

## Evaluation of the Relationship Between Ottoman Economic Thought and Political Economy in Practice

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### Research Article

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### ABSTRACT

It is a state governed within the framework of Islamic law with its Ottoman institutions and functioning. Thought, policy and implementation processes were built in this direction. In research on Ottoman, Islamic law, period limitations and conditions must be considered. In this regard, this study aims to reveal how the reflection of economic thought in political economy is adopted in practice. Different policies and activities can be seen from its establishment until its destruction. It has been determined that economic policies that are very different from today's conditions are reflected in practice. Traditionalism, provisionism and fiscalism, which are the basic principles of economic thought, lead to a completely human-oriented construction of political economy. Among those who emphasize this best, the reaya-sipahi relationship and the foundation system have been particularly highlighted in the light of current research and comments.

**Keywords:** Economy politics, Ottoman institutionalism, Ottoman thought, Ottoman economy, foundation, rayah

## Osmanlı İktisadi Zihniyeti ve Ekonomi Politikası Arasındaki İlişkinin Uygulamada Değerlendirilmesi

### Research Article

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### ÖZ

Osmanlı kurumları ve işleyişi ile İslam hukuku çerçevesinde yönetilmiş bir devlettir. Düşünce, politika ve uygulama süreçleri bu doğrultuda inşa edilmiştir. Osmanlı üzerine yapılan bir araştırmada mutlaka İslam hukuku, dönem sınırlılığı ve şartlar göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Bu doğrultuda çalışmanın amacı iktisadi düşüncenin ekonomi politik alanında yansımalarının ne şekilde benimsendiğini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Kuruluşundan yıkılana kadar geçen sürede farklı politika ve faaliyetler görülebilir. Günümüz şartlarından çok farklı ekonomi politikalarının uygulamaya yansıdığı tespit edilmiştir. İktisadi düşüncenin temel ilkeleri olan gelenekçilik, provizyonizm ve fiskalizm ekonomi politikasının tamamen insan odaklı inşasını sağlar. Bunu en iyi vurgulayanlar arasında reaya-sipahi ilişkisi ve vakıf sistemi güncel araştırma ve yorumlar eşliğinde özellikle öne çıkarılmıştır.

**Keywords:** Ekonomi politik, Osmanlı kurumsallığı, Osmanlı zihniyeti, Osmanlı ekonomisi, vakıf, reaya

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## Introduction

Political economy is an area where there has been a lot of debate from different groups in recent years. Although the concept is not new, its importance has become more evident in recent times. So what should we understand from this concept? Although it is important from which source we feed, in general it is the science of the laws that govern the production and exchange of material means of survival in society.<sup>1</sup>

In terms of this study, it is important to consider the concept of political economy with its social dimension. Then the concept can be defined as follows: It is the science that studies the social dimension of the economy. It touches upon the importance, development, purpose and impact of production on society. It examines the social relations of individuals who participate and do not participate in production in the production process.<sup>2</sup>

Naturally, it is the world of thought that reveals this concept. One of the most important aims of this research is to determine how effective the principles that constitute the economic thought system of the Ottoman society were in the construction of the Ottoman political economy. Examining the Ottoman political economy in practice with its social dimension is another important aim. In this regard, below, the reaya-sipahi relations, especially in the timar system, and the foundation system will be highlighted to clarify the issue.

### 1. A General Overview of Ottoman Economic Thought

Three main phases can be mentioned in Ottoman economic thought. First phase: The emergence, development, maturation and development of basic Ottoman economic thought.

Ultimately, it constitutes 'classical Ottoman economic thought', which includes the preservation of balance. Classical thought was extremely active from the foundation of the state until the end of the 16th century. Somehow, depending on the circumstances from the mid-16th century to the late 19th century. It continues to exist to a degree that can be called intense or mild. During this period the Ottoman 'subsistence', 'increasing state revenues' and 'balance' are put forward as the principles affecting the understanding. The second stage is the economic development of Western liberal ideas. This is the period when it starts to affect life. The Union and Progress Party's full libertarian. With this understanding, this phase partially ends. Because of completely liberal thoughts and policies. In a short time, it reduces the function of the Muslim-Turkish segment in economic life. With the realization of the situation and the beginning of the First World War, this thought. It is abandoned before it grows any further. In the third phase, which started with the First World War, Muslim Turks should take more responsibility in economic life the thought is effective.

According to classical thought, the subsistence principle is the most fundamental principle of Ottoman economic thought. The underlying reason is the value system internalized by the Ottoman. Accordingly, Ottomans, they see the sultans and the people as a trust from Allah. At this point, there is a relationship of responsibility between the manager and the people.

It must meet basic needs and ensure social welfare. According to this understanding, everyone in the country should be able to access the product they desire in the easiest way possible. The products are the same. It should also be of good quality, abundant and at a

<sup>1</sup> Sut Jhally, *The Political Economy of Culture, Cultural Politics in Contemporary America*. (UK: Routledge, 2022) 65-81.

