

Foundations in the Ottoman Empire and its Contributions to the Social Life

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Abstract

From the past to the present day, societies have established institutions to address their needs for social assistance, solidarity and security within their structures. Some social assistance and social security practices established in modern societies had been carried out by the foundation in Islamic societies in the past. In the Ottoman Empire, as in the Turkish-Islamic states, the foundation institution had played an essential role in the provision of the social order and the cooperation and solidarity of the society. The allocation of private property to the public service gives a social content to the property in question. The allocation of the wealth and income of the founders of the foundation to public service and transferring them to the persons belonging to the lower income group reveal the social function of the foundation. In this context, the main aim of the study is to reveal the function of the foundation institution in the context of social assistance, social solidarity and social security in the Ottoman Empire after first considering the definition, function and a short history of the foundation.

Key Words: *foundation, social service, Ottoman Empire*

Introduction

Foundation is to donate the interest (income or benefits) to those in need or to other charity ways when the asset ownership belongs to the endower. Foundation is a charity institution. It develops with the emotions of morality and religion. The aim of foundation activities is the public good. This thesis addresses the foundational institution which has existed for centuries in the Islam culture during the Ottoman Empire. To some extent, it also aims at understanding the foundations' activities and how these activities were determined with the purpose of explaining their missions and responsibilities. In order to search that, my research question is what are the foundations and what were the roles during the Ottoman Empire?

This study serves as a resource to get to know about foundations. It is also to understand the foundation culture, to get information thoroughly about its history, to understand how it has contributed to the state and the society and to learn about

their missions and services. While the thesis was being written, both the primary and secondary sources were examined.

The foundation institution, since its existence, has been one of the essential elements that spin the social wheels and it has carried on despite the changing political, economic and social conditions. Moreover, it also has provided for the society's needs, arranged new opportunities and played a significant role in determining the living standards. Also, it has shared most of the responsibilities of the state managers and played a crucial role in basic needs such as municipality and zoning. With playing an active role in the improvement of the state management's decentralized structure, it has carried out important work so that citizens living in the land away from the center have equal opportunities.

The first part of the thesis will explain the history of the foundation institution, its importance, and the types of the foundation. Subsequently, the second part elaborates the structure and missions of the foundation institution in the Ottoman Empire.

Foundation Institution

The foremost word in discussing the foundation institution in Ottoman Empire is '*vakıf*' (meaning foundation), an Arabic term derived from a plural version '*evkaf*.' It has different meanings, and the related one is the name of the system that allocates the interest of the property for the people, supports the idea that the property of the foundation is under the force of God, and bands the handover and getting a new property. This system is called '*vakıf*,' the donated property is '*mevkuf*' and who donates is called '*vâkıf*' (ÖZSOY, 1998).

In another definition, a good or a group of goods that have a legal entity created by allocating the sufficient goods or rights of real or legal entities for a specific purpose are called foundation. As can be understood from this definition, the two most essential elements that constitute the foundation are goods that can be allocated and the purpose of this good to be allocated. It is compulsory for the foundation to be lawful, specific, understandable, and sustainable.

It is normal that the feeling of doing charity and favors to others were born with humanity itself. As a result, it can be accepted that the charity activities are as

old as humanity. Hence, it has been accepted that charity organizations have existed since ancient times (HİLMİ, 1997). In old societies, there had been some charity activities. However, most of them stayed limited to their own period, and few of them gained continuity via existing in the next periods. Since the foundation is based on continuity (AKGÜNDÜZ, 1988) charities that are realized for a limited period are not considered within the concept of a foundation.

It is generally accepted that as an organization, the foundations appeared and improved with the emergence of Islam. However, it has been seen that some foundation practices have been considered within the foundation logic. Many foundation organizations known with the name of Halilürrahman¹ Foundations still exist in many places in the Arabian Peninsula. The Kabaa which is the kiblah of the Muslims is considered one of the foundations of Prophet Abraham (HİLMİ, 1997).

