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**Annotated Bibliography**

**June 1, 2024**

**Tentative Title:**

**Judging Sufis: An AI-Assisted Examination of Sufi Encounters in the Early Modern Istanbul Courts**

This research aims to trace long durée characteristics and trends within the legal and social dynamics of Ottoman Istanbul, particularly concerning its Sufi residents. It employs advanced AI tools to analyze the Ottoman court registers. For this purpose, the study draws on three broad scholarly fields: Ottoman Legal History, especially works adopting a quantitative approach; Digital History and methodologies, with an emphasis on distant reading techniques; and the history of early modern Istanbul, concentrating on urban religiosity.

1. **Ottoman Legal History**

The field of Ottoman legal history has developed significantly since the late 1980s. Historians primarily utilize Ottoman court records (*sijils*) to examine the historical evolution of the legal system in relation to social and political issues. Their research explores various aspects of daily life in urban settings, including gender dynamics, inter-religious interactions, crime and punishment, and the pursuit of justice in general. While a large part of studies predominantly employed a traditional qualitative approach through detailed readings of primary sources, recent scholarship has also incorporated the methodologies from the fields of statistics and economics. These newer approaches use quantitative analysis to address broader questions within the field or validate the hypothesis already put forward by previous scholarship.

**a) Earlier Historical Studies**

**Akgündüz, Ahmet. Şer’iye Sicilleri: Mahiyeti, Toplu Kataloğu ve Seçme Hükümler. İstanbul, 1988.**

This seminal work by Ahmet Akgündüz is akin to an encyclopedic guide that introduces the sijil as a vital historical primary source. It offers a comprehensive overview of the sijil and includes a catalog of approximately 17,000 registers (*defter*) from both Istanbul and various provincial cities.

**Gerber, Haim. Economy and Society in an Ottoman City: Bursa 1600–1700. Jerusalem, 1988.**

This pioneering study by Haim Gerber is one of the earliest systematic works that extensively utilizes court records as a primary source for analysis. It focuses primarily on the economic activities in the city of Bursa, exploring topics such as commercial exchanges, religious endowments (waqf), and artisanal practices.

**Jennings, Ronald C. Studies on Ottoman Social History in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Women, Zimmis and Sharia Courts in Kayseri, Cyprus and Trabzon, Piscataway, NJ, USA: Gorgias Press, 2011.**

This collection of essays by the late Ronald Jennings utilizes sijils to delve into the social history of Anatolian cities during the early modern period. Focusing on provincial towns like Kayseri and Trabzon, Jennings examines various social dynamics within the Ottoman Empire. His research explores topics such as legal procedures in provincial towns, the legal status of women, the pursuit of justice by non-Muslims, and crime and punishment with many others.

**Peirce, Leslie. Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab. Berkeley, 2003.**

This award-winning monograph by Leslie Peirce delves into law, justice, and public morality in 16th-century Aintab. Peirce uses a micro-historical approach to critically examine several sijil registers, focusing on how men and women at the local court resolved personal, family, and community disputes. The study highlights the flexibility of legal practices within the Ottoman legal system, showing how these practices were tailored to effectively manage and resolve local conflicts and interactions.

**Ze’evi, Dror. “The Use of Ottoman Sharīʿa Court Records as a Source for Middle Eastern Social History: A Reappraisal.” Islamic Law and Society 5 (1998): 35-56.**

This article is one of the earlier studies to critically examine the use of *sijil*s as historical sources for understanding the social, economic, and cultural dynamics of the Ottoman Empire. Ze’evi argues that while these records are rich in details on topics ranging from economic consumption to local politics, they should not be taken at face value due to their complex nature and the potential biases in their collection. He emphasizes the need for careful interpretation of these records, treating them as nuanced documents rather than straightforward factual accounts.

1. **Recent Studies with a Qualitative Approach**

Recent scholarship over the last decade builds upon the methodologies of previous studies while introducing new questions. Notably, these studies do not treat Ottoman history as an isolated phenomenon but emphasize its comparative and connected dimensions within the broader early modern context.

**Zarinebaf, Fariba. Crime and Punishment in Istanbul: 1700–1800. Berkeley, 2010.**

Fariba Zarinebaf’s book is a pioneering example of how the Ottoman world can be integrated into a larger historical narrative. By examining *sijil* registers, particularly from Galata, Zarinebaf explores the legal practices within the Ottoman criminal justice system and compares them with those in other major European capitals.

