



RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Aspects of Employment in Ottoman Waqfs Examples of Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye Waqfs

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Ottoman imperial waqfs as employment institutions, focusing on the salary register EV.HMH.1178, prepared for the Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs in the early 18th century. By analyzing the administrative and financial oversight documented in this register, the article explores the redistributive functions of these waqfs and their contribution to sustaining long-term social and economic stability. Special attention is given to the intervention of the central office (Sadr-ı Âli Nezareti/Grand Vizier's Office) through an imperial decree and the classification of employee roles by workplace. This research contributes to the literature on waqfs by providing insights into their employment systems and administrative practices.

**Keywords:** Ottoman Waqfs, Employee, Salary Register, Waqf Account Book

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## 1. Introduction

Ottoman imperial waqfs, established by sultans, their families, and high-ranking state officials, played a central role in social and economic life across both urban and rural areas (Barkan, 1963a; Orbay, 2017). These waqfs, with their public buildings (hayrat) and revenue-generating properties, significantly contributed to urban social life through complexes (külliye), which were often shaped around a mosque and included facilities such as madrasas and imarets (soup kitchens) and provided a wide range of social services to the public (Barkan, 1993; Gökçen, 1946; İnalçık, 1990; Oded, 1992; Singer, 2002; Thys-Şenocak, 2009; Yediylidiz, 2012).

These waqfs generated substantial revenue based on real estate holdings and taxes collected in rural and urban areas. The largest waqfs even had annual revenues that reached millions of silver coins (Arslanboğa, 2015; Barkan, 1963a; Güran, 2006; Orbay, 2011; 2014; 2017; Pantık, 2014). This financial power enabled imperial waqfs to play a central role in both economic and social area. Their wealth allowed waqfs to fund essential services and perform a crucial redistributive role, such as paying salaries to hundreds of employees and supporting various beneficiaries (zevâid-horan), including those in need, through their surplus (Barkan, 1993; Faroqhi, 1981; 1988a-b; Güran, 2006; Orbay, 2007a; Shefer-Mossensohn, 2003; Singer, 2002).

Orbay (2017:146) refers to this system as the "waqf economy," a concept crucial for understanding the economic and social dynamics of the Ottoman Empire. One of the best ways to understand the waqf economy is by analysing the official documents of these waqfs. Studies have shown how natural disasters, financial crises, and social uprisings are reflected in waqf documents, particularly waqf account books, demonstrating their usefulness for exploring economic and social history (Barkan, 1975; Faroqhi, 1988a-b; Güran, 2006; Orbay, 2013a; 2018; 2019; Pantık, 2021). The account books and müfredat (detailed) registers of waqfs are particularly valuable in tracing their operations and resilience across centuries (Orbay, 2005).

This study examines the role of sultanic waqfs as employment institutions by analysing the accounting records of the Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs. It specifically focuses on müfredat (detailed) register EV.HMH.1178, which was prepared as a salary register (defter-i vazifehorân) for these three sultanic waqfs. Let us first describe müfredat registers. These registers were maintained in addition to account books, particularly for major waqfs. Various types of müfredat registers were kept for different purposes. For example, uncollected revenues of waqfs were recorded in arrear registers (defter-i bakâyâ-i mukataat), inventoried goods of storehouses for imarets were documented in storehouse accounts (defter-i muhasebe-i an bâr ve kilâr), and salary payments of waqf employees were detailed in registers (defter-i vazifehorân) (Barkan, 1963a:254; Orbay, 2005; 2013b).

Müfredat register EV.HMH.1178 is a bound salary book (defter-i vazifehorân) containing three separate salary registers for the three sultanic waqfs. It was prepared to audit the employees of these waqfs and is dated 4 February 1702. The register consists of 89 double-sided pages (Karademir,2022:319). Each waqf's salary register began with an introductory paragraph, as is typical in waqf account books, providing details about the waqf (Barkan, 1963b; 1971; Orbay, 2007b; 2013b). Moreover, since these registers were specifically maintained to audit employees, they also included the names of the auditing members. For instance, the Fatih Waqf's salary register begins with the following passage:

*"Defter-i yoklama-i vezâifanı...ebu-el Feth Sultan Mehemed Han tabe serahu der nezaret-i hazreti Sadr-ı Âli ve ma'rifeti veziri mükerrem Osman Paşa kaimmakamı Asitane-i Saadet ve Abdürrahim Efendi Müfettiş-i Evkaf-ı mezbur ve Abdullah Efendi Halife-i muhasebe-i evvel ber muceb-i emr-i âli ve Rikab-ı Hümayunu şevketmakrun tahrir şüd mucebi'l va'ki fi 6 Ramazan 1113".*

This paragraph reveals that the registers were prepared under the Sultan's command, where the audit would be conducted under the supervision of the Sadr-ı Âli Nezareti (Grand Vizier's Office) and overseen by Osman Paşa, the kaimmakam (Grand Vizier's Deputy) in Istanbul. Abdurrahim Efendi,

as müffettiş-i evkaf (Inspector of the Waqfs), led the inspection, while Abdullah Efendi, as Halife-i muhasebe-i evvel (Chief Accounting Deputy), was responsible for maintaining and verifying the financial records (EVHMH.d.1178:3b).

