

HISTORY OF SLAVERY AND ITS END*

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Abstract

This study will explore a future era that has been termed as “Malikiyet ve Serbestiyet” (Ownership and Liberty) by Said Nursi in his work Mektubat. The study analyzes Nursi’s and Marx’s approaches in classifying human history and proposes a new classification which helps to understand the future’s economic relations better with the hints from the developments after Marx and Nursi.

This study discusses how it would be possible to get over negative conditions that people have faced throughout history such as slavery, captivity and the exploitation of human labor under the current salary system. The study shows that the “Ownership and Liberty Era” has many qualities, which offer more advanced conditions for humanity compared to the past.

It is aimed to achieve an original point of view by concentrating on the ideas of ownership, possession and liberty in an era where an increasing importance of property rights appears, and a desired freedom is accomplished in all matters.

Considering the high cost it imposes on countries and the harm it gives to the property system, and its hindering the advances proposed here, the black economy and its characteristics are also discussed.

Keywords: Evolution, slavery, ownership, liberty, feudalism

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Köleliliğin Tarihi ve Sonu

Öz

Bu çalışma Bediüzzaman Said Nursi'nin “Maliket ve Serbestiyet Devri” olarak isimlendirdiği dönemin özelliklerini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Makalede Bediüzzaman Said Nursi'nin ve Karl Marx'ın insanlık tarihini sınıflandırırken yapmış oldukları yaklaşımlar ve tahminler değerlendirilmiş ve bu kişilerden sonra gerçekleşen yeni gelişmeler de dikkate alınarak yeni bir sınıflandırma önerilmiştir.

Çalışmada tarih boyunca insanların maruz kaldığı çeşitli olumsuz ekonomik koşullardan (kölelik, esirlik ve bugünkü maaşlı sisteminin getirmiş olduğu problemler gibi) nasıl kurtulduğu ve kurtulabileceği ele alınmaktadır, Malikiyet ve Serbestiyet Devri'nin geçmişe göre insanlık için çok daha olumlu koşullar sağladığı ve bu dönemin öne çıkan özellikleri gösterilmektedir.

Makele; mülkiyet, malikiyet ve özgürlük fikirleri çerçevesinde günümüzde mülkiyet haklarının öneminin artmasını, bireysel ve toplumsal anlamda daha sık karşılaştığımız özgürlük taleplerini de göz önüne alarak Malikiyet ve Serbestiyet Devrine yeni ve özgün bir değerlendirme sunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Ülkelere getirmiş olduğu yüksek maliyet ve mülkiyet sistemini zedelemesi ve ele aldığımız gelişmeleri engellemesi nedeniyle kayıtdışı ekonomi ve özellikleri de tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tekâmül, kölelik, malikiyet, serbestiyet, feodalizm.

Introduction

In this article, we have studied the eras in which the progress of human society took place. We argue that humankind will experience, after capitalism, an era that can be called the “Ownership and Liberty” period.

Regarding this era in which ownership gains prominence as well as full-scale freedom, we also focus on the concepts of ownership and freedom and try to develop a different and unique perspective.

1. Eras of Human Living

Knowledge about the past provides a perspective in respect to the societies of today. History shows how people define the problems and how they can solve these, as well as the common side of human experiences.

Enquiry of past is also an examination of change. Such studies and investigations try to explain how the changes came about as well as the extent of their influences. History is inspection, enquiry and assessment of all facts that have occurred until today with all their dimensions. History is, essentially, an examination of human community in ever-increasing change.¹

The term “uygarlık” [civilization] is the counterpart of “medeniyet” in the Ottoman Turkish and Arabic languages. As the root of civilization is urbanization, the term, “medeniyet” is derived from “Medina” which literally means “city”.

The root of the word, “civilization” in European languages derives from “civitas” in Latin, which means “city”. Civilizations are defined as “the last stages of the most developed cultures”. The social and intellectual means in the commencement period of great nations or empires are described as “culture”. A culture which passes the commencement period

¹ Belma Tokuroğlu, Abdullah Ersoy, *Uygarlık Tarihi*, İmaj Kitabevi, Ankara, 2011, p. 1

and ossify into a stillness / inertia, is described as a “civilization”.

If a culture used a written script substantially, recorded some certain improvements in science and art, and created social and economic institutions properly in an attempt to establish order, security and efficiency, it is possible to denominate such a culture as a “civilization”. In short, civilization can be defined as a social organization that has more complex rules than those followed by people who lived in caves, or by primitive farmers.

Civilization implies a civic life, a government, a script, laws and mathematics. These facts depend strictly on each other. People who come together in a city and establish a state need mathematics in order to survey land, share the produced crops and gauge the seasons.²

Besides, they need script in order to publicize the laws into every corner of the community, particularly those laws regarding ownership and the other related fields of life. The crops need to be gathered up in the central land through irrigation-based agriculture. Thus, there arises a division of labor between agriculturalists and artisans. Some people, apart from agriculture, depend only on artisanship.

Besides, there must be a division of labor between agriculturalists and state employees such as clerks and civil servants. For that reason, surplus of agricultural crops that resulted from the villages of Egypt and regions of Mesopotamia were gathered around in the storehouses of city-states.

² Gordon Childe, *Tarihte Neler Oldu*, Çev. Mete Tunçay-AlaattinŞenel, İstanbul, Alan Yayıncılık, 1982, p. 12.

When the social developments are taken into consideration, it can be seen that the practices and habits which are not compatible with human dignity and honor have been abrogated substantially, albeit gradually. Likewise, the production methods and the societal structure of capitalism, which has strict rules, can also be ameliorated.

It should be kept in mind that the structure of capitalist society is more progressive and humane than that of the feudal society and slavery. A slave is, essentially, a commodity in that both her/his being and life is subject to ownership, but in a capitalist society, only a worker's (proletariat) labor can be bought. However, a human wants to be neither a slave (or serf), nor a wage earner.³ As humankind became free from being slaves and serfs, in the same manner they will become free from being wage earners.