<sup>2</sup> Max Koch and Hubert Buch-Hansen, "In Search of a Political Economy of the Postgrowth Era," *Globalizations* 18 (2021): 1219-1229, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2020.1807837>.

reasonable price. Therefore, economic policies, and the subsistence principle must be taken into consideration when determining the price.<sup>3</sup>

The public is a community that needs to be protected. Because the guarantee of the existence of the state is the people. According to the understanding that accepts the people as trust, the state is for the people. Before modern times and in economic thought.

What is the way to provide food for the people under the influence of conditions and Islamic values at a time when it is not systematized? To meet basic needs, create employment opportunities, production to protect and continue its activities. The importance of this issue for the state was due to the transportation, transportation and distribution ways and methods of that period due to its difficulty. Likewise, the most important features of the pre-modern period are: The amount of labor is low and cannot be increased quickly at the desired time. The ability to increase the production and productivity level to a certain level. That's why those who govern the state step in and change economic life tries to take control.<sup>4</sup> However, the Ottomans ruled on three continents. Meeting the food needs of the people is a very difficult effort, even for the state. Especially the food supply of Istanbul, the capital of the state and one of the most populous cities in the world, is very important. Despite all the difficulties, the Ottoman Empire created an atmosphere of tolerance by providing solidarity and cooperation in society. It can be said that he successfully resolved the subsistence issue for centuries by establishing.<sup>5</sup>

This principle begins to deform with the 1838 Trade Agreement and the Tanzimat. However, the fact that subsistence derives its legitimacy from Islamic values ensures that this principle is preserved until the last moment of the state.

In the classical period, the population of the Ottoman Empire reached 30 million. At the same time, the state establishes sovereignty over a very wide area. Goals of managers a large army must be kept ready to carry it out. All this organization the element that will take you away is a powerful treasure. Therefore, managing financing methods well, increasing revenues and using them efficiently is a serious issue.

The last principle is traditionalism. Reaching a certain level, accepting the point reached and seeing it as optimal, then preserving and maintaining this situation, and finally perceiving it as a road map can be defined as traditionalism. Accordingly, the Ottoman administrators were building on the successes achieved in the classical period for a long time.

It is based on established institutions and operations. What the Ottomans did in the classical period. Economic development shows that the economic thought structure is constructed rationally. In other words, policies and activities created in line with reason and values enable to achieve a certain social welfare. Accordingly, the economic situation in the classical period activities are carried out in a balanced manner.

In the Ottoman State, action was taken according to the equal distribution of resources. Fair sharing of income and wealth is important. The state has a guiding, determining and

It has a controlling effect. Regarding these, the number of workers, workplaces and stalls are kept close to each other in the guild organization, fief lands are shared equally with the

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<sup>3</sup> Şevket Pamuk, *Türkiye'nin 200 Yıllık İktisadi Tarihi*. (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yay., 2017) 143.

<sup>4</sup> Mehmet Genç, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Devlet ve Ekonomi*. (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 2012) 48-63.

<sup>5</sup> Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ*. Çeviren Ruşen Sezer, 20. Baskı, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2015) 76-80.

producers, the common people are prevented from leaving their land and migrating to the city, the price of most products is reduced subject to price. Examples that can be multiplied show that many policies and practices were put forward depending on traditionalism after subsistence.<sup>6</sup>

In the light of this system of thought and principles, a field of political economy has been formed. Of course, the conditions of the period and many factors were also effective. The timar system and the price, which can be considered as important reflections of the political economy, have been tried to be explained below. While these issues were discussed, they were mostly examined from a socio-economic perspective.

## 2. Reflection of Political Economy in Practice

### 2.1. Timar, Rayah and Spahi

Timar is the payment of all or part of the right to collect taxes on certain state-owned lands to some soldiers and civil servants in return for their services to the state. In other words, it is a system where the management and control of the land, whose ownership is in the hands of the state, is undertaken by the state, its supervision and operation is undertaken by the civil servant called timar spahi, and its maintenance and processing is undertaken by the reaya.