There are some other foundations for the name of other prophets other than Prophet Abraham. In the land registry books of ² tThere are foundations for the name of Prophet Yahya and Prophet Zekeriyya. However, these are not the foundations built by the aforementioned prophets. These are the foundations built by others after centuries in the places where these prophets lived, or their tombs are.³ Even though the organization of the foundation actually leans on the encouragement of charity by Islam and leans on the constant desire to do a good deed, some researchers explain the spread of foundation organizations in Ottoman Empire with Turks having similar feelings before Islam (KÖPRÜLÜ F., 1942).

There are also some objections to the claim that the foundation is a Turkish - Islamic institution. The following statements by Hüseyin Hatemi who expresses this view summarize these objections:

"The claim that the foundation organization is Turkish-Islamic institutions is criticized a great deal. There are similar institutions in the legal order of sedentary

¹ Halilürrahman is the nickname of Prophet Abraham

²In the Ottoman Empire, the action of determining and saving the population, land and real estate by the administrated committees in the framework of administrative organization and system to be applied in the conquered places was called 'tahrir' and the notebook these data was saved was called 'tahrir registry books' (land registry books).

³ For foundations font on behalf of the aforementioned prophets, see BOA Tapu Tahrir Notebooks No: 22, 29, 41

societies. In the narrow sense, before the birth of Islamic fiqh, we come across to the acceptance of legal entities of legal orders, especially legal entities of temples. In the legal orders of sedentary societies, there are similar foundations" (HATEMİ, 1996).

Even though the other examples are accepted before, the foundations that have legal entities and that serve in order to do charity work and do a good deed have been institutionalized and widespread with Islam (KÖPRÜLÜ B., 1951).

As social institutions, the foundations have played a significant role in the social, economic and political life of the communities that have lived in the broad Islamic geography extending from Andalusia to Indonesia and Central Asia to South Africa since the Hijri 3rd (10th millennium) centuries. Though they have lost their influences, they continue to play a significant role in shaping these societies (YENİYILDIZ, 1986). Because of its broadness of practice field and the extensity of the geography, the foundation has been considered the most important and extensive institution.

Types of Foundation

It is possible to make this classification in a variety of forms, from the group that benefits from the foundation to the group that rules the foundation and even to the kind of the good that is given to the foundation. In some pieces (KAYA, 1987) even though the foundations are classified in terms of services they provide such as religious foundations, social foundations, and economic foundations, it is appropriate not to do this classification. That is because a foundation can be religious as much as social and it can be social as much as it is economical.

Chattel, Real Estate, and Nature

Foundations in terms of chattel mean that money, fabric, various animal species, war materials, water, grain and many other goods entering the scale can be deducted from the security status in case of customs and manners.

Meanwhile, foundations in terms of real estate formations are means that real estate is something that cannot be transported to somewhere else. In the Islamic law, it is generally named as 'akar.' Though akar means land and terrain, the trees and buildings are also considered as akar.

There are some foundations in term of nature. Among other foundations are charitable trust foundations. In this context, everything that does not have the aim to gain income that the society can directly benefit from is the charitable trust foundations. Mosques, schools, libraries, student dormitories, madrasas, fountains, wells, roads, soup kitchens, health centers, hospitals, guest houses, and cemeteries are some of them.

Meanwhile, in order to realize the perpetuity concept that lies in the heart of foundation, to continue the foundation utilizing the estate and in order not to stop offering the service provided to the society, funds are something needed. This income of funds is provided by means of foundations utilizing income. Benefits collected from foundations utilizing rents of shops, houses, gardens are mostly not transferred to the society but to foundations that utilize the estate such as mosque, road, bridge, and school (ÖZTÜRK, Menşe'i ve Tarihi Gelişimi Açısından Vakıflar, 1983).