It is possible to evaluate the extent of humankind's desire for salvation from the wage-earning system through investigating the models of social change and evolution processes.

While investigating the social change models, many thinkers and authors have examined change from different aspects and each of them produced the models of change in accordance with his/her own theory. The most important result to be concluded from so many approaches is the inevitability of the change and the pervasiveness of progress to an extent that it has constituted a rule in economic, technological and scientific areas.⁴

³ Bediüzzaman Said Nursi, *Sözler*, Zehra Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2013, p. 635.

⁴ Ömer Faruk Uysal, <http://omerfarukuysal.8m.com/kure001.htm> 12.12.2014.

One of the features of the enlightenment tradition is the idea of progress. This way of thinking, which places special emphasis on societal progress, believes that humankind will achieve increasingly more knowledge and happiness.

According to Said Nursi, there is a trend of perfection and development in the world as well as the universe. As man is the fruit of the tree of the creation, he is also a part of this progress. This tendency can grow through the assistance of accumulation of ideas.⁵

2. Humankind's Life Eras According to Several Resources

Among the living conditions of a society, the most effective force that dominates societal progress is the way of production. It is the power of production that determines the level of social progress. The way of production is, essentially, no more than the acquisition of the means of support that humans need, i.e. material resources.⁶ There are some thinkers who dealt with humankind's living in a variety of societal modes.

Among many models, we see that Said Nursi's evaluation of human eras in *Risale-i Nur* has some common grounds and similar references to history as Marx's theoretical framework. Other than Marx, for example, Weber's social change analysis emphasizes the cultural background as the catalysis of change.⁷ Another important scholar, Werner Sombart in his analysis

⁵ Bediüzzaman Said Nursi, *Muhakemat*, İstanbul, Sözleryayınevi, 1977, p.13.

⁶ Georges Politzer, *Felsefenin Temel İlkeleri*, 5. bp. Çev. Erol Esevençay, İzmir, İlya İzmir Yayınevi, 2010, p. 307.

⁷ Alan Scott, Capitalism as culture and statecraft: Weber– Simmel– Hirschman, *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 13(1), 2012, p. 30-46

emphasizes the psychological accounts of individuals and firms and the entrepreneurial spirit.⁸ This article benefits from Marx’s and Bediüzzaman’s analyses and proposes a new taxonomy to understand today’s social and economic stance.

In this study, the eras of human living have been categorized into the following three epochs, i.e. the pre-slavery epoch, slavery and exploitation epoch, and post-slavery epoch. The slavery and exploitation epoch has been sub-divided into the primitive slavery epoch, captivity epoch, and wage-earners epoch. The wage-earning period has also been treated as the following three eras; brutal capitalism, socialism/communism and modern capitalism (the period we live in now). These periods has been shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The Eras of Human Living

Stages	Eras OF Human Living		
1. Stage	Pre-Slavery Period		
2. Stage	Slavery and Exploitation Period	Primitive Slavery Period	
3. Stage		Captivity Period	
4. Stage		Wage-Earning Period	Brutal Capitalism (Wild)
5. Stage			Socialism/ Communism
6. Stage			Modern Capitalizm
7. Stage		Post Slavery Period (Ownership and Liberty Era)	

Nursi mentions a post-capitalism period and puts premises like those of Marx. However, philosophically they

⁸ John H. Munro, The Weber Thesis revisited — and revindicated? *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 1973, 51(2), p. 381-391

have different points of views. It is necessary to manifest these differences and similarities with respect to societal change models. Marx, one of the prominent representatives of class-struggle theory, realizes his studies dealing with all of human history.⁹

He asserted that communal life would appear again at the end of world history. Marx's method of categorizing history according to the ways of production may help understanding the "Ownership and Liberty Era".

Marx's method and ways have been proved very useful in dealing with history periodically, and in asserting ideas as to how the world would be shaped.

According to Marx, human history is a history of struggle. Progress and change occurs at the end of these struggles.¹⁰ Nursi's classification differs considerably from other theories and approaches. In Auguste Comte's approach, industrial society corresponds to the positive stage. Nursi qualifies the industrial society as a "wage-earning" stage and expresses that humanity will go beyond this stage.¹¹

Table 2 – Eras of Human Living According to Marx - Nursi

Eras of Human Living	Karl Marx	Bediüzzaman Said Nursi	Author (proposed taxonomy)
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⁹ Bediüzzaman Said Nursi, *Mektubat*, Yeni Asya Neşriyat, İstanbul, 2002, p. 353.

¹⁰ Ayferi Göze, *Siyasal Düşünceler ve Yönetimler*, İstanbul, Beta BasımYayımları, 1986, p. 262.

¹¹ Bediüzzaman Said Nursi, *Mektubat*, Yeni Asya Neşriyat, İstanbul, 2002, p. 353.

1. Stage	Primitive Communal Society	Wildness and Nomadic Period	Pre-Slavery Period			
2. Stage	Slaver Society	Slavery Period	Slavery and Exploitation Period	Primitive Slavery Period		
3. Stage	Feudal Society	Captivity Period		Captivity Period		
4. Stage	Capitalist Society	Wage-Earning Period		Wage-Earning Period	Brutal (Wild) Capitalism	
5. Stage	Classless Society (Socialist / Communist)				Socialism/ Communism	
6. Stage			Modern Capitalizm			
7. Stage		Ownership and Liberty Era	Post Slavery Period (Ownership and Liberty Era)			

Economy, is, at the same time a scale of measure. In order to determine any factor's effect, it includes a series of strong and flexible tools that can assess a mass of information reasonably.

It became necessary to deal with societal progress and development with respect to ways of production and classifying and considering the ways of acquiring resources.