The Ottoman, in return for its military services, received a state title called timar spahi. It authorizes its soldiers to possess the tax revenues of certain lands. The spahi, granting the authority to dispose of the land in return for a cash title deed within its jurisdiction transfers. This title deed fee, which the people pay in the first place, depends on the location and productivity of the land. It varies from place to place. Citizens acquire the right to dispose by paying a price. A farm is a business land where agricultural production can be done with a pair of oxen. The farm is the basic agricultural enterprise of the Ottoman. Although the size of the farm varies depending on the location and productivity of the land, It is 60-80 decares from the ground, 80-100 decares from the middle ground and 100-150 decares from the Edna or barren place. Half of this is called oxendom. This field can only provide a family's livelihood. On family farms that are small businesses. The reaya cultivates the land he rents and pays taxes in kind or in cash to the sipahi. This tax paid by the common people is called tithe tax. Also to the reaya, The spahi pays a double duty of twenty-two coins annually. The product was produced by Reaya. It allocated some of the remaining parts, excluding taxes, as capital, that is, seeds, and the rest was evaluated on its behalf. He used some of the remaining produce to meet his needs in the market.<sup>7</sup>

He sells it to make ends meet. A peasant within the scope of the timar system in the 16th century. The tax burden it is obliged to pay is around 20-21%. The remaining product belongs to the villagers. It belongs to him personally.<sup>8</sup>

In the timar system, the reaya only have the right to dispose of the land. The right belongs to the state. Reaya had the right to dispose of these lands and these lands are Miri land cannot sell the land, dedicate it, grant it, donate it, or subject it to a will and cannot divide it as an inheritance. He cannot use it as he wishes, he cannot grow what he wishes, and he cannot use

<sup>6</sup> Mehmet Bulut, "Civilization, Economy and Waqf in Ottoman Europe," *Journal of Nusantara Studies* 5, no. 2 (2020): 49-65, <https://doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol5iss2pp48-67>.

<sup>7</sup> Orhan Kurmuş and Olcay Pullukçuoğlu Yapucu, "The Timar System: a Question of Financial Viability, 1470-1670," *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi* 35, no. 2 (2020): 530-541, <https://doi.org/10.18513/egetid.849750>.

<sup>8</sup> Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları: Seçme Eserleri I. V. Basım*, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2014) 45.

it as he wishes, cannot let go. As a condition, the product and quantity determined by the state. After producing, he can grow the product he wants. There is a minimum limit requirement for planting here. In addition, since labor wages are high, the villager operates his own farm. After processing, he can work on other farms and earn more income if he wishes. However, it cannot abandon production without justified and valid reasons.<sup>9</sup>

However, it cannot be said that the land must be cultivated. Laws are public to the subjects. It offers the right to free choice without harming its benefits. Old age, health problems, poverty and those who cannot work in the field for valid reasons such as these can state their spahi status. Reaya may transfer her rights to someone else at her request. In this situation, Sipahi transfers the power of disposition of the land to someone. If the subject does not comply with the contractual articles whose terms and conditions are fixed, the right to use it may be taken away by the sipahi. A land that has been left vacant for three consecutive years. It is taken from the tenant and rented to another farmer. Sipahi kills an illegal villager for ten or fifteen. He can force the revocation within a year, but this requires the judge's decision. If the villager works in a different job in the city, he must pay the compensation called double change coin to the spahi. The double change paid by the reaya is seen as compensation for the loss of income suffered by the official sipahi. It is equivalent to the value of a year's harvest.<sup>10</sup>

As can be seen, in the timar regime, the spahi had power over the person of the reaya and had no right between them, the relationship consists of a 'business relationship'. The only additional responsibility of the nobleman other than paying rent is working three days a year on the sipahi's hassa farm and putting the tithe collected by the sipahi into the warehouse or carrying it to the market. It has no other obligation than this. It cannot be made to work as a forced labor. He cannot use it for any purpose without paying for it hard on reaya cannot use it. In any negative situation, the reaya can complain about the sipahi to the kadi. Reaya unless he gives up and is willing to work, he can save on the rented land. The right belongs to him. In reality, he acts as the real owner of the land.

The reasons behind the reaya's ownership of the land to this extent are; your rent your land determined according to its yield, collecting rent from the product obtained, rent being taxed. It is the right to collect and dispose from father to son. At first The title deed fee paid in advance is seen as a purchase price rather than an advance rent. With all the measures taken, proletarianization of the people is prevented. Reaya has the status of indefinite tenant, provided that certain conditions are met is seen. The policy implemented is realistic, humane, fair, efficient, timely and quite. It is practical. It is also an indicator of Ottoman rationalism.<sup>11</sup> The Reaya could not leave the land they cultivated to anyone else as an inheritance, but the Ottomans develops a very rational formulation on it. In other words, to ensure continuous workability of the soil. It puts systematic rules into play. Transfer of the right to dispose of timar lands. It operates according to certain, fixed and unchangeable laws. According to the law, when the farmer dies. The right to cultivate the land first passes only to the son, and is not transferred to other heirs. In this way, fragmentation of the land and therefore loss of

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<sup>9</sup> Philippe Gelez, "The End of the timar System in Bosnia, 18th-20th Century," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 60, no. 60 (2022) 102-113, <https://doi.org/10.18589/oa.1223553>.

<sup>10</sup> Ayşe Adıyеke, "Effects of the Conversion of Timars to Mukataa in Crete on Ottoman Budget Balance and Revenues Accruing to Treasury," *Journal of Balkan and Black Sea Studies* 10, (2023) 15, <https://doi.org/10.56679/balkar.1288516>.

