In 1729 the first Turkish book was printed in Istanbul in Ibrahim Müteferrika's newly established printing press. It was a Turkish translation of an Arabic dictionary. Soon other books followed. Most of them were historical works that before had been distributed in hand-written copies only. The replacement of the hand-written by the printed copy was a slow process that took about a century and a half to reach the stage where books were written to be printed. This must have to do with the relatively high cost of printing in comparison with the hand-written book. For poetry and light literature the breakthrough came with a technical innovation introduced in Turkey in the late 1830s that lowered the costs of the printed copy drastically: the lithograph which replaces typesetting by handwriting. Only in the second half of the 19th century private enterprise and the growing demand of the reading public was able to spark a wave of publications of the older classical works that could until then only be consulted in the various libraries or purchased as expensive manuscripts of rare 18th-century printed copies. These 19th-century publications were on the same level as those of Ibrahim Müteferrika: they were not editions in any sense only perhaps in the sense that some passages were cut out by the censor or, for some reason, by the publisher himself. The publisher would procure a hand-written copy of the work to the typesetter, possibly with certain passages crossed out or marked as not to be included. The rest was the work of the typesetter. How was the hand-written copy selected? What happened to it afterward, was it destroyed or did it survive the procedure? Although these printed publications still fill our libraries and are certainly more often used than the manuscript copies in not always accessible libraries, no one has as yet to my knowledge been able to identify the manuscripts on which these late 19th and early 20th century publications were based. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that these printings have served several generations of scholars as extremely useful tools and furthermore, of course, have also been widely read by the general Ottoman public and by the older generations of republican Turks. With the revolutionary change of the Turkish writing system we come upon a new situation. Before entering into its discussion we have to cast a brief glance on the development of the technique of text edition in Europe.

From the start I want to exclude the edition of documents — documents are basically (of course, there are exceptions) individual items and their edition is based on a single copy, therefore they do not share all the problems of the literary texts (when dealing with works of the older periods historical texts are but a subgroup of literary texts). The history of text edition, like the history of the theater and of other institutions of sacral origin, starts with a deep bow: it requires an attitude of reverence vis-a-vis the text the scholar deals with. The long series of the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists is a good example or the editions of the classical works of Roman and Greek antiquity or even the *Acta Germaniae Historica* of a glorified Medieval past. The two dominant principles evolved from these experiences were:

A. Reproduce everything that can be found in the sources so that the user of the printed edition never needs consult the manuscripts; and

B. Reconstruct the original version as best you can by combining all the sources and selecting always the best reading. The combination of these two principles necessitates a dichotomy: on the one hand the reconstructed *édiction critique* of the current text, on the other hand an often very extensive apparatus of added notes to satisfy the first requirement. These notes, usually arranged at the foot of the page, fall into two categories: the first, usually referred to by letters, are textual notes reproducing the various readings found in the manuscripts (including also the manuscripts whose readings are conform whith the lemma). The second category, usually referred to by numbers, offers other notes, grammatical or lexicographical remarks, etc. If the text edition was accompanied by a translation, remarks on the content of the narration are arranged in footnotes below the translation. This was, and still is, essentially the system. To this must be added an introduction on author and work, a description of extant manuscripts, a stemma of the manuscripts, and other necessary information, as e.g., previous work, the history of the edition itself, remarks on the language of the work or (if it is a work of historiographic nature) on its importance for our
knowledge of a certain period. There are often photog-
graphic specimens of typical pages and indexes of
personal and geographical names.

As ambitions and achievements of Orientalist scholar-
ship began to match the standards of Classical and
Medieval editions, the principles and techniques of
European scholarship were applied to the edition of
Oriental texts. As an example I can refer to the editions
of the Bibliotheca Islandica series. They show that a
rigorous application of the same standards is possible
also when the classical works of the Islamic past are
published. Most of these works are in Arabic, some in
Persian, but since my topic is only Ottoman Turkish,
the relevant question for me will be the application of
the system to Ottoman Turkish sources.

