

**POPULATION POLICIES OF THE OTTOMAN STATE
IN THE TANZIMAT ERA: 1840-1870**

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**SABANCI UNIVERSITY
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POPULATION POLICIES OF THE OTTOMAN STATE
IN THE TANZIMAT ERA : 1840-1870

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
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BY

SELÇUK DURSUN

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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ABSTRACT

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Dursun, Selçuk

M. A., History

Supervisor: Prof. Huricihan İslamoğlu

February 2001, vii+84 pages

The formation of the Ottoman modern state in the nineteenth century was closely interrelated with the population policies. The policies directed towards population addressed three concerns central to Ottoman modern state building in the nineteenth century. These were the concern to tax, to create a labor force for agricultural production and local reconstruction projects, and to draft soldiers for the modern armies. The importance of protection and procreation of the population for agricultural production, taxation, trade, industry and military was substantiated by the population policies of the government in the early period of the Tanzimat. As the state identified the population as a source of income after the Tanzimat, it tried to protect and procreate its population through certain institutional arrangements and regulations. The population policies were interrelated with the whole body of social, economic, political, military, educational, and sanitary reforms that characterized the Tanzimat era.

Key words: local reconstruction works, taxation, population movements, banditry, marriage, procreation, birth control, population growth

ÖZ

TANZİMAT DÖNEMİNDE OSMANLI DEVLETİNİN NÜFUS POLİTİKALARI: 1840-1870

Dursun, Selçuk

Tarih Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Huricihan İslamoğlu

Şubat 2001, vii+84 sayfa

19. yüzyılda Osmanlı modern devletinin oluşumu nüfus politikalarıyla yakından ilişkilidir. Nüfusa yönelik olarak uygulanan politikalar, 19. yüzyıl Osmanlı modern devletinin üç ana kaygısına işaret eder. Bunlar sırasıyla vergi toplama, tarımsal üretim ve yerel imar projeleri için işgücü sağlama ve modern ordular için askere almadır. Tarımsal üretim, vergi, ticaret, endüstri ve askeriye için nüfusun korunmasının ve artırılmasının önemi, hükümetin Tanzimatın ilk yıllarındaki nüfus politikalarıyla şekillendirilmiştir. Tanzimat'tan sonra devlet nüfusu bir gelir kaynağı olarak düşünmeye başladıktan sonradır ki, çeşitli kurumsal düzenlemelerle ve yönetmeliklerle nüfusu korumaya ve artırmaya çalışmıştır. Bu nüfus politikaları, Tanzimat dönemini betimleyen toplumsal, iktisadi, siyasi, askeri, eğitim ve sağlık reformlarıyla bütünsel ve uyumlu bir yapı oluşturur.

Anahtar sözcükler: yerel imar işleri, vergi, nüfus hareketleri, eşkıyalık, evlilik, üreme, doğum kontrolü, nüfus artışı

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In the process of writing this thesis, I am especially grateful to my supervisor, Prof. Huricihan İslamođlu for her valuable training and guidance in every phase of research and writing. Without her generous help and motivation, I would have completely lost my tract.

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Naturally, all the errors are mine.

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INTRODUCTION

The Tanzimat era (1839-1876) has mostly been studied either as a set of ‘modernization’, or ‘westernization’ processes whereby the economic and legal developments of the period are attributed solely to impact of the West, or, as a period that witnessed increasing economic and political penetration of Western powers into the Ottoman territories. Both approaches are inclined to understate the internal dynamics of the Ottoman society and the Tanzimat reform policies. They neglect the increased sensitivity of the Ottoman state to the demands of the population and the “great transformation”⁷ that it underwent in the nineteenth century as part of the European interstate system.

Although the economic, social, educational and military developments after the Tanzimat era had been studied,⁸ not much is known about the nature of Ottoman population policies, especially those in the first half of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, the relative scarcity of studies on nineteenth century Ottoman society impedes scholars’ ability to examine the significance of the population issue, which had formed the basis of the reforms after Tanzimat in the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, the objective

⁷ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation. The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1944).

of this thesis is to provide a better understanding of the population policies in the Tanzimat era. It will argue that the objective of Ottoman government in developing agriculture, trade, and industry was strongly interrelated with its population policies, and that the Tanzimat policies of the 1840s constituted a coherent body. A large population was the precondition for economic revitalization after the Tanzimat proclamation,⁹ and as such, the Tanzimat mirrored the developments in other European countries.

In the Tanzimat era, the economy was based on agriculture, which was characterized by abundance of land and scarcity of labor and capital, as well as by technological backwardness.¹⁰ The government implemented several economic and social policies to mobilize its resources. These policies consisted of protecting the existing population, controlling the population movements, promoting procreation, and giving subsidies and lending money with interest to peasants.

⁸ It can be argued that these studies have been very limited in their concerns owing to the fact that most of Ottoman archival materials for the Tanzimat period was not available for the researchers until the 1990s.

⁹ Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison, Wis. : University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), p. 62 [hereafter cited as: Karpat, *Ottoman Population*].

¹⁰ Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı-Türkiye İktisadi Tarihi 1500-1914*, 3rd edition (İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1993), p. 171-4 [hereafter cited as: Pamuk, *İktisat Tarihi*]; Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 61; Donald Quataert, *Workers, Peasants, and Economic Change in the Ottoman Empire, 1730-1914* (Beylerbeyi, İstanbul : Isis Press, 1993) p. 24, [hereafter cited as: Quataert, *Workers, Peasants*] and “Age of Reforms, 1812-1914”, in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, Halil İnalcık with Donald Quataert (eds) (Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1994), 759-943, pp. 843-52 [hereafter cited as: Quataert, “Age of Reforms”]; M. A. Ubcini, *Osmanlı'da Modernleşme Sancısı* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 1998), pp. 257-65 [hereafter cited as: Ubcini, *Osmanlı'da Modernleşme*].

One of the most important characteristics of Ottoman agricultural economy for centuries¹¹ and particularly for Tanzimat era was ostensibly high land/labor ratio. The land/labor ratio is determined by dividing land under cultivation with the rural population.¹² The general population trends prevented the development of intensive agriculture, and extensive agriculture was the dominant practice throughout the empire.¹³ Therefore, the nature of state intervention via regulation changed dramatically every field of agricultural economy during the nineteenth century.¹⁴

The protection and procreation policies were designed to overcome the deficiencies of the land/labor ratio in the Ottoman agricultural economy. The abundance of land and shortage of labor forced the government to treat the population as a source of wealth and to direct its efforts to maintain its means of subsistence and security. The aim of the government was to

¹¹ For the effect of land-labor relations on population growth in the sixteenth century North Central Anatolia, see Huri İslamoğlu-İnan, *State and Peasant in the Ottoman Empire. Agrarian Power Relations and Regional Economic Development in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1994).

¹² Joel Mokyr, "Malthusian Models and Irish History", *Journal of Economic History* 40:1, The Tasks of Economic History (Mar., 1980), 159-166, p. 164 [hereafter cited as: Mokyr, *Malthusian Models*]. A more specific definition of land/labor ratio is the quotient of the acreage of agricultural land available and the number of workers available to cultivate it. Thus, the land/labor ratio can be calculated in two ways: first, over a whole country, and second, for an individual plot. In this study, the concentration will be on the high land/labor ratio of the Ottoman Empire (Roderick Floud and D. N. McCloskey (eds). *The Economic History of Britain Since 1700*. 2nd Edition. Vol I: 1700-1860 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 464).

¹³ Pamuk, *İktisat Tarihi*; Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century* (Albany : State University of New York Press, c1988) [hereafter cited as: Kasaba, *Ottoman Empire*]; and Quataert, "Age of Reforms".

¹⁴ Quataert claims that: "During the nineteenth century, the state began to encroach upon life in the countryside in a manner rarely, if ever, seen during the long centuries of the Ottoman imperium. This encroachment was part of a larger process, the Tanzimat reform program of centralization and Westernization, that sought to rebuild

flourish agriculture by increasing the number of cultivators and protecting the existing ones.

Before the 1870s Ottoman institutional arrangements in agriculture were specifically directed to steer the organization and regulation of economic life,¹⁵ and to improve the circumstances of Ottoman subjects. Yet, as Palairret points out, in an agrarian economy, population density is essential for the development of economy.¹⁶ In general, the population densities were very low (less than 20 persons per km²) in the Balkans¹⁷ during the first half of the nineteenth century. As the state identified the population as a source of income after the Tanzimat, it tried to increase the density of its population through certain institutional arrangements and regulations.

Furthermore, low population density, which characterized the Ottoman lands, was also detrimental for the industrial growth of the Ottoman state. Industrial development also needed more labor power, thus, major industrial development generally occurred in areas where there was relatively high population densities in the Balkans.¹⁸

The formation of the Ottoman modern state in the nineteenth century was also closely related with the population issue. Once the

Ottoman military and civil power to ensure the state's continued survival" (Quataert, *Workers, Peasants*, p. 32 and "Age of Reforms", p. 762).

¹⁵ Michael Palairret, *The Balkan Economies c. 1800-1914: Evolution Without Development* (Cambridge, UK. : New York : Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 1 [hereafter cited as: Palairret, *Balkan Economies*]

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

perception of population as a source of wealth emerged, obtaining information about the population inevitably became a priority. Population came to be considered as an economic resource from which the state derived income for its treasury and conscripts for its armies. Subsequently, the state introduced the practice of recording all members of society. Briefly, this meant that the focus on ‘population’ became a precondition for the formation of the Ottoman modern state in the nineteenth century.¹⁹

This thesis will consider two dimensions of the Ottoman policies concerning the protection and procreation of its subjects. The first dimension is the ways in which the Ottoman state implemented new techniques or reshaped old ones in order to prevent emigration and population movements, to increase the population size, and to provide security for its subjects. The second will be the issue of whether the aim of the Ottoman state to increase population was compatible with the general interests/concerns of the population.

For the most part, the protection policies stemmed from the need for keeping the productive part of the population remain uninjured, and thus aimed at providing the means to ensure the subsistence and maintenance for the peasantry. It was necessary to protect of the population from bandit attacks and from the oppressions of local landowners. To this end, the

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, especially chapters 2 and 3.

¹⁹ See the “Introduction” in Silvana Patriarca, *Numbers and Nationhood: Writing Statistics in Nineteenth Century Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) for

government tried to control the movement of population by implementing new measures for registration, establishing permanent police forces in certain centers, and developing sanitary services.

The procreation policies included enforcement of marriages and encouragement of reproduction within marriages while they discouraged traditional birth control methods and practices. Furthermore, they granted allowances and pensions to newly born children and prohibited the kidnapping of girls and marriages among extended families.

The immediate Tanzimat era seems to be a period of rules and regulations aimed at the protection and procreation of the population. Although there is insufficient statistical data to draw conclusions on the results of the post-Tanzimat population policies,²⁰ this thesis will examine the policies of the state toward its population as well as the responses of the subjects to these policies during the three decades after the Tanzimat.

To achieve this aim, examples from nineteenth century Ottoman archival documents, all of which pertain to the Balkan provinces of the Empire, compiled from the *İrade* (Decree) catalogues in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives (*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi*) will be given. These documents, which are classified according to dates of issue except for *Cevdet Tasnifi*, are very valuable sources for understanding the nature of

an eloquent discussion of how population statistics became to be one of the factors of the unification and formation of the Italian state.

administration in the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century. These *irades* issued by the High Council of State (*Meclis-i Vala*) will shed light to the issues related to the social, economic, political, and educational developments in the Ottoman society after the Tanzimat reforms in 1840s. All the words in the archival documents were translated to the modern Turkish orthography.

This thesis investigates the population policies of the Ottoman Empire during the immediate Tanzimat period. Chapter I describes the protection side of the population policies from 1840s to 1860s. This period is important because, to a great extent, it determined the form of the Ottoman policies during the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I sought for the origins of these policies in the archival documents of the period. Chapter I also deals with the social, economic, military, educational and sanitary aspects of the population issue in the Balkans as well as its external and internal dimensions.

Chapter II is concerned with the procreation policies of the Ottoman Empire in the light of a discussion on Malthus and two nineteenth century writers, namely Namık Kemal and Hyde Clarke. This discussion is followed by a description of the process whereby the Ottoman state managed to solve the problems of population issue. It ends with final concluding remarks on the population growth within the Empire.

²⁰ Nikolai Todorov, *The Balkan City, 1400-1900* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1983) [hereafter cited as: Todorov, *Balkan City*]; Karpat, *Ottoman*

I. THE PROTECTION OF POPULATION

The military defeats of in the early nineteenth century forced the Ottoman government to seek acquiring information about the demographic basis on which it can reorganize the army and increase the tax revenues.²¹ To this aim, a census was held in 1830/31, in which only the male population was counted. The purpose of this census was to have information on the number of conscripts and on tax liabilities.²² Thus, this census was very similar to earlier tax registers.²³ It only highlighted the financial and military administration for taxes and conscription.²⁴ The subsequent censuses were more complex in nature and detailed.

Although the results are unpublished, there were more information pertaining to the composition of the population in the second census, which was undertaken in 1844.²⁵ The census officials were chosen among the

Population and Quataert, “Age of Reforms”.

²¹ Daniel Panzac, *Population et Santé dans l'Empire Ottoman (XVIII – XX siècles)* (İstanbul: Les Editions Isis, 1996), p. 77 [hereafter cites as: Panzac, *Population et Santé*].

²² Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda İlk Nüfus Sayımı 1831* (Ankara, 1943), p. 189 and Karpát, *Ottoman Population*, p. 19. The official explanation was “to correct the tax inequities which had resulted from the change in property values, from transfers of land and use of old land deeds, and from the continuation of tax exemptions given in the past to *derbends* for the maintenance of roads and bridges now no longer in existence.” (Karpát, *Ottoman Population*, p. 20).

²³ *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Rehberi* (Ankara, 1992), p. 188n105. The government ordered that the census was to be conducted according to the old method (*usul-i sabıka*) (Karpát, *Ottoman Population*, p. 19).

²⁴ Pierre Maestri, *Compte Rendu General des Travaux du Congrès International de Statistique dans les Sessions de Bruxelles 1853; Paris 1855; Vienne 1857: Londres 1860 et Berlin 1863 publié par ordre du Ministre de l'agriculture, de l'industrie et du commerce sous la direction de Pierre Maestri* (Florence: Imprimerie de G. Barbara, 1866) [hereafter cited as: Maestri, *Compte Rendu General*], p. 267; Karpát, *Ottoman Population*, p. 19; and BOA *İrade*, *Dahiliye* 5284 (17 Cumade'l-ahir [12]61/23 June 1845).

²⁵ Ubicini, *Osmanlı'da Modernleşme* and Maestri, *Compte Rendu General*.

members of the religious establishment, such as judges and scholars.²⁶ They performed continuous visits within their localities and prepared regular annual tables containing data on births and deaths, the number of travelers, medical service, transfers of the properties, the amount of the new conscriptions, real and movable losses resulting from fire, epizootics, and the like. After being checked for their accuracy, the documents served different purposes concerning: age, profession, religion, military service, apportionment of taxes, and the like.²⁷ This kind of detailed information was the first step in dealing with the population issue more seriously.