2.1. Pre-Slavery Era (Primitive Society-Wildness and Nomadic Era)

This era constitutes humanity's first (and primitive) living stage. At this stage, every individual lives alone and there is a distinct lack of societal control, coalescence and public authority. At this era, the concept ownership is not developed yet. The society shows a disorderly and simple

structure. One of the most important features of this stage is that the individuals are readily sacrificed at the cost of the society's security and salvation. For the benefit of society, clan or tribe, the rights of individuals can be ignored. At this era, on the ground of only one person who commits a crime, all the people in the clan or tribe can be destroyed/eradicated.

One of the important reasons for why we call this period the "Brutality and Nomadic Era" is that in this stage, the individual's rights were regarded as very insignificant. People in this era provided things that are necessary in order to sustain their lives from stone-made tools. Their social production relationships also were compatible with their extremely primitive forces.

In this era the condition of work tools did not enable man to meet his needs alone. Needs required could only be supplied by joining the forces of all members of society.

In the primitive communal societies, there was no institutional structure that can be defined as a state.¹² In this societal structure where common ownership is preferred instead of private ownership, the means of production are the common assets of a community. This state of affairs is a situation where the people depend on only the natural law in ownership shares and in organizing their own deeds.

State of nature is a situation of equality where all authority and judicial right is mutually the same for everyone and thus no one has a right of hegemony over anyone else. As the labor productivity was extremely low, the resources produced were enough only to sustain peoples' urgent needs.

¹² Yıldırım Torun, *Demokrasi ve Cumhuriyet*, Ankara, OrionYayınevi, 2005, p. 14.

As there was no surplus production, it was not possible to mention anyone usurping the surplus value. There was no exploitation, so there was no need for a political organization. This era came to an end gradually with the development of productive forces, belief and political clan, and tribes.

2.2 Slavery and Exploitation Era

In a society, it is necessary to treat people equally before the law and to complete the concept of fraternity via economic justice. Therefore, in a capitalist system where the majority of people are wage earners, we see the continuation of the captive-“master” dialectic. The system prevents a slave’s symbolic reaction through disabling him; that is paying a wage in change for his effort.

This wage-earning aspect and its similarities with feudal societies is emphasized by Said Nursi by using the concept “ecir” which can be interpreted as today’s wage-earning system in a capitalist society.¹³

In the classical meaning, there is no considerable difference between slavery and that of working in return for a wage. In both arrangements, man works by selling his labor and relinquishing his freedom. As such, although there have been relative improvements among slaves, serfs and wage earners, there is no substantial difference among them with respect to respect to individual freedom. For this reason, in this study slavery, feudal and capitalist society has been dealt under the same title and described as “Slavery and Exploitation System”.

2.2.1 Primitive Slavery Era

Sparing an enemy’s life in return for his obedience, in the short run, yields some benefits for both parties. While the

¹³ Bediüzzaman Said Nursî, Sözlür, İstanbul: Sözlür Yayınevi, 1977, s. 505.

weak party will sustain his life, the strong one, in return for a tiny cost, provides an increase for his production force.¹⁴

Slaves, who characterize this era, were frequently captives of war. At one point, their living as slaves resulted in the eruption of revolts. Thus, people in this era started the struggle for leading a more dignified human life.

Now, at this period, the means of production were subject to individual ownership as well as slaves who constituted the productive class. The productive forces improved in extent to seize the values that were produced by others. However, to this end, slave workers could not consume the surplus values that they produced. Slavery, despite centuries-long efforts, could not be fully abolished. According to a study conducted in Australia, there are some 30 million slaves living in 162 countries, with around 14 million of these in India alone.¹⁵

2.2.2 Captivity Period – Feudal Society

As the means of production moved out from common ownership to the private ownership, the concept of equity among people was thoroughly destroyed and raised a community structure comprising of owners of properties who possess means of production and those who were deprived of ownership.¹⁶

Following that era known as the “slavery antique society”, the second societal structure emerged which had the same characteristics of the first one; that is to say the feudal society. Yet the number of slaves had been decreased and labor

¹⁴ Umut Omay, *Emeğin Kültür ve Manipülasyon Teorisi*, İstanbul, Beta Basım, 2009, p. 40.

¹⁵ Yasin Eskiköy, “Dünya’da 30 Milyon Modern KöleVar”, *Sabah Gazetesi*, 18.10.2013.

¹⁶ Torun, *Ibid.* p.15.

efficiency diminished. For that reason, in order to increase production, giving slaves a share from production was considered and this idea was actually realized in Rome. The slaves, in return for a small piece of land given to their possession, had to give the substantial part of crops they had produced to the property owners. They, besides their obligations in the style of produce/rent, had to work in the private land of the property owner (labor-rent) without any return.¹⁷

After the dissolution of the Roman Empire, hundreds of states were founded in the world such as Eastern Rome (Byzantium). In general, these states were named after their founding nations. They, after defeating their enemies, made the survivors captives and put them to work in their fields and houses. Until the nineteenth century they were governed via this system. Therefore, the people living in the feudal society were called “captives”. In this period, we observe a land lordship system (feudality) in which prevailed a closed household economy.

2.2.3 Wage-earners Era – Capitalist Society

The main reason for the demise of feudalism was the extreme exploitation of the labor force. Manor house workers, who were a kind of captives and were called serfs, started leaving en masse from their places of work. For the remainders, they were not sufficient in number to sustain the system on the old foundations and were very exhausted.

As long as the development of trade was confined to what was called the ‘vendor system’, the feudal society was still

¹⁷ Paul Sweezy, **Feodalizmden Kapitalizme Geçiş**, 3bp. Translated by Müge Gürer- Semih Sökmen, İstanbul Metis Yayınları, 1984, p. 37.

influential. However, when sedentary commerce and transportation was resulted into the establishment of interchange centers, the declining process of the feudal system was accelerated.

Handicrafts requiring more specialization and division of work than that of the manor house economy, not only met urban populations' own needs but also provided goods that can be purchased by the earnings of rural populations who acquired them at urban markets.

