

Preface

Even in Ottoman studies, where few things are self-evident, some projects stand out as obvious. When Suraiya Faroqhi retired from her professorship at Munich University in order to take up another at Istanbul Bilgi University, this change of place and academic context was the occasion to honor her as a scholar and a teacher, and to celebrate her achievements. Spontaneously, and independently from each other, three volumes were planned, two of which were published in due course.¹

That this volume, the third of them, is a latecomer is solely the responsibility of the three of us, the editorial team. There are of course several specific grounds why we failed to deliver on time; but there is only one real overarching reason: that we had underestimated the difficulties of the endeavor. From the very start we had envisaged a volume that might be at the same time a tribute to Suraiya Faroqhi and a contribution to the literature on themes pertinent to popular protest and political participation, which—we felt, and still feel—have not been given the attention they deserve in Ottomanist historiography. Consequently, we asked our contributors to produce articles that would explore how Ottoman subjects, preferably commoners, made their voices heard, promoted demands, or bargained with state authorities or local powerholders within an imperial context that—except for a very brief phase of its existence—did not establish formal institutions allowing the political participation of its subjects. (Why we chose “Popular protest and

¹ Onur Yıldırım (ed.), *Osmanlı'nın Peşinde Bir Yaşam: Suraiya Faroqhi'ye Armağan*, Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2008; Vera Costantini and Markus Koller (eds.), *Living in the Ottoman ecumenical community: Essays in honour of Suraiya Faroqhi*, Leiden: Brill, 2008. The first also includes a bibliography of Faroqhi's work (pp. 25-44).

political participation in the Ottoman Empire” as the theme of the volume in the first place will be explained in the introduction.)

This rather ambitious aim, to produce at the same time a *festschrift* and a coherent volume on a specific theme, had repercussions that hampered the progress of the publication and fostered a long and unanticipated delay. We have thus accrued many more reasons to apologize and thank people than is usual for editors. First and uppermost, therefore, we would like to thank for their patience all our colleagues who have contributed to this volume, and to apologize to them for a drawn-out process of negotiating, reviewing, and editing, with long intermediate periods that must have felt tantamount to abandonment. We also want to thank Fahri Aral from Istanbul Bilgi University Press, who readily agreed to publish the volume and then patiently instigated its completion, as well as Ben Young, who did a highly professional and at the same time extremely careful job of language editing.

This collective effort has resulted in a publication which, we hope, will rise to the expectations of our contributors and will compensate them for the long waiting period. Particular care has been taken to make the volume functional and utilitarian, not only to Ottomanists but also to colleagues from other fields or disciplines. For this purpose we have included a detailed thematic index, also containing Ottoman terms, as well as a unified bibliography.

The publication coincides with Suraiya Faroqhi’s seventieth birthday. We wish her all the best for many years to come—and may the Ottomanist scholarly community benefit from many more of her writings.

We deeply regret that Donald Quataert, an excellent historian and wonderful colleague, does not live to see his contribution published. He had finalized and approved the version printed here, and would certainly have enjoyed being among those presenting his friend Suraiya Faroqhi with the volume.

A last remark: In the final months of the preparation of this book, large parts of what once was the Ottoman Empire experienced large-scale popular protests that have toppled some of the regimes established there in recent decades. It remains to be seen whether these revolts and revolutions, which took many by surprise, will lead to social orders that are based on broad political participation; however, they certainly do show that post-Ottoman commoners have a voice, and moreover one that is often underestimated, just as their Ottoman ancestors did.

ELENI GARA - M. ERDEM KABADAYI - CHRISTOPH K. NEUMANN