Following the introductory paragraph, the employees were listed under their respective offices of employment. At the end of each register, there was a summary detailing the total payments for the year 1702. For instance, the Fatih Waqf's salary register was organised into four main categories. The first category included payments allocated according to the waqfiyye (endowment deed), noted as ber muceb-i şart-ı vakıf (in accordance with the condition of the waqfiyye/founder of the waqf). The second category comprised employee payments determined during the tahrir (survey) conducted by the Kadi (judge) of Istanbul, pursuant to the Sultan's decree in 1663 (Hijri 1073). A note at the top of the record stated: *"lüzumu olub muhaddes yekûnu mukarrer olan cemaatlerdir an vacib sene 1073 Dıhki Efendinin tahrir-i şüd ferman-ı âli."* This indicated that several muhdes (newly added) positions, which were outside the scope of the waqfiyye, were evaluated. Under the Sultan's decree, Dıhki Efendi assessed these positions and determined which were necessary for the waqf. Payments in this category were, thus, allocated to the muhdes positions deemed essential during the 1663 survey. The third category included fixed meat payments (baha-i lahm), also allocated in 1663. Finally, the fourth category included payments for muhdes positions recorded in 1702 (EVHMH.d.1178:18a-19b).

This article aims to contribute to the literature on Ottoman waqfs by examining the intervention of the Nezaret in the oversight of waqf employees within the scope of an imperial decree, while analysing the redistributive role of three major sultanic waqfs as both social welfare entities and employment systems. The article also explores the roles of employees within their respective workplaces, such as mosques or imarets, as recorded in the 1702 salary registers.

The Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs, as major institutions, have garnered significant academic interest. Ömer L. Barkan (1963b; 1971), in his pioneering works, published the account books of the Fatih Waqf for 1489 and

1490, as well as those of the Süleymaniye Waqf for 1585 and 1586, providing exact transliterations. Kayhan Orbay (2011) expanded on Barkan's work by conducting a financial analysis of the Süleymaniye Waqf in the 16th century, while Tevfik Güran (2006) evaluated the account books of the Süleymaniye Waqf, including those from the 17th and 18th centuries. Fahri Unan (2003) also studied various documents of the Fatih Waqf, including waqfiyyes and account books, spanning a period from 1489 to the early 1900s. Building on these foundational studies, this article offers an examination of the salary registers of the three sultanic waqfs, shedding light on their administrative and financial structures.

## 2. Employment in Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye Waqfs

The Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs were major institutions of employment in Istanbul, supporting a wide range of public buildings, including mosques, madrasas, imarets, and hospitals. These waqfs managed not only their primary complexes but also additional mülhak (annexed) institutions, thereby expanding their reach and impact. For instance, these waqfs collectively managed twenty-five madrasas and annexed an additional fourteen, supporting a total of thirty-nine madrasas, twenty-five mosques and masjids of varying sizes, five primary schools, and two zaviyas (dervish lodges) (EV.HMH.d.1178, pp. 3a, 16a, 17a-b, 18b, 34a, 35b, 50a, 72a-b, 74a-b, 75b). Beyond these, they maintained mausoleums, imarets, dârüşşifâs (hospitals), tâbhanes, libraries, muvakkithânes (clock rooms), caravanserais, and bathhouses (hammams), employing personnel in nearly ninety facilities.

By 1702, the three sultanic waqfs collectively employed individuals across 2,148 duties and provided stipends to 156 zevâid-horan (beneficiaries). However, the salary registers leave certain details unspecified. For example, Fatih's Sahn-ı Seman madrasas and the Yavuz Selim madrasa only recorded total payments without specifying the number of individuals employed. Earlier records provide some insight: two accounting books from 1489 and 1490 for the Fatih Waqf show that 160 individuals, including 120 students, received payments from eight madrasas (Barkan, 1963-b). Similarly, the Yavuz Selim Waqf's account book for

1628–1630 lists 24 individuals employed in its madrasa (MAD.d.4914, p.2a). Additionally, the salary registers mostly do not specify the number of personnel employed in mülhak (annexed) madrasas and mosques, suggesting that the actual number of employees was likely higher than the records indicate.

The daily payments to personnel in the three sultanic waqfs amounted a total of 15,601 akçe, equivalent to an annual sum of 5,616,360 akçe. The Fatih Waqf distributed 3,949 akçe daily, the Yavuz Selim Waqf allocated 4,767 akçe, and the Süleymaniye Waqf provided 6,885 akçe<sup>1</sup>. These payments covered the salaries of regular personnel assigned according to the waqfiyye, as well as additional payments for muhdes (newly added) positions, which were created outside the scope of the waqfiyye (EV.HMH.d.18-b,49b,89b).

As shown in Table 1, muhdes positions were recorded in both 1663 and 1702 in the Fatih and Süleymaniye waqfs. While the specific reasons for these additions remain unclear, the icmal (synoptic) registers of the Fatih Waqf indicate that the waqf employees were audited by the Sultan's decree under the supervision of the Kadi of Istanbul, and the necessary positions were identified in 1663. Consequently, the Fatih Waqf continued to allocate 474 akçe daily, and the Süleymaniye Waqf allocated 887.5 akçe daily for the remaining muhdes positions. However, it is uncertain which positions were deemed unnecessary for the waqfs.

**Table 1: Daily Salaries in Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye Waqfs in 1702**

	Fatih Waqf	Yavuz Selim Waqf	Süleymaniye Waqf
Waqfiyye	1,867	1,429	3,071
Muhdes/1663	474	-	887.5
Muhdes/Add. Pay.	1,059	433	842
Muhdes/1702	549	2,905	2,084.5
<b>Total payment</b>	<b>3,949</b>	<b>4,767</b>	<b>6,885</b>

Source: BOA EV.HMH.1178 p. 18a, 49b, 89b – Currency- Akçe

<sup>1</sup> When the daily salaries of the offices in the Süleymaniye Waqf were calculated individually, the total came to 6,875.5 akçe, which is 9.5 akçe less than the amount stated in the original document (Karademir,2022:322).

