TURCICA

DUDA, D. — Islamische Handschriften II. Teil 2, Die Handschriften in türkischer Sprache. 2 Vols: Textband; Tafelband. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna, 2008. (30 cm, Vol. 1: 315; Vol. 2: 157, 380 plates, 10 in colour). ISBN 978-3-7001-3879-2. € 223,20.

PARLATIR, İ., and Gy. HAZAI — Macar Bilimler Akademisi Kütüphanesi'ndeki Türkçe El Yazmaları Kataloğu. (Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi Yayınları No. 13). Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, Ankara, 2007. (27,5 cm, 565, 34 coloured plates). ISBN 978-9944-252-03-4.

PARLATIR, İ., Gy. HAZAI and B. KELLNER-HEINKELE — Catalogue of the Turkish Manuscripts in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest/Berlin, 2007 (24 cm, 664, 27 coloured plates). ISBN 978-963-508-558-3.

WÜRSCH, R. — Die orientalischen Handschriften der Burgerbibliothek Bern. Verlag Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2007. (24,5 cm, XXVI, 195, 31 plates, 7 in colour). ISBN 978-3-447-05493-5. € 64.

In a review published in *BiOr* earlier this year (LXV, cols. 253-5), I have pointed at the progress in the cataloguing of oriental manuscripts and mentioned in passing the catalogue of the *Burgerbibliothek* in Bern published in 2007. Here, I will devote more detailed attention to international developments in the field, and come back to the Bern catalogue. Not yet mentioned by me were the catalogue by İsmail Parlatır and György Hazai of the Turkish manuscripts in the library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, also published in 2007, and Dorothea Duda's two-volume work on the illuminated Turkish manuscripts in the Austrian National Library, Vienna, published this year (2008). All three publications are handsomely produced and contain beautiful illustrations, some, or all, of them in full colour.

The book on the Bern collection, first of all, is a collective effort to which nine scholars contributed; it contains serial descriptions of (1) Arabic; (2) Persian; (3) Turkish; (4) (one) Syriac; (5) Ethiopian; and (6) Japanese manuscripts. Added to these, there are those on (7) a Chinese block print; (8) inscribed palm leaves; and (9) manuscripts produced by European Orientalists. The descriptions are preceded by a brief introduction on the history of the collection. The *Burgerbibliothek* came into existence in 1951, when it was separated from the *Stadtbibliothek*, but the collection of oriental manuscripts preserved in it is much older. Formally, it found its origin in the library of the French scholar and diplomat, Jacques Bongars (1554-1612). His books, which comprised one Chinese block print, came to Bern in 1632. From then on, the collection slowly expanded, and today comprises 84 oriental manuscripts, a manuscript fragment and the aforementioned Chinese block print. The manuscripts acquired in the early modern period had belonged, as far as data on their provenance are available, to scholars, officers, a diplomat and some Protestant pastors. One manuscript, Cod. 713, an Arabic-Turkish book of prayers, was war booty. A French officer had 'received it from a Turk', as a note in the manuscript has it, during the Battle of Kövar on 28 August 1662. During the nineteenth century, a further two Arabic manuscripts were obtained as war booty in Algeria (in 1837) and in Aceh (northern Sumatra, in 1880). In modern times, acquisitions went on, and were nearly all gifts, the last of them taking place in 2004. The oldest manuscript dates from 1413 (Cod. 719, a medical tract in Arabic copied in Hebraic letters), the youngest from 1878 (Cod. 731, a copy of the Koran). Best represented are texts in Arabic (29 items), followed by those in Ethiopian (15), Turkish (15) and Persian (10). The dominating subject in the Islamic and Christian manuscripts is religion; among the Arabic manuscripts, there are 13 Korans, but there we also find grammar, poetry, and history. Quite a few manuscripts contain colophons with data on the copying and notes by owners/readers, oriental and western, often only their names, sometimes entries on family history. There are also a few manuscripts which contain splendid lacquer bindings or illuminations/illustrations. Attractive miniatures are, for instance, found in one of the more striking items in the collection, a rare copy of the first volume of an anonymous Turkish *Kahraman-name* (Cod. 551). The copyist finished his work during a night of Ramadan that was so cold, he remarkably notes, that the ink froze in his pen. There is no year mentioned in the colophon, but by 1693 the manuscript was in the possession of the library. Among the five miniatures, there figures a portrait of the protagonist of the story, the popular warrior-hero Kahraman, riding his six-legged grey. The catalogue is a masterpiece. Furnished with ten separate indexes, the book provides the interested reader (and potential user of the collection) with all the information he or she may require.