The other types are family foundations that accept the utilization of those of the descendants of the founder (AKİPEK, 1998). It is thought to have been born as a reaction to the Islamic heritage law. The family assets transformed into such foundations were able to remain as a whole during the generations within the conditions set by the foundation. (ÖZTÜRK, Menşe'i ve Tarihi Gelişimi Açısından Vakıflar, 1983, s. 84)

The other interesting foundation could be *Avarız* foundations. The word '*avarız*' (a word that is used for the extraordinary tax in Ottoman Empire) is the plural form of *arıza* (malfunction).⁴ What is referred here as a malfunction is disasters such as fire, flood, and unoffered situations like illness and death. *Avarız* foundations are the foundations established for the needs of the people in a village or a town. These needs can be sorted as meeting the needs of the tradesmen who are deprived of their earnings by disease, paying for the funeral expenses of the poor, and healing the patients.

⁴ VGM dictionary

Ownership and Administration

In term of ownership, *shahih* (legitimate) foundations might be the most important ones. These are the foundations that emerge with a person's allocating part or full of his property to serve a purpose in line with the legal procedure and allowing it to acquire legal entity status. What makes the foundation legitimate here is that the tangible asset of the foundation belongs to the legal personality of the foundation as property (ÖZTÜRK, *Menşei ve Tarihi Gelişimi Açısından Vakıflar*, 1983, s. 87).

In the meantime, goods and especially the real estate that are devoted do not always belong to the artificial personality of the foundation. Sometimes, the bare ownership of the good belongs to the founder. These foundations are called *irsadi* foundations (BERKİ, 1970). In such foundations, the interests of a part of the Exchequer, the rights of disbursement, or both, have been allocated by an emperor or by someone else with his permission for a specific purpose.

In the Ottoman Empire, the administration of foundations should be evaluated in two parts as before and after the Evkaf-ı Hümayün Nezareti (known today as the General Directorate for Foundations). The establishment date of the Directorate is the beginning of the 19th century (1826).

After the Evkaf Nezareti was founded and the administration was taken by the state, according to the type of existing state intervention, the foundations were subjected to certain limitations. They are registered foundations, annexed foundations, and exclusive foundations.

The first and foremost is registered foundations. These are the foundations that have separate legal entities and managed directly by Directorate. Those created by the dynasty and managed by the state officials are called "selatin foundations." The second one is annexed foundations. These are the foundations that are independently managed by administrators and are subject to the supervision of the Directorate. This supervision was generally realized by harem masters, Shaykh al-Islam, kadi-ul asker or Muslim judges and it performed like an organ included in the structure of the foundation. Lastly, exclusive foundations that are the foundations directly governed by private trustees without any intervention by the estate and the

Directorate. The state can only initiate investigations on behalf of the community authority. Foundations that emerged with the transformation of the land donated to the soldiers who achieved great success in the wars and in the realization of the order and the scholars who had the significant influence on the society (Mevlana Foundation, Hacı Bektaş Veli Foundation) are in this category.

Foundation Institution in the Ottoman Empire

When the emergence of the institution was examined in the Ottoman Empire, a more complex structure was seen. The perception of the foundation in the Ottoman Empire started from the Uighurs and reached to Seljuks with the Eastern influence and started from the Roman Empire and reached to Byzantine Empire with the Western influence. In the perception of institutionalization that emerges, the Islamic Law coexisted with the Roman law.

The foundations operating in the Ottoman Empire were institutionalized, far beyond the concept of charity, thanks to the accumulation of Islamic law and the sub-structure it provided. The institution of the foundation had obtained its most major growth after the emergence of Islam which cared a great deal about helping one another in social life and cooperation, and it has been adopted by strong Turkish states. Indeed, one of the most processed and developed parts of Islam law is foundations. Here, the basic awareness is the judgment that everyone deserves apart from the wealth that the state owns even it is at a minimum (ÖZTÜRK, Vakıfların Yönetimi Merkezietçi Anlayıştan Kurtarılmalı, 2006)

It is known that the Ottomans took over the administration in an Anatolian region which had already realized the reconstruction to a large extent with mosques, Islamic monasteries, inns, public baths, bridges, caravansaries and completed its infrastructure (İŞPİRLİ, 2006).

