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Book Review

Anadolu'dan Yeni Dünya'ya: Amerika'ya İlk Göç Eden Türklerin Yaşam Öyküleri (From Anatolia to the New World: Tales of the First Immigrant Turks in America) by Rıfat N. Bali. Istanbul: İletişim, 2004. 368pages. ISBN 9750502493.

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Although many books and articles had been published on immigration to America, there has been nearly no research on early Turkish immigration to the United States. Recently however, there has been a rising interest in Muslim Turkish immigrants in the United States. Rifat Bali's *Anadolu'dan Yeni Dünya'ya: Amerika'ya İlk Göç Eden Türklerin Yaşam Öyküleri* reflects this rising interest. Rifat Bali is a businessman who received his B.A. in Theological Sciences from the École Pratique des Hautes Études of Sorbonne University.

At the beginning of his book, Bali asserts that his aim is simply to tell personal tales of the early immigrant Turks. For non-Muslim immigrants from the Ottoman Empire, Bali used English-language archives and books published in the United States. For the part he tells about Muslim Turks he used memoirs of people who met Turkish immigrants and newspaper articles that were written by important Turkish journalists and politicians of the early twentieth century such as Hikmet Feridun Es, Ahmet Emin Yalman, Sabiha Sertel, and Zekeriya Sertel.

The story starts with the Great Wave of migration when millions of "new" immigrants from all around the world started their journey to America beginning in the 1880s. In the first chapter of his book, Bali gives information about the general and particular reasons of Turks' and the other peoples' migration to the United States at that time, the process and the circumstances that were waiting for the immigrants there, and the policy of the federal government considering immigrants. As for other immigrant groups, economic push and pull factors played the most important role in Turkish migration. Deterioration of the economic conditions in the Ottoman Empire and mechanization of the United States, paving the way for more semi-skilled or unskilled workers, created the movement of Turks from their homeland, where they worked as farmers. The second and the third chapters are about immigration of non-Muslim and Muslim Ottoman millets,

including Sephardic Jews, Greeks, and Armenians. In the last chapter the writer makes a summary of Turkish immigration to the United States until recent times.

What makes the book attractive for the reader is its presentation of the heroic stories that the reader hears from the mouths of the immigrants themselves. For example there is the story of Kurd Gulabi, who found work in America at the United Fruit Company and the Ford factory in Detroit. Gulabi worked for twenty-seven years, and then gave all of the money, and even his golden watch and belt, to Mehmed Fuad Bey, who was collecting donations for the opening of orphanages in Turkey for the children who had lost their parents during the Turkish War for National Independence. Gulabi became an American laborer, but supported and remained loyal to Turkey. One cannot help applauding such sacrifice.

Anadolu'dan Yeni Dünyaya is one of only two books published on early Turkish immigrants in the United States. The other is *Turks in America* by Frank Ahmed, who is himself the grandson of a Turkish immigrant. Frank Ahmed's book is based on his own personal accounts of Turkish immigrants in America, and Bali took most of the chapter on Muslim Turkish immigrants from Ahmed's book. There are many photographs in the book, mostly taken from the articles and books Bali used for his own book.

Anadolu'dan Yeni Dünya'ya has some methodological problems. In particular it does not make use of original governmental sources such as vital, judicial or military records. Nor does it make use of non-governmental records including cemetery records or local historical resources related to the first Ottoman migration to the United States. We could learn, for example, when Kurd Gulabi arrived in the United States, whether he married, or performed military service: through such sources he might become less heroic, but more human.

Nonetheless the book can be a source for professional historians as well as university students especially in the departments of sociology, political science, and history. Rifat N. Bali documented his sources with footnotes, and at the end of the book there is a glossary, a chronological chart of important events, and a bibliography.