As an example of a critical edition of a larger
coherent Ottoman-Turkish text let me point to
Friedrich Giese’s Altosmanische anonyme Chroniken,
Part 1 (Text und Variantenverzeichnis), Breslau 1922,
although this book appeared under extremely unfavor-
able conditions soon after the end of World War I at a
time of unrest and economic catastrophe. Giese had to
bear the costs of publication himself. Its important
introduction had to appear as a separate article in the
newly founded Mitteilungen zur osmanischen Geschich-
ete (vol. 1, issue 1, 1921-22, pp. 49-75) and the transla-
tion of the text had to wait until 1925 to be published
as part one of vol. 17 of the Abhandlungen für die
Kunde des Morgenlandes, a series put out by the Deut-
sche Morgenländische Gesellschaft. Giese’s text edition
itself, consisting of the text plus an index of names,
together 174 pp., and a 421-page ‘Variantenverzeich-
nis’, is all written by hand by himself and then litho-
graphically reproduced. It is therefore not as elegant
as, e.g., Rudolf Dvorský’s edition of Bâqî’s Diwân
which was printed at Brill’s in 1908. But it is a
monument to the courage and perseverance of a schol-
ar who recognized the necessity of applying the highest
standards to the edition of Ottoman texts. He fared
better in his later edition of ʿAṣiqpāşâ’s Chronicle
(1929) with its very satisfactory and typographically
pleasing lay-out.

In the meantime, in the 1920s, also in Turkey the
need of scholarly documented editions of the old texts
was felt. Notes appear at the foot of the page in text
editions, as e.g. in volumes 7 and 8 of Evliyâ Celebi’s
Seyâhatname (printed in 1928), a far cry from the
appearance of the earlier volumes. The two strands of
development, the popular — or rather ‘national’ —
editions and the rigorous scholarly editions, seemed to
be on the point of fusing, but the actual development
did not take such a smooth course — in 1927 Turkey
decided to give up the Arabic script and to adopt a
new writing system based on the Latin alphabet. To
make this drastic change effective, the public use of the
Arabic script was outlawed. This radical measure had a
number of effects also on the edition of Ottoman texts.

In Turkey itself it first slowed down the work on
editing and, as time passed, made it into a concern of
specialists. Specialists for this job have to be educated
and trained, and today, after more than fifty years, we
can say that the work done by them has become far
more competent than it was before. It has become a
specialists’ work for specialists. The driving force in
this development were individuals and institutions,
Adnan Adivar’s İslâm ansiklopedisi, for instance, the
Tarîh Kurumu, the Dil Kurumu with its historical
dictionary (the Tarama sözlüğü), and so on. However, in
addition to the a priori existing difficulties, new prob-
lems had arisen from the fact that the new writing
system was not simply a transliteration of the old
system into a new set of symbols; it was, on the
contrary, based on the living language itself. When
applying it to texts of an older period it had therefore
become imperative to know much more of the history
and the metamorphoses of the Ottoman language than
had been needed at the time when the Ottoman writing
system was still used. This is a requirement beyond the
classical principle of critical edition which was that the
dition should contain everything that was in the
sources. Now things are required which are definitely
not in the sources. Today we have a relatively clear
picture of Old Ottoman; but as the study and periodi-
ization of Middle Ottoman, the linguistic stage in which
the majority of yet unpublished materials are, is only in
the very beginning, every scholar who now publishes
such texts is constantly in danger of making mistakes.