The development of seafaring, colonialism, commerce and artisanship upset the societal structures; put an end to the closed economy and triggered the rise of an exchange economy. The general level of living improved, and a middle class comprising of traders, artisans, freelancers and intellectuals emerged. Feudal production became more and more dissolved and the commercial bourgeoisie became more influential.

As the trade sector began to develop, an urban middle class which, in old times, were occupied with trade and artisanship proceeded to suppress the working class. The aristocrat-peasant dichotomy that prevailed in the feudal societies was replaced by the employer-employee differentiation in the bourgeoisie societies.

In such a system, the capital holders (who were little in number) increased their power more and more as the proletariat class (whose number was constantly increasing) became further impoverished. While the substantial capital accumulated at the hands of potential capital holders, direct producers; that is to say an important part of guild craftsmen and those who were deprived of land constituted a large mass who, having split from the means of production were ready to supply their labor in return for wages.

In this period, the manufactural production stage was reached. The new type of entrepreneur, differing from those who process the raw material at his own household (mediating employer), was organizing the production in a better way.

Here, the wage labor and capital come together. In other words, the system of fabrication comes into the fore, hence emerges the first nuclear organization of capitalism. This stage, differing from the domestic system, was an organization of production in which the means of production as well as raw materials were supplied by entrepreneurs.

Thenceforward, what was primarily to change was not the nature of production organization, but instead the development of means of production at an enormous scale. While workers were increasingly free at re-selling their labor force, the slaves were sold for once to the slaveholders.

One of the common features of slavery-captivity and wage-earning is the employment of people on behalf of others; in other words, the exploitation of human labor. Some people have defined the period as the “wage-earner” era. Nevertheless, this wage was not given to workers deservedly; that is to say, this was capitalism.¹⁸

2.3 Post-Slavery Era (Ownership and Liberty Era)

The capitalist system and essentially the forces which exert efforts to sustain it, although alleviating the exploitation system, did not cope with the popular revolts. In parallel with the development of democracy and human rights, capitalism has entered into the stage of decline and collapse.

¹⁸ Cemil Ertem, “Malikiyet ve Serbestiyet”, Star Gazetesi, 20.03.2011.

The workers, who understood the difference and beauty of freedom, though their wages have risen over a given standard (minimum living index), have gone on gaining strength for their favor against dominant classes.

Labor exploitation is no longer confined to any place or rigid rules. Labor went beyond the confines of the walls of plants, but, contrary to what is believed, the flexible circumstances did not liberate it. People, by nature and feelings, do not want to be slaves or wage earners for a boss. Human honor and dignity do not accept a working style that is susceptible to exploitation.¹⁹

This new era's name is "Ownership and Liberty" period. In this era the individual will be able to come to the forefront, and the individual liberties will be enhanced by public guaranty and the bourgeois democracy will be a better representative of the expressive power of the individual.

On the other hand, instead of the wage-based working system (which is called modern slavery) the new era constitutes a widespread individual private ownership; an economic system in which cooperation becomes decisive. Market economics and knowledge has risen to the surface in the broadest sense and reached everyone simultaneously and uninterruptedly. Here, the free market economy prevails instead of the monopolistic economy.

It is a historical reality that civilization and culture, having escaped from its past which was susceptible to wars and exploitation, is proceeding on the future towards peace and human rights.

¹⁹ Çetin Veysal, *Savaşın Felsefesi*, 2. bp. İstanbul, Etik Yayınları, 2010, p. 279.

In turn, the future may constitute an Ownership and Liberty era free from slavery and exploitation.

3. Capitalism and Ownership System

Ayn Rand states that the right of ownership, like all the other rights, entails the right of operating. Thus, it is not only a right of owning some property but also is a right concerning a production of something and its results.²⁰

This right does not always ensure that a person acquires an ownership. However, in case he acquires an ownership it is a guarantee that he will be its own possessor. ‘This right includes acquiring material assets, sustaining and utilizing them.’ In this position, it is possible to see the meaning given to the ownership concept.

Economic development of a country depends, to a large extent on determining the ownership rights and the assessment of real estates. With the real estates’ ownership being guaranteed by the state, it is possible to realize a rapid rate of growth.

According to philosophers of the enlightenment, capitalism, as it protects private property, and in this context the individual, is the end of history. However, capitalism’s contradictions and the harms that it inflicts on human life and the environment is so serious that, parallel with the development of the idea of democracy and human rights, it is almost impossible for this system to survive. For that reason, it is difficult to define capitalism as an economic system that resulted from the spreading of ownership. This new era ought

²⁰ Ayn Rand, *İnsan Hakları, Bencilliğin Erdemi*, Translated by Nejdet Kandemir, İstanbul, Plato Film Yayınları, 2008, p. 142.

to have another name. It has been claimed by many authors such as Safa Mürsel, Cemil Ertem, Ömer Faruk Uysal, M. Abidin Kartal, H. Yunus Taş, and Mustafa Said İşeri that this new era should be named as the “Ownership and Liberty Era”.

In western democracy, it is accepted that the presence of different ideas and the right to life are fundamental rights. In order to achieve happiness, alongside economic growth and development, individuals in society may achieve the ability of protecting and improving personal potentials and may access the opportunities of development of these abilities equally. With the development of social rights, there have been recorded substantial improvements for the sake of realizing equity before the law, and individual rights and freedoms gained importance.

The major means of protecting individual rights and freedoms for individuals in society has been the concept of the legal constitution. By means of constitutional rights, the environment of free opinion rises to the surface with democracy more vigorously.

There is a very close relationship between the development of democracy and social rights and individualism. In order to understand the concept of the Ownership and Liberty era, it is in particular necessary to grasp the concept of liberty. By means of development of social rights and gaining importance of individualism in time, this era will make itself felt more vigorously.