<sup>11</sup> Huri Islamoglu and Caviar Keyder, *The Ottoman Social Formation, The Asiatic Mode of Production*. (UK: Routledge: 2018) 309.



income is prevented to the boy. It is not the ownership right of the land, but the right of disposition. The title deed obtains the right to dispose of it free of charge. The right of savings is as follows; no boy or girl child, girl if she doesn't have a brother, if she doesn't have a brother she has a sister, if she doesn't have a sister. If there is no father, to those who have a mother, if there is no mother, to those who share the land, if this is not the case, then to those who share the land, to the person from whom the fruit trees are inherited, or if he/she does not have the title deed offer, If he refuses, the land is given to those in need in that village. Savings rights other than sons. It is given to the heirs in exchange for the title deed.<sup>12</sup>

All the mentioned duties and responsibilities of the reaya and the work between him and his sipahi. The relationship is completely regulated by laws. Fief operating within a legal framework. All elements in the system are subject to strict control. Obligations and giving of the reaya. The required taxes are detailed in the law. This situation remains the same until a new revision. A dispute arose, otherwise, the judge is consulted. Reasons why the state is sensitive to the smallest detail regarding grooming aspect; Trying to obtain the highest income that can be obtained from the land and this. Therefore, aiming for the financial, military and administrative system to operate in the most efficient way is shown. Islamic law's principles of rights, justice, equality and labor. His respect for the element is among these reasons. Therefore, with the value given to labor. The employee is provided with self-confidence. Protection of all kinds of human rights of the person. It is emphasized by law that it is under In addition, the reaya had production skills such as oxen and plows.<sup>13</sup>

He is expected to provide his own materials because the farmer is an independent producer into the system. However, women also they may have the right to dispose of the farm. Conditions that apply to men also apply to women valid. The main purpose here is the continuity of production. For this reason as Weber meant, the use of farmers as slaves means that they are deprived of all rights such as being left behind, being abandoned to a passive life, being forcibly taken away from the product he produced, etc. The claims are incompatible with the grooming method applied in the classical period.

## 2.2. Spahi in its Social Dimensions

Sipahi are military personnel assigned by the state, whose annual income is determined by law, and who are equipped with executive and supervisory powers. Sipahi enforces the land laws of the state in the provinces. A title deed for vacant lands obtained by contract and in advance.

He puts it at the disposal of the villagers in return for the official. The villager is a sipahiye. He is only liable to pay taxes. Tax collection is made in cash or in kind. It is the duty of the sipahi to convert the same tax into cash. Minimum and maximum tax to be collected from the villagers. The rate and amount are determined in advance by law. In this way, the sipahi is prevented from acting arbitrarily in the eyes of the law.

The state imposes various duties on the sipahi. The duties of the sipahi are generally to enforce the land-related laws of the state in the provinces, to protect the people as a police force, to collect taxes as a tax collector, to carry out the maintenance and repair of bridges and roads in the area they are responsible for. Businesses to prevent fragmentation and disintegration, to protect soil fertility, to manage the timar lands, to train the cebelis when the

<sup>12</sup> Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi*. (İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1980) 313.

<sup>13</sup> Eliza Karczyńska, "The Social Structure of the Ottoman Society: An Attempt at a Theoretical Analysis," In. *New Developments in the Theory of the Historical Process*, Editor Krzysztof Brzechczyn, (USA: Brill, 2022), 296-310.

army was not on campaign, and to His time is to join the army with his followers. The sipahi who did not participate in the expedition was the soldier of that year are obliged to leave their taxes to the state. Among the duties of the timarili sipahi, those related to the military should be put aside.<sup>14</sup>

If we leave it alone, the main thing that should be emphasized is the duty of managing the land. Sipahi cannot cultivate the land himself or have anyone else operate it on his behalf. He has no ownership or right to dispose of the land. He has the right to receive a share of the income obtained as a result of the cultivation of the land. In the timar regime, all transactions have a calculable feature. In this context, the relationship between sipahi and the state consists of a business relationship. The relationship between the sipahi and the peasant is the same as the relationship between the state and the civil servant today. So, this situation can be likened to the relationship between a tax collector and a taxpayer.<sup>15</sup>

The Sipahi is given a certain piece of land to engage in agricultural activities for himself and his family and to graze his animals. The right of disposal belongs to the sipahi. The piece of land is called hassa farm or sword place, and the place where he feeds his horses is called hassa meadow. Hassa farm is a piece of land ranging between sixty and one hundred fifty acres, plowed by a pair of oxen. A private farm is also called a farm, a farm, a vineyard or an orchard. The sipahi himself or his family owns the land.