Nonetheless, it can be easily expressed that this physical heritage and foundational culture inherited from the Ottoman foundation understanding had both developed and diversified. Ottoman citizens led their lives with the chance of communicating with foundations and benefiting from them at almost every stage of their lives. This is why the analysis as "Thanks to the foundations, a man is born in a foundation house, sleeps in a foundation crib, eats and drinks from foundation

goods, studies from foundation books, teaches at the foundation school, gets his salary from the foundation administration, and when he dies, he is put into a foundation coffin and buried in a foundation graveyard" appears in many sources (ARŞEVÜK, 1938). The mentality in which there was even a foundation for servants who broke dishes like plates and cups went in order to avoid their masters would undoubtedly improve and diversify the culture and heritage it took over (KAZICI, 2006).

Social Effects and Main Services: Contribution to Social Aid and Social Security Services

The foundations aforementioned had impacted socially, including in main social services. It even affected the distribution of income-wealth. In the topics such as education, public works, and health that interest everyone in the society and that the government does not mostly see as its responsibility, the foundations operating service helps the income-wealth not accumulating and allows its distribution to the society. The aid of the foundations such as clothing in the form of public relief and such as scholarship in the form of financial aid most of the time creates a transfer from the rich to the poor.

In addition to this, it is an income-wealth transfer in which the characteristics of the beneficiaries are not asked, and public service such as education, health, and public works are aimed at everyone in the whole society, no matter if rich or poor. However, when it is taken into consideration that the individuals forming the society are mostly from the lower and middle-income levels, it is understood that the foundations realize income transfer from the rich to the poor.

The foundations also contributed to social aid and security services. The social aid services of the foundations vary. A part of services such as food and clothing aid to those in need, the establishment of soup kitchens and guest houses, the building of inns and baths, lending money, giving food and water to those in jail, giving fruits to the people and children are services that aim those in need. However, some of them are aids that have no condition of being in need. Foundation social complexes play a social catalysator role as they as they take the lead in the development of other meeting places in their environment in addition to services such as religion,

education, food distribution to the poor and guests and library. Foundations, with this aspect, have also been functioning as solidarity.

In the other side, the social security services the foundations serve can be analyzed in two groups. In the first group, some services can be benefited from without paying any fees or premiums, and most of the services are in this group. On the other hand, some needs are not broad; meaning they do not interest the majority of the people. At the same time, some needs are not continuous, they are faced once or a few times in life. For needs like these that social security institutions cannot help with, the foundations are seen suitable. Someone who faces such situation finds a foundation for this need to be fulfilled. Those who organize social security institutions might not think of these needs, and it is not realistic to make arrangements in a large institution for a need that is seen rarely. Thanks to the foundations, all these needs are fulfilled.

In a broader context, science and culture also get the distribution of the foundations. An important factor in finding foundations is one's desire to be remembered for a long time after their death. It is an expected feeling that one is remembered with the foundation she or he found as well as with the technical and aesthetic features of the foundations. Therefore, if the person seeing the foundation is building a big facility, he will want this facility to remember differently than the others. This desire has brought together the implementation of many new and different techniques in significant structures such as water facilities, bazaars, mosques, and baths. Hence, water calculation techniques developed by Mimar Sinan before he built the waterways to understand if there was enough water (ÇEÇEN, 1988), acoustic that came all the way to today which was tried in big mosques such as Süleymaniye and Selimiye, innovations such as big domes have been effective in the improvement of both engineering techniques and the aesthetic beauties.

The waterways were built by the foundations to fulfill the water need in İstanbul, a city that always had a water problem for centuries since there is no significant stream close by. Kırkçeşme which is the biggest one of these waterways and both an art and architecture masterpiece, water jumps and aqueducts are work of foundations. Research conducted for the establishment of these and the improved

engineering techniques are an essential contribution of foundations on scientific and technical development.