**Tak, Ekrem. XVI–XVII. Yüzyıl Üsküdar Şer‘iyye Sicilleri, Diplomatik Bakımından Bir İnceleme. Ankara, 2019**

Ekrem Tak’s study delves into the early examples of the *sijil* registry from the Üsküdar district of the Ottoman capital. Focusing on various document types particularly associated with official mandates and appointments, this research examines Hüccet, Arz, Maruz, Ilam, Tereke, Vakfiye, Müraşele, Ferman, Berat, Buyuruldu, Temessük, and Arzuhals. Tak provides a detailed analysis of these documents to understand their origins, development, and diplomatic nuances. This work is essential for understanding the administrative and legal functions of the Ottoman courts during the 16th and 17th centuries.

**Peters, Rudolph. Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law: Theory and Practice from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-First Century.Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005**

Ruud Peters’ book explores crime and punishment from the Ottoman era to present, focusing on regions like Iran, Pakistan, Sudan, and Nigeria's northern states. He delves into the classical doctrine and its practical enforcement through case studies on theft, banditry, murder, fornication, and apostasy, highlighting the kadıs’ judgment in applying the law.

**Ergene, Boğaç. “The Pitfalls of Writing Ottoman Legal History from the ‘Bottom Up’.” In Halcyon Days in Crete VII: Political Initiatives from the Bottom Up in the Ottoman Empire, edited by Antonios Anastasopoulos, 381-398. Crete: Crete University Press, 2012.**

Although I have not yet been able to locate this study for review, its title suggests a critical engagement with the micro-historical approach to Ottoman *sijil* registers. Ergene appears to examine the challenges and limitations inherent in interpreting Ottoman legal history from a bottom-up perspective.

1. **Recent Studies with a Quantitative Approach**

Recent scholarship in Ottoman legal history, notably pioneered by Boğaç Ergene and Metin Coşgel, has seen a significant shift towards utilizing quantitative methods to analyze *sijil* registers and *fatwa* collections. These studies not only validate or challenge hypotheses put forward by earlier scholars but also raise new questions thanks to their expansive approach to primary sources.They significantly benefit from incorporating methodologies from economics and statistics, enabling a deeper understanding of issues initially discussed, such as gender dynamics, non-Muslim interactions, commerce, judiciary practices, and wealth distribution, from a fresh perspective.

Although I will not annotate each work individually, it is important to note that while these studies employ similar quantitative methods, they ask diverse questions of different documents to explore various historical developments. Topics of interest include the impact of gender and religious status on judicial decisions, courts as revenue-generating entities, accumulation of wealth by judges, the center-periphery dynamics within the judicial system, the role of decisive oaths in judicial rulings, the evolution of legal opinions (*fatwa*s), and the spatial expansion of Ottoman courts.

These quantitative analyses are crucial as they broaden our methodological approach to Ottoman legal documents. They allow us to uncover answers to questions that might otherwise remain unexplored, reveal insights that might otherwise be overlooked, and pose new questions that might otherwise remain unasked. In this regard, they offer exemplary models and pose intriguing questions that could be further explored in my own research, which also incorporates artificial intelligence alongside quantitative methods.

**Ergene, Boğaç. “Pluralistic Methodologies in Islamic Legal Historiography.” Islamic Law Blog, January 7, 2021**. [https://islamiclaw.blog/2021/01/07/pluralistic-methodologies-in-islamic-legal-historiography/](https://islamiclaw.blog/2021/01/07/pluralistic-methodologies-in-islamic-legal-historiography/**)

This essay advocates for a pluralistic approach to the study of Islamic legal history, emphasizing the advantages of integrating traditional historical methods with economic and quantitative analysis. He argues that the innovative developments in the humanities and social sciences often stem from such interdisciplinary methods, which amalgamate tools from multiple fields into a cohesive analytical framework. More recently, scholars of Islamic legal history are increasingly capable of extracting and analyzing data from archival sources using advanced techniques that blend conventional and modern methods. The authors highlight several ongoing projects that exemplify this approach, including the digital humanities and data science initiatives at Harvard University’s Program in Islamic Law and the İstanbul Kadı Sicilleri project at Turkey’s Center for Islamic Studies.