He may not be interested. In this case, the hassa farm can be rented as the owner wishes can be given. The property rights of these places belong to the state. Sipahi cannot sell these lands. The timar land from which the sipahi receives his income does not enable the sipahi to become a land lord. Sipahi's resources are sufficient to enable him to live a good life. The width of the sword timar land given to the Sipahi is fixed. Sipahi expanded the land and gained hegemony. There are many legal obstacles to its establishment and becoming a feudal lord. The most important of these rational measures is the rotation of cavalry appointments of soldiers. Their locations are constantly changed at regular intervals.

In addition, as mentioned above, the timar given for the occupation of the sipahi and his family, called the couple, expansion, sale, foundation and donation, or employing unpaid workers on it is forbidden. Thus, the formation of the land aristocracy in the Ottoman Empire, which had great power in Medieval Europe, was prevented. Because, in the continuation of the landed aristocracy, a slave class was formed. It is inevitable. First of all, this is an issue that is not accepted in Islamic law.

There are other obstacles to the Sipahis turning into a center of power. The renewal of the charter in case of a change of sultan is an indication that the sipahi is a civil servant. Even the method of awarding the charter works systematically and fairly. After the sipahis who apply for timar are examined by the center, they are notified by sending a decree to the beylerbey. Beylerbeynin. His duty is to investigate the legality of the sipahi and the timar he aspires to. Her

With his approval, a certificate is given to the cavalymen in Istanbul. When there is a salary increase for Sipahi, additional land is given from another region. Sipahi cannot sell, inherit,

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<sup>14</sup> Howard, Douglas A, "Why Timars? Why Now? Ottoman Timars in the Light of Recent Historiography," *Turkish Historical Review* 8, no. 2 (2017) 132, <https://doi.org/10.1163/18775462-00802002>.

<sup>15</sup> Jonathan, Bramell, "Tulips to Tanzimât: Tensions of Reform in the Ottoman Empire," *Janus: The Undergraduate History Journal* (2019) 3.

dedicate or donate the fief lands given to him. However, the state nor can he arbitrarily take the land from the sipahi's hands. In addition, it is necessary to meet the conditions in order to become a timar spahi.<sup>16</sup> Spahi sacrificed his life for the sake of Allah for his state. Someone who can serve wholeheartedly, who is enterprising, brave, agile, fearless, loyal and harmonious should be. Aside from the arbitrary appointment of sipahis, as explained above, they were based on merit. There are difficult recruitment and promotion conditions.

He lives in the village that forms the Spahi fief but does not directly contribute to agricultural production. To ensure that Sipahis can live in the village. The state imposes some unimportant duties on the peasants. Villagers; To build a house for the sipahi, to build a warehouse to store the crops he collects, to carry the crops to the warehouse or to sell them. They are responsible for carrying it to the market, which is not far from the daily route. They also help mow the grass in the Spahi's meadow, but they do not have to carry the grass to the warehouse. If the Spahi came from another village, the villager must look after him and his horse for three days is responsible. All these duties of the sipahi and the reaya are explained one by one.

It is stated in the laws. The military officer had to change these and put the villagers to work. There is no right to employ. The timar owner, the sipahi, collects only legal taxes from someone who settles on vacant land within the borders of his timar in order to increase production. To increase efficiency, the government. It rewards the sipahi who increases the amount of cultivated land by placing peasants in his vacant timar. When continuity of productivity is essential, sipahi are those who work in their own fief. He does not want the villager to quit his job and run away. The escaping reaya pays double change tax to the sipahi. While the compensation was determined as fifty coins in ancient times, later the money was devalued. Three hundred coins due to reasons such as falling, country differences, grain becoming more expensive, etc. finds it.<sup>17</sup>

Spahi attaches importance to the continuity of production in order to increase its income. peasant's land encourages processing. He helps them when necessary. In this way, as productivity increases, production also increases and ultimately the income of the sipahi increases. The vast majority of the taxes collected by the timarli sipahi consist of double coins and tithes. After allocating his share of the tax, that is, the crop, the remaining part is put into the miri warehouse takes away. Land registry official and half of the fines collected from the villagers for minor crimes are also added to the income of the sipahi. Additionally, cavalymen who are successful in warfare are also rewarded. As can be understood, the income level of groomed cavalymen is enough for a soldier to live a prosperous life is at the level. At the beginning of the 16th century, the annual income of a cavalry soldier was thirty to forty gold ducats. The income of a janissary or a construction master is almost the same. When the sipahi dies, his son is given another gift, determined according to the sipahi's fief grooming is given. This is the sword amount of fief. Sipahi cannot leave his fief by will. The grooming status passed to the child is determined by law. If the son or children do not perform military service for a period of seven years, they lose their status as sipahi and are registered as reaya and are subject to tax. If a person whose status as a sipahi is revoked joins a campaign within seven years, he is granted a petition from his commander can receive grooming again. The son of the

<sup>16</sup> Ian, McLaughlin, "Some Dreamers of the Golden Dream": The Construction of the Golden Age Myth (s) in the Age of Ottoman Decline," *The Thetean: A Student Journal for Scholarly Historical Writing* 47, no. 1 (2018) 4.