Famous astronomy scholar, Ali Kuşçu, created an altitude board that shows the altitude of the sun to understand the time near the medresa in Fatih Külliye. The simple sun clock made by him were called Muvakithane⁵ still stands on the right dome of the mosque (UNAN, 1993). Evliya Çelebi gives the following information about Ali Kuşçu: *"A person dealing with astrology with the name of Ali Kuşçu had "Elem tere..." in front of the big dome and Quran reading school for Muslim children next to the Boyacılar door in the yard of the mosque, and it is unprecedented."* These institutions that are all foundations show the positive effects of the foundations on scientific research and development. As it is seen, the foundations not only targets education and religious culture but also have played a role in the education and enhancement of positive sciences.

The Role of the Foundation in the Formation of Society

It is clear that the foundations played an important role in many aspects in the formation of the society, including women involvement as well as society morals. The foundations have affected the participation of women in society in different ways. In addition to the widely seen women foundations, the fact that there are women trustees in the foundations, that there are many women borrowing from the foundations, that women can be guarantor for the debts of their husbands or other people, that there are women among the renters of the houses or workplaces are essential indicators. In the legal aspect, women can also be trustees, witnesses, etc.

In endowments, it is an often seen situation that there are specific criteria looked for in those who will get salary as workers and those who will get salaries without working (as aid). Some of the characteristics sought for are characteristics that the job requires. For example, musts such as an accountant good at accounting, a clerk good at literary composition, a competent teacher, an innkeeper good at service and able to give all kinds of services, a muezzin having a good voice are what it takes to overcome the task.

⁵. It is the place where the person attached to a mosque whose chief duty was to determine the time for ezan to inform the praying hour and time and where he did small scaled astrology of research

Many characteristics that are not related to the job but required by the morals of today are sought in those getting salaries who work or not. Some of the conditions wanted in endowments are helping widow women and the poor, well-behaved women. It is wanted that after the founder of the foundation dies, someone from his or her descent, woman or man and if he or she does not have any competent child, someone from the society that is suitable becomes the trustee.

A part of these are subjective characteristics and can be filled in accordance with the evaluation of the time. However, no matter how these concepts are interpreted, in the end, it contributes to the protection of society's morals and development. In addition to this, it should not be forgotten that these characteristics are written in moral and advice books in the Islamic world.

Most of these are characteristics that do not change with time, that a specific moral system always requires, that are even international such as having good morals, having proper attitude and behavior.

Social Related Services of the Foundations

During the empire, there were numerous services of the foundations. They were complex building service, health services, education services, social aid, and social security services, religious services, public works and municipality services. Over time, foundation institutions enlarged and the complex of buildings called *külliyeye* was built. A *külliyeye* is a sort of campus. In *külliyeye*, many different institutions were together and connected. In *külliyeye*, there were some or all of the buildings of mosques, different level education institutions, health institutions, hospices, soup kitchens, libraries, bathhouses, bazaars, guest houses, pensions in which students and academicians stayed, lodgement for employees, Ottoman bazaars, inns, and hostels. In order to pay for the expenses of these institutions, the income-giving properties such as vineyard, houses, and shops were donated.

Just as in the whole Islamic world, the Ottoman Empire also carried out healthcare services through foundations. While some of the health organizations were private, some of them existed inside complexes called *külliyeye*. Fatih's hospital is a part of Fatih's *külliyeye*. In this *külliyeye*, apart from the hospital, there were also a council, academy, medical school, school for children, rooms for those children to

stay, kitchen for the poor and the students, a guest house for the travelers, a bathhouse, and bazaar. The first health institutions in the form of foundations go back all the way to the first centuries of Islam, the first period of Abbasi meaning all the way back to VIII century. These foundations built for diagnosis and treatment grew and developed very soon, started to give medical education and got the name of *daru't-tib*.

Foundations also had helped to education services in various ways. From middle school to expertise schools, in every level of education were built by the foundations and the buildings, pieces of equipment, salaries of the employees, the food and clothing needs of the students and sometimes student scholarships were met by the foundations.