**Ergene, Boğaç, and Zeynep D. Abacı. “The Price of Justice: Revenues Generated by Ottoman Courts of Law in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries.”**Journal of Near Eastern Studies**81, no. 1 (2022): 25-52.**

**Metin Cosgel & et al., ”Gender and justice: The status of women in Ottoman courts,”**Economic History Review**,  2024; 1–31**

**Dörtok Abacı, Zeynep, Jun Akiba, Metin Coşgel, and Boğaç Ergene. “Judiciary and Wealth in the Ottoman Empire, 1689–1843”,**Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient**66, 1-2 (2023): 43-84**

**Emre Ozel, Osmanlı mahkemelerindeki sulh ve davaların nicel analizi: Merkez ve taşra karşılaştırması (1800-1840), Phd Diss., Istanbul Medeniyet University, 2020**

**Cosgel, Metin M. and Miceli, Thomas J. and Özer, Emre, “Resolving Lawsuits with a Decisive Oath: An Economic Analysis” (March 1, 2024)**

**Boğaç Ergene and Atabey Kaygun, “Semantic Mapping of an Ottoman Fetva Compilation: Ebussuud Efendi’s Jurisprudence through a Computational Lens,” Journal of Islamic Studies 32, no. 1 (2021): 62–115.**

**Ergene, Boğaç, and Atabey Kaygun. “Change Visible from a Distance: Digital Analysis of the Fetvas of Ottoman Şeyhülislams in the Early Modern Era.” International Journal of Middle East Studies 54, no. 3 (2022): 442–61.**

**Boğaç Ergene and Atabey Kaygun, “The Textual Evolution of the Ottoman Şeyhülislams’ Fetvas: A Cross-Corpora Computational Analysis,” Der Islam 98, no. 2 (2021): 516–45.**

**Bekir Gökmen, Türkiye’de Kadı İsimli Yerleşmelerin Mekânsal Analizi: Kadılık Kurumunun Yerleşme İsimleri Üzerindeki Etkisi**

1. **Digital History and Methodologies**

Digital Ottoman history is an expanding field that intersects with various innovative methodologies. A significant focus within this realm has been on spatial history, which employs geographical information systems (GIS) to enhance historical analysis. Notably, my own research contributes to this area, examining the history of Sufism in Istanbul during the late 19th century through spatial analysis. Despite the growth in spatial studies, text analysis in digital history remains less explored. Moreover, while there is a growing number of collaborative Digital Humanities (DH) projects within Ottoman studies, individual academic publications and historical research based on DH methods are less common.

The selected works critically engage with the lesser-explored domain of textual analysis within digital history, offering insights into both the challenges and potential of applying digital methodologies in Ottoman studies. This body of scholarship demonstrates how interdisciplinary contributions, particularly from historians and literary scholars, can significantly enhance our understanding. These scholars emphasize the value of “distant reading,” an approach that involves analyzing large corpora of texts using computational methods rather than traditional close reading techniques.

1. **Digital Ottoman Studies**

**Ergene, Boğaç A., and Atabey Kaygun. “Loglinear Analysis of Intergenerational Mobility in Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Anatolia.” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 57, no. 5 (2014): 669-702.**

This article employs loglinear techniques to scrutinize intergenerational mobility patterns in eighteenth-century Ottoman Kastamonu, utilizing tereke registers (estate inventories). The study focuses on the transmission of honorific titles between fathers and sons, offering insights into how title-sharing was structured across different socio-economic groups. Ergene and Kaygun’s work exemplifies the integration of historical inquiries with statistical and computational methods, offering valuable insights into social dynamics within Ottoman history.

**Fatma Aladag, Dijital Beşerî Bilimler ve Türkiye Araştırmaları: Bir Literatür Değerlendirmesi, *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi, Cilt 18, Sayı 36, 2020/2, 773-796***

In this article, Fatma Aladag, who co-founded the Digital Ottoman Studies platform ([www.digitalottomanstudies.com](http://www.digitalottomanstudies.com/)), presents an extensive review of the digital humanities, particularly focusing on its implementation in the field of Ottoman studies. The article acknowledges digital humanities as a significant academic discipline and provides a detailed list of ongoing, completed, and unfinished digital humanities projects in Ottoman historical research. Aladag’s work serves as a valuable resource for understanding the current state of digital humanities/history in Ottoman studies.