Additionally, the employees of the Fatih Waqf were entitled to an in-kind allowance of 240 vukiyye (equivalent to nearly 308 kg)<sup>2</sup> of meat, as specified in the waqfiyye. In 1663, the Kadi of Istanbul set this allowance at 1,059 akçe and distributed it among the madrasas and waqf employees. Similarly, the Süleymaniye Waqf's lahmiyye (meat allowance) was valued at 842 akçe and allocated accordingly (Karademir, 2022:322).

Eventually, these decisions continued until 1702. Nonetheless, it is evident from the salary registers that between 1663 and 1702, additional muhdes positions were created. Furthermore, it is noted that the meat allowances caused disagreements among the Fatih waqf employees due to the increasing number of personnel in 1663. The originally statement was as follows:

*"...vakfiyye-i mâmul behada mastur ve suhtegân ve sâir hüddamanın şurayalarının vaz olunmak üzere iki yüz kırk vukiyye lâhm tâyin olunub lâkin mûrûr-ı eyyamiyle cami-i şerifin vezâif-i muhdesatı ziyâde olub ve suhtegân ve hüddam-ı mezkûrların şurayalarında vaz' olunan iki yüz kırk vukiyye lahm için mezkûrların beynlerinde menâzi vâki olmağlar..."* (EV.HMH.d. 19-b).

As a result, by the Sultan's decree, it was decided to audit the employees in the Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs under the supervision of the Sadr-ı Âli Nezareti.

Research on the imperial waqfs reveals that increases in the number of employees or granting imaret rights to individuals out of the waqfiyye were not uncommon (Barkan, 1993:260; Eroğlu-Memiş, 2020:123; Oded, 1992:176; Pantık, 2021). Such changes were often accompanied by interventions via sultanic decrees issued by the central office (Oded, 1992; Pantık, 2021:75-76). Notwithstanding, the exact reasons for these increases remain unclear.

Barkan (1993:260) suggests that the rise in employee numbers may have been driven by the unemployment pressures of the 17th century. In the Fatih, Yavuz

<sup>2</sup> 1 vukiyye (okka)= 1,282 kg (Inalcık,2004:446)

Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs, these increases could also have been attributed to the expansion of the waqfs through the addition of madrasas, mosques, and masjids annexed as mülhak properties. Another factor may have been the creation of muhdes (newly added) positions to address the evolving waqf services, such as appointing dersiâm or mevlevihan in mosques during the 17th century. Regardless of the reasons, these changes clearly led to disagreements among waqf employees over the distribution of the meat allowance in the Fatih Waqf 1663.

After providing an overview of the salary registers of the Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs, we can now examine the detailed records in the register in the following section. In this study, the waqf personnel in the salary registers are analyzed under six categories: personnel in office of management, theological schools (madrasas), mosques, imaret (soup-kitchens), dârüşşifâs (hospitals), and zevâid-horan (beneficiaries from waqf income surplus).

### **2.1. Office of Management (Cemaat-i Zabitan) in the Salary Registers**

The waqfs were managed by a mütevellî (Öztürk,2006). In the Süleymaniye waqfiyye, the mütevellî is described as the person responsible for managing the waqf's income, overseeing public buildings, arranging repairs when needed, and ensuring that waqf employees performed their duties (Kürkçüoğlu,1962:37). Particularly, in imperial waqfs, serving as a mütevellî was considered a privilege. Those who gained experience in these roles were often promoted to the management positions of larger and more prestigious waqfs (Orbay, 2017:144).

The primary responsibility of a mütevellî in imperial waqfs was to ensure compliance with the rules outlined in the waqfiyye. These waqfs were closely supervised by central offices, including the offices of the Sadrazam (Grand Vizier), Şeyhülislam (the head of the Ottoman religious-legal hierarchy), and most commonly, the Darüssaade Ağası (chief black eunuch). Financial decisions, such as renting real estate or authorising major repairs to waqf buildings, were made by these central offices (Orbay, 2013b:45; 2017:145; Pantık, 2021:55).



The waqfs of Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye were supervised and audited by the office of the Sadr-ı Âli Nezareti (the office of Grand Vizierate).<sup>3</sup> This practice was initiated by Fatih Sultan Mehmed (Mehmed II), who placed the management of his waqf under the supervision of his grand viziers—a model later adopted by subsequent rulers. This marked the establishment of the Sadr-ı Âli Nezareti. (Öztürk, 1995:46; Kahraman, 2006:2). The mütevellî did not manage waqfs alone but worked alongside offices listed in waqf accounting books. The kâtib (scribe) played a crucial role, regularly keeping official records. In imperial waqfs, which had diverse income sources and numerous public buildings (hayrat), specialised kâtibs were assigned responsibilities at institutions like imarets and darüşşifas (Barkan, 1963a:280-282). Additionally, offices such as the câbiyan (revenue collectors) and kâtiban, meremmetis (repairmen), and rah-ı ab (water canal repairmen) ensured that waqf services continued without interruption.

In 1702, the mütevellî of the Süleymaniye Waqf received a daily salary of 100 akçe, the highest among the three waqfs addressed in this article. Hüseyin Ağa, the mütevellî of the Fatih Waqf, earned a daily salary of 50 akçe with an additional fixed payment of 2 akçe. Meanwhile, El Hac Ahmed, the mütevellî of the Yavuz Selim Waqf, earned 85 akçe daily, with 70 akçe recorded as kadim (previously established) remaining notes, as muhdes, which meant detected outside the waqfiyye in the records (EV.HMH.d.1178:3a,20b).