The second catalogue to be discussed here, which describes the Turkish manuscripts in the Budapest Academy of Sciences, is quite different, if only for the sheer size of the collection. Parlatır in his brief introduction to the Turkish edition (I was not aware of the English version until after I had written this review; I will turn to it in an addendum, below) tells us that the catalogue contains descriptions of 811 manuscripts, the oldest dating from 1324 (a copy of a well-known collection of stories entitled *Ferec ba'de ş-Şidde*), and therefore much older, he maintains, than any copy known to be preserved in Turkish libraries (none of which are older than

the late fifteenth century — I may add that the Leiden University Library also boasts the possession of an old copy, dating going back to 1491, Cod.Or. 12.407), but Parlatır disappointingly fails to give us the number or page where to find its description. In the section where the nine copies of the work are catalogued (Nos. 319-327), one finds that the oldest copy is No. 319 made in 1438. Parlatır's introduction also mentions a copy of a *Tezkiretü l-Evliya* (No. 364), an anonymous translation of a work of the same title by Faridduddin Attar, copied in 1348, but the description has 1340! The famous text was published, as the cataloguers further inform us, by Fuat Köprülü in 1913, and was the subject of various later studies, particularly for its linguistic characteristics.

One gets the impression, leafing through the book, that the genres known to Ottoman *Schrifttum*, — there are also a few manuscripts with Chagatay-Turkish texts — are well represented: from religion via belles lettres, historiography, geography (including an interesting collection of yearbooks, *salname*s, of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), the exact sciences, zoology, to language, prosody, military matters, architecture, music and 'food' (*yemek*, represented by an incomplete, anonymous and undated treatise on food, labelled '*aşçı kitabı*'. The description mentions 'chapter titles' in red. Why do the cataloguers not give us these titles, I wonder, that would give us at least an idea what type of text we have here. The label suggests, I should say, a cookbook rather than some sort of essay on foodstuffs. But who can tell?) The collection also contains official documents, such as letters, deeds of trust of pious foundations (*vakfiye*s), ledgers (*defter*s), registers (*sicillat*) and a passport (*mürur tezkeresi*, No. 632, dated 1841, but there is no indication as to whom the document was issued or where the traveller was supposed to go).

If one has a closer look, one cannot but become fascinated by the richness of the collection. I was immediately struck by many items which must be rare and, perhaps, unique. A problem here is, that we are not informed about this. References to literature and other catalogues is, on the whole, rather sparse and only extensive in the cases of well-documented items and, perhaps, items with which the cataloguers had been familiar. Much more time should, ideally, have been spent on background research. One comes across tantalizing texts, like, for instance, a two-volume epic of Qiran-ı Habeşi, translated from the Persian, copied in 1753 (Nos. 316 and 317); an undated and anonymous biographical dictionary of Janissary Aghas (No. 583); and an anonymous treatise on horses (*esbname*), copied in 1663 (No. 698), but the brief descriptions lack all further information.