**Alkan, Halime. “17. Yüzyıl İstanbul’unda Finansal Ve Ticari İlişkilerin Sosyal Ağ Analizi (SNA) Ile Değerlendirilmesi”. İstanbul İktisat Dergisi 69, sy. 2 (Aralık 2019): 285-320.**

This study represents one of the earlier applications of social network analysis (SNA) in Ottoman history. Halime Alkan investigates the financial (credit) and commercial transactions in Istanbul’s Galata district during the 17th century, employing SNA framed by a belief-based classification. The research aims to identify key economic players of the era. Alkan’s findings indicate a significant presence of Muslim individuals, statesmen, and foundations in financial relations during the initial period (1602-1619), while Christian elements predominated in commercial transactions. However, in the later period (1661-1697), Christians were notably more active in both commercial and financial relations.

**Uğur, Yunus, ed. *Dijital Beşeri Bilimler ve Osmanlı Çalışmaları.* Yapı Kredi, 2024.**

This recently published collection of essays explores the intersection of digital humanities and Ottoman studies. Although I am currently unable to access the volume, it features contributions from historians specializing in the digital humanities applied to Ottoman studies. It includes essays that use artificial intelligence to transliterate historical Ottoman texts and projects aimed at digital preservation of cultural heritage. This collection showcases innovative techniques that are transforming historical research in the Ottoman studies.

1. **Digital History Methodologies**

**Moretti, Franco. *Distant Reading.* London: Verso, 2013.**

Franco Moretti, who first introduced the term “distant reading” in his oft-cited article “Conjectures on World Literature” in 2000, explores this concept extensively in his book *Distant Reading*. This compilation of essays, published between 1994 and 2011, encapsulates both the evolution and continuity in Moretti’s thought. Notably, the term “distant reading” has shifted significantly from its original usage. Initially, it referred not to the digital analysis of literature commonly associated with it today, nor to the visualizations and mappings exemplified in his later work *Graphs, Maps, and Trees* (2005). Originally, “distant reading” was about studying world literature through the lens of secondary research conducted by others. This book not only provides a historical overview of the term’s development but also showcases how Moretti’s ideas have shaped the field of literary studies.

**Underwood, Ted. "A Genealogy of Distant Reading." *DHQ: Digital Humanities Quarterly* 11, no. 2 (2017): 1–12**

Ted Underwood, is a literary scholar and a pioneering figure in digital textual analysis in the American academia. In this short article, he explores the evolution and methodology of distant reading. He presents distant reading not merely as a research method but as an ongoing dialogue between literary studies and the social sciences, gradually embracing a more explicitly experimental approach. Underwood advocates for greater transparency about the social-scientific aspects of distant reading, arguing that this clarity is necessary to sharpen the research agenda and avoid the pitfalls of aimlessly exploring digital tools. He also suggests that clear communication in this area could help mitigate misunderstandings between practitioners of distant reading and digital humanists.

**Underwood, Ted. *Distant Horizons: Digital Evidence and Literary Change.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019.**

In this study, Ted Underwood employs the expansive data from digital libraries to address broad questions about literary history that have been difficult to tackle with traditional methods. Underwood illustrates how digital archives and statistical tools do not merely reduce literature to numerical data, but rather enhance our understanding of complex humanistic themes. He advocates for integrating both close and distant reading methods to uncover the larger strands of literary evolution, such as the differentiation of genres, shifts in gender roles, and the enduring nature of aesthetic judgment.

**Jockers, Matthew L. *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History.* Champaign, IL: Illinois Scholarship Online, 2013.**

Jockers’ *Macroanalysis* presents an important contribution in literary history, introducing large-scale literary computing, or macroanalysis. This method leverages the power of digital archives to study vast collections of texts, transcending the traditional approach of close reading individual works (similar to Ted Underwood). Jockers argues that macroanalysis allows scholars to understand the broader context surrounding individual literary works and enhances our understanding of literary history through quantitative and computational techniques.

**Muhanna, Elias, ed. *The Digital Humanities and Islamic & Middle East Studies.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016.**

This compilation of essays examines the cutting-edge digital scholarship in Islamic and Middle Eastern studiesThe volume covers a wide range of topics including digitization, visualization, text mining, databases, mapping, and e-publication. It is particularly noteworthy for demonstrating the application of digital methods beyond Ottoman studies, offering insights into the broader Middle Eastern context. This editorial collection plays a crucial role in showcasing how digital tools can enrich the study of the region by enabling new forms of scholarship and methodological approaches.