The education services provided by foundations were the result of the way the Middle East / Islamic state tradition looked at the duties of the state. In this approach, the state did not have to carry out public services other than justice and defense. It encouraged and controlled the execution of these services through private individuals and especially foundations. The Ottoman Empire, which followed this understanding, also carried out most of the public services, while education was carried out through foundations. The people in the management team pioneered establishing foundations in large quantities and by building lots of buildings, land, and income.

Generally, in Islamic countries, and in the Ottoman Empire in the meantime, education and training activities were not considered to be a direct task of the state to carry out. The state was taking cautions to promote education and monitoring it from time to time. As a result of this incentive, education was carried out by foundations.

In this field, the work the foundations did was to establish educational institutions, build and buy buildings for them. Also, the maintenance and repair of these institutions were realized by foundations. While some foundation founders built foundations for one education institutions, some of them built more than one inside one foundation.

As the educational institutions were built by the foundations, all the expenses necessary for these institutions to carry on were also covered by the foundations. The salaries given to academics were more than what was given to trustees including administrator, imam, and muezzin who got their salaries from the foundation. In a matter of fact, sometimes academic salaries were three or four times more than what they received⁶.

Fifteen coins were given to school teacher considered as a castle employee working in İstanbul Yeni Mosque Foundation in Çanakkale. This amount was around two times more than the daily amount given to castle and mosque employees. This rate shows that education employees were given more importance than the castle and mosque employees.⁷

In the same time, the foundations not only paid the salaries of the academics and built schools. They also gave scholarships to the students. In the accounting books, there are seen student scholarships.⁸ Some foundations gave regular scholarships to students. As this is seen as one of the fundamental duties of the foundations, in the accounting books, the scholarships given were saved with personal expenses as current expenditure.⁹

One of the social benefits that foundations realized was to provide clothing to children and school children in general. Sabık Defterdar Mustafa Efendi Foundation donated 4600 coin worth of clothing to school children. Besides, 720 coins were spent from the same organization for clothing costs for children without specifying whether or not they were school children (İŞSA 26/30/4-a).

⁶ For example, the sheik of Darullurra who worked in Molla Husrev Mosque got six coins while the trustee, the imam of the mosque and muezzin of the same foundation got two coins every day.

⁷ While the amount of money paid to the castle employees was around 8.15 coins, the average daily salary paid to the mosque workers were 7.6 coins.

⁸ From the Abdusselam Bey Foundation in 1633, every year 1800 coins were given to the students as scholarship. For the school providing education in Mola Husrev Mosque, the foundation founded by Hacı Şaban gave two students one coin daily in 1659. In the same foundation, the most significant amount of salary was given to the school teacher şeyh-i darulkurra who got six coins daily. When considered the imam of the mosque, muezzin and foundation trustee received two coins, and the administrator received one coin, it can be seen that the scholarship was enough to meet the needs of a student.

⁹ The student of the Fatih the Conqueror schools was accepted as the school employee and was recorded to the accounting notebook and the two coins given to the student as pocket money was written as personnel expenses (UNAN, 1993).

Foundations also realized the functions to the social security in the Ottoman times both in the classical period and the renovation period (TABAKOĞLU, 1997). Among the social aid services of the foundations were providing dowries for orphan girls, paying the debts of those who were in jail as debtors, saving those imprisoned because of bankrupt, giving clothes to the elders of the village, helping the neighborhoods and villages for taxes. It also included providing military pieces of equipment, building purveyance chamber facility, feeding soldiers fruits, building lighthouses, helping the orphans, widows and those in need, taking children out in the spring, providing food, clothing and education materials to school children, giving fuel money to students. This kind of social services also manifested in giving clothes and provisions to the poor children, widows and old people, providing funeral services for the poor and outcasts, building laundry rooms, making children and the poor happy in religious holidays.

Foundations helped the poor, the outcasts and the addicts in different ways. The aid was sometimes in the form of cash and sometimes aid in kind. While some foundations gave a regular monthly allowance to the poor, some of them helped them in specific days such as *Ramadan* and holidays.