Perhaps there is no further information in these cases. Unfortunately, this lack of data also extends in many instances to items that could have been further explored. The descriptions of the miscellaneous manuscripts (*mecmu'at*), to give an example, do not furnish more than the barest indication of contents, as for instance under item No. 481, of which we are informed that that it contains poetry, some in Persian, and prose, with here and there interlinear Persian translations, as well as examples of calligraphy. Which poems and what prose is kept in the dark. The quotation of *incipit*s and *excipit*s, apparently of, respectively, a *gazel* for a certain Mehmed Paşa and a chronogram, does not help the reader much in identifying the contents. There is no indication of a possible dating. The descriptions of the other 25 miscellanies of various types in the collection are not much better. This is a pity, because detailed study of the contents of such manuscripts, as I know from experience, sometimes brings texts to light that have so far been unknown.

The overall impression one gets is, regrettably to say, of neglect that could, with little effort, have been avoided. One finds question marks here and there in stead of page numbers and death years of authors that could have been checked. *Hicri* dates are incompletely converted to C.E. ones, or not at all, and names of persons mentioned, even of grand viziers and other high functionaries, are not identified. Parlatır and Hazai were not even able (or could not find the time), to give a striking example, to find out who 'Voban' was, the French author of a translated treatise on fortification (No. 807, dated 1791), nor did they bother to look up the title of the French original. A quick look at the Internet learns us that it was *Traité de l'attaque et de défense des places* by Sébastien le Prestre de Vauban (1633-1707), printed many times, translated into English and Turkish; the Turkish version was printed in Istanbul in 1791, the same year as found in the manuscript. This could mean that the manuscript was copied from the printed text, a possibility that, inevitably, escaped the cataloguers.

Another example. No. 398 describes an embassy report (*sefaretname*) by Şerif Paşa. No references or dates are mentioned. The ambassador must have been Halil Şerif Paşa, who was Ottoman ambassador in Paris for a few months in 1877, because no other envoy to Paris of that name is known. The report does not seem to be documented anywhere (the late Roderic Davison for one was unaware of it; he does not anyway mention it in his biographical sketch of the ambassador published in *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* in 1981), so the copy of this report must be rare, perhaps unique. But the reader, again, is left uninformed and has to do the research himself.

A final example which is of particular interest to me. Describing five copies of Mustafa Âli Efendi's famous world history, *Künhü l-ahbar* (Nos. 524-528), the cataloguers inform us that the author wrote fifteen other works (fifty is more near the truth) and, referring to secondary literature, fail to mention Cornell Fleischer's often-quoted biography and my own thesis on the history itself. So they missed essential data on the author's life and works, and minor points like the year of the author's death which is not 1599 but 1600, as Fleischer found out. Worse, the cataloguers do not distinguish between the four volumes of the history, so it is not clear which volume is described under which number.

A more serious drawback is that it apparently did not occur to the cataloguers that the reader/user of the catalogue may be interested in the provenance of the manuscripts. Data thereon are almost completely lacking. Parlatır does not devote one word to it in his brief introduction. This I find rather shocking. Hungary can boast of a many good and even famous Orientalists/Turkologists — I only need to mention the names of Vámbéry, Karácson and Németh — and one could not help wondering whether any (many?) of the manuscripts in the collection might have belonged to one of these interesting personalities. (In the descriptions of some manuscripts, one finds references to earlier owners, among them, indeed, Vámbéry — but they are not mentioned in any index.) Or whether any of the manuscripts were acquired as war booty. Or had belonged to a local Ottoman *medrese* library at an earlier period. And so one could go on. Another missed chance! (Perhaps no such data are found in the manuscripts, but we are not enlightened on this aspect in the introduction.)

The catalogue contains four indexes. These make the book, despite its shortcomings, very useful. Until this catalogue had appeared, I was quite unaware of the existence of the aforementioned copies of Âli Efendi's history although I had already seen many for my thesis. So now I all but have made up my mind to pay a visit to Budapest as soon as I can….

