# The Ottoman City between East and West
## Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul

Studies of early modern Middle Eastern cities, whether classified as Islamic, Arab, or Ottoman, have stressed the atypical, the idiosyncratic, or the aberrant. This bias derives largely from orientalist presumptions that these cities were in some way substandard or deviant. One purpose of this volume is to normalize Ottoman cities, to emphasize how, on the one hand, they resembled cities in general and how, on the other, their specific historical situations individualized each of them. The second is to present a challenge to the previous literature and to negotiate an agenda for future study. By considering the narrative histories of Aleppo, Izmir (Smyrna), and Istanbul during their Ottoman periods, the book offers a fundamental departure from the piecemeal methods of previous studies, emphasizing the importance of these cities during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and highlighting their essentially Ottoman character. While the essays provide an overall view of the three cities, each can be approached separately. Their exploration of the available sources and the agendas of historians and social scientists who have conditioned the scholarly perception of these influential cities makes fascinating reading.

EDHEM ELDEM is Professor of History at Boğaziçi University. His publications include *A 135-Year-Old Treasure: Glimpses from the Past in the Ottoman Bank Archives* (1998) and *Banque Impériale Ottomane: inventaire commenté des archives* (1994). DANIEL GOFFMAN is Professor of History at Ball State University. He is the author of *Britons in the Ottoman Empire, 1642–1660* (1998) and *Izmir and the Levantine World, 1550–1650* (1990). BRUCE MASTERS is Professor of History at Wesleyan University. His publications include *Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East* (1989).

# *Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization*



*Titles in the series*

STEFAN SPERL, *Mannerism in Arabic poetry: a Structural Analysis of Selected Texts, 3rd Century AH/9th Century AD–5th Century AH/11th Century AD* 0 521 354854

PAUL E. WALKER, *Early Philosophical Shiism: the Ismaili Neoplatonism of Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī* 0 521 441293

BOAZ SHOSHAN, *Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo* 0 521 43209X

STEPHEN FREDERIC DALE, *Indian Merchants and Eurasian Trade, 1600–1750* 0 521 454603

AMY SINGER, *Palestinian peasants and Ottoman Officials: Rural Administration around Sixteenth-century Jerusalem* 0 521 452384 (hardback) 0 521 476798 (paperback)

MICHAEL CHAMBERLAIN, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350* 0 521 565069

TARIF KHALIDI, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* 0 521 465540 (hardback) 0 521 58938X (paperback)

REUVEN AMITAI-PREISS, *Mongols and Mamluks: the Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260–1281* 0 521 462266

LOUISE MARLOW, *Hierarchy and Egalitarianism in Islamic Thought* 0 521 564301

JANE HATHAWAY, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: the Rise of the Qazdağlis* 0 521 571103

THOMAS T. ALLSEN, *Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire: a Cultural History of Islamic Textiles* 0 521 583012

DINA RIZK KHOURY, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540–1834* 0 521 590604

THOMAS PHILIPP AND ULRICH HAARMANN (eds.), *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society* 0 521 591155

PETER JACKSON, *The Delhi Sultanate: a Political and Military History* 0 521 404770

KATE FLEET, *European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: the Merchants of Genoa and Turkey* 0 521 64221 3

TAYEB EL-HIBRI, *Reinterpreting Islamic Historiography: Hārūn al-Rashīd and the Narrative of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate* 0 521 65023 2

# The Ottoman City between East and West

## Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul

EDHEM ELDEM
DANIEL GOFFMAN
and
BRUCE MASTERS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521643047



First published 1999
Reprinted 2001
This digitally printed first paperback version 2005

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*
Eldem, Edhem
The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul / Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters.
p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in Islamic civilization)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
1. Aleppo (Syria) – History – 17th century. 2. Aleppo (Syria) – History – 18th century.
3. Izmir (Turkey) – History – 17th century. 4. Izmir (Turkey) – History – 18th century.
5. Istanbul (Turkey) – History – 17th century. 6. Istanbul (Turkey) – History – 18th century.
I. Goffman, Daniel, 1954– . II. Masters, Bruce Alan, 1950– . III. Title. IV. Series.
DS99.A56E43 1999
956.2–dc21 98–43855 CIP

