

**Dimitris J. Kastritsis:** *The Sons of Bayezid. Empire Building and Representation in the Ottoman Civil War of 1402–1413.* Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007. The Ottoman Empire and its Heritage, vol. 38. 250 pp. ISBN 978 90 04 15836 8.

The work concentrates on the period of the Ottoman Empire following the defeat by Timur. The author's main interest is to show that the years intervening before the new stabilisation of the empire in 1413 should not be seen as an "interregnum" but as a fully-grown civil war. He argues that the term *interregnum* "detracts from the importance of these years, reducing them to a dark interlude between the reigns of Bayezid I and Mehmet I...(XI)." According to Kastritsis these years have been seen as an interlude between more stable reigns, which created the impression that they were rather a time of chaos. He claims that exactly the opposite was true, that the Ottoman realm was divided between rival claimants to the throne, who carried out coherent politics including diplomatic relations with foreign powers.

Before describing the situation of the empire during these years and the activities involved, the author gives a thorough account of the research done up to now. He then gives a survey of the sources used, and underlines that one of the reasons why this period has not yet been covered in the detail which it deserves, lies in the nature of these sources which require a knowledge of Ottoman, Persian, Greek, Latin, Spanish, Old Serbian and the Venetian dialect of Italian.

The author starts his description of what he calls *civil war* by describing the situation Timur left behind, saying that Timur spent half a year touring Anatolia, reinstating members of the beylik dynasties as his vassals. In this way, several beyliks were reconstituted; an important statement demonstrating that Timur was not exclusively a bloodthirsty destroyer but also a political planner, as these activities guaranteed the preservation of local rule and thus stability.

By treating the situations in different areas, in Anatolia and in the Balkans, the author gives a useful insight into the relations of the conflicting parties, those of the Ottoman rulers towards each other on the one side and those between the Ottomans and other powers, like the Hungarians, Venice et cetera on the other side. These chapters show both the rivalries as well as the different alliances which were built up by the various parties.

The author comes to the conclusion that Ottoman attitudes on succession in general differed significantly from the period of the *interregnum* or *civil war*, compared especially with those of the time of Mehmet the Conqueror fifty years later. They are rather comparable to Inner Asian tribal empires, for the basic principle of their succession system was the rule of the most talented member of the royal family. The policies of the rival princes differed from the Inner Asian paradigm in so far as each prince aimed at becoming his father's sole successor.

Kastritsis' work is a thorough study of a period of the Ottoman Empire, which has up to now only been treated in articles with no effort to gain a comprehensive picture of the whole period. The author of this book has successfully filled this gap.

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**Kyōko Maezono:** *Intransitiv-, Transitiv-, Kausativ- und Passiv-  
verben im Mandschu und Mongolischen. Tunguso Sibirica*  
18. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007. 162 pp. ISBN  
978-3-447-05360-7, ISSN 0946-0349.

Bei dem an dieser Stelle besprochenen Buch handelt es sich um eine Arbeit, in der über das typologische Verhältnis von Mandschu und Mongolisch zueinander ein möglicher Beitrag zur Frage der Sprachverwandtschaft der sogenannten altaischen Sprachen gegeben werden soll resp. geprüft werden soll, ob über einen Vergleich anhand der Verbbildung dieser Sprachen ein solcher Beitrag geleistet werden kann. Für die Studie wurde ein typologisch-kontrastiver Zugang und kein historisch-sprachvergleichender Ansatz gewählt.

Als Ausgangsmaterial für diese kontrastive Untersuchung hat Frau Maezono verschiedene Texte, die sowohl auf Mandschu als auch auf Mongolisch vorliegen, verwendet. So zum einen das *Manju i yargiyan kooli* (= „Wahrhafte Annalen der Mandschu“) und zum anderen das *Erdeni-yin Tobči* (= „Juwelenknopf“, Geschichte der Herkunft der Könige). Darüber hinaus wurden allerdings auch verschiedene Beispiele aus dem *Mongγol-un Niuča Tobča'an* (=