The salary register of the Süleymaniye Waqf listed six kâtibs. The kâtib-i evvel (head scribe) received 20 akçe per day, with an additional 2 akçe payment, while other specialised kâtibs, such as the kâtib-i anbar (warehouse scribe) and kâtib-i meremmat (repair scribe), earned between 4 and 10 akçe. These roles were categorised under the office of zabitan (office of management) (EV.HMH.d.1178:51a-b). In comparison, the kâtib-i evkafs of the Fatih and Yavuz Selim waqfs received a daily salary of 10 akçe each (EV.HMH.d.1178:3a,20b).

<sup>3</sup> According to an account book of the Sadr-ı Âli Nezareti, which was prepared shortly before the establishment of Evkaf-ı Hümayun Nezareti (the Ministry of Waqfs), there were 200 waqfs registered within the office. Among these, three were the Fatih waqf (Fatih Külliyesi Vakfı), Yavuz Selim waqf (the Sultan Selim-i Kadim Vakfı), and Süleymaniye waqf (Süleymaniye Külliyesi Vakfı) (Pantik, 2021:53-footnote 101).

The salary registers of the three sultanic waqfs also detailed the large offices of câbiyan and kâtibân. These offices included 63 individuals in the Yavuz Selim Waqf (33 managing revenues in Rumelia and 30 managing those in Anatolia), 30 in the Süleymaniye Waqf, and 20 in the Fatih Waqf<sup>4</sup> (EV.HMH.d.1178:39a,81a).

## 2.2. Theological Schools (Madrasas) in the Salary Registers

A madrasa was an educational institution in the Islamic world, often associated with religious learning but offering a broad curriculum, especially in the Ottoman Empire. Throughout Ottoman history, these institutions served as essential educational centres with a profound impact on both the state and society (İpşirli, 2003). The Ottoman ulema (scholar) class was trained in madrasas and could later be appointed as müderris within the madrasas, or in religious roles such as hatib (preacher) in mosques, kadis (local judges) in courts, or kâtibs in state institutions (Baltacı, 1976:19). Additionally, madrasas played a crucial role in preparing future high-ranking state officials. For instance, research on the Sahn-ı Seman madrasas reveals that between the late 15th and mid-16th centuries, out of 105 müderris, 28 went on to become kadis (judges), 7 advanced to the rank of Şeyhülislam (chief jurist), 5 became sanjak müftis, and one rose to the position of the Grand Vizier (Unan, 1999:90).

Sahn-ı Seman madrasas established by Fatih Sultan Mehmed after the conquest of Istanbul were among the most prominent, and these included eight schools, four located on each side of the Sultan's Mosque within the Fatih Complex. Each madrasa contained nineteen rooms: two for muids (assistants to the müderris), fifteen for students, and two for servants. Behind the Sahn-ı Seman madrasas, the Fatih Complex included an additional eight madrasas known as tetimme madrasas, which prepared students for the Sahn schools (Baltacı, 1976:23; Unan, 2003:63-66). Records indicate a stipend of 6 akçe for a hafız'ül-küttab (librarian) and 4 akçe for the kâtib, suggesting the presence of a library in the tetimme madrasas

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<sup>4</sup> In the Fatih Waqf's salary register it was named as the office of câbiyan ve mutemedan and included only one kâtib.

(TSMA.d.3882:2a, 3b).<sup>5</sup> Both positions were recorded under the office of mosque (cemaat-i müteferrika-i camii şerif) in the accounting book of the waqf (EV.HMH.d.1178:4b). Some scholars concluded that books initially located in madrasas may have been moved to the mosque during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II. (Erünsal, 2018:84-85; Unan, 2003:71)

Fatih's waqfiyye stipulated that each müderris in eight madrasas would receive a daily salary of 50 akçe, each müderris would receive 5 akçe, each student would receive 2 akçe, and two servants in each madrasa would also receive 2 akçe (TSMA.d.5882:2a). On the other hand, the 1489 and 1490 accounting books for the Fatih Waqf indicate that two müderris received an increased daily salary of 80 akçe marked as zevâid, meaning their salaries exceeded the waqfiyye's stipulated amount by 30 akçe- while another müderris received 60 akçe, also noted as zevâid (Barkan, 1963b).

Until the mid-16th century, the Sahn-ı Seman madrasas were the most prestigious (Ünver,1942), accommodating 120 students at a time. According to the salary register, the staff and students in each madrasa received a total of 103 akçe with an additional supplementary payment of 116,5 akçe. Additionally, the suhtegân madrasa paid a daily sum of 33 akçe, noted as lahmiyye (meat payment) (EV.HMH.d.1178:3a-b).

When Sultan Süleyman built his complex, he followed a similar approach to that of Fatih Sultan Mehmed, constructing six madrasas around the mosque. Of these, four were dedicated to theological education, one focused on the study of Hadith (Dârül-hadis), and one served as a medical school (medrese-i tib). In Süleymaniye's waqfiyye, the müderris in the four theological schools were allocated a daily salary of 60 akçe each, those in the hadith school were allocated 50 akçe, and the müderris in the medical school were allocated 20 akçe. Similar to the Sahn-ı Seman madrasas, each madrasa was expected to educate 15 students,

<sup>5</sup> The date of this this waqfiyye, first published by Süheyl Ünver, is unknown. Ünver (1938:39) suggested that this waqfiyye might belong to the 17th century.

each receiving a daily stipend of 2 akçe, while the medical school accommodated eight students, also with a daily stipend of 2 akçe for each (Kürkçüoğlu, 1962). Together, these madrasas collectively accommodated 83 students. Additionally, Sultan Süleyman built a madrasa in honour of his father, Yavuz Sultan Selim, in 1548-49, and it was part of the Yavuz Selim Complex (Baltacı, 1976:537; Yüksel,2009).