In the *külliyeh* which was in the form of campus, the nutrition expenditures had a significant place. The nutrition expenditures of the *külliyeh* were made more by the soup kitchen. The first soup kitchen in İstanbul was made by Fatih the Conqueror.

Similar to the other Islamic societies, also in Ottoman society, the mosques were sometimes established before the neighborhood, and the settlements were formed around the mosques. This was not only in centers like İstanbul but also in the provinces. For instance, in Derbend, which was a famous city on the West coast of the Caspian Sea, the mosque was in the middle of the market (BARTHOLD, 1945).

Dini Religious services include mosques and small mosques, paying the salaries of the *imams*, *muezzin*, and pensioners. Some foundation founders required the Quran to be read for their souls after their death or for their dead parents on sacred nights, on certain days or certain days of the week. The salaries paid for these were also included in the scope of religious services.

In the Ottoman Empire, during the period of progression, the foundations played an essential role in the expansion and the establishment of the state. Most of the establishments, bastions, inns, shops, caravanserais and other buildings built by the foundations were built outside of the walls surrounded the cities (YÜKSEL, 1998). These buildings contributed to the expansion and the development of the cities.

GünümüMost of the tasks conducted by the municipalities today were realized by the foundations back then. Among the municipality services that foundations conducted, waterways, fountains, baths, cleaning tasks, reconstruction activities in the cities and the roads in the cities are some of them that come to mind. The services the foundations provided are so much in relation to the municipality services that according to Osman Nuri Ergin who conducted much research on this topic that "Foundations are nothing more than municipalities." (ERGİN, 1936)

Water Services, Urban Construction, and Transportation

As there is no river passing close to İstanbul, because of the geography it is built on, the water problem for this city which is a big and essential center, there was always the problem of water. Considering that it always faced envelopments, it is also readily understood that the water problem was even more critical.

After the conquest, waterways were built by Fatih the Conqueror in order to meet the need for water, and fountains and wells were opened in various places. In the foundation records named " Foundation Notebook of Fountains, Public Fountains, Mosque, Lodges, Small Mosques, School, Soup Kitchen, Military Post, Well and Water Pump Valid for İstanbul's Water" from İstanbul Head Office of Foundations, 1553 places giving water in the city borders of İstanbul, the name of the founders, their places and how much water flow were allocated. Similar to other foundation pieces, the amount of money in the construction of the waterways is vast.

In İstanbul, there were many fountains built for the water coming from inside and outside of the city to be benefited from. These fountains most of which are still standing today were built in the form of fountains. One of the crucial services built in the form of fountains in order to meet the water need of the society were public

fountains. The purest form of it was a base of faucets or cuddles, which are placed on a pedestal or bench with a high base

Foundations contributed a great deal to the development of the cities with the social and religious service institutions. When said urban construction activities, one of the things that come to mind is the construction of roads and pavements. While it is seen that many foundations fixed the fronts of the bazaars and stores and paved, in the cases that this was neglected, the state's foundations were forced to fix the pavement of their own stores.¹⁰

By establishing structures such as bridges, roads, water wells, fountains, mills, seaside, cisterns, schools, mosques in the settlements outside the city, reclaiming, building or buying agricultural units such as vineyards and orchards, olive groves, and rances, providing income for these to continue to give service, the foundations played a vital role in the construction of the nation (YÜKSEL, 1998).

In the Ottoman Empire, a transportation and communication network was consisting of the staging station established by the state for the military, judiciary, the administration purposes, and guard community. (It is said that the state made the main transportation roads as surplus receipts and the feudality and commandery made the second level roads). Only the government officials could benefit from this transportation network. Traders, pilgrims, ordinary passengers, etc. called civilian passengers could not benefit from this official transport organization (YÜKSEL, 1998).

On the other hand, civilian passengers could benefit from the facilities such as inns, etc. built on the route to the aforementioned official transportation. In order to provide income for the foundations and helping the merchants, volunteers, and other civilian passengers to continue on their way safely and comfortably, the founders build some facilities on this official state transportation network.

