Palestine Peasants and Ottoman Officials is a major contribution to peasant studies. It sets a model for similar studies in the Arab provinces and in the empire at large. Comparative studies on Ottoman rural administration and peasant societies in general, which are long overdue, can only be possible on the basis of works such as the one under review.

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The book is a collection of four contributions by Suraiya Faroqhi, Mehmet Genç, Donald Quataert, and Çağlar Keyder. It is enframed by an introduction and an afterword by the editor. Versions of the contributions were presented at an interdisciplinary conference held at the State University of New York-Binghamton in November 1990. All of the authors are noted specialists in the field of Ottoman social and economic studies with Çağlar Keyder covering the post-Ottoman era in Turkey.

The economy of the Ottoman Empire was essentially dominated by the agrarian sector. However, the research into the quantitatively more marginal manufacturing sector of the Ottoman state is indispensable for an understanding of the process of Ottoman underdevelopment, especially when put into a broader comparative and a theoretical framework. In the field of Ottoman studies much work at that point has still to be done. In his introductory remarks Donald Quataert stresses the methodological backwardness of Ottoman studies, which he attributes to the negligence of a comparative perspective as well as to the insufficiency of scientific manpower in the comparatively new field of Ottoman economic and social studies, where there is not even an established basic framework of facts for the modern period. Especially long-term developments in Ottoman manufacturing are still almost totally obscure. Under these circumstances the “state-of-the-art summary” the book claims to present necessarily consists of a very fragmentary picture. So as a whole the volume constitutes a starting point for further research and discussion rather than a result, a matter which is, however, clearly stated by Donald Quataert in his introduction. Having thus lowered the reader’s expectations the contributions nevertheless offer important insights of high interest.

Suraiya Faroqhi in her article “Labor Recruitment and Control in the Ottoman Empire (Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries)” is primarily concerned with the mobilization of labor by the command economy of the Ottoman state. The scarcity of sources concerning the role of private entrepreneurs and putting-out merchants in the production process forces her to largely pass over the non-state aspect of the Ottoman economy. Moreover the fact that trade, and—within the sphere of production—capital, are far better documented than labor renders her undertaking especially difficult.

With the notable exception of the slave-based silk manufacture centered around Bursa which has been studied by Halil Sahîllioğlu, broader source materials on the Ottoman industry are available only for the period after the considerable expansion of state bureaucracy since the middle of the sixteenth century. Large scale slave work in manufacture, however, constituted a rather extraordinary case and even in Bursa apparently ceased to be of any importance in the seventeenth century. In general “the Ottoman state relied extensively on drafted labor, which was either paid below market rates or not paid at all” (p. 15). Suraiya Faroqhi argues that the reliance on civil prestations may have contributed heavily to affect the Ottoman economy during war times. She then differentiates four cases: coercion that required relocation of the craftsmen involved, prestations rendered without relocations, money payments in lieu of prestations and the role of military labor in the manufacturing sector. To cover these topics she has to rely largely on the comparatively sparse number of case stud-
ies available. The known data being all too fragmentary one can not expect the resulting picture to be more than a tentative account.

While Faroqi explicitly states that the private sector of manufacturing is under-represented in the primary sources and therefore necessarily tends to be under-rated in analysis, Mehmet Genç ("Ottoman Industry in the Eighteenth Century: General Framework, Characteristics, and Main Trends") on his part interprets the Ottoman economy as clearly dominated by the state. He contends that the application of a triad of classical Ottoman étatist principles (provisionalism, traditionalism, and fiscalism) extended into the 18th century and led to an expansion of state control over production. Ottoman economic practices like taxing or hindering exports, showing some reluctance vis-à-vis import substitutions etc. differed sharply from European mercantilist principles and seem to be judged by Genç as ultimately contraproducive. He contests, however, the view that the Ottoman industry did merely stagnate in that period. Providing three fascinating case studies of state investment in manufacture (woolen cloth, silk, and sail cloth) at the beginning of the 18th century, he manages to demonstrate some of the various factors that may have contributed to the heterogeneous picture of the Ottoman economy at that time. It is interesting to see e.g., how the lack of technological know-how to produce the required high-quality wool made the respective state investment a complete failure, whereas in the case of high-quality silk production where sufficient indigenous know-how was available, manufacture expanded to the degree that import substitution was achieved. Whatever its shortcomings in regard to its étatist bias (criticized by Quataert in his introduction) the contribution of Genç presents a framework as well as the material that, I think, are valuable for further discussion of the period.

Donald Quataert’s article "Ottoman Manufacturing in the Nineteenth Century" is a condensed version of material to be found in his book Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of Industrial Revolution, Cambridge 1993.1) Arguing against the (meanwhile widely abandoned) decline paradigm he presents convincing evidence that, at least in the textile sector, the Ottoman industry especially after the 1870s was able to expand considerably. This was made possible by the adaption of production to the special profiles of the domestic market and by the reduction of wage costs. Low wages were also a major factor in the expansion of the export oriented raw silk production, while the immense increase in carpet making and export in some respect constitutes a special case as it met a specifically aesthetic demand in Europe. As in the cases mentioned above, real wages tended to be extremely low and to even fall in the course of the century.

Another point by Quataert concerns the role of the Ottoman state in economics which, he argues, was vastly exaggerated by both contemporary observers and today’s researchers. In addition he contends that the state bureaucracy acted rationally in not favoring a substitution policy of industrial goods. "From the viewpoint perspective of international politics, Ottoman industrial development was not a viable option for Istanbul planners" (p. 91). While this latter point seems debatable to me, Quataert’s argument that natural and social factors (such as population density, water supply and popular resistance to the erection of factories) contributed far more to the actual development or non-development of industrialisation in the Ottoman empire than did state policy seems quite convincing and deserves closer attention in future research.

Çağlar Keyder ("Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and in Republican Turkey, ca. 1900-1950") stresses two historical circumstances he regards as crucial for the development of manufacture in the first half of the 20th century: The absence of large scale land owning in Anatolia (with the exception of the Çukurova region) which hindered accumulation in the agrarian sector, and the destruction of the Greek-Armenian bourgeoisie in the course of the transition from Empire to Nation-state without a Muslim-Turkish counterpart to take over. The reconstruction process of the 1920s that involved the gradual emergence of a "native class of businessmen endeavoring to replace an ousted bourgeoisie" (p. 137), he argues, was abruptly stopped by the world economic crisis. Keyder then discusses briefly the étatist policy inspired by Italian and Soviet models and the war time economy. It is hard to believe,