In the salary register, müderris and student payments in the Süleymaniye Waqf matched the waqfiyye's specifications. In addition to this, for Darülhadis and four madrasas, a daily baha-i taam (fixed food payment) of 117 akçe was provided, while the medical school received 58,5 akçe (EV.HMH.d.1178:50a-b).

According to the salary register, the Yavuz Selim Waqf paid 112 akçe for müderris and students, with an additional 97 akçe noted as lahm-ı madrasa (meat payment) (EV.HMH. d.1178:20a,49b). In 1628, the number of madrasa staff was 24, and they were paid 111 akçe according to the account book (MAD.d.4914:2a).

In the salary registers of three sultanic waqfs, additional madrasas were funded by these waqfs outside the provisions outlined in the waqfiyyes. The Fatih waqf supported three madrasas: Kalenderhane with 17 students, and Efdalzade and Molla Gürani, each with 10 students madrasas (EV.HMH.d.1178:3a; Unan, 2003:148). Kalenderhane was reportedly one of the eight churches converted by Fatih Sultan Mehmed into a mosque or madrasa (Baltacı, 1976:267; Unan, 2003:148-149), although there is no record of it in the accounting books of 1489 and 1490.

Additionally, the Yavuz Selim Waqf funded six mülhak (annexed) madrasas: İbrahim Kethüda, Kirmasti, Mehmed Ağa, Tahtakadı, Üçbaşı, and Yarhisar. Finally, the Süleymaniye Waqf provided salaries for five madrasas: the Fatma Sultan, Hafiziyye, Hakaniyye, Süleyman Subaşı, and Şeyhülharem madrasas (EV.HMH. d.1178: 35a-b, 50a).

The salary registers of the three sultanic waqfs indicate that they collectively funded 39 madrasas, including preparatory schools (medrese-i suhtegân) in the

Yavuz Selim and Süleymaniye waqfs, provisions, with a total payment of 1,352,760 akçe including supplementary payments in 1702 (EV.HMH.d.1178:48b,76b).

### 2.3. Mosque Personnel in the Salary Registers

In the Ottoman Empire, mosques, sibyan mektebi (primary schools), and tekke/zaviyas (dervish lodges) served not only as places of worship but also as centers for religious services and public education. Mosques held particular significance in social life, acting as central gathering spaces for Muslim neighbourhoods (Önkal-Bozkurt,1993). This role become even more pronounced when a mosque was constructed by an Ottoman sultan, as it came to symbolise the sultan's authority and presence within the community.

In the salary registers of the three sultanik waqfs, individuals serving in the sultanik mosques were categorised under the office of the mosque staff in a manner similar to the classification found in waqf accounting books, depending on their specific duties (Barkan, 1993; Faroqhi, 1988b; Orbay, 2013b). These duties were broadly classified into subcategories such as personnel performing religious services and supporting mosque functions (cemaat-i müteferrika-i camii şerif), staff responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the mosques, and duagûs (jûz/surah reciters).

The most important roles in religious services were held by hatibs and vaizs (preachers), both of whom addressed the congregation during the Friday prayers. The primary distinction between them lied in the hutbe (the sermon delivered by the hatib), which is a compulsory part of the Friday prayer and was traditionally conducted in Arabic in Ottoman mosques, whereas the vaiz's sermon was not mandatory (Baktır, 1998; Zengin, 2008:379-380). In the Süleymaniye Mosque, this new role of vaiz, following Hanafi teachings, was authorised to deliver sermons during the Friday prayers, religious holidays, and holy nights (Necipoğlu-Kafadar, 1985:98). According to the 1702 salary registers, the hatib in the Fatih Mosque received 30 akçe, while the vaiz received 50 akçe (EV.HMH. d 1178:3a). In the Yavuz Selim Mosque, the hatib earned 25 akçe, and the vaiz earned 35 akçe (EV.

HMH. d.1178:20b). In the Süleymaniye Mosque, the hatib was paid 45 akçe, and the vaiz was paid 40 akçe (EV.HMH. d.1178:50a). Additionally, the office of müezzins (cemaat-i müezzinan), who called the faithful to prayer, included 12 müezzins in the Fatih Mosque and 24 in the Süleymaniye Mosque (EV. HMH.d.1178:5b,52b).

The salary registers for the three sultanic waqfs also list the şeyh (scholar) of the dârülkurrâs under cemaat-i müteferrika-i camii şerif. The dârülkurrâs were often established around sultanic mosques and served as places for teaching the recitation of the Quran (Bozkurt, 1993). Abdullah Efendi, the şeyh of dârülkurrâ in the Fatih Waqf, received 10 akçe, while Hafız Ahmed Efendi received 15 akçe in the Yavuz Selim Waqf. The Süleymaniye Waqf, by contrast, had a separate building for the dârülkurrâ within the complex, where the şeyh, Hüseyin Efendi, was paid 25 akçe including 10 akçe designated for student support (EV. HMH.d.1178:4b, 20a, 51b).

Another significant role in religious services was the dersiâm, a position that emerged in the mid-17th century. The dersiâm taught madrasa students and held public lectures (İpşirli, 1994a), while the Mesnevi-hân (Mesnevi reader) also became recognised as a religious position in Ottoman mosques. In the Yavuz Selim Waqf, a dersiâm received a daily salary of 10 akçe, while in the Süleymaniye Waqf, a dersiâm earned 30 akçe, and a mesnevi-hân earned 20 akçe. All records in the register were written down as muhdes since they were assigned outside the scope of the waqfiyye (EV.HMH.d.1178:6a, 20a, 51b). The importance of these positions laid in their direct contact with the public. Not only did they provide essential religious services, but they also shaped social life.