¹⁰ In a verdict written addressing the judge dated May 24, 1572, it was stated that most of the bazaar in Istanbul were in front of foundation shops and the pavements were destroyed, that the pavement of the Mutatlar Bazaar was destroyed more. It was ordered that these pavements, as well as the pavement in front of the foundation pavement of Hagia Sophia, would be fixed by the trustees, that assigned person for this task, a Hassa architect Mehmet Subasi would gather all the foundation trustees including the Sultan foundations and the pavement in front of each shop would be fixed by architects and those who did not realize this would be reported to the palace to be dismissed. (Refik, p61-62).

These facilities were expensive and the need for important organization in order to ensure the continuity of these must be the main reason why the founders were of those rich. For the small scaled foundations built by the middle class, rather than their establishment, their care or management does not create inconvenience. Founders - who built caravansaries, inns, baths, bakeries, blacksmiths, haystacks, warehouses, mills, roads and pavements - also allocated for the maintenance and repair of these.

Conclusion

At the end of this thesis, the purpose is to explain what the foundation institution is. It encompasses the foundations existed for centuries in the Islamic culture and its missions, activities, the procedure of determining activities, its sponsors, its tasks and responsibilities during the Ottoman Empire. It explains that foundations are so much more than institutions created only to help. The role of the foundations in the transfer of the cultural heritage to the next generations and the national and moral values exceeding ages and lands should never be ignored. Even today, they guide us for the future and light our past. They also contribute directly to the science and technology for the students they raise, with the schools they build from kindergarten to university level.

This study attempts to elaborate the foundation culture, getting through info on its history, understanding its contributions to the state and to the society and understanding how foundations function today. Pertaining to what their missions and services, the foundations have taken more roles in around 1500 years than we think or assume. The fact that the primary sources often talk about gaining God's mercy, obeying the Prophet's advice and the effort to go to the heaven make evident that foundations are not built with earthly reasons but in a way, for the afterlife. What motivates the sponsors of the foundations is the Islam itself. It is effortless and transparent to see this understanding both in the secondary sources and in the foundation managers. This conscious, where the haram and halal are considered as important as the laws, is probably the reason how foundations have stayed alive for such a long time.

While undertaking this responsibility, the foundations have managed to be one of the most critical elements that ensured the continuity of the social life. Despite the changing politics, economy and social circumstances, the foundations have met the needs of people, educated them and gave them job opportunities. Especially in times when the government went through hard times, this vital role decreased the effects of the crisis and increased the strength of the people a lot.

The foundation institutions are not only crucial for the people but the state as well. In this geography where there is a central state tradition, in the betterment, zoning, and social order, the foundations have played a crucial role. Again, with the Islamic motivation, that foundations handle the management and maintenance of the holiest and precious buildings such as *Mescid-i Haram*, *Mescid-i Nebevi*, *Kubbet-üs-Sahra*, and *Mescid-i Aksa* is the most significant sign of how much trust are given to the foundations. Apart from that, foundations which supported road construction, school construction, bridges, waterways, zoning activity line, education expenses of the students and even the servants when they broke plates of the houses they worked for, have become an essential part of the society's peace.

The foundations - built sometimes by the sultan himself as the head of the state, sometimes the other family members from the reign, sometimes by the bureaucrats taking part in the state management, sometimes by the individuals with the state support and sometimes just by the individuals themselves - have been a tool for the purposes talked about above. Even though there are different purposes in establishing a foundation, the support, trust, and agreement of the society have been taken. This study on foundations in the Ottoman Empire would be an example for the Turkish history and its foundations and, at the same time, might shed light on the further researches.

Author Note

Emre Rifat Güpgüpoğlu studied at Yeditepe University and currently is a postgraduate student at Silk Road School, Renmin University of China. This paper was conducted intensively as he is a member of a family that has been maintaining a foundation exist up to the present time with a clear reputation. His family established the foundation with their own assets more than 200 years with the sole purpose of gaining God's mercy by donating some properties.

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