European scholars were confronted with the same
problem, if they felt it necessary or convenient to add a
romanized transliteration to the edition of the text in
its original graphy. Such an addition was important
especially when the text was of an archaic character
and posed questions in the domain of Ottoman linguis-
tic history. Already the earlier editions of texts in Old
Ottoman, as e.g. in Hermann Vambery’s Alt-osmanische
Sprachstudien (Leiden 1901), had given texts in
both Arabic and romanized form, some — as, e.g.
Ananiasz Zajęczkowski in his Studia nad językiem
staro-osmańskim (Cracow, 1934 and 1937) — omitting
the reproduction of the Arabic text, but reflecting all
its details in the exact Latin transliteration. The system
of transliteration was essentially based on the system
used for transliterating Arabic (secondarily also Persian),
with certain modifications needed for Ottoman. It was
convenient to use a uniform system for the three
classical languages of Islam, however there were differ-
ences pertaining to the different language areas of the
scholars using it. In modifying the common system the
addition of symbols for the Turkish vowels posed less
of a problem than the change of specific Arabic conso-
nants to the form they were actually pronounced, as
e.g. the dâd to z or the thâ’ to s. I don’t know when
exactly Western scholars started to transcribe the dâd
with the z with the dot on top in Persian and Ottoman
words. In much more recent years also Western scholars began to abandon their traditional system and instead to adopt the Modern Turkish alphabet as the base, often with modifications (sometimes taken from the system applied by the Turkish edition of the Encyclopedia of Islam). Maybe I should here say something on my own system: it is also based on the writing system today used in Turkey (in my opinion, a nation has the right to see its past literature through the medium of its present writing system and thus to be able to read it with ease) but I introduce symbols for the phonemes not existing today, i.e. for Middle Ottoman the phonemes ə, q and x. The Arabic letter tāʾ in Turkish words with back vowels I regard as undifferentiated as to sonorization (similar to the kāf that can be read as g or as k) and I transcribe it arbitrarily, or rather in accordance with the modern pronunciation of the word, by d or r with dot underneath. The specific Arabic sound symbols I regard as graphic variants and indicate them by the usual diaritical dots or lines under or over the letter.

One additional burden, but at the same time an important measuring-stick of quality, that the non-Turkish editor of an Ottoman text has to face is the task of translation. For Turkish-speaking readers a faithful reproduction of the text may seem enough, but only an annotated translation can insure the correct understanding of it by the reader and will, by the way, also reveal whether the editor himself really understood what he was reproducing. In this respect the non-Turkish editor is more vulnerable to criticism than the Turkish editor.

Let us now return to the situation as it was thirty or forty years ago. It was at that time, already during and certainly after World War II, that type-setting of Arabic texts in Europe became prohibitive. The Bibliotheca Islamica was able to continue its editions by having the type-setting done in Istanbul — until the last compositor who still knew how to do it died — and in Beirut. The question arose how to produce a text photomechanically. This solution has been adopted, e.g., by Merdith-Owens in his edition of the Tezkere of 'Āşık Çelebi (London 1971) or by Petra Kappert in her edition of Koca Nişancı’s Chronicle (Wiesbaden 1981). It necessitates a lot of leafing back and forth. To avoid such irritating and often unnecessary commotion, the always resourceful Sir Gerard Clauson in his photomechanical reproduction of the Sanglax (London, 1960) introduced little marks along the edges of the pages which alert the reader or user to look into the section of notes for further information.

D. The most commonly adopted way (both in Turkey and in the Western countries) was to separate the critical apparatus from the reproduction of the text in its original graphy and to shift it to the romanized translation which in this manner became the focal point of the edition. Under these circumstances, the photomechanical reproduction of one of the manuscripts served as a palaeographic sample without other functional importance. This method could also be applied when the manuscript was a unique one and no other textual footnotes but corrections of scribal errors were required, as, e.g. in Barbara Flemming’s edition of Fakhri’s Khusrev u Şirin (Wiesbaden 1974).

E. From here the next step was to content oneself with the transliteration, connected with the critical apparatus, and to reduce the reproduction of one or several manuscripts to a few sample pages, or, finally, to omit them altogether. If we had at least gained something esthetically and palaeographically by abandoning the denaturalized printed Arabic characters and
shifting to the photograph, we now lose all contact with the manuscript but we are left with an artificial but good, reliable substitute. Furthermore, such an edition is accessible to everyone who reads the Latin script, whereas texts in Arabic graphy become increasingly enigmatic to younger readers, both in Turkey and even among our students.

I have described five methods that have been tried out in order to adjust the format of text edition to the technical innovations and the economic limitations of our time. I can think of a sixth method. When I was working on the edition of the Turkish Ferec ha’de s-ṣiddel, around the year 1950, I figured out a complicated system that would combine the photomechanical reproduction of a text with a true critical edition. It had the critical apparatus at the foot of the page and showed the accepted and rejected variæ lectiones by a system of brackets of various shapes. How ingenious it was you can infer from the fact that it was never used. I cannot even show you a sketch of how it was conceived. Later I gave up the idea and followed the general trend that I have described under D. I had become less interested in the format of editions than in the contents and the poetic structure of the texts.