ISBN-13 978-0-521-64304-7 hardback
ISBN-10 0-521-64304-X hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-67354-9 paperback
ISBN-10 0-521-67354-2 paperback

Transferred to digital printing 2005

*For our teachers*,
Halil İnalcık
*and*
Robert Mantran

# Contents

# Illustrations

# Maps

# Preface

This book was conceived in the fall of 1993 during conversations between the authors at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul and during an ARIT (American Research Institute in Turkey) sponsored tour of early Ottoman sites in northwestern Anatolia. The three authors agreed that there was a lack of synthetic works on Ottoman cities and that, having each recently completed monographs on our respective cities, it would be interesting and perhaps useful to write surveys of Ottoman Istanbul, Izmir, and Aleppo. These studies might not only provide students and non-Ottoman historians with practical introductions to these important Ottoman cities but also produce a framework to think about the shapes these and other Ottoman urban centers took, how they functioned, and how they compared and contrasted to other cities.

During the next year the authors wrote drafts surveying the histories of these cities before reconvening at a one-day conference, "Three Ottoman Cities," held at Ball State University in the spring of 1995. The structure for this meeting was somewhat unusual for we were not only looking for feedback on our work but also trying to arouse curiosity about Ottoman studies and generate as wide an interest as possible. We presented summaries of our works and asked historians from outside of our field to respond to drafts of our writings. Then, at the end of a rather full day, a panel of Ottomanists remarked on the inter-specialty give-and-take.

The format generated a fascinating, indeed invaluable, discussion. Professor Kenneth Hall, a southeast-Asian specialist, reviewed Bruce Masters's presentation on Aleppo; Professor Miriam Usher Chrisman, who studies Strasbourg and other early modern European cities, considered Daniel Goffman's examination of Izmir; and Professor Andrew R. L. Cayton, who has written extensively on early national US history, reflected on Edhem Eldem's exploration of Istanbul. Each of these historians critiqued our ideas insightfully and incisively, as did our chair, Professor Leslie Peirce, and Professors Molly Greene, Jane Hathaway, Donald Quataert, and Sarah Shields, who made up our panel of Ottomanists.

The contributions of the commentators were helpful in several ways. First

was the confirmation that a need exists for such surveys as this book attempts. Each of our outside commentators expressed a certain wonder at the hidden richness of the Ottoman universe. The depth of their remarks and their enthusiasm for this project were confirmation that comparative studies have a place in Ottoman history and that Ottoman history has a great deal to offer Asian, European, and US historians and *vice versa*.

Each commentator also refined and broadened the conference's thinking about the Ottoman city. Ken Hall reflected upon how, despite a series of economic and social transitions, over the centuries both Aleppo and certain southeast Asian cities managed to keep themselves in the "middle" of both culture and commerce. Socially, residents did so by turning outsiders – in the Aleppan case, Ottomans – into partners with local inhabitants; economically, they did so by nurturing networks between communities within cities and between urban dwellers and inhabitants in their hinterlands. Hall further observed that Aleppo seemed to have shared with southeast-Asian port cities the ability to turn "outside" into "inside," that is, to seize for themselves the institutions, techniques, and commodities of foreigners, citing as an example the appropriation and transformation of local market textile patterns and materials.

Whereas Hall emphasized similarities between southeast and southwest Asia, Miriam Chrisman found marked differences between the social and commercial structures of Izmir and western European cities. Particularly noticeable to her was the Ottoman emphasis on "provisionism" (that is, state regulation of the production and marketing of goods and especially foodstuffs) and the lack in Izmir of the autonomous political infrastructure typical of medieval European burgs. Chrisman did not derive from this assertion the Weberian conclusion that this lack of a civic culture made Izmir somehow less a city than its European companions. Instead, she speculated that it may have been Izmir's relative independence from legacies, conventions, and bureaucracies, its openness and plasticity, that enticed European merchants to settle in that port town in the early seventeenth century. She also suggested that western Europe's movement toward a more rigid orthodoxy and its expulsion of infidels and heretics after the Protestant Reformation may have helped inspire merchants to flee that sub-continent and re-establish themselves in more broad-minded venues on commercial and cultural borderlands in western Anatolia, the eastern American seaboard, southeast Asia, and elsewhere.