In the same year also the *temettuat* (revenues) surveys was initiated throughout the Empire. These surveys registered and classified property, including cultivated and uncultivated land, animals, stores, as well as agricultural produces and income of individuals gained from these goods and resources, in agricultural economy.²⁸ The objective of these surveys was to organize a new system of taxation in order to meet the fiscal needs of the Ottoman state. The Tanzimat decree abolished all customary taxes, except for the tithe (*aşar*), the head tax on non-Muslims (*cizye*) and sheep

²⁶ Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, p. 20.

²⁷ Maestri, *Compte Rendu General des Travaux* and Ubcini, *Osmanlı'da Modernleşme*.

²⁸ For an excellent discussion of *temettuat* registers, see Huri İslamoğlu, "Statistical Constitution of Property Rights on Land in the 19th Century Ottoman Empire: An Evaluation of *Temettuat* Registers", *Paper delivered at the Conference on Land Issues in the Middle East*, Harvard University (March 1996); Mübahat Kütükoğlu, "Osmanlı Sosyal ve İktisadi Kaynaklarından Temettü Defterleri", *Belleten* 59:225 (1995), pp. 395-418; Alp Yücel Kaya, *Dynamics of a Regional Economy Through the Temettuat Defters: Bayındır (İzmir) in 1845*, Unpublished M. Sc. Thesis, Middle East Technical University, 1998.

and other animals (*ağnam resmi*). The customary taxes that were abolished were replaced by a fixed tax called *vergi* or *an-cemaatin vergi*.²⁹ This system was designed to increase the revenues of the state, to establish a centralized control on tax collection and a moderate taxation system for the population, which aimed at eliminating inequalities among regions.

In 1845, the next year after the first census and the *temettuat* registration, the central government decided to introduce new policies concerning the population issue. The policies directed towards population addressed three concerns central to Ottoman modern state building in the nineteenth century. These were the concern to tax, and to create a labor force for agricultural production and local reconstruction projects, and to draft soldiers for the modern armies.

The success of these policies was dependent on the government's dissemination of its control through the local networks. The early nineteenth century, up to the 1840s, was a period of struggle between the government and local power blocs. To this aim, the state first tried to break up the taxation claims of the local landowners, judiciary, tax-farmers and contractors.³⁰ Put differently, the newly planned tax reforms after the

²⁹ Reşat Kaynar, *Mustafa Reşit Paşa ve Tanzimat* (Ankara : Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, 1991), pp. 258-63 [hereafter cited as: Kaynar, *Tanzimat*]; Shaw, Stanford J. *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 84 [hereafter cited as: Shaw, *Ottoman Empire*]; Abdüllatif Şener, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Vergi Sistemi* (İstanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 1990), pp.1-2 [hereafter cited as: Şener, *Osmanlı Vergi Sistemi*].

³⁰ Bruce McGowan, "The Age of the Ayans, 1699-1812", in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, H. İnalcık and D. Quataert (eds)

Tanzimat forced the Ottoman state to abandon its dependence upon the local notables (*aghas*) and tax-farmers (*mültezims*) in order to obtain a relative freedom, at least, in financial matters. The local landowners paid very little or no taxes and enjoyed a relative independence in collecting local taxes, since their military participation in state's war campaigns gave them certain privileges.³¹ On the other hand, tax-farmers became dominant actors in the local administration by acquiring property, to the disadvantage of subjects.

Muhassıls (tax collectors) were sent to the provinces to eliminate the privileges of these groups on collecting local taxes.³² This *muhassılık* system degenerated and became inoperative in a very short time. The first reason of this degeneration was the incapacibilities of these persons to analyze the conditions in the provinces and their inefficiency in collecting taxes. The second was the economic conflict between *muhassıls* and local landowners. The third was the administrative conflicts between the *valis* and the *muhassıls*. The government did not draw a functional separation

(Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 637-758 [hereafter cited as: McGowan, "Age of Ayans"].

³¹ Kasaba, *Ottoman Empire*, pp. 80-1; Quataert, "Age of Reforms", p. 797; Yuzo Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar: Karaosmanoğulları Üzerinde Bir İnceleme* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), p.1.

³² BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 251 (18 Zilkade [12]55/23 January 1840); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 260 (20 Zilkade [12]55/25 January 1840); BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 7 (2 Muharrem [12]56/6 March 1840); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 411 (9 Muharrem [12]56/13 March 1840); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 478 (25 Muharrem [12]56/29 March 1840); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 515 (1 Safer [12]56/4 April 1840); BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 57 (29 Rebiyyü'l-evvel [12]56/31 May 1840); and Şener, *Osmanlı Vergi Sistemi*, p.1; and Kaynar, *Tanzimat*, pp. 285-63.

between the administrative domains of these officials.³³ Thus, this way of controlling the localities did not totally prevent resistances against the state's centralization project.

The government realized that any effort coming from the centre to break up the powers of these groups increased their resentment and proved to be difficult to implement. With the recognition of this reality, that is the reforms could not be done without the support of these groups, the government relied on the power of local landowners (*vücu**h*) and the non-Muslim community leaders (*kocabaşıs*) over the population, as before. Thus, representatives from each province were invited to İstanbul to discuss the policies that the government aimed at introducing.³⁴ In 1845, a special commission met in the capital. The government gave a memorandum, which explained the objectives of the Tanzimat reforms and encouraged them to reveal their opinions on reforms, and to state the necessities and conditions of their localities. To a great extent, they pointed out that the people were living in poor conditions and asked for state support as loans to enable the people, to clean the rivers and to direct them to their original courses. They asked for a just distribution of fallow and empty fields for

³³ BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 70 (20 Rebiyyü'l-ahir [12]56/21 June 1840); BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 74 (24 Rebiyyü'l-ahir [12]56/25 June 1840); BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 100 (2 Cumade'l-ahir [12]56/1 August 1840); BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 246 (14 Zilhicce [12]56/6 February 1841); Şener, *Osmanlı Vergi Sistemi*.

³⁴ Tefik Güran, "Ziraî Politika ve Ziraatte Gelişmeler, 1839-1876", in *150. Yılında Tanzimat* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992), 219-33, p. 222 [hereafter cited as: Güran, "Ziraî Politika]. The Aydın delegates of this commission consisted of the chief clerk of the Customs Office, an ex-governor, local judges, merchants and landowners (quoted in Kasaba, *Ottoman Empire*, p. 59).

cultivation and permission for free trade in grain. They, furthermore, expressed opinions on the rearrangement of taxes. This later demand was proved to be consistent with government's future plans for tax reforms. But, in the end, the central government declared that a rearrangement of taxation and new rules for grain trade could only be done after the end of the *temettuat* registration.³⁵

Nevertheless, the government did not want to deliver the control of reconstruction projects totally to local authorities. To this end, Councils of Reconstruction (*Mecalis-i İmariyye*) were established in the regions included within Tanzimat reforms. The Councils of Reconstruction were consisted of the members of the merchants' guilds and religious establishment.³⁶ The first venture of these councils was to survey the economic conditions of the Ottoman subjects. Second, they were to investigate the agricultural lands and people working on them. In other words, they were to find out whether the population of a region was sufficient for agricultural cultivation or not. In relation to this, they were to sketch empty lands suitable for settlement of population.³⁷ Third, they had to determine the possible tax contribution of a given region and make plans

³⁵ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845).

³⁶ “[M]eclis-i İmariyye namıyla *bazırgan ve da‘ıyan-ı Devlet-i Aliyyeden müretteb olarak dahil-i da‘ire-i Tanzimat olan mahallere meclisler ta‘yin buyurulmuş[tır.]*” (BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 (1261/1845), Lef 15), emphasis mine.

³⁷ The government sent engineers and cartographers to the provinces for repairing and marking the various locations, including buildings, bridges, canals, and other unspecified things of the same category, with numbers, and for preparing the maps and plans of those locations (BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 5284 (17 Cumade’l-ahir [12]61/23 June 1845)).

for the roads and rivers that needed construction, reconstruction, or cleaning.³⁸ Although not mentioned here, the Councils were asked to investigate into matters relating to improvements, such as the restoration of bridges and buildings, cleaning of canals and opening new ones, and strengthening of fortresses.³⁹

Of these improvements, opening new canals, watercourses and cleaning existing ones were the most important ones, because they were indispensable for the progress of trade, agriculture, transportation, sanitation, and irrigation.⁴⁰ The major aim of these projects on irrigation was to encourage the development of a market for trade and agriculture. For this reason, particular instructions were given to the Councils of Reconstruction for investigation.⁴¹ In one of these instructions, the government wanted to know the conditions of the roads and bridges that people used while going to ports and market places.⁴² At the same time, these projects were aimed at preventing seasonal floods, spread of diseases,

³⁸ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 78 ([12]61/1845) and Tefvik Güran, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı*, (İstanbul Eren Yayınları, 1998), pp. 45-50 [hereafter cited as: Güran, *Osmanlı Tarımı*].

³⁹ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845). For a discussion of the operations of these local councils and their applications, see Stanford J. Shaw, "Local Administrations in the Tanzimat", in *150. Yılında Tanzimat* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992), pp. 33-49.

⁴⁰ "Bu makule tesviye-i turuk ve tathir-i enhar küşad-ı mecra keyfiyyatı esbab-ı i'mariyye-i mülkiyyenin ve tevsi'-i ticaret ve zira'at-ı teba'anın şart-ı azamından olmasile pek lüzumlu mu'tena şeyler olub, fakat keyfiyyet-i tesviye vü tanzimi ve mesarifat-ı vakı'anın tahkiki icab-ı maslahatdan olmagla bu misillü hususat-ı mütenevvi'a-i i'mariyyenin tahkikat-ı lazımasile icab u iktizalarının iş'arı hususı ta'limat-ı mahsusale ile Mecalis-i i'mariyye me'murlarına havale olunmuş olmagla tahkikat-ı lazımlarından cümlesinin keyfiyyatı anlaşıldıktan sonra icra-yı icabatına i'tina kılınacağı." (BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845), Lef 15).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

harms of locusts and insects, which generally caused bad harvest.⁴³ Furthermore, the feasibility of draining and cleaning of rivers and opening up new canals depended on the expected profits from cultivation. For instance, particular instructions were given to the Councils of Reconstruction to investigate the courses of some rivers if directed to uncultivated fields create a possibility for the peasants to gain profits from rice cultivation.⁴⁴

The successes of the local reconstruction projects were important for the local population. First, the reforms in irrigation system could benefit the small peasants holders. The costs of bringing water from a nearby river by building up canals exceeded peasants' ability to pay. On the other hand, the wealthy landowners could benefit from these policies by cutting the expenses of constructing canals to their estates. Although the government wanted to extend the benefits of irrigation to small peasant holders, the local landowners probably resisted this policy, since water resources were scarce.⁴⁵ Second, the construction of roads and bridges could lower the costs of transportation of agricultural produces to ports and marketplaces. They could also make the collection of taxes easier.⁴⁶ The local reconstruction works continued until the Crimean War. However, due to the

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Kasaba, *Ottoman Empire*, pp. 60-2.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ I did not encounter any document mentioning such resistances. But, the Turkish government's policies of irrigation in 1960s revealed widespread conflicts between peasants and local landowners. This conflict was one of the major plots in Turkish movies of the period .

increased military expenses, many of these works were abandoned and the function of reconstruction councils in the process lost its value.⁴⁷ Thus, before the period of increased European demand for the Ottoman agricultural products, especially after the Crimean and American Civil wars, the central government was trying to establish a basis for the development of a home market, whereby peasants could enter into exchange relationships with each other without intermediaries. Since transportation costs were high, except for those peasants whose fields were closer to marketplaces, majority of peasants depended on intermediaries to bring their production to the market.⁴⁸ The governmental efforts in constructing new roads and repairing old ones, opening up new waterways and canals, maintaining the security of roads and bridges were all aimed at providing more peaceful and protective market environment for individual peasants.

All these local infrastructural reconstruction projects were centralized and paid by the central government, which put more burdens to the central treasury and increased the need for a rearrangement of existing taxes. Thus, the regularization of taxes as a specific and definite proportion, and their equalization among regions included in the Tanzimat reforms was to be handled to increase the revenues of the central treasury.⁴⁹ The central government stressed that the increase in the revenues of the state should not

⁴⁶ Shaw, *Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, p. 11.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.87.

⁴⁸ Kasaba, *Ottoman Empire*, p. 84.

be less than its expenses. Yet, during the process of tax distribution and collection, the state officials were to be concerned with the conditions and abilities of the subjects to pay taxes as measured by their annual revenues. Be that as it may, the central government was actually interested in the level of increase in overall taxes with the end of the *temettuat* registration.⁵⁰ These registers would include individual revenues as well as revenues accruing from individual villages, that is, the total amount of taxes. The estimate of the regional proportion of tax rate was to be decided after a strict analysis of these registers.⁵¹

Apart from the standardization of taxation, the central state also decided to impose a second category of taxes, which is called the public contribution (*isti'ane-i umumiye*). This type of tax was mainly based on the idea that the subjects should contribute to the state's public improvement projects. The idea behind the newly established social contract between the state and the subjects after the Tanzimat was that the political existence of subjects before courts of law would only be actualized by the payment of taxes and making necessary public contributions. However, the article of public contributions was postponed and decided to be not publicized until

⁴⁹ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845) and BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 78 ([12]61/1845).

⁵⁰ This concern was expressed in an *irade* as: "Although the exact information on the revenues will be understood after the registration of the yearly revenues of the subjects, the expected increase in the annual income of the state would be realized after the arrival of all rough copies of the *temettuat defters*." (BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 78 ([12]61/1845), emphasis mine).

⁵¹ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 5284 (17 Cumade'l-ahir [12]61/23 June 1845) and BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 603 (29 Safer [12]56/2 May 1840).

the central government finished the compilation of the revenue registration.⁵²

Besides capital, all these works necessitated and were dependent on more labor force. There was the problem of labor contribution of the public relating with these improvement projects of the Ottoman state.⁵³ Since *corvée* labor was abolished with the Tanzimat decree, the reconstruction projects were to be carried out by wage labor. Therefore, the central government ordered the Councils of Reconstruction to determine suitable people among local population as wage laborers. However, in order not to distract agricultural production, they could import wage laborers from other provinces, when necessary.⁵⁴ However, the abolishment of *corvée* with the Tanzimat Decree did not apply everywhere in the same way. For example, it was one of the causes of revolts in Niş (1841) and Vidin (1851), which will be dealt in detail later:

In the Vidin area, conflict between villagers who refused to perform *angarya* after the proclamation of Gülhane and local officials reached such proportions that the matter was referred to İstanbul. Although the capital decided in favour of the villagers, the local *meclis* dominated by the aghas

⁵² BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 78 ([12]61/1845).