4. Ownership System and Informality

According to Marx, the source of struggle and strife among people is the feeling of possession and accordingly, the ownership problem. Therefore, the primitive communal era in

which the means of production was not in the hands of individual owners, is defined as an ideal system in relation to the principles of equality and justice. Yet the ideal system has sometimes been argued as requiring transcendence from the traditional dichotomies such as strong-weak, ruler-ruled, master-slave, wealthy-poor, black-white, and so on.

The developed Western countries, having firmly installed the legal infrastructure of the ownership system, have established a distinct superiority over the people of the rest of the world. Of the major factors, that makes the United States and Europe dominant over the rest of the world is their establishing democracy and liberalism. However, one of the most important issues that have been overlooked is the implementation of the ownership system and its legal infrastructure. So much so that, various researchers have emphasized its importance as equivalent to the development of democracy.

Countries in the Third World and the cities of ex-communist countries are replete with entrepreneurs. We can see thousands of people trying to sell something in the Middle Eastern *souq* or in a Latin American town or in Moscow. Moreover, the people in these countries are skillful and enthusiastic. In addition, they can achieve these with almost zero capital; we cannot observe this ability in the other parts of the world. It is not fair to accuse the people who are extremely competent at grasping modern technology and applying it as lacking an entrepreneur spirit.

However, these countries have not developed economically. Although they have been trying to develop, one of the assets they have not produced yet is capital. The capital

is the lifeblood of economic system in the developed countries, and it is regarded as a base for development.²¹

The research conducted in the countries of Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America has showed that these countries have all resources necessary for their development. Even in the neediest countries, the poor have savings. Such that, the value of these savings in these countries is 40-fold of the foreign aid that they have been receiving from 1945.²²

However, the obligations of the dwellings and companies that have been constructed on the un-registered lands have not been determined fairly. The industrial institutions have been installed far away from the regulatory control of the financiers and investors. These properties can readily be transformed into capital, as the rights on them have not being documented adequately.

There are no property transactions except for the places where the people believe and depend on each other. Likewise, it is not possible to make mortgages in order to borrow a loan and the status of the people taking out the loans are not assessed in return for an investment. Yet in the developed Western countries each parcel of land, each building, and each machine and equipment has been registered with a land certificate. These assets have been linked with the whole economy and thus the added value is acquired.

The most important indicator of the Ownership and Liberty Era is represented by the assets with certificates which must be regarded as capital. By this means, it can be possible to exert capital from many items that, at first glance are regarded

²¹ Hernando De Soto, *The Mystery of Capital. Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Everywhere Else*, New York, Basic Books, 2000, p. 32.

²² Ibid p.30

as “rubbish”, and thereby the economic development can be achieved without needing strong capitalist institutions.

The origin of the sense of ownership is often ambiguous and there is an aspect of it that is difficult to grasp. However, it is one of the key concepts of growth. This drive is one of the causes that makes the West develop and gain strength. The other one is democracy and liberalism, to which we, in this thesis give the meaning “liberty”.

The previous studies’ emphasis on the sense of ownership and democracy was very important. Thus, to name humanity’s future potential era, the “Ownership and Liberty Era” has been adopted. There are important reasons underlying the existence of the unrecorded sector. A research has revealed how hard and difficult obstacles there are to get legal acquisition. For example, a small clothes shop was opened in Peru. To fulfill legal requirements several visits were made into the center of Lima. Six hours a day were spent only to get a license certificate, and in the end, 289 days and \$ 1231 was spent for all of these shop opening procedures. Expenditures here; that is to say \$ 1231 was 31-fold of those days’ minimum wage. In addition, a required permit in order to erect a building on public land was acquired in six years and eleven months by visiting 52 public offices and involving 207 managerial procedures.

In Philippines, it is possible buy a house legally in 13 to 25 years and via 168 legal steps. The process for the registration of a legitimate building on agricultural land in Egypt can take between 6 to 11 years of procedures in public offices.

One of the ways of settlement of an ordinary citizen in Haiti onto public land is via renting out the land from the

government for 5 years and then buying it. In a research, this renting out procedure was attempted to be realized via the local business partners. In total, regarding this transaction, in two years' terms 65 bureaucratic procedures were required. In order to buy land around 111 bureaucratic proceedings were required, which ended up taking a total time of 12 years. In short, acquiring land via a legitimate process takes almost 19 years. However, in the country, sustaining such legitimacy is far from guaranteed.²³

Features of the developing countries and poor nations with respect to coping with economic problems, are as follows:²⁴

- I. Assets of a citizen are not known.
- II. The addresses of individuals are not certain and cannot be confirmed.
- III. Those who are in arrears can readily hide themselves and adopt similar tricks in order to elude people from their debts.
- IV. Resources cannot easily be transformed into capital.
- V. Belongings cannot be divided into shares.
- VI. There aren't standard definitions of assets; they not be contrasted and compared with each other.
- VII. The rules regarding ownership can differ from one city to another, and even from one district to another.

²³ Ibid, p. 26.

²⁴ Ibid, p. 11.

The problems that face today's poor countries show similarities to the armed citizens of the United States (cowboys) in the nineteenth century.

Emigrants coming from Britain faced a land acquiring system, which was extremely complex and at the same full of contradictions. For instance, a vast area of land could belong to a man and at the same time to another man whom the same land had been bestowed to by the British royal family. Thus, a man could claim that he had bought the land from a Red Indian family and another person could accept the same land instead of salary from a legislative assembly.

Some people might not even see those lands. Even worse, those lands, years before emigrants arrived there had been divided into pieces and cultivated. Thus, we see here, in the proper meaning of the word the typical milieu and setting of the "wild west" classics. We can understand from this why everybody in the society carried a pistol, because his or her life was a fully wild and brutal form of living.