<sup>17</sup> Mehmet Ali Türkmenoğlu, "Osmanlı Klasik Döneminde Sipahi, Köylü ve Devlet," *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 53 (2021) 485-503, <https://doi.org/10.21563/sutad.1052653>.



fief owner who dies during the campaign is given a larger fief than the son of the fief owner who dies in normal life. The dead sipahi's son is born after a certain period of time. Then he becomes a fief owner. The reason for this period is that the children reach the ability to run a sword fief.<sup>18</sup>

As can be seen, no connection can be established between prebendal feudalism, conceptualized in the Weberian discipline, and the Ottoman production system, financial methods or fief regime. The system is based on the perfect and efficient processing of soil, which is an important resource. This process works very systematically and rationally with the sipahi-state-reaya dialogue. The measures taken are extremely efficient and effective. The duties and responsibilities given to the sipahi are for the benefit of the sipahi. Multidirectional Relationship and communication are achieved through a grooming system. Employment of the labor factor, agricultural Encouragement and support of entrepreneurship and welfare of farmers are within the scope of this application is implemented.<sup>19</sup>

As can be seen, timar lands are under the responsibility of the timar holder sipahi. Maintenance of these lands, which the state sees as an income item, increasing their productivity and producing income. Protecting the people is among the duties of the timari sipahi. Tahrir process occurs every twenty or thirty years or when there is an intense change in tax sources. It is done in case. In addition, in new conquests, a new sultan came to the throne. This method is also used in cases of financial and economic turmoil, or as a result of major natural disasters. The attitude of the Ottomans in both the registration and timar methods was quite rational. In particular, the traditions and laws of the conquered places were in force for a certain period of time allowing them to stay ensures that all the steps mentioned above can be easily implemented provides. In addition, both political and financial conflicts are resolved in this way without pressure or intimidation. With this policy, three continents and approximately twenty.

An area of five million square kilometers is kept under control by the Ottoman Empire. Instead of a rigid and non-solution-oriented legal system, the Ottoman understanding; It replaces the customary law, which has absolutely rational and immutable Sharia law at the center, and varies and is flexible depending on the region, which is not independent of Sharia law at the borders.<sup>20</sup>

### 3. Foundation System

As a result of a superficial research, it is observed that the Ottoman Empire was a foundation civilization and that foundations played an essential role in economic life and worked with a constant 'pump priming' effect. So what is a foundation?

Dedicating something is, first of all, depriving a person of his own property. It is defined as donating money to those in need for the sake of Allah, without expecting anything in return. Institutions that carry out this sacred duty are also called foundations.

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<sup>18</sup> Leyla Aksu Kılıç, "Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırmalarında Timar ve Zeamet Ruznamçe Defterleri (Timar and Zeamet Ruznamçe Registers in Ottoman History Studies)," *Studies Of The Ottoman Domain* 7, no. 12 (2017), 105-139, <https://doi.org/10.19039/sotod.2017.54>.

<sup>19</sup> Veysel Dinler, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Klasik Dönem İdari Yapısı ve İşleyişi," *Telakki Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 1, no. 1 (2022) 11-44.

<sup>20</sup> Mehmet Doğan, "Osmanlı Timar Sistemi'nde Muasırlarının Gözünden Değişme ve Çözülme," *Çankırı Karatekin Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10, no. 2 (2019) 154.

Throughout the centuries, from the foundation of the Ottoman Empire to its collapse, most facilities and institutions are operated through the foundation system. Masjid, mosque, lodge, mausoleum, madrasa, infant school, dervish lodge, bridge, road, waterway, irrigation canal, fountain, lighthouse, castle, fortification, sports facilities, recreation area, widow's and orphan's home, child care home, shelter buildings such as shelters, hospitals, caravanserais, soup kitchens, libraries and baths are within the foundation system.

These are institutions that are built and offered for the benefit of society. In short, all services expected in a civilized society, except defense, are financed, organized, built and protected thanks to this system. According to the records of the General Directorate of Foundations It has survived from the Ottoman and Seljuk periods, but has no ruler left. The number of foundations is 52,000.

Foundations should primarily benefit people, especially the needy. In addition, the continuity of the foundation is also essential. Guaranteeing this process depends on the systematic and efficient operation of the facilities. For this purpose, foundations are required to be established with registration documents called foundation deeds.<sup>21</sup> In this sense, foundation charters are very important in terms of understanding the nature of the foundation system and, more importantly, discovering the human mentality behind it.<sup>22</sup>

Most of the duties performed by social institutions in modern states were carried out by the Ottoman Empire. It fulfills foundations in civilization. The main ones are education, health, social security, social assistance, public works, municipal services, religious and military duties.