⁵³ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845); BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 4475 (29 Cumade'l-ahir [12]60/16 July 1844); and BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 5284 (17 Cumade'l-ahir [12]61/23 June 1845).

⁵⁴ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845).

rearranged taxation so that no real changes took place. The peasantry also complained of being forced to do unpaid labour on roads and bridges.⁵⁵

In 1851, the local councils were once again informed that the *corvée* had been abolished with the proclamation of Tanzimat and people should not be used in private service of local officials and landowners and in local reconstruction projects by way of *corvée* labor.⁵⁶ This was one of the measures that were aimed at keeping a part of the population, especially poor, under state control by providing employment in infrastructural projects.

These decrees, also, set certain duties for the local officials, such as the control of revenues and the apportionment of taxes (*vergi*) during the survey of the *temettuat* registers, the means for assisting poor and needy (*i'ane-i fukara ve za'fa*), and the collection of the taxes only during the crop season.⁵⁷ By this way, the state tried to secure itself from possible resentments. Furthermore, the central government set the priority for

⁵⁵ Mark Pinson, "Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period – The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 103-146, p. 115 [hereafter cited as: Pinson, *Ottoman Bulgaria*]

⁵⁶ Article 29 in *Düstur*, "Taşra Meclisine Verilen Talimat", p. 878.

⁵⁷ "Bu def'a memalik-i mahruse-i hazret-i şaheneden gelen vücut ve kocabaşların buldukları memleketin iktiza-yı mevki'lerine göre levazım-i me'muriyyetine da'ir verdikleri layihalarının ekseriyesinde münderic olan mevadın biri emval virgünün vakt-i mahsulde tahsiline mübaşeret olunması ya'ni vakt-i mahsulatdan evvel ahaliden virgü tahsili kendülerine pek güç gelerek şöyle ki mahsulat idrak itmiyan mevsimde ahali sermayeden tehi-dest bulunarak huzurı karz-ı güzeşte veyahud selem tarikiyle şundan bundan akçe istikraz iderek virgü te'diyesine muhtac ve öyle vakitsiz virgü alınması kendülerine akçe hususından tolayı ziyadesiyle ba'is-i zaruret ü ihtiyaç olmakdan naşi emval virgünün vakt-i mahsulde tahsiline müsa'ade buyurulması niyaz u istid'a olunmuş[tır]" (BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 (1261/1845), Lef 15) and BOA, *İrade, Hariciye* 1549 (24 Rebiyyü'l-ahir [12]62/22 April 1846).

enabling the population, because the success of the improvement projects depended on assisting and securing the means for individuals' maintenance and subsistence.⁵⁸ There are many decrees, which were sent to the local officials, emphasizing the importance of the maintenance of the population and the securing its subsistence and circumstances of the prosperity of the property and of the subjects of the Ottoman state.⁵⁹ The immediate Tanzimat period was a passage from the older forms of charity to public assistance by ways of allowances, loans, and public works. Previously, guilds, *vakıfs* (pious foundations), and wealthy men used to distribute alms, feed the poor, and contribute to the prosperity of their communities. Therefore, the government acknowledged poverty as a social problem and began to handle it in particular ways.

Accordingly, the government ordered money transfers to the localities in the shape of loans with interest, in accordance with customary practices. That is, the government decided to lend money to individuals at a rate of monthly one per cent interest.⁶⁰ However, in order to secure returns, the officials of the councils were expected to investigate each locality for their cash needs and to restrain the money that will be transferred, to guarantors. In addition, the cash to be transferred should be used for

⁵⁸ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 5220 (19 Cumade'l-ula [12]61/26 May 1845) and BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845).

⁵⁹ BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 956 (3 Cumade'l ula [12]59/1 June 1843); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 5907 (9 Safer [12]62/6 February 1846); BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 1468 (6 Rebiyyü'l-ahir [12]62/3 April 1846) and BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 1532 (4 Receb [12]62/28 June 1846).

necessary improvements, and essential regulations should be set beforehand in order to prevent possible wastes in other places. Moreover, for the purpose of determining the amount of the loans and securing them beforehand, the government demanded the officials to acquire information on the factors of production of each debtor, the time period for the debt returns, and the means for finding guarantors, who would get loans. Localities that did not need cash, but which could develop their trade and agriculture when encouraged and endured, would also be paid.⁶¹

The objective of these policies was to protect the peasantry from the exploitation of moneylenders. The debts taken with very high interests from such bankers were an impediment to public improvement projects.⁶² Since peasant indebtedness caused flight, the central government ordered that all

⁶⁰ Güran says that between 1843-1846, the government gave a total sum of 12.5 million *kuruş* (piastre) to peasant cultivators as loans (Güran, “Zirai Politika”, p. 220).

⁶¹ “Fi’l-hakika istikmal-i esbab-i i’ mariyye-i mülkiyye madde-i matlubası i’ane ve ikdar-i ahaliye mütevakıf ve menut ve bu dahi şera’it-i mer’iyye ü mahsusasına tatbiken iktiza iden mahallere akçe i’tasiyle hasıl olacağı runümun olarak i’ane taleb iden ahaliye şürot-ı borç ve usul-i vechile fa’izle karzen akçe virüleceği ve fakat ol emirde herbir mahallin iktizasına göre istihsal-i levazım-ı ma’muriyyeti matlubası zımnında ne mikdar i’ane-i nakdiyye i’tasına mevkuf ve muhtac olduğu ve cihet-i te’miniyyesile küfelaya rabt olunması ve virilecek akçe ancak esbab-ı lazıma-ı i’ mariyyeye sarf olunub, aher yerlere telef olunmaması hususunın rabıta ve zabıtası yoluna konulması lazıma-i maslahatdan olarak bu hususların Meclis-i i’ mariyye me’murlarına ta’limat-ı seniyye ile havale kılınmış olmagla buna da’ir keyfiyyat-ı lazıma mahalleri usul ü nizamına bi’t-tatbik bu tarafa iş’ar olunarak tobyekuni anlaşıldıktan sonra iktizası vechile i’ane-i nakdiyye keyfiyyet olınacağı kat’iyyen ma’lum olması ve ba’zı mahaller ahali i’ane-i nakdiyyeye muhtac olmayarak fakat memurin taraflarından teşvikat u ikdamat ile teksir-i zira’at ve ticaret ve hüsn-i suret san’atları husule geleceğinden bu makulelere dahi mahalleri me’murini ve Mecalis-i i’ mariyye azaları iktizası vechile teşvikat u ikdamatı icra ve bu tarafa iş’arı lazım gelen ba’zı müteferri’atı olduğu halde anın dahi icabına bakılmak üzere Der-sa’adete [vürud?] eylemeleri keyfiyyatı dahi ta’limat-ı mahsusa ile müşarun muma-ileyhim taraflarına ihale kılındığı.” (BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 (1261/1845, Lef 15).

⁶² BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845). Poor villagers borrowed money at an interest of 20 to 24 per cent per annum (McGowan, “Age of the Ayans” p. 696).

the transactions were to be just and in accordance with the fatwa issued by the Sheikh-ul-Islam.⁶³

The shortage of labor accompanied by the lack of technological innovation prevented commercialization, market-orientation and intensification of agriculture within the large landholdings (*çiftlik*s) in the Balkans.⁶⁴ Even during the high European demand for Ottoman agricultural products, relatively large arable parts of these estates remained unused.⁶⁵

The sharecropping practices among peasants and landowners were also affected by the labor scarcity and technological backwardness of Ottoman agriculture. First, the land/labor ratio determined the terms of sharecropping. In regions, where the ratio was high, that is, land was abundant and labor was scarce, the terms of sharecropping usually benefitted the sharecroppers. On the other hand, if the ratio was low, which means land was scarce and labor was abundant, the terms of sharecropping were disadvantageous to peasants, especially to the landless ones.⁶⁶ Second, the landowners preferred sharecropping if the costs of production were less than that of technological innovation.⁶⁷ Third, cultivation of commercial crops, such as cotton, grapes, olives, and tobacco, needed less labor power by using some relatively better techniques than the more traditional ones.⁶⁸

⁶³ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845).

⁶⁴ Quataert, *Workers, Peasants*, p. 22.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 23 and Ubcini, *Osmanlı'da Modernleşme*, p. 258.

⁶⁶ Tökin, *Türkiye Köy İktisadiyatı*, 2nd edition (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1990 [1934]), pp. 187-8.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.191.

⁶⁸ Kasaba, *Ottoman Empire*, pp. 83-4.

Thus, the cultivation of these crops served the landowners interests. However, the government tried to remedy the problem of labor shortage in cultivation of commercial crops by promoting and encouraging small peasant holders through governmental subsidies.⁶⁹ Although the increase in the agricultural products was restricted only to grain production, the central government proclaimed that there was abundance of land for other more profitable products. Hence, the government ordered the officials to ask for the assistance of peasants and to explain them that the government was planning to support and secure the maintenance of those peasants, who would cultivate these profitable products.⁷⁰ Fourth, for protecting sharecroppers from the oppressions of landowners, the government directly intervened into and regulated the contracts between landowners and sharecroppers.⁷¹

The Control of Population Movements

The labor scarcity and technological backwardness forced the Ottoman government to control the movement of population, which accelerated during the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the case of the Bulgarian peasants, Todorov argues that the relative scarcity of

⁶⁹ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845) and Güran, *Osmanlı Tarımı*, p. 53 and pp. 75-80.

⁷⁰ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845). Another measure for protecting the producers was the order sent to those places, where horses and beasts of burden were bred. As stated in the same *irade*, those breeders should sell some of their animals to other places that there was scarcity of them.

land under cultivation was one of the causes of peasant flights. He adds that peasants abstained from cultivation because of the burden of taxes and certain difficulties that prevented bringing marginal lands into agriculture.⁷² The government's efforts for controlling the movement of population had two aims. First, a labor force for agricultural production and for projects of reconstruction works was needed in the provinces. The poor and the unemployed were to be kept alive under state's protection. Their movement was restricted, because they constituted in effect the necessary labor force. Second, the government sought to prevent any loss in population through migration.⁷³ However, it was very difficult to implement these measures. Most importantly, it was difficult to convince a poor man or an unemployed person to stay in a place where there were very limited opportunities for him to make a living. Peasants usually sought for a livelihood through seasonal work and migratory labor.⁷⁴ Another choice for rural peasants was becoming bandits.

The late eighteenth century was marked by a remarkable movement of population, which began much earlier, from the countryside to the towns and cities, to the highlands and to the Habsburg and Russian territories. Two major reasons for these migrations were insecurity and unjust governmental practices, such as unequal taxation, and inability of the

⁷¹ See "Bosna Nizamnamesi" (1859), *Düstur*, vol. 1, 3rd ed. (İstanbul, [12]82/1865-6), 78-84.

⁷² Todorov, *Balkan City*, p. 197.

⁷³ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 600 ([12]56/1840).

central state to prevent the mistreatment of peasants by local landowners and state agents in the provinces.⁷⁵ McGowan argues that these massive migrations of peasants and their shift to banditry created negative effects on the population growth within the Ottoman Empire, one being the depopulation of a region through flight of the people.⁷⁶ The flight of rural population into cities increased the number of urban poor in search of new opportunities to find jobs, even for very low wages. Todorov asserts that this was a very common characteristic of the urban economy throughout the Balkans in the nineteenth century.⁷⁷ Thus, the frequent movement of population from one place to another in search of better living conditions was very widespread during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The Ottoman state used social, political, and economic means to prevent the emigration and movement of population. The first attempts for controlling the movement of population after Tanzimat began in 1840. An imperial decree issued to *muhassıls* on the regulation of the movements of population declared that the local officials did not pay enough attention to

⁷⁴ Todorov, *Balkan City*, pp. 66-70 and pp. 197-200 and Quataert, "Age of Reforms", pp. 892-5.

⁷⁵ For the eighteenth century, see McGowan, "Age of Ayans", pp. 646-50 and for the nineteenth century, see Quataert "Age of Reforms"; Pamuk, *İktisat Tarihi*; and Kasaba, *Ottoman Empire* and certain decrees.

⁷⁶ McGowan mentions that a new type of 'transhumance' emerged in the Balkans. In this type, not only the shepherds sought for new pastures for their herds, but also men usually looked for new opportunities to supply better means of livelihood (*idem*, "Age of Ayans", pp. 647-8).

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p. 198; Quataert, "Age of Reforms"; and Palairot, *Balkan Economies*.

the *mürur* article.⁷⁸ According to this decree, all the residents of any district, i.e. Muslims and *zimmis*, nomads and tribes, should take permission from the local authorities, when planning to leave their regions. The *muhassıls* had to give an official certificate, *mürur tezkeresi* (travel card), explaining the reason and the period of travelling. This *mürur tezkeresi* served as a kind of identification card.⁷⁹ Without this document nobody could leave a district.⁸⁰ Later on, these *mürur* registers were synchronously used with censuses.⁸¹

In 1860s, this *mürur* system was modified and became more complex. Local and provincial councils were made responsible for monitoring the practices on the acts of *mürur* system.⁸² This new registration was more suitable for modern state practices and consistent with a real census objective. After the registration of population, all individuals were given official identity cards, which were called *Osmanlı Tezkeresi*. Without these certificates, the people could not appeal to courts for any type of petition. If any individual wanted to leave his hometown or village, s/he was to apply to the property commissions (*emlak komisyonu*) to certify in these *tezkeres* that s/he paid his/her property and profit taxes.

⁷⁸ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 600 ([12]56/1840).

⁷⁹ Karpat, *Ottoman Empire*, p. 35.

⁸⁰ BOA, *İrade, Cevdet Zaptiye* 733 (24 Safer [12]61/4 March 1845).

⁸¹ BOA, *Maliyyeden Müdevver Defterleri* 8602 (1 Muharrem [12]62/30 December 1845 – 7 Rebiyyü'l-ahir [12]66/20 February 1850).

⁸² Article 19 in “Taşra Meclisine Verilen Talimat”, *Düstur*, vol. 1, 2nd ed., p. 875.

Otherwise, the person could not get a *mürur tezkeresi* for traveling.⁸³ If any person was captured in any place without an official seal on his/her *tezkere* confirmed by property commissions, s/he was to be immediately sent back to his home, or s/he could pay a bond (*kefalet ücreti*) to become free until a decision was reached for his/her position. The identity cards of those individuals, who were put into prison, were to be replaced with blue-colored ones when they were released. For the government it was necessary for distinguishing guilty and innocent subjects.⁸⁴ These frequent movements of population caused problems with properties that these emigrants left behind. The government solved this problem by reallocating these properties to their owners on their return.

The peasants, who fled to cities, had entrusted their immovable holdings and properties to their relatives. They took away their movable properties, such as sheep and other animals, and valuable items, together with themselves. When they returned to their homelands with their families, sheep, and other animals, these immovable properties were reallocated to them. There were specific *defters* pertaining to these reallocations.