Beyond these primary roles, there were various other positions within cemaat-i müteferrika-i camii şerif that supported mosque functions, including the muvakkit (timekeeper), hâfız-ı kütüb (librarian), kâtib-i kütüb (library scribe), and mücellid (bookbinder). Staff members in these roles in the three sultanic mosques received a daily wage of 5 to 10 akçe, as noted in the salary registers (EV.HMH.d.1178:4b, 20a, 50a).

Furthermore, additional staff members were tasked with maintaining in the mosques, lighting candles, sweeping floors, and opening and closing the doors of waqf buildings (cemaat-i kayyıman, siracıyan, bevaban). In the salary registers of the three sultanı waqfs, these roles were typically recorded under separate offices, with daily salaries ranging from 3 to 5 akçe. Within the Fatih Mosque, there were 11 individuals in these roles in total, while there were 16 in the Yavuz Selim Mosque and 31 in the Süleymaniye Mosque (EV.HMH.d.1 178: 5a, 21a, 53b).

Finally, the office of duagûs in the mosques deserves mention. Given that the majority of mausoleum personnel were duagûs, they are best evaluated together under the same title, as duagûs largely performed similar roles across both mosques and mausoleums.

### ***Office of Duagûs in the Mosques and Mausoleums***

In the Ottoman Empire, duagûs held the responsibility for conducting prayers and Quranic recitations, especially within the framework of waqfs (İpşirli, 1994b). These duagûs were often organised into sizable groups, either explicitly specified in the waqfiyyes or designated at a later stage. They were notably active within the mosques and mausoleums affiliated with the Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs, where the salary registers reveal that these groups operated as distinct duagû communities. Their primary duties included reciting Quranic verses (devirhân, eczahân, mustahfız), specific surahs (Enamhan, Yasinhan, Tebarekehan), and counting rosary beads with designated holy phrases (müsebbih, salavati). Additionally, they prayed for the souls of the waqf founders (musalli) within their respective communities.

The presence of large duagû groups in Ottoman waqfs can be traced back to the 15th century, as evidenced by Fatih Sultan Mehmed's 1470 waqfiyye (Beyatlı, 2013). The Süleymaniye waqfiyye reveals that duagûs congregated in mosques and mausoleums, where they conducted collective prayer sessions (Kürkçüoğlu, 1962). The stipends received by duagûs in the three waqfs were generally consistent. For instance, hafizes (individuals who memorised the Quran) within the devirhan groups received daily stipends ranging from 3 to 5 akçe. Musallis

and those responsible for reciting specific surahs from the Quran, such as Enamhân, received daily stipends between 5 and 7 akçe, while others typically received a daily stipend of 2 akçe. The titles of duagûs in the registers included efendi, şeyh, seyyid, halife, and hafiz although some duagûs were mentioned by name alone. According to the salary registers, there were a total of 83 duagûs in the Fatih Waqf, 458 in the Yavuz Selim Waqf, and 524 in the Süleymaniye Waqf (including duagûs in the zaviya and Cihangir Mosque). They worked in the mosques, mausoleums, and the Hakim Çelebi zaviya. The presence of eczahans played a significant role in the expansion of the number of duagûs within the waqfs. For example, the salary registers for the Fatih Waqf reveal a relatively small number of eczahans. Although the waqfiyye for the mausoleum of Fatih Sultan Mehmed initially specified 90 eczahans (TSMA.d.3882:3b), the salary registers listed only 22 individuals (EV.HMH.d.1178:10a-b,11b). Additionally, an examination for the accounting registers of the Fatih Waqf for 1489 and 1490 reveals 36 eczahans with a stipend of 1,5 akçe, organised into three groups within the mausoleum (Barkan, 1963b). Furthermore, 20 eczahans assigned to the Fatih Mosque in the waqfiyye did not appear in the records (TSMA.d.3882:2b).

In contrast, the situation differed in the Yavuz Selim Mosque, where 96 eczahans were documented, and in the Süleymaniye Mosque, where 124 eczahans were present. This pattern also extended to the mausoleums. In the Yavuz Selim Complex, there were 126 eczahans for the mausoleums of Yavuz Sultan Selim, Hafsa Sultan, and Şezadegân, along with 65 mustahfiz who not only recited the Quran but also served as guardians. In the mausoleums of Kanuni Sultan Süleyman and Hürrem Sultan, a total of 258 eczahans and mustahfiz were recorded.<sup>6</sup> The eczahans in Ottoman waqfs contributed not only through Quranic recitation but also by creating a vibrant and spiritual atmosphere in these buildings.

Many of the duagûs were originally appointed through waqfiyyes, although some were later assigned as muhdes, or newly appointed beyond the scope of

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<sup>6</sup> EV-HMH-d,1178, vr. 23b,24a-b, 25a-b,27a,28a-b,29a-b,30a,31a-b,32a-b,33a-b,34a-b,62a, 63a-b,64a-b,65a-b,66a-b,67a-b,68a-b,69a-b,70a-b,71a



the original waqfiyye. For example, the registers indicate a group known as cemaat-i musalliyân ve Enâm ve Yasin ve Fetih ve İhlas-hân-ı muhdesat-ı mezkûreyn, which included 82 newly designated duagûs in the Yavuz Selim Waqf. However, individuals with identical responsibilities were also present.

