the appraisal of Hadith is required than attempting to rehabilitate this authority and discrediting that. The most spectacular claim of the Akl al-Hadith incredibly pressed to success in Muslim history has been that Hadith is of an altogether higher standard of credibility than pure history. Pure history, say, the biography of the Prophet, is undoubtedly exposed to normal hazards of history-writing. But the basic redeeming feature about history—as distinguished from Hadith—is that it consists in a connected narrative with largely built-in criteria of texts and standards of objective criticism and judgement. History is, indeed, a “field” wherein what has gone before largely constitutes a matrix for what is to come. Every Hadith, on the other hand, is a story by itself—short or somewhat long—but neither organically related to one another nor to known history. Whatever “background” is sought to be supplied here and there is transparently pseudo-history. For example, “I came to the Prophet and he was sleeping with a white cloth on him; I came again and he was sitting. He said...” To crown this all, almost all legal Hadith is patently contradictory. In face of all this, what degree of credibility can Hadith claim merely on the basis of a formal preoccupation with the “authorities”—even assuming that authorities did exist from the earliest times, which is not the case? This certainly does not imply that all Hadith is therefore incredible but it does mean that every Hadith has to be examined, so far as this is possible, also, and more fundamentally, on grounds other than those of rijaL

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The author of this monograph, a Lecturer in Turkish at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, has described the sources of Neshri’s famous history of the Ottoman Empire “Jihan Numa” which continued to serve as the main source of reference by the Ottoman chroniclers and European historians, through the Codex Hanivaleanus, for a long time. He has tried to show how Neshri’s work was revised and expanded by himself and then by copyists and editors.

Neshri wrote his history during the early years of the reign of Sultan Bayezid (1481-1512). The number of his manuscripts known until 1927 was three. But at present the number has risen to fourteen. Professor P. Wittek demonstrated the dependence of Neshri’s History on ‘Ashikpashažade’s History. Professor Halil Inalick of Turkey and the author of this monograph have concluded that Neshri followed a text closely related to an anonymous Turkish history of the Ottomans, available at the Bodleian Library. The author is of the view that the two literary traditions followed by Ottoman writers were interwoven by Neshri (pp. xiv-xv).

The author has provided an interesting and critical account of Neshri’s life. Neshri was a nome de plume used by the historian for poetry, and his original name, on the evidence of the Bursa register, may have been Huseyn b. Eyne Beg. But he was a minor poet who lived at Bursa and enjoyed very little fame among his contemporaries (pp. 1-5).
The author has concluded on the basis of evidence available from the manuscripts of the work by Neshri that it was perhaps the first Universal History written in Turkish on the model of the classical Arabic and Persian works, and that its text was based entirely on 'Aşikşahzade's History and the Oxford Anonymous History. The latter served as the basis for the expanded text of the Ottoman History of Rûhi of Edirne (pp. 7-11).

The earliest known manuscript of Neshri's History was discovered by Theodor Menzel in Kastamonu in 1929. It is, therefore, known as Codex Menzel. After the death of Theodor Menzel, it was entrusted to the German Academy where it was studied by F. Taeschner. Some specimens of Neshri's writing are also given by the author (p. 21).

Codex Hanivaldanus is a work compiled in Latin by the Ottoman Court interpreter Murad, a Hungarian who had embraced Islam, from various Turkish works for Count Philipp Haniwald, the secretary of the Imperial ambassador in Constantinople. The compiler relied on the Codex Verantianus, a compilation in Italian translated from two recensions of the Anonymous Chronicles, for accounts of the reign of Sultan Mehmed II (pp. 31-32).

Five appendices are also provided by the author at the end of this monograph, which have increased the value of this study. Fresh information on Neshri's History made available by writers in recent years seems to have prompted the author to deal with this topic. His labour seems to have been amply rewarded. It is an important reference work for the scholars as well as all the serious students of Ottoman History.

KARACHI

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