The pioneers, who settled into the lands that did not belong to them, said that what gave the soil value was their labor. According to them, an official certificate of title or randomly drawn limits could not define the ownership. They claimed that ownership was the right of those who occupied land and cultivated it. Of course, central government and federal officials did not accept this situation and sent military troops led by officers and devastated the farms and buildings. However, the people residing in that region, after the troops had gone, reconstructed the buildings again and tried to maintain their lives under the hard circumstances. Thus, the facts that occurred in the United States two centuries ago are the present-day fundamental problems in the poor countries.

The industrial revolution, which began in the last half of the eighteenth century, originated in Britain and thereby spread widely into the other European countries. Modern industrial techniques have strikingly developed since, and this development has led to major and deep societal changes. A new formation that had been determined by urbanization has emerged and has launched an unprecedented migratory movement. A great mass of population has been aggravated in the industrial regions.

In this way, because of social and other developmental changes, a large mass of working class has emerged. The population of the cities has rapidly risen, and male, female and juvenile labor have faced difficult, hard and exhausting working conditions. By the 1950s, in many poor and undeveloped countries of the world, an economic revolution has taken place, replete with upheavals resembling the social and economic crises that Europe had experienced in 1800.

The acceleration of mechanization in agriculture has decreased the demand for labor in the countryside. The advancements in medicine and practices of public health has decreased the rate of infant mortality and increased life expectancy. Following these developments, the majority of people began rushing into the cities. The population of cities increased rapidly.

Today, alone in China and India hundreds of millions of people have migrated into the metropolitan areas. However, because of migrations, almost two thirds of people began living in the slums. Because of illegal housing, sewage systems have tended towards collapse, and vendors have occupied the streets. The big cities have become virtually uninhabitable areas.

On the other hand, the economic triumph of the West lies in its success in transforming ownership into capital. It has been claimed that the value of real estates that have been possessed but have not been owned legitimately by the poor people of developing countries was over \$ 9.3 trillion. Thus, the way out for the thriving economies is transferring this dormant capital into the system.

5. Influences of Ownership System and Value Increases in Real Estates

The ownership system that provides process, forms and rules enables us to transform assets into active capital. The ownership records and titles represent our common understanding as to what is meaningful for any assets.

These certificates or documents aggregate all information that is necessary to conceptualize the potential value of an asset, and organize it, and thereby make it controllable. Marx starts *Das Capital* with “commodity”, and gives place to the concepts of goods, money, capital, labor and value, as well as the relationships among them and their transformations.

According to Ibn Khaldun, work and strife are the bases of economic activities. Commodity does not have any value. What matters is the labor exerted in order to produce this commodity. Therefore, the price of a commodity means an equivalence of labor for producing that commodity²⁵.

Ibn Khaldun asserted that further production could be realized by maximum efficiency, profit-seeking entrepreneurs who consider the results of the deeds in respect to benefits and

²⁵ R. İhsan Eliaçık, *Mülk Yazıları* (2), İstanbul, İnşa Yayınları, 2010, p. 7.

costs, and trade and specialization. The best state is that which has the lesser bureaucracy and the lesser number of mercenaries in order to protect the law and order, and it gathers the lesser taxes in order to finance public affairs. For that reason, the World Bank has exalted Ibn Khaldun as the “first proponent of privatization”.²⁶

The land survey (cadaster), is one of the most important functions of the ownership system; it is a public service determined by each country’s needs and goals. Its contents can be changed with a country’s social and economic developments and can be implemented in order to meet the needs of society. As the society’s structure and needs develop, the cadaster’s extent and content can be altered. Up until today, this change has shifted from a singular dimensionality to the multidimensionality²⁷.

The increasing population has resulted in land becoming a commodity whose acquisition is getting more and more difficult. Therefore, it increases in value and becomes a source of wealth in itself. Alongside the land, the values of the other real estates (houses, workplaces) are being increased.

This phenomenon, in almost every country, for a secured investment, leads credit organizations to use their resources fearlessly. In the West, what constitutes the capital is a latent process embedded in the complexity of the official ownership system.

²⁶ Stephen Glain, *Islam in Office*, Newsweek International, 03.07.2006.

²⁷ Tülay Tufan, Hüseyin Erkan, S. Gökçin Seylam, *Kadastronun Ekonomik Kalkınmada Rolü*, Ankara, 13. Türkiye Harita Bilimsel ve Teknik Kurultayı, TMMOB Harita ve Kadastro Mühendisleri Odası, 18-22 Nisan 2011.

As the Western nations improve their ownership system, unwittingly they have developed the mechanisms that easily release capital. These mechanisms can be perceived as the arts of the system that only protects ownership, not as the complex mechanisms that enable us to transform the potential assets into capital. The effects of ownership systems in respect to this issue can be categorized into six topics.²⁸

- I. Fixing the Economic Potential of Assets
- II. Integrating Dispersed Information into One System
- III. Making People Accountable
- IV. Making Assets Fungible
- V. Networking People
- VI. Protecting Transactions

6. Ownership and Liberty Era

Liberty is not being an individual under someone else's arbitrary constraint. The ownership is an indispensable tool for defining liberty areas, demarcating lines and protecting them. It is estimated that humanity will escape from wage earning through "ownership" and elude from captivity via "liberty", and thereby attain real civilization.

Futurist Alvin Toffler mentions three major shifts in which the bases of wealth and welfare have switched ground. These shifts are respectively the first wave that signs switching from hunting and gathering to sedentary agriculture, the second wave that refers changing from agrarian society to industrial

²⁸ De Soto, *Ibid*, p. 47.

society, and the third wave that indicates shifting from industrial society into the information society.

Toffler, while stating that the third wave had started in the 1950s and that in those years the bases of shifting to information society had been laid convincingly, he, although aware of the era in which we live and on the brink of it, could not dare a naming for it.²⁹ Toffler, in his *Future Shock* deals with the future issue, and states that capitalism was on the verge of demolition and a new era was about to start.³⁰

This revolutionary era in which the slavery will be abolished has a name beyond that of the “information society”; its name is the “Ownership and Liberty Era”.