Of an altogether different calibre is the third and last catalogue of this review. It consists of two volumes. The first contains detailed descriptions of the illuminated and illustrated (mostly Ottoman) Turkish manuscripts in the National Library in Vienna, in which, as could be expected, much attention is paid to outward appearance. In the description of each item one finds, among others, separate paragraphs which contain brief essays ('commentary') on the manuscript as well as data on the provenance. There are also, often very elaborate, descriptions of the illumination and/or miniatures found in the manuscripts. The second volume contains a selection of plates which accompany the descriptive parts. The first volume is preceded by an introduction and is concluded by exhaustive indexes of various types, including an iconographic one. Earlier volumes in the series to which this catalogue belongs, meant to make the art-historical riches of the library accessible, describe the Persian and Arabic manuscripts.

The catalogue contains descriptions of 129 selected manuscripts (not all 360 Turkish manuscripts with any form of decoration were included). Genres represented are — I quote from the introduction — poetry, ethics, philosophy, mysticism, magic, astronomy, geography, history, philology, literature, chronology and various technical handbooks on, for instance, the art of distillation and fortification (both eighteenth-century translations of much older European works, Cod. mixt. 1264 and 1316). Most manuscripts were produced in, most likely (not all of them contain colophons), Istanbul from the second half of the fifteenth to the end of the nineteenth centuries. Earlier owners were mostly Orientalists, among them Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1856), founder of Ottoman studies in Austria, the Istanbul book collector Dr Oskar Rescher (1883-1972, earlier mentioned on these pages), and various diplomats and court interpreters. A beautifully illuminated and illustrated genealogy of the Ottoman ruling house, Cod. A.F. 50, rightly characterised as the showpiece of the collection, originally belonged to the famous general, Prince Eugen of Savoy (1663-1736), who acquired the manuscript after the battle of Peterwardein (Varadin) of 1716 where its original owner, the officer and book collector Damad Ali Paşa was defeated by him and killed (cf. Teil 1, p. 28). Other striking items in the collection are miniatures of the siege of Belgrade (1521) and the battle of Mohácz (1526) in an early copy of the history of Koca Nişancı (Cod. H.O. 41, dated 1575 — plates I and 36) and a copy of the Book of Navigation (*Kitab-ı Bahriye*) by Piri Reis (d. 1554-5), richly furnished with coloured portolano charts (Cod. H.O. 192, undated — plates 157-205). Both manuscripts were acquired from Hammer-Purgstall.

Although none of the manuscripts described and depicted here was previously unknown to the learned world, this new catalogue is richer in content than its predecessors and brings us closer to the manuscripts by its pictorial aspect. The catalogue is well written and surely enriches the life of both manuscript readers and art historians.

ADDENDUM

The English version of the Budapest Academy catalogue, which came to my attention after I had reviewed the Turkish one, is slightly better than that published in Turkey. (The quality of the coloured plates, however, is inferior to those in the Turkish version; they are somewhat out of focus and they are also less in number.) It contains an introduction in which, thank God, some space is devoted to provenance — we now learn that the origin of the collection dates back to the nineteenth century and is connected with the names of Dániel Szilágy (1831-1885), Ármin Vámbéry (1832-1913), Józef Thúry (1861-1915) and — I guessed so much — Gyula Németh, as well as some other Hungarian Orientalists. (Karácson is not mentioned.) But these names are not linked to parts of the collection or individual manuscripts. For this, however, we have now a separate index that lists the 'names of persons mentioned in the descriptions', among them Vámbéry and Thúry. The descriptions themselves contain some additional data on these earlier owners, based on notes in Hungarian found in the manuscripts (e.g. nos. 134, 542 and 593). From all this, one begins to suspect that the Academy may lack a good archive in which provenance is documented, but we are not further informed about this. As regards the descriptions themselves, they are here and there slightly improved and the question marks have disappeared. The book on 'food' is now characterised as a 'cooking book' (p. 582); 'Voban' is turned into 'Sébastien Vauban (1633-1707)'; but the title of the French original of the text remains a mystery. Şerif Paşa is still not identified and the same is true for the four volumes of Âli Efendi's *Künhü l-ahbar*. The various data accompanying the paragraphs on this great work are the same as those in the Turkish version. Unchanged are also the other items I mentioned in my original review above. But instead of four, we are now served with nine indices, and there is also a twelve-page glossary, which is of course a good thing.