Finally, 39 individuals in the Fatih Waqf and 162 individuals in the Süleymaniye Waqf, including women, were recorded under the duagû offices (cemaat-i vaizan ve duagûyan/duagûyan-ı evkaf-ı muhdesat). Most of them received salaries ranging from 5 to 20 akçe, with only one individual in the Fatih Waqf, Abuzer Çelebi, noted as receiving 100 akçe. None of these individuals were assigned to specific duagû positions, and in the Fatih Waqf, they were listed under mahlûl (vacant) positions (EV.HMH.d1178:6b,82b).

#### **2.4. İmaret (Soup Kitchen) Personnel in the Salary Registers**

The term imaret in Ottoman waqfs generally refers to the section of a waqf dedicated to food distribution (Ergin, 1945; Tarım-Ertuğ, 2000). The central component of an imaret was the aşhane (kitchen), where meals were prepared. Additional facilities such as tabhanes (guesthouses), caravanserais, or even stables were often included as integral parts of the imaret (Unan, 2003). While the specifics varied depending on the waqfiyye, food from the imaret kitchen was generally served twice a day to variety of individuals, including guests, madrasa students, waqf employees, and those in need (Tarım-Ertuğ, 2000). This practice symbolised the Ottoman Empire's generosity and administrative strength (Singer, 2002).

The Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs each had an imaret; however, it remains unclear whether the Yavuz Selim Waqf's imaret included a caravanserai, as this was not mentioned in its waqfiyye (Yüksel, 2009:515). Nevertheless, the salary register for the waqf lists two individuals identified as ahuri (stable servants), suggesting the presence of a stable (EV.HMH.d.1178:38a).

Each imaret was administered by a şeyh (head), who worked closely with the mütevellis to manage all aspects of food production and distribution. The şeyh was responsible for procuring kitchen materials, supervising meal preparation, hosting visitors, and ensuring efficient operation (Kürkçüoğlu, 1962). In the Fatih imaret, the şeyh was titled seyyid/efendi, while he was referred to as halife in the Yavuz Selim imaret and hacı/efendi in the Süleymaniye imaret. The şeyh received a daily stipend of 20 akçe (EV.HMH.d.1178:11a, 35b, 75a).

Under the şeyh's supervision, kitchen operations followed four main stages. Procurement was managed by the vekilharç, who purchased the necessary supplies with the help of a kâtib and delivered them to a kilari (storekeeper). The vekilharç received a daily salary of 10 akçe in the Fatih Waqf, 6 akçe in the Yavuz Selim Waqf, and 5 akçe in the Süleymaniye Waqf. While some kâtibs were specifically appointed in the waqfiyyes, new positions such as kâtib-i kilâri (storehouse scribe) and kâtib-i taam (supply scribe) emerged over time to meet the operational demands of the imaret.

Food preparation involved a well-organised team of workers with distinct roles, often outlined in the waqfiyye. Sorting wheat and rice was assigned to the nakkad-ı kendüm/erz, while grinding them into flour was the responsibility of the kendüm kûb. The tabbah (cook) prepared meals, and bread-making was carried out by the habbaz. Serving bread and meat fell to the nâkib-i nân and nâkib-i gûşt, respectively. Cleaning and collecting utensils were the duties of the kâse-keş and kâse şuy. Salaries for food preparation workers ranged between 4 and 6 akçe daily, while service and cleaning personnel earned 1–2 akçe.

Maintenance work formed another aspect of imaret operations. The Fatih imaret employed 15 maintenance workers, the Yavuz Selim imaret employed 27 maintenance workers, and the Süleymaniye imaret and tabhane (guest house) employed 14 maintenance workers. These workers, tasked with maintaining and cleaning the facilities, received a daily wage of 2-5 akçe, For ensuring that the facilities remained functional and clean.

In total, the salary registers of the three sultanik waqfs list 125 employees dedicated to various roles in the imaret kitchens and 56 maintenance workers.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.5. Dârüşşifâ (Hospital) Personnel in the Salary Registers

Dârüşşifâs were integral components of waqf complexes, with both the Fatih and Süleymaniye waqfs including their own facilities. Historical sources, such as those by D'ohsson, suggest that the Fatih Dârüşşifâ was exclusively for men (Ünver, 1942). However, Kunter (1961:144) cites the phrase, "...Dârüşşifâyı âmmе-i ehl-i İslam belki kâffe-i ibâd- Rabbü'l enâm için vakfeyledim" from the waqfiyye, interpreting it to mean that the hospital served all individuals in need, regardless of religion. In contrast, Shefer-Mossensohn (2003:131) notes that while the Fatih waqfiyye explicitly mentions Muslims, it does not clarify whether non-Muslims were treated there.

The salary registers reveal that the Fatih Dârüşşifâ employed nine healthcare staff, including two tabibs (doctors), each earning 20 akçe daily (EV.HMH.d.1178:14b). However, the 1489 accounting book of the Fatih Waqf documents a Ser-e-tibba Muhiddin, who earned 30 akçe daily, alongside six tabibs, earning between 5 and 15 akçe, though the reason for this increase in medical staff remains unclear (Barkan, 1963b:317).

The Süleymaniye Dârüşşifâ employed eight healthcare staff members, with Ser-e-tibba Ahmed Efendi earning 40 akçe daily. Two other tabibs were specified as tabib-i sani (second doctor), earning 15 akçe, and tabib-i selase (third doctor) earning 10 akçe (EV.HMH.d.1178:77a).