People also fled into the territories of another state due to insecure conditions in their own villages. Most frequently, they crossed over the borders to Greece, Serbia and Austria-Hungary. The importance given to

⁸³ “Tahrir İdareleri Tarafından İ’tası Mukteza-yı İrade-i Aliyyeden Bulunan Nüfus Tezkereleri Zahrına Yazılacak Nizamiyyedir” (14 Cumade’l-ula [12]77/28 November 1860), *Düstur*, I. Tertib, Cilt 1, p. 903.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

agricultural production was also in the agenda of the Austria-Hungarian Empire and Serbia. Like the Ottoman government, Serbian and Austrian governments issued many decrees to encourage immigration and to increase agricultural production.⁸⁵ There was a constant competition between these states for migratory peasants and wandering poor moving back and forth across international borders. The triangular movement of rural populations between Ottoman, Serbian, and Austrian territories made these states to give certain concessions to peasantry, such as tax exemptions, land allotments, allowances, and security in religious practices.⁸⁶ Furthermore, the competition between the Ottoman and Greek states for rural migrants can be added to this picture. In 1846, the Finance Minister stated in subsequent decrees that since the government was concerned with the stability of the state and the public security, one could expect a slight increase in the numbers of immigrant people from Greece. He demanded officials to show considerateness in their treatments of these immigrants.⁸⁷ However, the conditions were not so much different in these neighboring countries. For example, Habsburg and Serbian taxes were heavy, so people

⁸⁵ Stoianovich, Traian. *A Study in Balkan Civilization* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), pp. 178-9 [hereafter cited as: Stoianovich, *Balkan Civilization*]. For instance, Serbian government issued decrees to the rural police to supervise peasants, whether they were acting in accordance with governmental regulations, or not. But, Serbian encouragement of immigration disturbed Austrian government. Thus in 1847, Metternich issued a decree, which says: "Ever since [it has come to be persuaded that profits can be derived from agriculture, [the government of] Serbia has been more inclined to promote the cultivation of the soil.... In view of the fact that the natives have not yet decided to put their hand to plow, [the government is pursuing a policy of making] welcome all immigrants who are ready to their energies to agriculture" (quoted in *ibid.*, p. 180).

⁸⁶ Palaioret, *Balkan Economies*, p. 22 and Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 62.

⁸⁷ BOA, *Irade, Hariciye*, 1549 (24 Rebiyyü'l-ahir [12]62/21 April 1846).

did not stay for long and usually returned back,⁸⁸ when they observed that nothing was changed in their lifestyles. There were examples showing returns of peasants to their homelands.⁸⁹ Similar reallocation processes were also applied to these peasants following their return. Furthermore, only the sheep of the returnees was registered in the *defters* (registers) and was taxed. The unregistered cattle was not. To this end, the Finance Minister had issued a specific order prohibiting the registration of cattle other than sheep.⁹⁰ The exclusion of cattle from registration was another form of subsidy for the peasants. Moreover, these people were assigned guarantors (*kefil*) in order to prevent other flights and were given their former privileges and then registered in the *defters* with their sheep and settled in various places written in those *defters*.⁹¹ In one sense, the process was very similar to earlier Ottoman practices. That is, the government took proper measures to prevent peasant flights and ‘to leave peasants strong enough to

⁸⁸ Stoinavich, *Balkan Civilization*, p. 181.

⁸⁹ Fifteen peasant families, with a total population of forty-one persons, who fled to Greece, where they stayed for three months, returned to Tırhala in 1845 (BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 7090 (27 Safer [12]63/14 February 1847)). They had 2055 sheep. Seven of them did not have any sheep, one had 600 (he had also six children, being the highest), one had 450, the other 300. The remaining five owned between 110 to 165. There were twenty five children, one of the families did not have any. The average is 1.8 children for per family.

⁹⁰ Another example is the return of 34 families with a population of 88 persons and 2608 sheep. There were also other kinds of cattle, but the Minister of Finance Safveti Paşa said that there was no need for registration of them into the *defters*. In another example, this time the petition was made by the heads of the finance office (*mal müdürü*) and the governor of the province. Two weeks later, a decree was sent to them stating that their petition was accepted (BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 7090 (27 Safer [12]63/14 February 1847)). Previously, thirty four families with a population of 75 persons returned to Tırhala (BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 6127 (1 Rebiyyü'l-ahir [12]62/29 March 1846)).

⁹¹ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 6127.

sustain direct state taxation'.⁹² First, it tried to subsidize and augment the existing levels of income. Second, it utilized measures to encourage the peasants, who have fled their villages, to return.⁹³ Third measure was to send military officials to bring back runaway peasants.⁹⁴

The Protection of Population and Police Measures

The two concerns of the Ottoman government, those of protecting the population and maintaining order were at odds with each other. Military policies after Tanzimat brought new contradictions to the administration, especially in the field of conscription. Conscription, which formerly had no specific pattern, and resulted in uneven distribution of levies from different regions and/or different communities, was to be proportionate to the population density. The soldiers were to be drafted in accordance with the population of each locality. The matters on conscription was stated in the Decree as:

⁹² McGowan, "Age of Ayans", p. 683.

⁹³ As a response to the wishes of peasants, the Council of Vidin exempted the village of Tırnabofça, located in Niş and was ransacked by the Albanian bandits, from payment of taxes due for the year of 1259/1843-4. These peasants had just returned to their homelands. To this end, the *Meclis-i Muhasebe-i Maliye* (Council of Bookkeeping and Finance), with the approval of the Ministry of Finance, requested from the High Council of the State that the decision of the Council to be executed, since the assistance of the villagers was necessary for the reconstruction of the village. Also, this would encourage the other peasants, who had fled, to return to their village. This case was discussed in the Meclis-i Vala and a decree of confirmation was ordered, and was valid as of the first day of September of the same year. (BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 1110 (5 Şaban [12]60/20 August 1844). Total amount of taxes they had to pay is 2749 *kuruş*.

⁹⁴ In one case, Major General Mustafa Paşa was sent to bring back the fugitives, who fled to the Albanian mountains. He was given the substantial sum of 15000 *kuruş* as his travel allowances and together with a set of restrictions, he was expected to follow

[s]ome localities have been burdened beyond their capacity, and others have provided fewer soldiers than they could, causing disorder as well as *damage to agriculture and trade*, with their lifetime terms causing a lack of energy in service as well as *lessening of the population*. Therefore, it is necessary to establish suitable procedures for taking soldiers from the localities when needed and to take them in rotation for terms of four or five years.⁹⁵

By this way, the central government wanted to encourage the development of trade and agriculture of a given region. Further, the length of military service was to be reduced to four or five years. The objective was to prevent demoralization of the recruits and, as importantly, not to interrupt their years of procreation.⁹⁶ Although the active military service was decreased to five to six years, people continued their military duties as reserves, even after the end of real military service.⁹⁷ The recruitment of young rural population into army ranks reduced the number of peasant cultivators in the countryside.

First attempts to reorganize the military began after 1830s. A *redif* (reserve militia) system was introduced in 1834 during the reign of

(BOA, *İrade*, *Dahiliye* 7224 (8 Rebiyyü'l-ahir [12]63/26 March 1846). Nevertheless, in the same document there is no information on what these instructions were.

⁹⁵ The transcription of the Tanzimat Decree can be found in Kaynar, pp. 172-3 and Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi V*, pp. 263-266. This English translation was quoted from Shaw, *Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, p. 60 (emphasis mine).

⁹⁶ For a brief summary of the articles and a comparison of the Decree with the Declaration of Rights and some other European examples, see Ezel Kural Shaw, "Tanzimat Provincial Reform as Compared with European Models", in *150. Yılında Tanzimat* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992), 51-67.

⁹⁷ Shaw, *Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, pp. 100ff.

Mahmud II.⁹⁸ Shaw argues that Mahmut II's aim was to convince the population that this new system was to allow the population to "care for their own security while providing a pool of trained men who could be brought to war more rapidly and effectively than had been the case in the past."⁹⁹ *Redif* battalions were established in every province in accordance with the population densities.¹⁰⁰ They were commanded by *müşirs* (field marshals, or *valis*), but in order to gain the support of the local population the majors, lieutenants, and colonels were appointed among the sons of the local notables and elites and regular salaries were paid to these officers.¹⁰¹ After 1835, with the need for a direct centralized control over these battalions and the opening up of a new military school, the sons of the local notables and elites were sent to their homes and replaced with Ottoman military officials.¹⁰² This reorganization did not satisfy local notables and elites and therefore they broke off their support. The number of redifs failed to keep up the government demands for enrollment.¹⁰³ However, the experience of this first step to modern conscription provided a basis for the

⁹⁸ BOA, *Maliyyeden Müdevver Defterleri* 9002 (cited in Shaw, p. 54n121).

⁹⁹ Shaw, *Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, p. 43.

¹⁰⁰ These battalions were established three to four in every district and ten to twelve in every province (Mustafa Nuri Paşa, *Netayic ül-Vukuat. Kurumları ve Örgütleriyle Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992), p. 298-9) [hereafter cited as: Mustafa Nuri, *Netayic ül-Vukuat*]. Shaw says that in the beginning there would be 40 battalions, one for each district, in total with approximately 57,000 *redifs*. But, in 1836 the system was reorganized. This time with 120 battalions, three for each district, and 100,000 men. (Shaw, *Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, pp. 43-4).

¹⁰¹ Mustafa Nuri, *Netayic ül-Vukuat*, p. 298.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Shaw, *Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, p. 44.

development of provincial armies and local police forces later during the Tanzimat.¹⁰⁴

After 1840s, local police forces (*zaptiye*) were established in every district that was included within the Tanzimat reforms. These forces were responsible from escorting the collection of taxes and providing the necessary means for security of population, travelers, roads, and bridges. In the beginning, the state employed local militia, retinues, irregulars, old bandits and vagabonds as security forces, when needed, in maintaining order and in the collection of local taxes. However, some of their applications increased the resentments of peasants. During the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, the Bosnian Muslims and the Albanian tribesmen were usually employed as retinues in the Ottoman army.¹⁰⁵ Up to the conscription policies after Tanzimat, these mercenaries remained a threat both to the well-being of state and of society.¹⁰⁶ The bureaucrats of the Ministry of War and the representatives in the *Meclis-i Ahkam-ı Adliye* soon came to the conclusion that if the police reforms were continued to be implemented in this manner, persons who were formerly employed in the retinues of military commanders, *müsellims* (local collectors of the taxes and tithes) and *mültezims* (contractors) would become unemployed and

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ McGowan, "Age of Ayans", p. 649.

¹⁰⁶ Shaw, *Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, pp. 40-5. For a very good discussion of how the post revolutionary French governments dealt with mercenaries through conscription policies, see the chapter on conscription in Isser Woloch, *The New Regime: Transformations of the French Civic Order, 1789-1820s* (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1994).

impoverished. Furthermore, the members of the local reserve or militia were prevented from engaging in agriculture and public improvements. Thus, the practice of employing local reserves or militia as gendarmerie force was abolished and persons who were formerly in the service of military commanders, local collectors of taxes and tithes, and contractors began to be employed.¹⁰⁷ In 1846, Sultan Abdülmecid advised the *Meclis-i Ahkam-ı Adliye* (Supreme Judicial Council) to reorganize these police forces, since in the Bulgarian provinces they were acting in opposition to the Tanzimat requirements.¹⁰⁸ However, nothing changed until the end of the Vidin revolt, when the local police forces in Vidin were abolished.¹⁰⁹

Except for collection of taxes and for maintenance of local security, police force was implemented also to suppress the bandits.¹¹⁰ In most cases,

¹⁰⁷ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 411 (9 Muharrem [12]56/13 March 1840).

¹⁰⁸ Pinson, *Ottoman Bulgaria*, p. 114.

¹⁰⁹ Halil İnalçık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi* (İstanbul: Eren Yayınları, 1992), pp. 79-80 and Pinson, *Ottoman Bulgaria*, p. 114. An interesting example was the case of a *kocabaşı*. The *kocabaşı* (headman of Christian community) of a region nearby the Greek border complained about the Greek bandits, who had destroyed and stolen his property. He asked for a compensation for his damages and permission for hiring militia against those Greek bandits. The government decided to pay compensation, but decreased the payment that was demanded by the *kocabaşı*. Also, the government gave permission for hiring sixty-eight mercenaries among the *derbends*, who became unemployed after the military reforms and conscription policies, and undertook the salary payments of these guards (BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 5262 (28 Şevval [12]60/10 November 1844). The *kocabaşı* demanded 20,000 *kuruş* for his damages and 550 *kuruş* monthly salary for each guard. But the government decided to pay 15, 000 *kuruş* for a compensation and 300 *kuruş* monthly payment for each *derbend*.

¹¹⁰ For example, the secret agent of the governor of Silistre reported the appearance of bandits on the shores of Vidin, Rusçuk ve Silistre. These bandits were using force against the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects; they were killing the people and seizing their properties. The secret agent's investigation revealed that a man called Hüseyin with his seven or eight companions was responsible for the disturbance. This group had engaged in brigandage for nearly two years in the vicinities of Niğbolu, Rahova and Ziştovi. One and a half months before the last incident they also ransacked a village very close to Ziştovi, and an island on the Tuna and captured the boats of the Serbian fishermen.

the central government rewarded the gendarmerie of a district for their performance in driving away the bandits who attacked villages and travelers and seized their property. This reward was usually a substantial *atiyye-i seniyye* (gift granted by the Sultan).¹¹¹ In other cases, high officials were honored by the title *kapucıbaşılık* (official representative of the government in the provinces). For example, the *müşir* (field marshal/governor) of Rumeli, his *mühürdar* (private secretary), and the *mütesellim* (local contractor of taxes and tithes) of İlbasan *sancak* (subdivision of a province) were all titled with *kapucıbaşılık*, when they succeeded in suppressing a big revolt of a number of villages included within the *sancak*.¹¹² About four or five thousand *başıbozüks* (irregulars) were gathered around from the Rumeli *vilayets* (provinces) to suppress and punish the revolters and reestablish the order. The major demand of the revolters was not to pay the taxes to the *mütesellim* Derviş Ağa and his nephew, the deputy collector in the districts of the revolt, Esad Ağa. In the end, the revolt was suppressed and the

Finally, the agent of the governor, accompanied by the gendarmerie of the province and with the help of a certain Ahmet Ağa and his men, defeated those bandits and gave back the boats of the fishermen. (BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 4475 (29 Cumade'l-ahir [12]60/16 July 1844)).

¹¹¹ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 4507 (29 Rebiyyü'l-evvel [12]60/18 April 1844). The amount of these gifts sometimes could be very high. For instance, the militia of the tax collector of the Za'ra-i Cedid district of Filibe had lost some of their horses and their clothes and their guns were destroyed in a skirmish with bandits. It was said that their loss was worth about six to seven thousand *kuruş*. The losses of these persons were compensated. Actually this amount was a very high cost for the conditions of the period, especially in view of the fact that there were only four bandits involved and two were killed and the other two managed to escape wounded. Even a moderate village's total amount of taxes was not more than the half of this cost.