Remains the enigmatic fact of two different catalogues describing the same collection. In the introduction to the English version this is explained by the surprising sentence: "Due to the cataloguing tradition in Turkey, the Turkish version is slightly more comprehensive than the English version, which in its presentation essentially follows the well-known method of Turkish scholars". This seems to imply that Turkish scholars use a different and more comprehensive method of cataloguing. Judgment of whether this is good or bad is avoided, but the text goes on to state that the catalogue (= the English version of the catalogue?) follows the excellent methods applied in the German Oriental Cataloguing Project (which resulted in a magnificent series of, indeed very detailed, catalogues published from the 1960s onward). Does this mean that Turkish scholars have not yet risen to the level of German excellence and should do with, not so much a more comprehensive, as an, at some places, defective and unfinished product? This would really be a shame and, with its implication of Saidian 'Orientalism', unworthy of scholars like Hazai and Kellner-Heinkele. But the statement is of course plain nonsense in the first place. Turkish scholars do not use methods different from those of their European and American colleagues, even if they have published catalogues in the past that are more 'comprehensive' than the German ones. (Such summary catalogues, sometimes called 'handlists', have also been published in Europe and the USA.) For the explanation of the discrepancy one has to look some-

where else. Earlier in the same introduction, we are informed that it was Parlatır who made the descriptions after he had undertaken 'three one-month study trips to Budapest between 2001 and 2003.' Three months for 811 manuscripts! No wonder that his catalogue was (and in its English garb still basically is) not up to the level of the German catalogues. It is in fact astonishing that it is as good as it is! Probably thanks to an infusion of money from Brussels (which is alluded to in the introduction) at a later stage, the editors were able to have Parlatır's work translated, and to improve and extend the descriptions here and there. Or so I guess. But why not tell us what really happened and fob us off with the feeble subterfuge I quoted above? Scholarship is all about truth and I am shocked that my colleagues demean themselves to cover up a messy editorial procedure in this way just not to look silly. By doing that, they have made things worse.

Leiden University, November 2008 Jan SCHMIDT

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KURZ, M. — Ein osmanischer Almanach für das Jahr 1239/1240 (1824/1825). (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, 276). Klaus Schwarz Verlag, Berlin, 2006. (23,5 cm, 165). ISBN 3-87997-339-3.

The book under review here contains, as pièce de résistance, an annotated translation into German of an early nineteenth-century Ottoman almanac, a copy of which is preserved in the State Library of Prussian Cultural Heritage in Berlin (Ms.or.quart. 1697). It is followed by a facsimile of the original text. Almanacs belonged to a popular genre and could be reckoned among the most wide-spread type of book in the Ottoman Empire (although it is clear that the illiterate or those who had only received an elementary education could not have understood much of their contents). In this, Ottoman almanacs resembled their European counterparts, which became popular in the West after printing had begun to bring down the price of books in the late fifteenth century. Although Ottoman almanacs, annual and perpetual, both in the format of the hand-written book and of, often beautifully calligraphed and illuminated, rolls of parchment and precious paper (so-called *ruz-names*), are found in great numbers in museums and libraries that boast collections of Oriental manuscripts, the phenomenon has been little studied so far. That is a pity, because they reflect a world view, shared by most Ottomans, in which magic and the occult sciences, especially astrology, played an important role. This phenomenon, too, has been neglected by scholarship, despite the central position of magic and the related 'learning' in Ottoman culture, also literally: the astrologer, for instance, was an important functionary at court and often consulted by sultans before they undertook action (although not all sultans were convinced that this was helpful). This publication, therefore, is most welcome. It is at the same time a useful guide — as yet the only one of its kind — for anyone, a manuscript cataloguer for instance, interested in deciphering and interpreting this type of texts.