The basic and natural rights that are applicable for all human beings stem from natural law. The basic and natural rights of which people possess by their existence as humans are as follows:

- I. Right to life
- II. Right of freedom, and
- III. Ownership right.

The right to life is the source of all rights, and the ownership right is the reflection of these rights put into practice; so much so that without the right of ownership it is not possible to utilize the other rights. The right of ownership has an importance given to it by the religion of Islam and has become one of the basic human rights.

²⁹ Arman Kırım, *Türkiye Nasıl Zenginleşir?* İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi, 2008, p. 99.

³⁰ Ömer Faruk Uysal, “Beşeri Yaşama Devirleri”, *Köprü Dergisi*, Kış 2000, p. 49.

The development of the ownership system and the spreading of it to all the layers of the society has made the countries accumulate capital in a flash. Thus, it contributed seriously towards increasing the level of welfare. Nursi gives a great importance to the “drive of ownership” as it is given to human beings as an inherent feature³¹.

People, instead of working under the command of other people and utilizing their labor under a fund holder, instead want to set up their own business and work for themselves. This is an inherited and natural situation. Most people, instead of working as a wage earner under the command of someone, at least, prefer to be a partner of a business with someone else.

Man desires to get some return for his labor; even if he makes a mistake he accepts and bears the consequences of his faulty deed. Man has difficulty in accepting the bad consequences of someone else’s faults. Particularly he has difficulty to consent the faults of capital holders who utilize his labor in return for a wage.

The Ownership and Liberty Era can be broadly described as follows:

The great majority of the society, i.e. in particular the grass roots, may have even if it be a small one, a property, a self-run business and, broadly some entrepreneurship freedom. Volunteers should leave management of the production and distribution of goods and services to individuals or groups that comprise it. Each individual should be permitted selling and buying at a price that both parties agree with. In general, the

³¹ Ibid, p.47

freedom of entrepreneurship, private ownership and market mechanism, overall, should be approved and fostered.³²

The concept of ownership, in an economic sense, includes owning, producing, owning one's production and labor, and assessing and utilizing it freely. This concept also implies an economic system in which monopolies and nation-states that produced and protected them noticeably loose hegemony. This era, in a political sense includes a type of democratization in which all variety of rights and liberties are applied to the large masses of society.

In the legal sense, the legal agreements that the individuals define via contracts will come to the forefront and gain validity, and arbitration and similar regulations will come into play.

In a cultural sense, multiculturalism, and local and authentic cultures will come into the forefront, and the interactions among the cultures will increase.

Today's partially adopted and used models such as decentralization (instead of unitary structure), participation banking (interest-free banking), employees' becoming partners of the organizations that they work in, widespread appearance of joint-stock companies, grass-rooting of the ownership, and time-sharing systems will be in a more improved style among the features of this era.

The second feature of the Ownership and Liberty Era is the expansion of all varieties of liberties in an unprecedented way. A world-wide consensus has taken shape on the legitimacy of liberal democracy, and at the same time, it has the upper hand against rival forms of hegemony such as monarchy,

³² Ömer Çapra, *İslam Ekonomi Sistemi*, İstanbul, FikirYayımları, 1970, p. 31.

fascism, and communism. Whereas recent forms of governments have led to great drawbacks and basic inner contradictions that resulted in their decline.

However, liberty and liberal democracy, which refers to this era, has given freedom and independence the most improved form. The ultimate point to which thinkers who regard “liberty as the right of doing everything that does not harm anyone else” is liberal democracy. Whereas, the real liberty gives the right to everything which inflicts harm neither to oneself nor to anyone else³³.

Considering from this point, there are grave and deep splits between the capitalist system and the ownership and liberty era. The Ownership and Liberty Era should be addressed as a new period for humanity. Cemil Ertem, states that the “Wage is return of labor received unsatisfyingly” and has assessed the current capitalist system, like Bediuzzaman, with the “wage-earner” concept³⁴. For that reason, in order to investigate capitalist and post-capitalist periods properly, the wage and wage systems should be dealt in a historical perspective.

Capitalism’s abolishment of feudalism put an end to the land-based slavery. However, it created, through the process of commodification of the labor, a new form of slavery. The capitalist system has primarily addressed the wage-labor relationship, sustainability and enlargement of private ownership.

³³ Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, *İçtimai Dersler*, Zehra Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2013, p. 101.

³⁴ Cemil Ertem, “Malikiyet ve Serbestiyet Devri”, *Köprü Dergisi*, Sayı 114, 2011, p. 63.

Nevertheless, it could not prevent exploitation of human labor and thus led to constraints of liberties. It is not possible even to be a slave to wage-earning on a part-time basis; for, to be exploited even for two hours a day, and to be obliged to alienated work, makes one a slave for the rest of the day.

A liberated time can be possible only if the rationale of this time at every aspect can manage to be spread over the labor organization. Ending the wage-earning system will lead to the ownership and liberty era that enables the proper use of human rights and freedoms and will allow people to do the jobs that they like.

If the human beings are allowed to perform jobs suited to their abilities and tendencies, there will be no compulsory working. Just as an artist performs his art free from material concerns, the people in this era will be busy with works they love.

Human Rights are rights given to humans for solely being human without consideration of their language, religion, race, gender, nationality, social status and color. Right to life, right to not be tortured, treated and punished inhumanely, right to not be forced to work, right to fair trial at impartial and independent courts at a reasonable time, the right to be innocent until proved guilty, freedom of religion and thought and expression - all these are rights that are guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights and cannot be given up by humans today or in future.

All these rights led to the development of the social state, welfare state and liberal democratic state concepts in the world. The main purpose of the state that is constituted by the frames of human beings' own consents and mutual contracts, is the protection of people's basic and natural rights such as life,

freedom and ownership, and defending the country from foreign potential threats.