¹¹² BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 147 (13 Şaban [12]55/22 October 1839).

accused ones were killed by those *başıbozüks*, causing more resentment among the people against the tax collector and his irregulars.¹¹³

The actions of these irregulars were not the sole contentious element causing public resentments. Occasionally, the local landowners and merchants were accused of disturbing the peace. For example, in Bosnia, the government was anxious that the violent oppressions of these groups, if continued, would attract the attention of foreign powers, and affect the internal tranquility of the region, and if dispersed to other places, the well being of the subjects would be threatened. Thus, the government ordered the high officials of the provinces to take necessary police measures to prevent the oppressions by using the gendarmerie under their command. In the end, the local authorities managed to suppress these groups and reestablished the order.¹¹⁴

Banditry

As ‘social control’ became more visible at the local level with the spread of Tanzimat reforms in rural areas, the central government was inclined to protect the population from banditry.

In the official documents, the general denomination for bandits is *eşkıya*. But often they are also called as *haşerat* (mobs, rabbles, beasts, or vagabonds), *hubaşat* (incongruous persons collected together), *havene*

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 3469 (14 Cumade'l-ula [12]59/12 June 1843).

(traitors, evildoers, or scoundrels), *erbab-ı hıyanet ü şekevat* (the people of high treason) and the like.¹¹⁵ The bandits attacked villages, killed people and animals, and stole properties of villagers. They also destroyed crops and took hostages. The bandits not only stole money, horses, guns and confiscate property of the people, but also lifted *mürur tezkeresi* (permit to travel) and *cizye evrakı* (documents of head tax). They generally run away to the nearest mountain, forest, or wasteland where they could go into hiding very easily.¹¹⁶ Usually, the local police forces followed the insurgents joined by a group of local fellows (chosen among the poor and needy), who knew the region well. They got a *mürasele-i şer'i* (an official letter) from the *kadı* (judge), which explains the aim of the pursuit and the crimes of the rebels. When these insurgents captured, the stolen objects and property were registered in a document, which is called an *ilam*, or *mazbata*, that was sent from the local council of the district (*kaza meclisi*) and then the captured items were returned to their owners and registered in these official documents. The *zabtiyes* and fellows always received an *atiyye-i seniyye* (gift from the Sultan), in the shape of money or property.¹¹⁷ There were three functions of these gift. First, it could be a compensation for the losses during the pursuit, i.e. horses, clothes, money, or guns. Second, it was an act of displaying a pattern of loyalty for the other parts of

¹¹⁵ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 147 (13 Şaban [12]55/22 October 1839) and BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 4507 (29 Rebiyyü'l-evvel [12]60/18 April 1844), Lef 1.

¹¹⁶ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 4007 (9 Şevval [12]59/2 November 1843); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 4507 (29 Rebiyyü'l-evvel [12]60/18 April 1844), Lef 1.

the population. That is, if they had helped the government in its efforts for establishing authority in the provinces, they would have been rewarded. Third, it could constitute a threat for the rebels to change their mind.

The end stage of an harmful attack was usually the displacement of villagers.¹¹⁸ But sometimes the people of a region joined these bandits and acted together against the oppressions of landowners and tax demands of the government.¹¹⁹ This latter form of banditry was the most difficult one for the state to suppress. The greatest revolts of this kind was emerged in Niş (1840) and Vidin (1851).

Between 1840 and 1850, two major revolts, namely Niş and Vidin, besides some minor uprisings that occurred elsewhere in the Balkans,¹²⁰ threatened the Ottoman control in the Balkans and the practicality of Tanzimat reforms. The revolt of Niş occurred partly because of the unjust assessments of newly reformed tax levies and partly because of the malpractices of local officials.¹²¹ To suppress the rebels, the governor of Niş sent irregular Albanian troops (*başıbozüks*), who further increased resentments of the peasants. The Albanian irregulars not only terrorized peasants and poor people, but also confiscated their property. Although they

¹¹⁷ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 4507 (29 Rebiyyü'l-evvel [12]60/18 April 1844), Lef 2.

¹¹⁸ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 147 (13 Şaban [12]55/22 October 1839)

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye*, 3652 ([12]59/1843); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye*, 4007 (9 Şevval [12]59/22 October 1843); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye*, 4460 (8 Receb [12]60/25 July 1844); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye*, 4475 (15 Receb [12]60/31 July 1844); BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye*, 4507 (29 Receb [12]60/14 August 1844).

¹²¹ Pinson, *Ottoman Bulgaria*, 103-7 and İnalcık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, pp. 30-3.

were paid salaries and were given ration from the government, they provided food for themselves and fodder for their animals from the villagers by force.¹²² Then, approximately ten thousand people fled to Serbia.¹²³ When these events were heard in İstanbul, the *müşir* (field marshal) in Rumeli was sent to suppress the Albanian troops, to secure the area, and to bring back emigrants and to return their property, which was seized by these irregulars. Finally, the military officials convinced the emigrants to return their homes by giving certain concessions and guarantees. However, the situation of the peasantry did not change too much and emigration to Serbia continued.¹²⁴ On the part of the government, such emigrations meant the loss of laborers and taxpayers, which increased labor scarcity and diminished state's income. Thus, the central government tried to find further remedies to gain the loyalty of subjects. By that time, also French, Russian, and Austrian governments sent special agents to control the situation and to inform their governments on the nature of uprisings.¹²⁵ Additionally, Austrian and Russian governments feared from the spread of resentments “among those segments of their population living closest to the Ottoman lands”.¹²⁶ These put the Ottoman government in a position to compete with foreign demands over the protection of local non-Muslims.

¹²² BOA, *Cevdet, Dahiliye* 11871 ([12]69-70/1853).

¹²³ Pinson, *Ottoman Bulgaria*, p. 107.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-113.

¹²⁶ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 112.

About a decade later, the Vidin upheaval broke out moderately because of the same reasons of the Niş revolt. The causes of Vidin revolt were irregularities in tax distribution and landholding practices, improper administration on the part of the government officials and the like. Peasants usually complained about the oppressions of tax farmers, landowners, and local civil and military officials.¹²⁷ By this time, the central government ordered the local officials to convince the insurgents without using force. But, if they could not be successful in persuading, then they could implement only regular army forces, not the *başıbozüks* (irregulars). Nevertheless, the local landowners had already been gathered a group of irregulars to suppress the revolt, which further augmented peasants' discontent.¹²⁸ Later on, many oppressed peasants fled to Serbia. The first operation of the regular army that was sent from İstanbul was to destroy the *başıbozuk* forces.¹²⁹ The government promised that no punishment would be applied to those villagers, who returned their homelands. After certain negotiations, the representative of the central government in the region persuaded the emigrants to return their villages.¹³⁰

To sum up, the post-Tanzimat Ottoman state did implement new modern policies to suppress the revolts and secure the population from

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-19. For example, the *vali* of Silistre informed the central government that the main causes of the uprising with respect to peasantry were the unjust applications of 'village landlords, constables, tax collectors and county officials' (cited in Pinson, *Ottoman Bulgaria*, p. 113 and İnalcık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, p. 50 and pp. 75-6).

¹²⁸ İnalcık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, pp. 51-3 and Pinson, pp. 123-24.

¹²⁹ Pinson, *Ottoman Bulgaria*, pp. 124-5.

bandit attacks. These policies sought to recruit large numbers of young men for the army as well as for local security forces to be employed against the would-be rebels. However, the irregulars led by the local landowners and tax-farmers contradicted with the central government's policies of protection the population from violent oppressions. Simply because of the population policies of the state, these forces of local landowners were to be eliminated in order to secure the subjects' loyalty and to provide necessary means for maintaining their means of subsistence. Thus, the introduction of centrally organized police force in the process of collecting taxes and protection of population was crucial for the Ottoman state. For planning and building an education program, the government imported French military officials to serve in the police force. For instance, *état majeur* officers came to İstanbul from Paris to sketch a modern plan for the organization of the local police forces on modern techniques.¹³¹ Furthermore, these policies put more burdens on the central treasury and could not override the contradictions, which were inherent in the system.

Policies of Protection on Education and Sanitation

The other Tanzimat reform on the protection of population concerned the study of arts and sciences and matters of public education. That is to say, it was about the regulations of primary and high schools, and

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

¹³¹ BOA, *İrade, Hariciye* 1343 (Rebiyyü'l evvel [12]61/March 1845).

universities. For this aim, three reports were prepared and provisional funds and appointments were arranged. Apart from some small expenses, this reform was also postponed, for sketching out necessary resolutions, until the regulations of public contribution tax.¹³² The success of the reforms in education and the generalization of educational institutions were also dependent on the rearrangement of taxes and on the reconstruction of the countryside.

The cholera in 1831 and the plague in 1836 threatened the Empire. The government took some modern sanitary measures for the first time in the history of the Ottoman Empire.¹³³ They were not very effective, and the problems continued. In 1836, special decrees were sent to the military officials in Rumeli in order to take measures for controlling the spread of epidemics. Finally, in May 1838, the high officials, high ranking soldiers, religious persons gathered to discuss the sanitary problems and to shape a sanitary policy for the Empire.¹³⁴ In 9 May 1838, an imperial order was issued in *Takvim-i Vekayi* (the official newspaper), which mentioned the importance of the development of sanitary facilities. According to this decree, it was necessary to provide remedies to these diseases which can improve the health, contribute to the prolongation of life expectancy, and increase the population of the Empire, thus, its power, trade, and resources

¹³² BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845) and BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 78 ([12]61/1845).

¹³³ Panzac, *Population et Santé*, pp. 77-8 and Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 92.

¹³⁴ Panzac, *Population et Santé*, p. 78.

and also to make its finance more prosper.¹³⁵ To this aim, the first lazaret was opened in 28 December 1838. These policies occurred at irregular intervals and were limited only to scattered localities, and they accelerated only after the Tanzimat. Between 1839 and 1941, sixteen new lazarets and sanitary offices were added,¹³⁶ the majority being in the Balkan territories of the Empire. In 1850, all frontier regions of the Empire were covered with sanitary offices.¹³⁷ The Sanitary Council of the Ottoman Empire was established in 9 December 1838 under the reign of Mahmud II.¹³⁸ Consequently, after the proclamation of the Tanzimat, the sanitary council became the Supreme Council of the Health of the Porte (*Meclis-i Tahaffuz-ı Devlet-i Aliyye*).¹³⁹ This council furnished to guide the sanitary offices in the localities and to aid in sanitary matters to local authorities, whose earlier efforts had been impeded by lack of a central authority. The council had the authority to establish new local sanitary offices and lazarets and to investigate sanitary conditions in particular districts. The major responsibilities of this council were to regulate sanitary policies of the government, to prevention and control of the spread of epidemics, and to establish quarantine administration in critical regions.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 79

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 82-3.

¹³⁷ There were more than 60 offices. In 1846, the expenses of the sanitary policies rose to 3,5 million *kuruş* (*ibid.*, p. 84).

¹³⁸ This council was consisted of twelve members: two Ottomans, including the president Hıfzı Mustafa Paşa, and ten Europeans, five doctors and five representative of the Great Powers (Panzac, *Population et Santé*, p. vi and 79).

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-81.

Panzac argues that the origin of the Ottoman state's sanitary policies was the realization of the demographic insufficiency and the effects of epidemics, such as plague and cholera.¹⁴¹ Thus, the acknowledgement of demographic insufficiency due to the military factors had been accentuated with the epidemics,¹⁴² which forced the Ottoman government to implement modern policies for protecting the health of the people.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

II. THE PROCREATION OF POPULATION

Some of the contemporary writings on population growth will be a guideline for discussing the Ottoman politics of procreation during the immediate post-Tanzimat period. Before dealing with the policies of procreation and numerical data on the population growth of the Ottoman state, I will discuss the main arguments of Thomas Malthus, Namık Kemal and Hyde Clarke to evaluate abstract and concrete dimensions of the Ottoman population growth. Both historians and demographers have come to see the Malthusian model as explanatory for the pre-industrial states since the 1960s.¹⁴³ Kemal, as an Ottoman subject, and Clarke,¹⁴⁴ living in the Ottoman Empire as a foreigner, will be helpful for understanding how the Ottoman population problem was perceived by the contemporaries.

The common belief among these contemporaries that the Ottoman population decreased during the first half of the nineteenth century is partly misleading.¹⁴⁵ Malthus claimed that there was a relative decline in the Ottoman population, which began in the last quarter of the eighteenth

¹⁴³ Robert Woods, "The Population of Britain in the Nineteenth Century", in *British Population History: From Black Death to the Present Day*, Michael Anderson (ed) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 281-358, p. 293.

¹⁴⁴ Clarke was a fellow of the German Oriental Society. He stayed in the Ottoman state for some time; he worked with Ahmet Vefik Efendi and Suphi Bey (Clarke, Hyde. "On the Supposed Extinction of the Turks and Increase of the Christians in Turkey", *Journal of Statistical Society of London* 28:2 (Jun., 1865), 261-93 [JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/>, October 6, 2000], p. 261)[hereafter cited as: Clarke, "On the Supposed Extinction"] and compiled statistical data on the Muslim and the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁴⁵ Karpát, *Ottoman Population*, p. 11.

century and continued up to the early nineteenth century.¹⁴⁶ Kemal, a successor of Malthusian assumptions, argues that the population of the Ottoman Empire was decreasing since the time of Suleiman the Magnificent.¹⁴⁷ On the other hand, Clarke follows a different argument. Although he did not have reliable statistics, except for the ones that were provided by some Ottoman state officials, he argued that the Ottoman population was neither decreasing nor increasing. Therefore, each of these three writers provides a good opportunity for comparing the European and Ottoman viewpoints on the population problem.

A Critique of Malthusian Population Theory

In 1798 Malthus published *An Essay on the Principle of Population as It Affects the Future Improvement of Society, with Remarks on the Speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet, and Other Writers*. He revised the ideas in this first edition of the Essay in subsequent editions until 1826.¹⁴⁸ His main argument in the first edition of the *Essay* is that the population growth follows a geometrical order while food supplies could

¹⁴⁶ [Malthus, Thomas Robert]. “Of the Checks to Population in the Turkish Dominions and Persia”, *Population and Development Review* 6:1 (Mar., 1980), 153-7, p. 154 [hereafter cited as: Malthus, “Population in the Turkish Dominions”]

¹⁴⁷ Namık Kemal, “Nüfus”, *İbret* 9 (25 June 1872), in *Namık Kemal ve İbret Gazetesi*, 2nd edition, Mustafa Nihat Özön (ed) (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1997), 72-85, p. 77 [hereafter cited as: Namık Kemal, “Nüfus”].