Mankind from time immemorial has been pondering their natural environment and has been gazing at the sky, thereby speculating about the nature of time, the sun, moon, stars and other celestial phenomena, their movement and ulterior meaning. The basis to the sciences of time-reckoning and astronomy, an important part of which consisted of the, we would nowadays say: pseudo-science, of astrology (the two were only distinguished in modern times) was laid in antiquity and inherited by later civilisations, including that of Islam. Almanacs are essentially calendars with additional information in tabular form about lunar and solar systems of time-keeping, festivals (including, often, non-Muslim ones), times of prayer, historical events, the sky and its constellations, the weather, agriculture, diet and health, and auspicious and inauspicious days ('elections', *ihtiyarat*) for certain activities. Kurz in her introductory part succinctly describes the history of astronomy among the Ottomans and of the genre of the almanac in the Islamic world in general. She also analyses its technical aspects, both as calendar and astrological manual, and explains how to read the tables.

Astronomy, it thus appears, was part of the regular curriculum in institutions of higher learning, *medreses*, and the Ottomans followed the example set by the mediaeval masters in the field who had worked in centres of learning like Samarqand and Cairo. Astronomical works, often translations of, and commentaries on older works, began to be published in the Empire in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the pinnacle of Ottoman astronomical fame was doubtless the observatory erected in Istanbul for Takiyüddin er-Raşid during the reign of Sultan Murad III (1574-1595). It unfortunately did not survive for long — the structure was demolished in 1580 — owing, basically, to the prevailing of fundamentalist thinking which associated astronomy/astrology with godlessness. This dominant mentality continued to stifle new ideas during the following centuries. Henceforward innovative concepts, if at all, came from Europe through translations which began to appear in the Empire from the late seventeenth century onward. With these, new theories on cosmography, especially heliocentrism, part of the 'scientific revolution' which was taking place in Europe, became available to Ottoman scholars for the first time. Western-style astronomy was officially taught in Ottoman military and naval academies from the late eighteenth century onward. This should have killed astrology, based as it was on the traditional concept of geocentrism, but it did not, and the cleft between 'higher learning' and popular — and not-so-popular — ignorance remained, both in the West and the Ottoman Empire. Almanacs based on mediaeval knowledge and pseudo-knowledge, including the one discussed here, remained as popular as ever, religious prejudice against their magic aspects notwithstanding. As a concession to the new knowledge, astronomical data found in almanacs were in later years sometimes improved on the basis of European astronomical tables, but the format remained essentially the same.

Almanacs of the type we find in the Berlin manuscript, had been produced in the Islamic world since the ninth century and were in turn based on Hellenic examples. One of the first Ottoman almanacs was produced by a certain Sheik Vefa (d. 1491). It also became the most widely spread one and was endlessly copied and imitated during the following centuries. Almanacs kept being produced until the late nineteenth century, by which time lore from Europe was also included and the traditional prognostic aspect had almost disappeared. The first printed one dates from 1842-3. The Berlin manuscript belongs to the more elaborate versions that came on the market. It consists of tables covering the twelve months of the year (of, artificially, 30 days each, followed by the necessary 5 or 6 extra days), beginning on 21 March 1823. The tables

are preceded by detailed prognostications in the rather convolute rhymed prose then fashionable on the fate of the Sultan, his servants and the populace at large as well as two horoscopes for, respectively, the new year in the Istanbul area and — this was part of traditional lore found in most works of this type — the Turcomans in Central Asia (based on the Chinese system of animal years). They are followed by data on a partial eclipse of the sun (on 21 December 1824) and what it meant for mankind.