The state's ground requires the people's approval, and this entails the acceptance of an individual-based political organization. Individual-based politics reflects a system opposed to the dictatorial regimes. It is the individual who is essential; the government is a means that regulates the relationships among individuals. This ideal government form that had been tried to be formed by Locke, overlaps with the principle of the liberal state. It has been claimed that the specifically socialist society cannot be democratic in respect to ensuring the individual liberties.

In this regard, democracy can be defined as people's direct or indirect sovereignty or as their utilizing power. It has been appraised that democracy is a regime that regards the public - not monarchs or sovereigns who depend on an oligarchic group - as the ultimate source of the power mechanism. Thus, the concept of democracy concurs with the "governing of the people by people/public" idea.

Here, the government concept of the 'people' taking the political decisions and applying them are comprised of two arguments:

- I. Freedom
- II. Individuals' equality before the law.

From the individuals' perspective, liberty is a right and cannot be usurped. The other existential right is private ownership, and this is linked with the labor principle. Any person cannot manipulate the ownership which is acquired by another individual's labor.

From this point of view, democracy is relevant to the equality principle which is based upon the right of government to the concept of the sameness of human existence, and principle of liberty as an inborn right. By this sense, it is a political system where the liberty and equality are defined at the legal level and assured.

A new ownership language should be constructed. In the core of this ownership language should be placed the merit of working and the honor of personal industriousness. The Ownership and Liberty Era is not a period that has only economical connotations. It signifies an era, which has, legal and cultural equivalents and it should be dealt with on its own.

Conclusion

The fields of history, sociology and economics have revealed that humanity lived through a variety of stages and it had experienced a process of social evolution. It has been agreed that it has experienced up to date the primitive communal life (wildness and nomadic era), slavery, feudality and capitalist periods.

The traditional society depended on the natural hierarchy system. People had rights according to their positions in society. In the traditional society, hierarchy would not hide the realities of hierarchy. Rather, it ensured that the symbols of hierarchy be on display. These symbols did give a 'beyond-the-society' meaning and legitimacy.

At the process of transforming to a bourgeois society, this societal system based on an open hierarchy had begun to be criticized. The new law, having ensured the individuals' rights and obligations determined by free capital, was constructing a

field free from politics, morality and historic-societal involvement, where the economic relationships could be thriving and developing, and was thus being founded on tyranny.

However, this new tyranny, unlike the privileged rights bred from the natural hierarchy, had to in fact hide itself. This is because the new societal imagination was remolded on the rebellion against the “tyranny of man on man”.

The equality before the law is one of the basic principles of human rights. Unvirtuous and dishonorable relationships between master and slave had to end. Countless research has been conducted on this issue. It has been observed as the advent of an era which is compatible with human honor and dignity.

Ownership and Liberty Era theory is one of these theories and puts forward the conditions necessary for humane living. Another feature of the Ownership and Liberty era in respect to the economy is that it signifies a period in which the capital can flow over the larger layers of the society instead of being concentrated in the hands of a few.

Although the law of contracts is one of the most important respected and impartial institutions in respect to financial markets and the legal system, the “ownership” right is almost never mentioned. If the ownership rights of the owners is not under the assurance of the owners of land, stocks and intellectual rights, there will be difficulty in the fields of investment and in keeping pace with new developments.

If the ownership is not being sold and bought securely under the control and regulations of the authorities, the market itself cannot achieve a dynamic level of growth and development. The lack of the ownership rights has been one of

the most important factors that led people from the formal market to the underground, shadow sector.

If we look at Western style democracies, we can see a system in which there is a strong legal mechanism that protects the ownership rights. In fact, in these countries, one of the prominent elements is that democracies can benefit from ownership rights.

Although each of them has a different land order and ownership rights system, their common point is the protection of ownership rights and the opportunities that enable the exchange of properties.

Knowing the first owner of any property is important, and this knowledge is to be accessible to every person. Sales, purchases and collateralizing procedures are being easily realized in Western democracies.

In the great majority of the developing countries, ownership rights exist. Nevertheless, because of the lack of the legal frame that completes these rights, ownership rights cannot be subject to the realm of commerce. The legal frame can provide the ownership to transform into a field where its use is assessed at maximum level and is largely secured.

Here, the most important issue is having political discernment and understanding that enable legal structuring in respect to protect private ownership rights. Though the private ownership rights had even existed to some extent in the hunters societies, they are still not available in many countries.

The first step should be exploring which property rights exist. Then, the results, with the lessons obtained from the developments of models in the Western world, would be

organized in order to protect these rights and to classify them. While the majority of systems were developing as a matter of course, they have raised recently in a 50 to 200-year-period. The economic and social landscape of the West during the industrial revolution would resemble today's Third World countries, where black markets, mafia, widespread misery and lawlessness exist in abundance.

Although ownership is a vague drive and its source is abstruse, it has become one of the key concepts of growth and development. It is one of the most important reasons that made the West thrive and develop. The other one is democracy and liberalism, by its name in this study it has been termed 'liberty'.

While describing the future and developing a variety of theories regarding it, many researchers and scholars have grasped and explained why the ownership drive and democracy is so important. For that reason, this era of humankind has been given the title of "Ownership and Liberty Era".

Development requires capital; the societies have the opportunity to meet this need via appraising their real estates. The official ownership that places all rights and constraints under the state guarantee, in other words cadaster, i.e. land survey is being risen to the surface as an important tool.

In the nature of man, there is a drive for protection and use of possessions and belongings carefully, while considering the needs of future generations. To this end, the state guarantee and security should be established.

One of the major features of the Ownership and Liberty period is the fact that it protects and ensures the ownership system and liberties. Human beings' evolution, perfection, desire for living a life compatible to his honor and dignity have increased these demands day by day. There are so many strong

liberty movements that even the most oppressive state governments do not resist these developments.

The top priority of the less developed countries should be to protect the ownership rights of individuals. After all, democracies have ensured the protection of the ownership system and the right of exchanging assets.

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