In this respect, foundations have many features that deeply affect the socio-economic structure. These institutions ensure a more equitable distribution of income and provide stability to commercial life. It provides income, that is, the needs of merchants such as property security, financing and insurance meets their needs; devastating social security by minimizing unemployment and poverty events unfold prevents it from coming out. On the other hand, his property and wealth. It encourages the feeling of sharing in people by encouraging them to help those in need. It guarantees the dignity and honor of individuals by providing at least a minimum living to the poor and It allows them to get rid of the negative effects of begging and parasitic living.

There are grand viziers, state officials, scholars, sheikhs and other administrators. The other group that enabled the emergence of foundations consists of those outside the military class. These are wealthy producers, merchants, craftsmen and wealthy people. In the foundation system, the wealth within the country. Distribution of services and income among individuals through the process of reduction from segments to society takes place. A foundation-business continuity principle established through this means transferred in the first place by rationally evaluating its capital or income accordingly. Thanks to wealth, it turns into a mechanism that produces continuous income.<sup>23</sup>

In other words, the construction of any institution or business that foundations approve to be built directly with their own capital contributes to employment, income distribution, goods

<sup>21</sup> Nihal Cihan Temizer, "Vakıf Sistemi: Osmanlı ve Batı Karşılaştırması," *International Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies* 7, no. 2 (2021) 141-162, <https://doi.org/10.25272/ijisef.895830>.

<sup>22</sup> Raif Kaplanoğlu, Niyazi Topçu and Hüseyin Delil, "1455 Tarihli Kirmastî Tahrir Defteri'ne Göre Osmanlı Kuruluş Devri Vakıfları." (İstanbul: Avrasya Etnografya Vakfı Yayınları, 2014).

<sup>23</sup> Adnan Ertem, "Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Vakıflar," *Vakıflar Dergisi* 36 (2011) 25-65.

and services. It contributes to the mobility of service flows, in short, to the revival of the market requiring large capital. After the construction of the structures is completed, their maintenance and other important expenses.

In order to meet the needs, new investments are made that generate permanent income, that is, in the form of a business. In this regard, foundations-enterprises established in areas where there is need and where small producers cannot afford are transferred to tradesmen and merchants, thus ensuring the sustainability of production and commercial activities in economic life.<sup>24</sup> According to the 1527-1528 budget, some cities had a foundation of 13.6 million coins. With its revenues, 75 caravanserais and inns, 238 baths, 45 soup kitchens, 342 mosques, 1055 masjids, 110 Institutions such as madrasas, 626 zawiyas, and 154 teachers' schools were operated. Sultan Mehmed had the Grand Bazaar, the largest trade center of its time, built to cover the expenses of Hagia Sophia. With the foundation enterprises created in this way, Economic actions are encouraged and the economy is revitalized. In 1546, the revenues of public foundations in Istanbul alone were obtained from 5717 shops, more than 4000 houses, 228 mills, 199 villages, 68 bakeries, 40 hamlets, 38 cloth mills, 28 caravanserais, 19 inns, 18 cellars, 14 basements. Likewise, according to a document dated 1572, most of the shops, workshops and businesses adorning the bazaars of Istanbul were founded by foundations. operates within the body. "The laundry in Topkapi Palace Ahmed Ağa to cover the food expenses of the workers working in the manufacturing workshop (1000 krş), Tavaşi Rıdvan Ağa (1000 krş), Ramazan Bey (105 krş) and Belkıs Hatun (100 krş). It is possible to multiply these examples. The number of such foundations-enterprises is especially high in Istanbul. There are 13 large inns and 3000 shops run by foundations in the bazaar between Beyazıt and Nuri Osmaniye. There are very large buildings like Vezir Inn and Valide Inn. There are 468 of these inns in Istanbul.<sup>25</sup>

Considering the share of the foundation system in the Ottoman economy, these institutions its essence is better understood. Accordingly, 12% of the national income in the 16th century (1527-1528), 15.97% in the 17th century, 26.80% in the 18th century, 10% in the 19th century. 15.77% of it is under the control of foundations. Also, the records dated 1530-1540. Accordingly, 17% of the annual income of the Anatolian province, 15.70% of the Rum Province, Damascus and 14% of Aleppo provinces and 5.4% of Rumelia belong to foundations. According to a research conducted on 1000 inheritance books in Istanbul in the 17th century, 11.61% of the debts of 554 debtors are to foundations. These ratios are important in the economy, aside from the fact that foundations function as credit or financial institutions. It is extremely important in terms of emphasizing its activities.<sup>26</sup>

Foundations operate not only as foundation-industrial enterprises but also as foundation-agricultural enterprises also operates. Enterprises that produced more grain in the 16th century continued to grow after this century. It focuses on fields such as olive growing, viticulture and tobacco growing. In these areas mentioned in the 18th century. The production doubles the grain production. Income obtained from foundation-agricultural enterprises such

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<sup>24</sup> Mehmet Genç, "Klâsik Osmanlı Sosyal-İktisadî Sistemi ve Vakıflar," *Vakıflar Dergisi* 42 (2014) 9-18.