The translation is very readable and the tables, thanks to Kurz's translation effort, easily accessible. If anything, perusal of the work makes it abundantly clear that Ottoman prognostications and advise what to do or not to do on certain days (the 'elections', found in the tabular part) were as trivial and vague as any horoscope found in your local tabloid nowadays. They are sometimes also funny. To give some examples: 'election' for Saturday, the 21st of Şevval: 'Refreshing of the limbs, relaxation and pleasure'; for Tuesday, 7th Zilhicce: 'Selling of land and of pearls'. The forecast for 19-21 Şa'ban: 'disobedience, weakness and confusion in tax collectors'; idem, for 28-31 of the same month: 'an increase in the desire of the flesh in the people at large; the weather unsettled'. The work is completed by a detailed bibliography and index.

Leiden University, November 2008 Jan SCHMIDT

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TRAUSCH, T. — Abbildung und Anpassung. Das Türkenbild in safawidischen Chroniken des 16. Jahrhunderts. (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, Band 227). Klaus Schwarz Verlag, Berlin, 2008. (23,5 cm, 172). ISBN 978-3-87997-343-9.

The book discussed here has its origin in a Magisterarbeit (MA thesis) accepted by the University of Munich in 2007. In it, as the title indicates, the author aims at analysing the image of the 'Turk' (*Türkenbild*) found in Safavid historiography.

The 'Turk' in general played a not unimportant role in Persian history, particularly from about 1500 onwards, when an awesome but futile struggle between the Ottoman and Safavid empires about the hegemony in the Middle East, if not the world, took place — and it was to last for centuries. At the same time, the Safavids were, off and on, engaged in war with the Uzbeks on their eastern borders. Members of both dynasties, Ottoman and Uzbek, if not most of their subjects, had an ethnic-Turkish origin. To complicate matters, at least from a modern point of view, is the fact that the Safavid dynasty had their roots in Turkic Azerbaijan, and that a considerable number of its subjects in Iran were ethnic Turks. The theme of this book, therefore, is not without relevance. Studies focusing on the subject of the image of 'the other' in the pre-modern world exist for European literature, but hardly for oriental ones, as Trausch points out, so this is an interesting exercise. What is more: Western scholars hardly realize that the Orientals not only had ideas or rather, prejudices, about them, Europeans, but also about their oriental neighbours. Thus, the Turks (or rather Ottomans — 'Turk' was a term of abuse among the educated inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire and indicated an uncouth farmer or herdsman), for example, had, often stereotype, ideas, about Germans, Englishmen and the French, but also about Arabs, Persians and Indians. This was what the sixteenth-century Ottoman poet Faqiri had to say about Persians:

> '[…] They live it up all the times at parties/ They are the leaders of the herd of Shiites/ […] They've sunk to every deception and trickery/ For a kaf and a nun [buttocks] they hand over the soul's currency.'[1])

The Safavids and their supporters, the *qızılbash*, moreover, were viewed with utmost suspicion by the Ottomans, being associated with heresy and sexual debauch, for instance in the work of the historian Mustafa Âli (d. 1600).

Such cross-ethnic and cross-border imaging, as Trausch is well aware, often says more about the opinions of the author and the political and cultural milieu to which he belongs than about realities.

Trausch in his study restricts himself to a limited range of sources, namely three chronicles compiled by, respectively, Khwandamir, Hasan Beg-e Rumlu and Eskandar Beg-e Torkman Monshi who covered the period 1501-1629 in their books, the heyday of the Ottoman-Safavid conflict. All three were members of the ruling elite and well connected to the court — so they could be expected to represent the ideas which circulated among the ruling elite — and devoted some space in their works to contemporary Ottoman developments, Rumlu and Monshi also to events related to Persia's eastern Turkic neighbours, the fearsome Uzbeks. But this was not what these books, and pre-modern chronicles in general, were about. The prestige of the dynasty to which they were beholden, and particularly its prowess on the field of battle came first. Foreign nations and rulers were only introduced as minor players if they could thereby embellish the dynasty's image. The fate of ordinary people was left completely in the dark.