In addition to tabibs, both the Fatih and Süleymaniye dârüşşifâs employed two kehhals (eye doctors) and two cerrahs (surgeons), whose daily salaries ranged from 3 to 6 akçe. The preparation of medicines was managed by the aşşab, who procured the ingredients, and the edviye-kûb, who prepared the medicines.

<sup>7</sup> EV.HMH.d.1178: 11a, 12-b, 13a-b, 35a-b, 36a-b, 37a-b, 38a-b, 75a-b, 76a-b, 77a-b

These personnel earned salaries between 2 and 4 akçe (EV.HMH.d.1178:14a, 77a, 78b).

Patients rested in tabhanes during their recovery period, and supporting patient care required additional staff, including the came-şûy, responsible for washing the clothes of patients, the ser-tıraşi (barber), who provided shaving services, and the âbrizî, who supplied water. These positions received daily wages of 3 to 4 akçe (EV.HMH.d.1178: 14a, 15a-b, 77a, 78a-b). Furthermore, the dârüşşifâs had kitchen and masjîd for patients, necessitating additional staff for food preparation and maintenance. A total 26 personnel were assigned to these duties in the Fatih Waqf, and 33 personnel in the Süleymaniye Waqf, including maintenance positions.

The dârüşşifâs also functioned as educational institutions, providing medical students with practical experience alongside theoretical studies (Zorlu, 2002). Although the Fatih Waqf did not have a dedicated medical school, it contributed to medical education by employing şakird (students) within the hospital (Ünver, 1942). According to the Fatih Waqf salary register, a group referred to as şakirdan-ı ve tabiban-ı dârüşşifâ ma'mure received a daily salary of 6 akçe (EV. HMH.d.1178:18b).

## **2.6. Zevâid-horan (Beneficiaries) in the Salary Registers**

Within Ottoman waqf institutions, a category known as zevâid-horan (beneficiaries) consisted of individuals who received allowances from the surplus income generated by the waqfs. These payments, separate from those specified by waqfiyyes, functioned as a form of social welfare within the waqf system. Various groups receiving benefits under the title of zevâid-horan included retired waqf employees, retired state officials, widows, clergy, and those in need (Barkan, 1971). According to the tevcih and mühimme registers, individuals facing poverty, disability, or personal difficulty could petition for support through waqf mütevellis (Aslanmirza, 2017:41).

In the 1702 salary registers, only the Yavuz Selim Waqf recorded a group identified as cemaat-i duâgûyan ve zevâidhoran-ı muhdesat-ı mezkûreyn. This group included 156 individuals, though it was unclear who among them were duagûs and who were zevâidhor. The account records included only the names, and if present, titles such as şeyh, seyyid, halife, efendi, halife, and çelevi. The highest individual payment of 35 akçe went to a certain Abdürrezzak b. Mehmed (EV.HMH.d.1178:46a).

In contrast, in 1628-1630, the account book of the Yavuz Selim Waqf listed zevâid-horan in three categories, with the highest payment, daily 130 akçe, was allocated to Abdullah Efendi in the first group, cemaat-i mevali-i'izâm ve mevali-zâdegân. The term mevali-zâdegân was used to refer to children of high-ranking judges and scholars (İpşirli, 1988). The second group, meşayih-i kiram, consisted of 44 individuals who received daily stipends ranging from 5 to 10 akçe. The last group, cemaat-i havâtîn included 101 women, most of whom received a stipend of 10 akçe (MAD,d. 4924, p.3a-b, 4a-b).

On the other hand, neither the Fatih nor the Süleymaniye waqfs recorded any zevâid-horan in their salary registers, without any explanation of this absence. However, in the 1489-1490 account books of Fatih waqf, "cemaat-i müteferrika ve zevâid-horan" (the office of various duties and beneficiaries) listed beneficiaries in this group (Barkan,1963b:318-319). Similarly, in the 1585-1586 accounting books of the Süleymaniye waqf, 188 zevâid-horan were recorded in four different groups (Barkan,1971:149).

## Conclusion

This study highlights the crucial role of Ottoman imperial waqfs as both employment institutions and social welfare entities, with a particular focus on the Fatih, Yavuz Selim, and Süleymaniye waqfs. Established by Ottoman sultans, these waqfs not only provided public services but also acted as significant redistributors of wealth and providers of employment opportunities. The analysis of the 1702 salary register reveals the extensive administrative and financial operations of

these waqfs, showcasing their ability to adapt to evolving socio-economic needs through the creation of muhdes (newly added) positions beyond the provisions of their original waqfiyyes.

Employing individuals over 2,148 duties and allocating funds to 156 zevâid-horan (beneficiaries), these waqfs demonstrated substantial economic and social influence. The findings indicate that these three sultanik waqfs, established in the 15th and 16th centuries, expanded over time through the addition of mülhak (annexed) public buildings such as madrasas and mosques. Furthermore, the involvement of the central administration in auditing and overseeing waqf employees through the Nezaret underscores the balance between managerial flexibility and the necessity for accountability.

Beyond their social services, the salary registers also detail the expenditures of these waqfs on salaries for employees of mosques, mektebs (primary schools), imarets, and dariüşşifas (hospitals). Notably, the support of thirty-nine madrasas—both primary and annexed—that educated hundreds of madrasa students highlights the significant contributions of the waqfs to education, a point that warrants particular emphasis.

This study also contributes to our understanding of the “waqf economy,” emphasising how waqfs not only sustained public welfare but also reflected broader economic, social, and political dynamics within the Ottoman Empire. By analysing the müfredat register alongside previous studies, it extends our knowledge of the functioning of imperial waqfs, shedding light on their capacity to address both institutional needs and community welfare across centuries.

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