1. **Early Modern Istanbul and Urban Religiosity**

It is no overstatement to say that Istanbul is the most extensively studied city in Ottoman scholarship. The works listed below provide a glimpse into various facets of the Ottoman capital during the early modern period, with a particular focus on aspects such as everyday life, urban transformation, inter-religious interaction, consumerism, and consumer culture. Despite the considerable attention devoted to both the modern and early modern periods of Istanbul’s history, relatively little research has focused on religion as a social and cultural phenomenon within the city. While numerous studies examine Islamic architecture and institutions like mosques, madrasas, and Sufi lodges, fewer address how religion as a social category influenced and shaped urban interactions, or how religions—especially Islam—were practiced and perceived in the caliphal seat of Istanbul.

**Hamadeh, Shirine, and Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, eds. *A Companion to Early Modern Istanbul.* Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, October 28, 2021.**

This multidisciplinary volume marks the first collective effort to examine Istanbul as an early modern metropolis. Through a compilation of 27 essays —a substantial number for an edited collection, it provides an unprecedented exploration of a diverse range of topics. Contributors deliver a comprehensive overview, spanning conceptual discussions on early modernity to more specific examinations of elite networks, death, and crime. The essays delve into the socioeconomic, political, cultural, environmental, and spatial dimensions of the city, uniting rarely addressed topics and introducing novel subjects alongside fresh perspectives on traditional debates.

**Necipoğlu, Gülru. *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.**

*The Age of Sinan* is recognized as a seminal historical work on the most celebrated architectural figure in Ottoman history, Mimar Sinan, whose designs have profoundly shaped architectural practice and aesthetics within the empire. This book delves into the life, works, and enduring legacy of Sinan, offering rich insights into his innovative approaches and the architectural culture of the Ottoman period.

**Kafadar, Cemal. “How Dark is the History of the Night, How Black the Story of Coffee, How Bitter the Tale of Love: The Changing Measure of Leisure and Pleasure in Early Modern Istanbul.” In *Medieval and Early Modern Performance in the Eastern Mediterranean*, edited by Arzu Öztürkmen and Evelyn Birge Vitz, 2014.**

In this insightful article, Cemal Kafadar explores the intricate relationship between substances like coffee and the cultural shifts in early modern Istanbul, positioning these elements within the broader narrative of modernity. Kafadar delves into how such substances influenced the pace and mood of daily life, reflecting broader socio-cultural transformations. He highlights coffee’s pivotal role in the evolving leisure and pleasure landscapes of the city, drawing connections to other global commodities like chocolate, coca, sugar, and tea.

**Abu-Manneh, Butrus. “Sheikh Murād al-Bukhārī and the Expansion of the Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī Order in Istanbul.” *Die Welt des Islams* 53, no. 1 (2013): 1-25.**

This influential study examines the life of Sheikh Murad and the significant expansion of the Naqshbandi order in Istanbul during the early 18th century. Contrary to the prevalent narratives of the Tulip Age, which focus on Western influences, Abu-Manneh argues that this period saw a deepening of Islamic influence in the Ottoman capital. He presents a detailed account of how the revivalist branch of the Naqshbandi order contributed to a more pronounced Islamic coloring of Istanbul’s societal and cultural landscape during this time.

**Çalış-Kural, B. Deniz. *Şehrengiz, Urban Rituals and Deviant Sufi Mysticism in Ottoman Istanbul.* Ashgate, 2014.**

The author explores the urban culture of Ottoman Istanbul through the lens of Şehrengiz poetry, a genre that celebrated various cities within the Ottoman Empire from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. The book delves into how Ottoman urban culture and traditions were influenced by the dynamic interplay of groups with differing political and religious ideologies. By examining real and imaginary urban spaces, gardens, and landscapes, alongside ritualized traditions, Çalış-Kural reveals the formation of Ottoman spatial culture in the context of orthodox and heterodox Islamic practices and imperial politics. The study argues that Şehrengiz served as a subtext for secret rituals promoting Melami mysticism, advocating for creative imagination and a nuanced understanding of space

**Additional important studies:**

Hamadeh, Shirine. *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008.

Baer, Marc. *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Boyar, Ebru, and Kate Fleet. *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Sajdi, Dana, *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2008.

Büyük İstanbul Tarihi, vols 10, İsam: Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, İstanbul: 2016. <https://istanbultarihi.ist>