As a result, the image of the Turk in general, that is, as a socio-ethnic group, is not a topic in these works. We do not even know if such a thing existed, although the word 'Turk' or its derivatives, is used often, as among the Ottomans, in a pejorative sense. (A more neutral term was 'Rumi', sometimes ''Othmani', for Ottoman.) Ethnicity hardly played a role in public life before the rise of nationalism in the nineteenth century, although people were, of course, aware that some people looked different than themselves, spoke a different language, and were accordingly given a specific name, like, indeed, Turk, or Persian or Mongolian. What did matter in life, instead, was one's religious community, whether one was a Muslim — Sunni or Shii — or Christian or Jew. Telling in this respect are the very names of two of the chroniclers: 'Rumlu' and 'Torkman', which point to a Turkic background, but which did not seem to have made any difference for their point of view. What Trausch gets from his sources, consequently, is not so much characterisation of Turks in general, as that of Ottomans and Uzbeks in the persons of the rulers of the Ottoman and Uzbek dynasties with whom the Safavids had to deal in the course of time.

The trend which emerges from these sources is, as Trausch demonstrates by his detailed summary of the relevant passages, that the Ottoman sultans were respected by the Safavids as fellow-Muslims and, on the whole as 'just' and

[1]) Quoted and translated by Edith Gülçin Ambros, 'Six Lampoons out of Faqīrī's Risāle-i ta'rīfāt', in *WZKdM* 82 (1992), p. 34.

even ‘wise’ rulers (‘just’ and ‘wise’ being the usual epithets of a successful and therefore legitimate Muslim prince), with the exception of the treaty-breaking sultans Selim I, Murad III and Ahmed I. But they were not accused of anything so bad as heresy or sexual debauch. Although the Ottomans defended Sunni Islam in their realm, this is not held against them, and even judged positively when they are cast in the role of warriors against the Frankish infidel. They are more or less depicted as colleague-kings with whom, although of lower status, being the offspring of a minor Asian khan called Oghuz, one inevitably had one’s quarrels now and then. By contrast, the Uzbeks are said to be vile, cruel to both subjects (‘Turks and Tajiks’ as one passage has it, cf. p. 142) and enemies, and adherents of a faith, namely Sunni Islam, that one hardly could call Muslim. In passages that describe conflicts with these people some of the authors indulge in graphic descriptions of torture, rape and slaughter. On their turn, the Safavids did not hesitate, as the chroniclers likewise do not hesitate to emphasize, to take their revenge on the Uzbeks and their local Sunni subjects by converting them to Shiism by force, murdering them or chasing them away from their homes. Descriptions of such excesses are never found in the context of the wars against the Ottomans. This is remarkable. It is unlikely that these were less brutal. Why, then, were the Ottomans put in a far more positive light than the Uzbeks? Trausch has an interesting explanation for this. The Ottomans, he maintains, were of far more political and economic importance to the Safavids than the Uzbeks, who were not more than a minor nuisance. Wars against them could not be won and were damaging to the lucrative silk trade. Hence, one should not provoke them by writing too offensively about them. That the Ottomans were able to read their books was beyond doubt; they knew Persian. The Persians themselves donated expensively manufactured copies of the chronicles here discussed to the Ottomans as diplomatic gifts — copies made in Persia are still to be found in Turkish libraries today — and, I could add, Persian histories were used as sources by Ottoman historians, among them the aforementioned Mustafa Âli.

Remains the question what the Persians who lived under the Safavids thought of ‘Turks’ in general. In order to find that out, chronicles are not the right sources, so much must be clear, because they ignore the lower orders of society and their ethnic intricacies. Here, popular literature, such as stories and humoristic verse by the like of Faqiri, could perhaps yield data. Let us hope that Trausch finds time to explore the theme further in the future.

Leiden University, December 2008 Jan SCHMIDT