

Kasumović naglašava da je u procesu kreiranja austrougarske trgovinske politike u Bosni Hercegovini, Zemaljska vlada ipak uzela aktivno učešće, budući da nije samo slijepo slijedila naredbe Zajedničkog ministarstva finansija, nego je naprotiv često znala pokazivati neslaganje i insistirati na specifičnostima Bosne i Hercegovine.

Fundirana na različitim, veoma brojnim i uglavnom do sada neiskorištenim izvorima i relevantnoj literaturi, knjiga *Austrougarska trgovinska politika u Bosni i Hercegovini 1878-1914*, predstavlja značajan doprinos bosanskohercegovačkoj historiografiji austrougarskog perioda. "Znanstvena korektnost", nepristrasnost i objektivnost, iz nekoliko različitih perspektiva sagledana pojava, uz kritičku valorizaciju, kontekstualizirane izvore i odmjerene zaključke, daju mi za pravo da, stručnoj javnosti koju interesira ovaj period, ali i svim zaljubljenicima u ekonomsku i pravnu povijest, toplo preporučim ovo vrijedno naučno štivo.

MINELA RADUŠIĆ

**Aliye F. Mataracı. *Trade in Wartime: The Business Correspondence of an Ottoman Muslim Merchant Family*. Istanbul: Libra Kitapçılık ve Yayıncılık, 2016. pp. 1-266.**

*Trade in Wartime: The Business Correspondence of an Ottoman Muslim Merchant Family* is a well-conceived and deftly executed piece of research and analysis that attempts to address big and important problems by examining the data which obviously relate to small spaces and relatively short time sequences. Big question is the nature of social, political and economic

changes in a period of crisis which led the Ottoman Empire to the Great War and its ultimate collapse. Equally laudable and utterly important is the author's endeavour to understand and present the trading culture of the Ottoman Muslim society in these challenging times of globalisation, modernisation and national movements, especially business correspondence, trading customs and commercial networks. Although Aliye Mataracı focuses her attention on the activity of only one trading house, the conclusions she offers us are much more farsighted as they also deal with the broader socio-political context. Thus, the approach employed in this book partially reminds of the strategies and objectives adopted by Carlo Guinsburg and other major contributors in the field of microhistory. Arguably, the most important characteristic of their work is that they often started out the research with smaller sequences and issues, the so-called "scraps" of history, but regularly tended to finish the job with contextualisation and big conclusions.

The Ottoman Muslim Merchant family whose activity and business correspondence occupy the central part of this study are the Mataracızâdes, whereas the timeframe most of this book speaks about is the year 1914, one of the breaking periods in world history, and in the history of the Ottoman Empire, as well. At that time, the trading house of Mataracızâde was led by three brothers resident in three different towns: Ali, in Rize; Ilyas, in Istanbul, and Cemil, in Manchester.

Having that in mind, a question arises: of all the trading houses of the Ottoman Empire – and that is quite a number – why is this one so important and why the activity of the mentioned brothers deserved to catch an eye of a historian, that is, what qualifies it for becoming the subject-matter of scholarly

analysis? Knowing that there could be various answers to these questions, Aliye Mataracı offered us her own views. Among other things, from the contextualization of data she provided us, one can arrive at a conclusion that mentioned brothers are both typical and untypical representatives of the social layer they belonged to. What is typical about them is the fact they ran a business which was in the hands of their family from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, whereas they managed to build on experiences and trade practices inherited from their ancestors. On the other hand, the untypical element was their indifference in relation to more and more powerful discourse of the “National Economy” project of the Second Constitutional Period, as well as the absence of closer connections with the political elites of the time.

Although the business operations of the Mataracızade firm and the commercial network developed by its holders and main figures represent the core subject of Aliye Mataracı’s work, rightfully, the author did not just limit her scholarly interest to the activity of one merchant family. Quite the opposite, in this book we can find valuable information about the wider context in which the Mataracızâdes conducted their affairs. Moreover, the author offers data and interpretations which contribute to a better understanding of the Ottoman state strategy widely known as the *Millî İktisât* [i.e. National Economy], as well as to a further illustration of the Turkification process to which the Ottoman Muslim bourgeoisie was exposed at the time. Therefore, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that this book seeks to explore the role and position of the Mataracızâde brothers in two closely connected historical processes – the one which can best be described as the strengthening of the Muslim bourgeoisie

and the other which relates to the changing nature of their identity.

Before offering us some conclusions, the author compared the results of her own micro-research of mentioned Ottoman Muslim trading house with the dominant scholarly representations of the so-called National Economy and of the Turkification process. That approach provided her with reasonable grounds to reassess the reach and effectiveness of Ottoman economic strategies. Furthermore, she argues that the Mataracızâde brothers have often been unjustifiably associated with the newly rising national entrepreneurs formed under the National Economy program.

The basis of the study consists predominantly of information found in a copybook of the Mataracızâde trading house. Above all, it is an interesting primary source that provides insight into the correspondence of the prominent family members during a seven-month period in 1914. Within that documentary framework, particularly interesting are the letters exchanged between the Mataracızâdes in relation to their various business affairs. Besides, mentioned copybook contains data on the communication of the brothers with their fellow merchants, business partners, and collaborators.

Depending on questions we are trying to answer, these narrative sources may hardly be replaceable, particularly in cases when they offer a seducing and interesting narration, together with an insight into the personal point of view of their writers. But on the other hand, the letters may also provide only hints of what happened in the past, leaving us, thus, with a lot of new and often unsolvable questions. Consequently, one should not forget that the Mataracızâde copybook is “only” a textual remain of the

past, and every text, as insightful as it may be, should always be considered within a discourse. At least, this is my opinion on this subject matter.