¹⁴⁸ E. A. Wrigley, “The Limits to Growth: Malthus and the Classical Economists”, *Population and Development Review* 14, Issue Supplement: Population and Resources in Western Intellectual Traditions (1988b), 30-48, p. 32 [hereafter cited as: Wrigley, “Limits to Growth”].

only increase at an arithmetical rate.¹⁴⁹ To illustrate this argument, he collected information on the population growth of the United States, which had been estimated that its population was doubling in less than twenty-five years.¹⁵⁰ In his article “Population”, Kemal ascertains this Malthusian argument and claims that in the absence of extraordinary crises, the Ottoman population can double in size in about twenty-five years.¹⁵¹ For further explanation, let us notate the initial population as x and food supplies as x' . In twenty-five years, population becomes $2x$ and food supplies $2x'$. It is clear that there is no problem for this period, since population and food supplies increased synchronously. However, after fifty years they become $4x$ and $3x'$, and after hundred years, population and food supplies become $16x$ and $5x'$, respectively. If we assume that population is doubling in twenty-five years, it means that in a century, population will be 3.2 times larger than food supplies. Thus, $11x$ of the population will be victimized by misery, famine, and disease after the turn of the century.

¹⁴⁹ Woods, “Population of Britain”, p. 291; Wrigley, “Limits to Growth”, p. 30; William Petersen, “Marxism and the Population Question: Theory and Practice”, *Population and Development Review* 14, Issue Supplement: Population and Resources in Western Intellectual Traditions (1988), 77-101, p. 80 [hereafter cited as: Petersen, “Marxism and the Population Question”].

¹⁵⁰ Woods, “Population of Britain”, p. 291.

¹⁵¹ This rate, he concludes, emerged from a six or seven fold increase in the population of the United States and two or three fold in European countries over a century. To illustrate this, Kemal follows a different path and reaches the same conclusion as Malthus: He argues that for a period of twenty years -other things being equal- a healthy married couple is naturally capable of producing at least one child a year. As such, this family would include twenty-two persons within twenty years. This means that in two years, the original couple doubles and becomes four. Thus, for him, if the Ottoman subjects followed the laws of nature, the Ottoman state would be able to reach to the level of economic growth of western states by increasing its population.

According to Malthus, this is the fundamental check to population growth.¹⁵²

But, in order to attain a clear understanding of the nineteenth century population growth in the Ottoman empire, I will discuss other Malthusian assumptions on the population problem that were exposed in later editions of the *Essay*. First of these assumptions is the checks to population growth. These are classified as ‘positive’ and ‘preventive’ checks. ‘Positive’ checks are war, famine, disease, unhealthy working and inappropriate labor and weather conditions, extreme poverty, poor childbearing, big cities, and excesses of all kinds. People have no control over ‘positive’ checks.¹⁵³ On the other hand, people can keep pace or decrease population growth by implementing voluntary ‘preventive’ checks. Malthus ascribed the far lower rates of European population growth to ‘preventive’ checks, giving special emphasis to late marriage patterns of Western Europe. The other ‘preventive’ checks, which he mentioned, were birth control, abortion, infanticide, adultery, and homosexuality. He

¹⁵² Woods, “Population of Britain”, p. 292.

¹⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 292 and David Price, “Of Population and False Hopes: Malthus and His Legacy”, *Population and Environment* 19:3, 1-10[http://www.news.cornell.edu/releases/March98/Malthus_legacy.html] Reached 25. 09. 2000, p. 3 [hereafter cited as: Price, “Malthus and His Legacy”]. Kemal also mentions these ‘positive’ checks. They are the bad weather conditions and insufficient dressing that could not prevent the body from weather conditions, dirtiness of households and quarters, disability in protecting the bodily health, bad nutrition, moral corruption, excess consumption of alcohol and tobacco, wars and contentions, lack of planning in the administration of wealth, grief and internal constipation, and abortion. On the other hand, the ‘preventive’ checks are addiction to drinking and dissipation, various sexual practices, prostitution, and polygamy. Among these ‘positive’ and ‘preventive’ checks not growing enough trees and polluting lakes or water supplies, which help the freshness of weather, the dirtiness of households and

considered these checks as immoral.¹⁵⁴ For Malthus, those societies that ignored the imperative for moral restraints, such as delayed marriage and celibacy for adults until they were economically able to support their children, would suffer the horrible ‘positive’ checks of war, famine, and epidemics. From this concern about the sufferings from ‘positive’ checks, Malthus warned that poor laws (legal measures that provided relief to the poor) and generosity must not cause their beneficiaries to relax their moral restraint or increase their fertility.¹⁵⁵

Malthus mentioned that production involved the two of three factors of production: land and labor.¹⁵⁶ For him, an uncontrolled population growth would put a pressure on land available for agriculture, which its supply was fixed, and therefore production could not catch up with increasing population.¹⁵⁷ Central to this argument is Malthus’s formulation of the ‘law of declining marginal returns’ on land. Concisely, this refers to the thesis Malthus put forward in the first edition of the *Essay*. That is, means of subsistence could not grow as rapid as population. At this point, Malthus shares the same view that the fixed supply of cultivable land is the

quarters both in the cities and villages effected the population growth in the Ottoman Empire more than others (Namık Kemal, “Nüfus”, pp. 79-80).

¹⁵⁴ Woods, “Population of Britain”, p. 292.

¹⁵⁵ George R. Boyer, “Malthus Was Right After All: Poor Relief and Birth Rates in Southeastern England”, *The Journal of Political Economy* 97:1 (Feb., 1989), 93-114. [hereafter cited as: Boyer, “Malthus Was Right After All”].

¹⁵⁶ Wrigley, “Limits to Growth”, pp. 33-4.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

core principle of declining marginal returns, with Smith and Ricardo.¹⁵⁸

However, at the same time, he challenged the arguments of the mercantilists' that the number of people determined the nation's wealth and the physiocrats' argument that the wealth determined the numbers of people.¹⁵⁹

Malthus's assumptions did not rely on feasible empirical data.¹⁶⁰

Thus, some of his discussions remain mere speculations on the main trends of population growth in the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, there is not sufficient data on the size; growth, fertility and mortality rates; migration; and age-sex composition of the Ottoman state for the first half of the nineteenth century. However, it is still possible to challenge some of the Malthusian assumptions on population growth in pre-industrial states, the Ottoman Empire as being one of them, by showing solid examples from the archival documents.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35. Wrigley's work exposes an excellent discussion of the similarities and differences of Malthus, Ricardo, and Smith on economic growth, mainly emerging from their discussion of the population problem.

¹⁵⁹ For a further discussion of the main differences of mercantilist, physiocratic and Malthusian assumptions on population issue, see E. P. Hutchinson, *The Population Debate: The Development of Conflicting Theories Up to 1900* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967)[hereafter cited as: Hutchinson, *Population Debate*]; Joseph J. Spengler, *French Predecessors of Malthus: A Study in the Eighteenth-Century Wage and Population Theory* (New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1965) [hereafter cited as: Spengler, *Predecessors of Malthus*]; and Charles Emil Stangeland, *Pre-Malthusian Doctrines of Population: A Study in the History of Economic Theory* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1966) [hereafter cited as: Stangeland, *Pre-Malthusian Doctrines*].

¹⁶⁰ His main conclusions rely on the writings of traveler accounts, and German, French, and English political treatises. See Spengler, *Predecessors of Malthus*; Stangeland, *Pre-Malthusian Doctrines*; and Hutchinson, *Population Debate*. These books contain various mercantilist, cameralistic, and physiocratic writings on population growth.

First, Malthusian model was operated through death rates rather than birth rates.¹⁶¹ But, to understand the growth rate of the Ottoman population, we need to evaluate fertility rates.¹⁶² As Wrigley and his colleagues mention, rural marriages and fertility strictly responded to changing economic conditions throughout history.¹⁶³ Even though there is very limited information on the very character of pre-industrial controls of fertility, Tilly argues that the control of fertility did not emerge after full-fledged industrialization.¹⁶⁴ Fertility rates rose and fell repeatedly in the pre-industrial states.¹⁶⁵ Thus, it is very difficult to find an exact rate. Moreover, the validity of the Malthusian ‘positive’ checks (i.e. war, famine, and epidemics), which caused major shifts in population growth, has been greatly challenged after the development of historical demography.¹⁶⁶

Second, due to the high land/labor ratio, there was not an important population pressure on land in the Ottoman Empire. The ratio of total land under cultivation to rural population was considerably high, especially for the first half of the nineteenth century, that is before the massive territorial loses. Thus, in order to eliminate the labor shortage in agriculture, the

¹⁶¹ Mokyr, “Malthusian Models”, p. 163.

¹⁶² Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 11.

¹⁶³ E. A. Wrigley et al, *English Population History from Family Reconstitution, 1580-1837* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997) [hereafter cited as: Wrigley, *Family Reconstitution*].

¹⁶⁴ Tilly, Charles. “The Historical Study of Vital Processes”, in *Historical Studies of Changing Fertility*, Charles Tilly (ed) (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), 3-55, p. 19 [hereafter cited as: Tilly, “Vital Processes”]

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

Ottoman government directed its efforts to restrict peasant movements and to increase population.

Namık Kemal and Clarke on Ottoman Population Growth

Namık Kemal was very much influenced from the western political economists' views on population growth, especially Malthus's. His major concern was to discover the causes of the so-called population decline in the Ottoman Empire and to suggest certain remedies for driving away the reasons for population decrease. He argues that if the government wants to eliminate impediments that hinders the population growth, it should treat the natural law of population increase as an everyday practice, then theoretically, in about twenty five or at most in fifty or sixty years, the Ottoman state could manage to increase its population. For him, the security of the Ottoman state and its independence from the sanctions of western powers depended on the population size, which should not fall much behind the European states'. Population growth was to become the major concern of the Ottoman government, since it actually had the potential to increase demand for agricultural production.¹⁶⁷

Kemal argues that the means of subsistence, such as agriculture, trade, and crafts, could not increase in step with population growth.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ Namık Kemal, "Nüfus", p. 82.

¹⁶⁸ In fact, Kemal wants to illustrate the Malthusian geometric increase in population in a popular manner. Malthus argues that while the population increases geometrically (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32), food supplies increase only arithmetically (1, 2, 3, 4, 5,

Agricultural production only supplies the demands of consumers and could not be preserved. Considering land has a fixed boundary, population was to be increased to such a level that each person would have enough land in order to secure his means of subsistence, and accordingly reproduce. For Kemal the major 'preventive' checks to population growth is mortality.¹⁶⁹ Nevertheless land could not feed such a population increase even mortality rate is high, because its supply and productivity are limited.

According to Kemal, industrial production is not possible without agricultural supplies. Further, the commercial capital could not derive profit to the extent that it can double in two years like population.¹⁷⁰ For Kemal, there is only one thing in the world that increases in step with population, namely interest, especially the debt taken with compound interest. It is not possible to make a living by transactions made out of interest, because they do not guarantee means of subsistence. Kemal avows that disgusting things like interest and usury, which are contrary to eternal justice and human nature, will be totally abolished. All these remarks lead him to end with a conclusion pertaining to the population growth in the West. He argues that although the population growth in Europe is sustained by many factors, its main cause is the influence of the subsistence requirements of workers.

6). From this observation, he concludes that an uncontrolled population growth will cause shortage of food, poverty, and social unrest.

¹⁶⁹ His estimation that natural deaths are merely one fifteenth of natural births is very naïve.

¹⁷⁰ There is however an exception to this proposition: the merchants who gain a hundred percent profit from selling their goods. For Kemal, their profit is not coming from commercial activities, but from theft (Namık Kemal, "Nüfus", p. 75).

Against the political economists' treatises on the rules and causes of the population growth, Kemal argues that their attempts to find means for setting a limit to population growth depended on the precautions taken by the citizens, not on abstract formulations of political economists. At this point, he was trying to put the 'moral restraint' as the major check to population growth, which is contradicted with his former discussions.

For Kemal, the population growth is not a crucial problem for the Ottoman state.¹⁷¹ He suggests that the most prominent duty of Ottoman subjects is to procreate. For him, the Ottoman state is suffering disastrous crisis from the insufficient population. He argues that spending time and money for the construction of railroads and the opening up new public schools in the most deserted parts of the Empire is wasteful. Moreover, Kemal claims that almost eighty percent of the total agricultural lands, once prosperous, are now remaining uncultivated. If they were not opened to agriculture immediately, there would occur a subsistence crisis.¹⁷² He explains that for about two hundred and fifty years, the Ottoman state

¹⁷¹ Here, Kemal brings up the Muslim belief, which suggests that the supply of God is abundant and resignation to him is dominant. Further, he considers the power of this civilization to be so strong that it could not be limited by the conceptions and ideas of the contemporary century.

¹⁷² He argues that during the time of Suleiman the Magnificent there were a hundred million people living in the Ottoman territories, except for the overseas. He then notes that the population of his time has decreases to less than forty million. He wonders, why the Ottoman population is less than that of France, though the Ottoman possessions are five times larger than the France's (Namık Kemal, "Nüfus", p. 70). As a matter of fact, it was the continuation of a false belief common among Enlightenment thinkers, like Montesquieu, that the ancient civilizations were more populous than the modern ones made Kemal to argue that the Ottoman population at the time of Kanuni was 2.5 times higher than it was in 1870s. Ubicini gives the Ottoman population as 35.3 million, based on the 1844 census (Ubicini, *Osmanlı'da Modernleşme*, pp. 33-7).

suffered from ‘positive’ checks like wars, plagues, and rebellions. The combination of such factors caused population decline in the Ottoman Empire. However, he claims that since the Tanzimat, there were relatively less oppressions, epidemics, and wars, so the population of the Ottoman state was neither decreasing nor remaining stable.

Another discussion of the period was the Muslim and non-Muslim population growth in the Ottoman Empire. It was believed that non-Muslims were rapidly increasing at the expense of the Muslims. One reason was being the restriction of military service only to Muslims. Kemal confidentially believes that the non-Muslims cannot outnumber the Muslims. Put differently, the Muslim population would not decrease to a level that it would threaten the existence of the Ottoman polity. He thinks that military service was to be extended to non-Muslims. In fact, conscription was made compulsory for non-Muslims in 1855, but it was not put into effect until late in the nineteenth century.¹⁷³ He continues searching for the causes that prevent the population growth in the Ottoman state. Kemal argues that Malthusian concepts of ‘positive’ and ‘preventive’ checks to population growth as universal in the Ottoman territories. For example, the spread of epidemics is one of the major causes for population decline. There, he adds, the public health and police departments of the state had to issue proper rules and regulations to prevent the spread of epidemics.

¹⁷³ Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 21.

Clarke disagrees with Kemal. He argues that epidemics ceased to be exist for a long time, therefore it could not be a cause for the population decline. On the other side, plague could be a cause for the displacement of population.¹⁷⁴ For Kemal, increasing agricultural production was essential to feed more people. Thus, vineyards and tobacco fields were to be transferred to grain production in order to prevent the excess consumption of alcohol and tobacco.