Cayton extended the comparative motif to North America. He found interesting the similarly parasitic natures of eighteenth-century Istanbul and Cincinnati, especially the manner in which goods seemed to be sucked into each. He then proceeded into a fascinating discussion of the idea of "contact" as a neutral way to think about cultural overlap and interplay in both the eighteenth-century midwestern United States and the Ottoman Empire's capital. As he pointed out, historiography now shies away from

reducing groups to pawns and strives to endow *all* individuals, communities, and civilizations with agency and status. In American historiography, this emphasis means exploring the worlds of native Americans, French settlers, African-Americans, and women as well as British conquerors. In the case of Istanbul, it requires examining the intersections between the multitude of communities and organizations that lived in the city, working out how they co-existed and how power was distributed among them. In each case, Cayton argued, the perception even more than the reality of power was what mattered. In both Istanbul and the American middle west, for example, the leverage of the French government and settlers was far greater than their real capacities seemed to warrant. Cayton did not push this similarity too far, however. He noted one important difference in the Ottoman linkage of power to diversity rather than to uniformity. In Istanbul, a cacophony of convictions existed in place of the ideological unity that was becoming so much a part of American history.

The contributions of the Ottomanist commentators, perhaps inevitably, tended to be less speculative than were the comments of our non-Ottomanist colleagues. Nevertheless, they too focused upon comparisons and contrasts. Both Molly Greene and Sarah Shields, albeit in quite different ways, deduced from the presentations the difficulty of discovering a normative "Ottoman city" (much less an Islamic one) or even meaningful shared characteristics. Greene further observed that despite the importance of commerce in sustaining the vigor of Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul, these Ottoman cities all died political rather than economic deaths. Jane Hathaway elaborated upon Cayton's observations about contact through a discussion of constructed identities in the Ottoman context, suggesting that particularly in Ottoman Arab lands the interplay between the Arab and Ottoman cultures was more complicated and deeply embedded than heretofore imagined. Finally, Donald Quataert emphasized how important it is to continue drawing upon the work of non-Ottoman historians and to repudiate an approach toward Ottoman studies that has overemphasized the unique and the idiosyncratic. Quataert implicitly and rightly asserted that Ottoman Istanbul, Izmir, and Aleppo were first and foremost cities; their Islamic, Arab, Turkish, Ottoman, or Mediterranean characteristics remain secondary.

It is a pleasure to thank those organizations and individuals who have supported us financially and through access to their facilities. We have drawn upon the resources of many archives in France, Syria, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Without exception, their staffs have been unstinting in their assistance. Connie McOmber, the Ball State University cartographer, skillfully devised the three maps of Aleppo, Istanbul, and Izmir and their surroundings.

Edhem Eldem would like to acknowledge ongoing and enthusiastic support from the Institut Français d'Etudes Anatoliennes d'Istanbul and

his home institution, Boğaziçi University, particularly its Department of History. He also wishes to thank Ms Araks Şahiner for kindly letting him use her findings on Yakub Hovhanessian.

Dan Goffman thanks the National Endowment for the Humanities for a Fellowship for College Teachers and Independent Scholars that, together with matching monies from Ball State University's Office of Research, funded his 1993–94 academic year in Istanbul. The Department of History at Ball State University generously granted him release time and Boğaziçi University provided housing and rank in its Department of History, where Selim Deringil, Selçuk Esenbel, and Tony Greenwood were particularly kind and supportive. He also thanks Amy Singer and Ehud Toledano of Tel Aviv University and its Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern & African Studies for hosting him for a month in the summer of 1994, during which he wrote much of his contribution to this book.

Bruce Masters would like to thank the Fulbright Commission, the Colonel Return Jonathan Meigs First Fund, and the American Research Institute in Turkey for providing funds and the Trustees of Wesleyan University for sabbatical time off that made the research of his section possible. He wishes also to thank Abdul-Karim Rafeq for a thoughtful reading of his chapter on Aleppo and Tony Greenwood and Gülen Aktaş for their hospitality during his research visits to Istanbul.