However, like many other authors who work with narrative sources, Aliye Mataracı faced different challenges and her answer to these problems was metaphorically described in this book as an attempt “to listen what these documents had to say”. Having in mind the wider picture, the author invested efforts in explaining the general practice of trading correspondence in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Also, it is worth mentioning that the author of this book not only decoded the contents of the Mataracızâde letters but also contributed to a better understanding of a social context in which they came into existence. Achievement of that task is a complex issue which demanded employment of appropriate theoretical background, as well as knowledge of the debates in contemporary historiographic studies.

“The Trade in Wartime” of Aliye Mataracı is a book that undoubtedly follows academic practices and traditions characteristic of a well-written scholarly work. Among other qualities, the author writes in a flowing manner, every chapter includes clearly defined thesis and argumentation line, while the conclusions are based on thorough analysis of primary sources. Furthermore, the author argues her positions convincingly and avoids not confronting the ideas that have, for long, dominated the historiography in Turkey, as well as the public discourse in the Western European countries.

When speaking of the values and advantages of this book, it should also be noted that the research results are in close connection with the tasks mentioned in

the introduction and that they fully justify endeavors to write such a study. Besides, in my eyes, it is noteworthy to emphasize that the author was well acquainted with the character of sources she used, and with the appropriate methods that could be employed in their analysis. Apparently, she knew what the right questions to pose were – her book is the best proof of that – but, at the same time, I got the impression that the selection of research questions was, at least partly, determined by the author’s accurate recognition of the possible answers she can get by analysing the Mataracızâde copybook. The mentioned source was analysed within a broader discourse of written trade communication, while the author invested considerable efforts in understanding the links of letters produced by the Mataracızâde brothers to the correspondence practices and styles of the epoch. Furthermore, the author thoroughly researched the historical background of mentioned merchant family; she managed to detect key features of their business activities, as well as the dominant business traditions of the world within which they lived and acted.

But this book is not only important because of the insight into the history of commerce in the Ottoman Empire. More than that, it offers us a chance to gain a better understanding of the mentality of some Ottoman Muslim traders, a glance at their private world. Having in mind the fact that research of the private histories and everyday life of the past is very popular in today’s historiography, I am sure this kind of information can attract the attention of the public. Anyway, my attention has certainly been drawn to the letters exchanged between the oldest of the Mataracızâde brothers, İlyas, and the youngest brother, Cemil, who resettled

to Manchester for business purposes. As a matter of fact, I find this correspondence to be very interesting and even touching, from time to time. With a brotherly devotion and care, İlyas was writing to Cemil, often giving him advice on the importance of identity, religion, honor and integrity. By the time a potential reader finishes the reading of this book, I am convinced that, among other things, she/he will have become acquainted with three “new” men of the past, their private lives, struggles and aspirations. Thus, one could say that the author preserved a few of the so-called “small people” from oblivion, or, in other words, we can say she got the Mataracızâde family out of their relative anonymity, providing them a place on a broader and more visible scholarly stage.

At the end, it should be stressed that this book represents a successful scholarly investigation that fits well into the existing body of knowledge about the character and complexity of socio-political changes which marked the last years of the Ottoman history. But more importantly, it provides us with a tightly argued, nuanced and highly interesting picture of the Ottoman trading culture, as well as with the information on lives and struggles of the raising Muslim bourgeoisie in the eve of the World War I. Thus, it is a most welcomed addition to scholarship that will surely help future researchers to better understand the ways how stories of “small” people and sequences of history could be knowledgably used in debating and reconstructing big and important historical problems.

AMILA KASUMOVIĆ

**Amila Kasumović, *Austrougarska trgovinska politika u Bosni i Hercegovini 1878-1914*, UMHIS [i. e.] Udruženje za modernu historiju /Udruga za modernu povijest, Sarajevo, 2016, 397 str.**

Knjiga autorice dr. Amile Kasumović pod naslovom *Austrougarska trgovinska politika u Bosni i Hercegovini 1878-1914*, predstavlja doktorsku disertaciju odbranenu na Filozofskom fakultetu u Sarajevu 11. juna 2013. godine. U bosanskohercegovačkoj i stranoj historiografiji nema djela u kojem se u cjelini razmatra razvoj trgovine u Bosni i Hercegovini u periodu od 1878-1914. Knjiga dr. Amile Kasumović postojeću prazninu popunjava u znatnoj mjeri. Obima je 397 strana, od kojih se na glavni tekst odnosi 338 strana, na zaključak na bosanskom i na njemačkom 13 strana (339-356), popis korištenih izvora i literature 17 (373-388), priloge 16 i na registar ličnih i geografskih imena 9 (389-397) te na sadržaj tri strane. U nizu dat je prateći kritički aparat, sa 870 napomena u ujednačenoj formi. Pored uvodnih razmatranja knjiga je koncipirana iz pet glava sa po više kraćih poglavlja. U opširnim uvodnim razmatranjima autorica je ukazala na značaj teme i njenu istraženost u historiografiji, definirajući problemski okvir za njeno kompleksnije sagledavanje. U drugom dijelu uvoda autorica razmatra mjesto i ulogu Bosne i Hercegovine u zakonodavnom sistemu Monarhije.

U prvom poglavlju knjige pod naslovom *Između Istoka i Zapada. Trgovinsko zakonodavstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini 1878-1882*. (str. 33-120) autorica je posebnu pažnju posvetila ocjeni karaktera osmanskog trgovinskog zakonodavstva, razmatrajući utjecaj pod kojim je ono bilo i kako se provodilo u praksi. Posebna pažnja je posvećena načinu