The critique made by some Europeans¹⁷⁵ on polygamy that prevent the population growth in the Ottoman Empire refuted by both Kemal and Clarke, but on different grounds. For Kemal, this is an example of the lack of knowledge on obstacles that hinder population growth. For him, a suggestion that one woman's quality of giving birth is higher than three or four women's potential of reproducing is inconceivable. On the other hand, Clarke claims that the practice of polygamy might be disadvantageous, but it was not a sufficient cause for the population decline. In addition, he claims after the Tanzimat reforms, which brought safety for life and property, the polygamy declined. There is empirical testimony on this statement. Todorov's calculations for some major cities in the Balkans revealed that polygamy was not widespread among the Muslim population.¹⁷⁶ Further, the poverty of the lower classes was effective on

¹⁷⁴ Clarke, "Of the Extinction", p. 268.

¹⁷⁵ Like Montesquieu's.

¹⁷⁶ Todorov, *Balkan City*, p. 363. See also Ubicini, *Osmanlı'da Modernleşme*, p.

checks on polygamy, thus it might be better to think that polygamy mostly exists among the upper and political classes.¹⁷⁷ Based on his interviews, he claims that in places where polygamy is still practiced, it does not assist permanent population growth. Although crude birth rates were high, the number of surviving children is very few.¹⁷⁸ In reality, fertility and mortality rates were high among the Muslim population in the Balkans.¹⁷⁹ Further, he adds that there is no evidence from history, which proves that polygamy has provided population growth more than monogamy.¹⁸⁰

In the third edition of the *Essay* in 1806,¹⁸¹ Malthus interprets contemporary accounts of the travelers on rural checks to population and tries to identify the causes of rural depopulation in the Ottoman Empire. He argues that this phenomenon depends on the corruption of local institutional arrangements, not to inefficient procreation or to insufficient agricultural technology. Even though the Ottoman Empire had a large territory, the fundamental cause of the depopulation is the nature of the Ottoman government.¹⁸² In opposition to Malthus, Clarke argues that the farming of land tax might leave peasants to deprivation and oppression of the tax-

¹⁷⁷ Alan Duben and Cem Behar. *İstanbul Haneleri: Evlilik, Aile ve Doğurganlık 1880-1940* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1996), pp. 161-5 [hereafter cited as: Duben and Behar, *İstanbul Haneleri*].

¹⁷⁸ Clarke, "Of the Extinction", p. 271.

¹⁷⁹ Justin McCarthy, "Muslims in Ottoman Europe: Population from 1800 to 1912", *Nationalities Papers* 28:1 (2000), 29-43, p. 38.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

¹⁸¹ Tomas P. Malthus, Thomas R. *An Essay on the Principle of Population* [1806], Chapter 10 of Book I. This excerpt was published separately in 1980. [Malthus], "Of the Checks to Population in the Turkish Dominions and Persia", pp. 153-7.

¹⁸² [Malthus], "Of the Checks to Population", pp. 153-7.

farmers and their dependents. But, the government, without any efficient power of protection, is trying to prevent the oppressions and formerly abolished tax farming in the Balkans.¹⁸³ After Mahmut II's subjugation of provincial *ayans* at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Clarke says that privileged mansions and establishments were abandoned, and this caused a negligible decline in the population of the Turks for a short period of time, at least when local and military authority weakened. However, there was displacement of population.¹⁸⁴ He adds that if one accepts that the Ottoman government is defective and irrational and is not successful in just administration, then how one can explain the reasons for massive immigration from Persia, Russia, Wallachia, Austria, Greece, and the Ionian islands and Malta to the Ottoman empire.¹⁸⁵

In short, in opposition to Malthusian argument, Kemal was well aware of the fact that population growth and agricultural improvement via increased productivity can be thought together. However, his reliance on Malthusian assumptions prevented him to draw a better picture of the population issue in the Ottoman Empire. However, his argument that trade and manufactures can be developed through agricultural improvement and population growth is vital.¹⁸⁶ Modern scholarship showed that there was a

¹⁸³ Clarke, "Of the Extinction", p. 270.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

¹⁸⁶ Kemal's mentor Şinasi wrote in 1861 that the productive land was the only genuine source of wealth and trade and industry existed for the transfer of agricultural products. In his article *Ottoman Public Exhibition*, he remarked that although a developed industry is very crucial for a country's prosperity, the means of subsistence and the source

strong connection between the development of rural industry and population growth.¹⁸⁷ In the Ottoman case, rural industry was developed in the Balkans, where there were higher population densities.¹⁸⁸

Different from Malthus and Kemal, Clarke argues that a steady increase in population requires an increase in territory and in food supplies within the limits of natural law of procreation.¹⁸⁹

Control and Regulation of Population Growth

Because land was plenty and population was few in the Ottoman Empire, the government considered the population growth as one of the primary causes of prosperity.¹⁹⁰ In order to encourage population growth, the government proclaimed couples that marriage and procreation was legitimate and respected, before both canon and civil law. In this respect, the High Council of the State issued many decrees (*irades*) to promote marriage and reproduction. The efforts to establish a central control over the marriages began during the first years of the Tanzimat period.¹⁹¹

of wealth of the Ottoman state rested on its agricultural produces. He offered the government officials and wealthy people to buy the British agricultural tools displayed in this exhibition and utilized modern agricultural techniques in order to improve the amount of agricultural produce of the Ottoman Empire (Hikmet Dizdaroğlu (ed), *Şinasi: Hayatı, Sanatı, Eserleri* (İstanbul: Varlık Yayınevi, 1954).

¹⁸⁷ Tilly, “Vital Processes”, p. 27.

¹⁸⁸ Palaret, *Balkan Economies*, chapters 2 and 3.

¹⁸⁹ Clarke, “Of the Extinction”, p. 278.

¹⁹⁰ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845); BOA, *İrade, Cevdet Adliye* 825, Lef 1 (23 Cumade'l-ahir [12]60/10 July 1844); BOA, *İrade, Cevdet Adliye* 825, Lef 2 (29 Cumade'l-ahire [12]60/16 July 1844).

¹⁹¹ BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845); BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 78 ([12]61/1845).

The legal definition of a marriage was made by an official document, called *izinname* (document of permission), issued by local judge (*kadi*).¹⁹² The fees of these *izinnames* (documents of permission) were differentiated from region to region. Even in some places, the fees were too high that people abstained from marriage. The government fixed these fees of marriage contracts throughout the Empire to three *kuruş* (piastre) for virgins and two *kuruş* for widows by a firman issued in 5 Receb [12]66/17 May 1850.¹⁹³ The permission for marriages were to be taken from the local judge in order to authenticate that there was no religious and administrative obstacles for couples to marry.¹⁹⁴ For example, marriage was prohibited for foster children and for couples who had blood relations with each other. Marriages among extended families, like cousin-cousin marriages, were also forbidden due to the policies of procreation of the Ottoman Empire and religious concerns. The couples were to get the approval of their relatives. The Ottoman government established a direct proportional connection between marriage and procreation. That is to say, marriage meant to have children. However, there were customary practices among people, which contradicted this formulation of marriage. For instance, there were marital birth control methods within families, which the central government desired to manipulate.

¹⁹² Duben and Behar emphasizes that in practice the Muslim population did not take into consideration these *izinnames*. Then, they argue that that might have been true for the countryside (Duben and Behar, *İstanbul Haneleri*, p. 123).

Duben and Behar argue that though there is information on *coitus interruptus* and other birth control methods used in the countryside, there is not enough information on whether these methods were practiced regularly or not. They add that the common fertility form in the countryside was, what demographers called, the “natural fertility”. They conclude that after all the people in the rural areas knew the birth control methods, but they did not practice them due to social and economic reasons.¹⁹⁵ However, a decree issued by the government displayed that people in the countryside practiced birth control widely. Such customary practices (*görenek*)¹⁹⁶, which the government officials viewed with distaste and preferred not to discuss in documents, were common in most pre-industrial societies.¹⁹⁷ The Ottoman subjects resisted the policies of procreation and pressures coming from the central government in many ways. The control of fertility within marriage was an important one. This might take the form of *coitus interruptus* or *reservatus*, of abortions and of infanticide.¹⁹⁸ These were not novel

¹⁹³ BOA, A. MKT. UM. 10/85 (23 Receb [12]66/4 June 1850). This irade displays a tendency for including the *kadı* courts into Tanzimat reforms as an object of regulation.

¹⁹⁴ Duben and Behar, *İstanbul Haneleri*, pp. 121-3.

¹⁹⁵ Duben and Behar, *İstanbul Haneleri*, p. 14.

¹⁹⁶ The word *görenek* literally means in Turkish “a precedent; a knowledge seen or experienced; a method”.

¹⁹⁷ Le Roy Ladurie calls such kind of methods and practices as “sinful secrets” of contraception. See Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The Territory of the Historian*. Trans. from the French by Ben and Siân Reynolds (Sussex: The Harvester Press Limited, 1979), p. 241. Ladurie displays that during the French warfare activities and conscription policies of the Revolution and the Empire between 1789 and 1813 “sinful secrets” of contraception spread out rapidly within the French countryside, causing significant decline in fertility rates (*idem*, p. 252).

¹⁹⁸ Quataert, “Age of Reforms”, p. 790 and for the same phenomenon in Europe, see E. A. Wrigley, *Continuity, Chance and Change: The Character of the Industrial*

customs, but experienced throughout centuries. In a period of where modern contraceptive methods were unknown, it became a kind of tradition among rural and well-to-do parts of the population. As Wrigley mentions, these control methods were already known by people, but brought into use when the necessary and sufficient conditions emerged.¹⁹⁹ Even in the age of condoms and other modern medical techniques, *coitus interruptus* is still one of the most common methods implemented by people to control fertility. On the other hand, it is a technique, unlike the other cultural methods, which can spread among people without propaganda. That is, each couple could invent it by themselves.²⁰⁰ However, if this is so, the Ottoman officials might have seen it as part of a wider tradition. Another method for controlling fertility is leaving proper time intervals between one child and the next, which was common throughout history. Besides, certain traditional techniques and practices were adapted for birth control.²⁰¹ Hatcher and his colleagues summarize these traditional factors that might decrease fertility in any given traditional society. First is the promotion of lengthened breast-feed. Even today this is one of the most important methods of contraception

Revolution in England (Cambridge [England] and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹⁹⁹ E. A. Wrigley, *People, Cities and Wealth: The Transformation of Traditional Society* (Oxford, UK; New York, NY, USA: Blackwell, 1987), p. 265 [hereafter cited as: Wrigley: *People, Cities and Wealth*].

²⁰⁰ Cited by *idem*, p. 266 and Alfred Sauvy, *Fertility and Survival: Population Problems from Malthus to Mao Tse-tung* (New York, NY: Collier Books, 1963), pp. 211-3.

²⁰¹ Robert A. Hatcher, et al. *Kontraseptif Yöntemler: Uluslararası Basım* [Contraceptive Technology: International Edition] (Ankara: İnsan Kaynağını Geliştirme Vakfı, 1990), p. 19.

that limits fecundity.²⁰² This practice might take a couple of years depending on the social acceptance of breast-feed among men and women in a society. The second factor is continence, which also prolonged breast-feed.²⁰³ Third is the existence of customary and traditional practices that prevent pregnancy.²⁰⁴ These and other types of birth control practices were probably known to a great extent by the Ottoman subjects in the nineteenth century.²⁰⁵ The contraception practices might have affected by a decline in infant mortality, because when more children survived, parents would probably desired to control fertility.²⁰⁶ However, the nature of those practices is unknown.²⁰⁷

The other birth control practices were abortion and infanticide. They were increased after Tanzimat as a resistance to recruitment policies of the Ottoman state. One peasant complained in 1861 as: “To what purpose bring up sons, as soon as they came to an age to be able to help us, [they] are

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²⁰³ *Ibid.* Some customs and traditions that increase continence are as follows: the importance of virginity before marriage, celibacy, early marriages, the period of breast-feed, polygamy (one or more spouse’s forced continence), the birth of grandchild, infections after birth.

²⁰⁴ These are grouped into three: mechanical, spermedical, and systemic. Mechanical preventives are sponge and sponge-like materials, half-peeled-lemon and small linen pillows that is put on the cervix, animal intestine and urinary bladder and linen cover, and jumping. Spermicidal materials are lemon juice, tannin, wax, baking soda, salt, various vegetable roots and oils, alum, red rose and raspberry leafs and pebbles put in front of uterus. Third group is the systemic preparations, which are regularly used for longer periods. They are made by boiling certain plants and vegetables, like bracken, juniper, and willow leafs. The person then drinks the mixture on a routine basis (*ibid.*, pp. 20-23).

²⁰⁵ Duben and Behar, *İstanbul Haneleri*, pp. 190-5.

²⁰⁶ The second half of the nineteenth was marked by a decline in infant mortality with the development of sanitary services in the Ottoman Empire (Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, pp. 30-2).

liable to be taken away by conscription.”²⁰⁸ Women did not want to bear children, whose lives were not guaranteed.²⁰⁹ Families generally countenanced abortion and infanticide for various reasons: to prevent the problems of pregnancy and to get rid of the children they cannot keep. However, still there is not enough medical evidence to estimate the density. Abortion was executed by those so-called ‘bloody midwives’ (*kanlı ebe*), who were very popular among commoners.²¹⁰ Abortions performed by these unqualified persons endangered the women’s life. In 1842, a course for midwifery was opened in İstanbul. The western teachers gave instructions on modern techniques to the young Ottoman girls. After the end of these courses, the attendants earned a degree to practice and teach their knowledge on modern birth techniques and practices in more healthy conditions.²¹¹ However, this effort was limited only to İstanbul and did not spread to other provinces.

The government documents stressed that even though those birth control techniques and practices were contrary to canonical law; and squandering and diminishing state’s taxes, the people could not be

²⁰⁷ Quataert, “Age of Reforms”, p. 790. Quataert says that due to the abundance of Muslim writings and medical handbooks on birth control, it will no be unwise to argue that many Ottoman subjects were aware of a great variety of birth control techniques.

²⁰⁸ Charles Issawi (ed), *The Economic History of Turkey, 1800-1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 23 (quoted in Kasaba, *Ottoman Empire*, p. 67). Issawi gives more references of similar complaints emphasized in British Foreign Office documents.

²⁰⁹ Quataert, “Age of Reforms”, pp. 790-3.

²¹⁰ Abdülaziz Bey. *Osmanlı, Adet, Merasim ve Tabirleri* [Âdât ve Merasim-i Kadime, Tabirât ve Muamelât-ı Kavmiye-i Osmaniye], K. Arısan and D. Arısan Günay (eds), İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995), p. 25.

persuaded to give them up.²¹² For the central government, many men and women absolved themselves from the natural laws of marriage and procreation. The government ordered the local officials to give wise information on the types of those practices and to find out to understand why people were still abstaining from marriage and reproduction, after all governmental subsidies were utilized in provinces. Furthermore, the government asked those officials to find new ways of adjusting a system and minimum expenses to increase marriages.²¹³

Another example for the people's resistance to population policies of the state and response to economic conditions was late marriages. For example, late marriage among female population was common in İstanbul during the nineteenth century.²¹⁴ Although there is little information, the large numbers of unmarried adults in the Ottoman Empire included the conscripts, sailors, a large portion of those engaged in transportation, and the male servants in large cities.²¹⁵ The *redif*, or reserve, due to spending part of their time at home, can marry like servants when their masters permit.²¹⁶ Clarke argues that the Christian women of the Ottoman Empire usually married between 18 to 24 ages, but among the Turks the, marriage ages were varied from 25 to 35 in the harems. Todorov gives the average

²¹¹ Sema Uğurcan, "Tanzimat Devrinde Kadının Statüsü", *150. Yılında Tanzimat* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1989), pp. 497-510.