<sup>25</sup> Aydın Yalçın, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi*. (Ankara: Ayyıldız Matbaası, 1979) 183.

<sup>26</sup> Mehmet Tuğrul and Mehmet Bulut, "Osmanlı Şehirlerinde Vakıflar ve Kültürel Hayat: Selanik ve Sofya," *Balkan Araştırma Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10, no. 2 (2021) 601-633.

as olive groves, gardens and mulberry groves; While it constitutes 52% of the total foundation revenues, grain revenues only correspond to 26%.<sup>27</sup>

The establishment of foundations as a rational business naturally leads to employment of the workforce contributes. Supporting employment directly encourages the production of goods and services. The functions of these institutions in the field of employment; It can be mentioned as revealing new employment opportunities and further improving existing employment opportunities. Maintaining continuity of production and professional foundations established to encourage professional activities are also it is important in terms of emphasizing the role it plays in the production process. Between 1667-1805. 39 of the 554 cash foundations included in the research during the period were professional foundations. In terms of the contribution of foundations to employment, Sultan Süleyman's. The Suleymaniye Foundation he built is a good example. In this foundation alone, 636 in 1557, In 1703, 1199 people were employed.<sup>28</sup>

As can be understood, foundations in Ottoman society, it is located at the very center of economic life. The following can be said as the economic functions of these institutions. Foundations, which are described as irrational in the Weberian paradigm, support the entrepreneurial mentality, redistribute income and transform capital into investment providing institutions. Shifting investment expenditures to areas needed for 'social benefit'; establishment of social solidarity, more equitable distribution of wealth and serves to increase the level of welfare to a certain level. At the same time, encouraging investments, preventing the available resources from remaining idle or creating a wasteful economy prevents it from appearing. On the other hand, resources that can be allocated to luxury consumption can be saved. It also provides guidance. Current income by allocating a share from available income to savings. It is primarily used to provide essential goods and thus the total benefit. It is kept under control at a high level.

The practical functioning of foundation institutions or enterprises in this explained system is as follows. It means that a personal asset changes hands on behalf of the society, considering the public interest, and it brings the distribution of wealth to a fair level. Foundation institution continuity of business is managed rationally. With the principle of profitability to increase its capital is operated. Considering that the aim of the service provided is maximum benefit and the aim of a business is maximum profit, the principle of efficiency is followed here.

### Conclusion

Examining the practices in the Ottoman political economy is important in terms of seeing to what extent the thought system is reflected in reality. The reason why the timar regime and the foundation system are discussed in this study is that these practices were mechanisms of controlling the long-term Ottoman economy and even political life.

When we look at the economic life, we see that the agricultural sector is of great importance. The Ottomans implemented the timar regime to control vital agricultural production. The food needs of cities, palaces and soldiers were met with the timar system. Agricultural lands were encouraged to be cultivated continuously and in the most efficient way. The aim was to produce state revenues without interruption. Efforts were made to maintain the existence of agricultural lands in their entirety. Fair and effective collection of taxes and employment of

<sup>27</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein and Faruk Tabak, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Akdeniz ve Avrupa Dünya Ekonomisi (1560-1800)," *Osmanlı 3*, (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yay., 1999) 202-209.

<sup>28</sup> Tevfik Güran, *Ekonomik ve Mali Yönleriyle Vakıflar*. (İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2006) 143.

labour in the agricultural sector were emphasized. Such policies were carried out healthily. With such practices, the Ottoman peasant was an active member of the production system as an individual in his own right. He was integrated into the system as a subject.

A strong financial organization was established to control all these economic operations healthily for centuries. This structure is a central treasury, timar and foundation system. The state-operated under three rational institutions. In addition, in the pre-modern period, a detailed recording application such as the census method was one of the rational methods in financial operations. Thanks to the strong financial system of the Ottoman, activities related to economic and other systems continued safely in the classical period. In this respect, according to research, Ottoman society had the characteristics of a production society in which farmers were constantly encouraged to produce by the state and kept under control with rational controls.

Ottomans approached capitalist developments extremely critically without adopting capitalism and the system. They showed successful performances. It is possible to see these developments in Ottoman society. In the Ottoman political economy and society, the relevant institutions and methods were built on moral, religious and rational values as much as possible. A practical-rational structure prevailed. In other words, society was not only motivated by success and interest, but also feelings such as solidarity, sacrifice and brotherhood were the source of motivation. Not all value areas were violated in the name of gaining economic and political power. In other words, it can be stated that the socio-cultural system in the Ottoman State assumed a legitimacy-distributing function.

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