²¹² BOA, *İrade, Mesail-i Mühimme* 58 ([12]61/1845).

²¹³ *ibid.*

²¹⁴ Duben and Behar, *İstanbul Haneleri*, pp. 155-60 and Quataert, "Age of Reforms", p. 790.

²¹⁵ Clarke, "Of the Extinction" p. 271.

ages at marriage for some Balkan cities ranging between 26 to 31 for men and 15-21 for women.²¹⁷ Although later marriage age seems to be appropriate only for the harems, actually an Ottoman decree talks of the very common practice of late marriages among women.²¹⁸ The decree, issued in 1844,²¹⁹ stated that in some districts and villages of the Sublime Porte, maiden girls until the age of thirty were not given permission for marriage by their fathers and relatives. In addition, widows, for no reason, stayed single. These cases suggested obstacles on the way to achievement of government ends of increasing population.²²⁰ Late marriage, widowhood, and celibacy limit a woman's childbearing years. That is to say, if a woman stays unmarried for some years her period of childbearing ceased during her maturity. To prevent these unsuitable obstacles, the government asked for a fatwa from the Sheikh-ul-Islam. In this fatwa, the Sheikh-ul-Islam argued that, from the religious point of view, henceforth it was legitimate to punish anybody, who opposed the marriage of older girls and widows. Any effort intended to conceal aforementioned cases on the part of the *kadis* (judges) and other local officials, by taking bribes, should also be punished. If

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

²¹⁷ Todorov, *Balkan City*, p. 362. Todorov's calculations showed that approximately 28 to 35 per cent of men and 15 to 18 per cent of women of total population remained single.

²¹⁸ Clarke, "Of the Extinction", p. 273 and BOA, *Cevdet Adliye* 825 (23 Cumade'l-ahir [12]60/10 July 1844).

²¹⁹ BOA, *İrade, Cevdet Adliye* 825, Lef 1 (23 Cumade'l-ahir [12]60/10 July 1844).

²²⁰ Actually, this decree was an important example for how the Ottoman state make generalizations on population, relying upon one particular example. In this case, some news on the late marriages of maidens and the existence of high numbers of single widows in the *liva* of Kocaeli arrived in *Meclis-i Vala* (*ibid.*). Then, the *Meclis* universalized the decision throughout the empire.

fathers and relatives insisted on keeping maidens and widows unmarried, they were to be asked to explain their reasons. If it was realized that there were no religious constraints, they should be demanded to perform the marriage. However, it was added that some regions might have been practicing different customs, prescribed by their traditions, then the others. As being a valid excuse, if the cost of the marriage in any place was too high for the families to cover the expenses, then, the marriage could be delayed for some time. However, the state ordered immediately the elimination of such unnecessary expenditures.²²¹ This situation was also common in the Balkan cities. Todorov's studies on some Balkan cities displayed that widow's numbers were considerably high.²²² In relation with late marriages, another one, even though of very small in amount, was the divorce among young couples, because couples usually have not known each other before marriage. It seems that a high marriage age for women and thus only a small number of births per marriage, the Ottoman state should not be expecting a sustained growth.

Additionally, the central government forbade marriages within extended families.²²³ To arrange necessary precautions, the local *kadis* were entrusted authority. Another means for promoting procreation was subsidizing families. In the *sancak* of Menteşe, a certain Abdurrahman's wife had given birth to triplets on November 26 in 1846. About three

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² Todorov, *Balkan City*, p. 363.

months later, the local council wrote to the *Meclis-i Vala* that these children were still in life and demanded an assignment for salary and pension to the triplets. *Meclis-i Vala* found this decision appropriate and decided that it was to be made customary for other places as well and wrote to the Finance Minister to accomplish the necessary regulations.²²⁴ Here we see another generalization of a particular event. Actually, this decree also displays how the local decision mechanisms could be affected in the center. Even before the Tanzimat era, the Ottoman state encouraged procreation. However, this policy was usually sporadic. For example, in 1818, the government donated 10 *akçes* per day as an allowance to a mother from Damascus, who gave birth to triplets.²²⁵

After kidnapping of girls in Rumeli became widespread, the central government ordered that such kind of actions was against the justice of the state and was both forbidden by canon and civil law. On the part of the state, these unlawful actions were particularly caused by not paying attention to security issue and by the lack of police forces. Thus to maintain the security of the subjects, the government ordered that such offenders were to be punished according to law and put into prison for six months. Interestingly, taking those girls out of their home district to another district's court for marriage was also prohibited. If such an occasion

²²³ BOA, *İrade, Cevdet Adliye* 825 (23 Cumade'l-ahir [12]60/10 July 1844).

²²⁴ BOA, *İrade, Dahiliye* 6990 (30 Safer [12]63/17 February 1847).

²²⁵ Quataert, "Age of Reforms", p. 784.

happens, judge of any district should not permit that marriage and punish the offenders for six months, too.²²⁶

Final Remarks on Population Growth

After a possible decline before 1830s, Ottoman population increased at an average estimated rate of 0.8 per cent per annum.²²⁷ According to Palairet, the population growth of the Balkans was 0.97 per cent per year between 1790 and 1910. However, growth in Ottoman Europe was below than that, being 0.8 per cent per annum. A general estimate of population growth in the Balkans between 1850s and 1870s was stood for 1.1 per cent per year.²²⁸ From 1850s to 1880, the growth rates became slower for both regions, namely 0.9 per cent per year for the Balkans and 0.7 for the Ottoman Europe.²²⁹

Nevertheless, the most informative statistical data on birth and death rates for the Ottoman Empire was compiled from the registers done between 1878 and 1914.²³⁰ Estimation from these registers displayed that Muslim birth rate was 49 per thousand and death rate was approximately 29-38 per

²²⁶ BOA, *İrade, Meclis-i Vala* 1535 (4 Receb [12]62/28 June 1846).

²²⁷ Quataert, "Age of Reforms", p. 777, Palairet, *Balkan Economies*, p. 19.

²²⁸ Palairet, *Balkan Economies*, p. 7.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19. Both Karpát and Palairet argue that the Ottoman state was experienced a continuous population growth between 1800 and 1875 (Karpát, *Ottoman Population*, p. 11 and Palairet, *Balkan Economies*, p. 7). Furthermore, there was a continuous population growth during the eighteenth century. For population estimates for the years 1700, 1718, 1740, 1788, and 1815, see Palairet, *Balkan Economies*, p. 6, Table 1.1.

²³⁰ Karpát, *Ottoman Population*; McCarthy, "Muslims in Ottoman Europe"; Quataert, "Age of Reforms"; Duben and Behar, *İstanbul Haneleri*.

thousand.²³¹ As Quataert concludes, these rates was more or less equal to that of an ordinary pre-industrial state, such as eighteenth century France.²³² However, this information is not sufficient for making a final remark on the rate of population growth in the Ottoman Empire. There are no accurate data on the rates of immigration and rates of exact fertility. Rather than the crude birth and mortality rates (live births or deaths per 1,000 population), it is well proved that the major determinant of population growth is the fertility rate, or the refined fertility rate. That is the rate at which female population procreate children.²³³ Moreover, it is misleading to make a connection between decreasing death rate and an increasing birth rate as a cause of population growth.²³⁴ In addition, statistical evidence displayed that infant mortality rates increased or decreased in proportion to the number of living children in the family.²³⁵

Another impediment is the exact data on the number of in-migrant population to cities. However, it is possible to make some estimation, which relied on particular studies had been done on various cities in the Balkans. For example, Todorov says that movement of rural population to cities would affect population growth, both positively and negatively. First,

²³¹ Quataert, "Age of Reforms", p. 784 and McCarthy, "Muslims in Ottoman Europe", pp. 39-40.

²³² Quataert, "Age of Reforms", p. 784.

²³³ Wrigley et al, *Family Reconstitution*.

²³⁴ Marshall, T. H. "The Population Problem During the Industrial Revolution: A Note on the Present State of the Controversy", in *Population in History: Essay in Historical Demography*, D. V. Glass and D. E. C. Eversley (eds) (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1965), 101-43, p. 252.

²³⁵ Quoted in *ibid*.

higher prices and adaptation to new lifestyles in the cities usually affected the tastes of people and caused a decline in fertility. Second, a possible increase in per capita income, a continuation of past habits, and availability of better sanitary conditions could increase fertility rates.²³⁶ Todorov argues that larger cities had a relatively higher population increase, in contrast to the population of small cities, which generally decreased or remained steady during the nineteenth century.²³⁷ However, the population in the larger Balkan cities might have been increased through massive in-migration from rural countryside, rather than a natural growth.

²³⁶ Sauvy, *Fertility and Survival*, pp. 113-5.

²³⁷ Todorov, *Balkan City*, p. 356.

CONCLUSION

This analysis of the population policies in the nineteenth century Ottoman state inspired by the archival documents of the period, and supported by contemporary second hand sources. However, due to the insufficiency of empirical works on this subject, this study remains incomplete. Such empirical data would have been useful for making comparisons with European developments and would have helped to picture the Ottoman case more accurately. This study will be better articulated, once the appropriate data and numbers are effectively derived from the archival documents. As such, more work had to be done on how statistical information on population and policies pertaining to it differentiated, codified, and institutionalized in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Nevertheless, I have attempted to construct a model based on the protection and the procreation of the Ottoman population. The importance of protection and procreation of a labor force for agricultural production, trade, and industry was substantiated by the policies of the Ottoman government in the early period of the Tanzimat to prevent peasantry from emigration and banditry, and to encourage marriage and reproduction. Such an approach is a very important step towards building a more accurate and all-encompassing understanding of the reform policies of the Tanzimat era. I have tried to distance myself from previous works, which only deal with

the collection of numbers from the censuses of the nineteenth century. A close analysis of these censuses could not give us enough information without discussing the post-Tanzimat practices of the Ottoman state, which were generally tried to be undertaken by administrative reforms.

The objective of local construction projects and the new taxation system was to secure the subsistence requirements of peasants. The government controlled the movement of population, because of the need for labor force for agriculture and reconstruction works in the provinces. Modern police forces were established in the countryside to maintain order, to collect local taxes and to eliminate the threats of banditry. The government implemented sanitary policies to improve the living conditions of people and to protect the health of the population. The state's policies against poor and needy were mostly directed to keep a part of the population as reserves for potential laborers and recruits, thus preventing them to be a threat for the public order. On the other hand, the bandit attacks were also a threat to the entire population and the state. On the part of the state, they caused a danger for its security. Thus, those attacks had to be dealt with collectively, such as by the state and the affected population, by the police and gendarmarie forces, or by the army, when the threat went beyond the power limits of any part of the population. But, there also exists a contradiction here. It is the withdrawing or keeping a productive part of the population in barracks and others in reserve that would be destructive to

agricultural production. One of the preventive measures was the control of the movement of population. The Ottoman state usually implemented police restrictions on people's immigration from one place to another. To put in another way, the Ottoman state tried to spread its security matters to the whole population in the nineteenth century. Some of the new regulatory texts and codes of the post-Tanzimat period, such as the decisions of the councils, certain decrees and the Criminal Code, shared a common feature for maintaining the social order and disciplining the unruly parts of the population. That is, all the offenders of social order were to be punished.

Protection of the existing population was not enough for the Ottoman state for materializing its aims and policies. When the population came to be considered as a source of wealth, then it was to be multiplied. In relation with the nineteenth century conceptions of population, procreation was extremely crucial for increasing and sustaining the production, especially the agricultural production. However, the state's policies of population growth did not usually compatible with personal, or group decisions. People did not want to increase the family size. If they felt they could make themselves better by having many children, then why they resisted to population growth is an important issue for further research. This implies that the Ottoman population, whether instinct or rational, controlled fertility.

Except for some very few studies, there are no individual works that is devoted entirely to population issue, which significantly affected the development of the Ottoman modern state in the nineteenth century. Population processes and trends, at best, generally take a tiny part of the Ottoman studies. On the other hand, there are plenty of studies that had been done for western countries, especially after the 1960s. For instance, more studies had to be done on demographic response of rural population to proto-industrialization in the Ottoman state. One could be the effect of female labor on population growth, which was dominated most of the rural industry after the destruction of the Janissary institution in 1826. In particular, after the destruction of the Janissary army in 1826, male dominated labor in the guilds also declined. Thus, share of male labor in manufacture decreased sharply. But, this vacuum was filled by female labor working in their households as a part of the putting-out system. Male and female demands for marriage were to be shifted in response to changing economic conditions. Mokyr's study on Ireland has revealed that the development of rural industry made women marry in later ages than men.²³⁸ However, the lack of statistical data remains as an important obstacle for the researcher.

The declining fertility rates and fleeing of rural population to cities or to other nearby countries were responses to increasing population pressure or to worsening economic conditions. However, this account is

²³⁸ Mokyr, "Malthusian Models", p. 165.

somewhat problematic in two ways. First, the rural population can shift to manufacturing within the countryside,²³⁹ or migrate to cities in search of better livelihood, which was relatively very common in the Balkans during the nineteenth century.²⁴⁰ Second, the causes of population pressure and economic conditions and rural responses to them cannot be substantially differentiated from each other.²⁴¹

The available population data for the first half of the nineteenth century is not fully enough to draw a wider picture of the population policies of the Ottoman state. But, if we are to understand how the concern of the government on population issue affected the development of the Ottoman modern state in the nineteenth century, we must better not to count only the number of 'heads', fertility rates, age-sex compositions, and population densities in the censuses; but social, economic, institutional, and educational aspects of those numbers and rates. More significantly, we need more information on the population policies of the Ottoman Empire to conduct comparative analysis with other states, which will challenge some of the already established assumptions on the nature of Ottoman state in the nineteenth century.

The population policies interrelated with the whole body of social, economic, military, educational, and sanitary reforms after the Tanzimat.

²³⁹ Dov Friedlander and his colleagues showed this tendency based on statistical data (quoted in Tilly, "Vital Processes", p. 18).

²⁴⁰ Quataert, "Age of Reforms" and Palairot, *Balkan Economies*.

²⁴¹ Tilly, "Vital Processes", p. 18.

These policies failed because of the social and political turbulence and the financial collapse of the Empire writ large, in which the Ottoman state could not deliver and accommodate existing tensions within the society. Therefore, if we are to understand the population issue that affected the formation of the Ottoman modern state in the nineteenth century, we must better to study social, cultural, institutional, economic, educational, political and administrative aspects of it within both state and society.

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