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Sidestepping Capitalism: on the Ottoman Road to Elsewhere*

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Abstract Mapping productivist logic derived from the history of capitalism onto the rest of the world blocks the view of alternative systems, and their internal logic. Theories of the capitalist state can capture neither the nature of the non-capitalist states nor those states' social and economic relations. Our alternative formulation of the Ottoman state disassociates class, property, and distribution from the sphere of production and associates them with the state. Thereby, Ottoman history sheds its petrified cloak and the Ottoman state comes to life; motion, change and class conflict are things Ottoman once again.

Introduction

Before capitalism some social systems outside western Europe — such as the Ottoman — were in a process of transformation that led elsewhere.[1] Yet, the histories of these regions are written after the pattern of experience of their west European counterparts, utilizing the same concepts and themes.[2] There is a wealth of critical literature discussing the flaws of these Eurocentric histories. In critiquing the limits of the existing accounts, this literature identifies 'what the east was not.' Disappointingly, the criticism does not go much beyond this identification.

Our purpose is to begin telling the story. It is our contention that the history of the Ottomans can be reconstructed utilizing the concepts of the Eurocentric accounts — such as state, class, property and distribution — while qualifying their meanings. Moreover, we argue that in the Ottoman context the interactions among these concepts are quite different from the west European case.

We hold the following views on the state of analysis of historical change in non-European societies. The historical trajectory of western Europe can neither define the course of a non-European historical transformation nor is it suitable for constructing a comparative model encompassing both the European experience and the rest of the world. Thus, when an analysis of non-European change is attempted, the explanatory potential of some of the classical postulates of liberal and Marxist social theory needs to be explicitly scrutinized. Moreover, liberal and Marxist theories are at their best as theories of a specific historical development, i.e. that of capitalism in western Europe.[3] Likewise, they are at their weakest when understood as trans-historical theories of social development. Yet, the predominant

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trend in Marxist and modernization studies of the 'Third World' has been to read these theories in terms of the latter understanding. The 'West' is thus taken as the primary referent; the 'West' becomes the standard for trans-historical and cross-cultural 'universals.' This produces the all too common, though unacknowledged, conflation of analytic categories with historically specific cultural categories such as class, state, and property.[4]

Whether non-European societies underwent social and political transformation is not at issue. They did! And there is good evidence of movement on a path resembling neither the motion of capitalism nor its feudal predecessors. Our concern here is with the identification of the character of that movement. The basic problem with social histories of the non-European world is the petrified account of its non-capitalist past. Given the 'universalist' approach of modernization theories,[5] the character and the dynamics of the 'traditional' society is not specified. Concentration is on the 'process' of modernization as a consequence of the encounter with Europe, providing a still-life characterization of the 'traditional' epoch. Furthermore, the presumably universal concepts applied in mapping out the historical spectacle cannot give life to the earlier structures in most of the world before the period of European colonization or 'encounter.' Those concepts begin to assume a universal character — if at all — only after the dawn of the capitalist era.

The dynamism of Ottoman history remains invisible as long as transformation is associated solely with the sphere of production. To demonstrate this we will critically discuss the following four categories in Ottoman history: i) the identification and definition of class(es), ii) the concept of property, iii) the distribution of social surplus — within the context of the state, — and iv) the state. We will be following the Ottoman road to reach a reformulation of articulations that were non-modern, yet, viable and dynamic. It will not lead towards a charted territory such as capitalism or modernity. The counterfactural question, where the road would have led had the encounter with capitalism not taken place, is irrelevant. Our problem is to identify the movement itself not its unrealized destination. It is necessary to capture the movement and characterize its own dynamics which continue into the post encounter period in order to avoid falling back on the Eurocentric model which casts more shade than light on alien structures.

Class and property are the two categories of social analysis that provide the dynamism of European history. The motion of Ottoman history can also be understood through the interaction of these categories, but not as an interaction of classes over property. On the contrary, in the Ottoman context both class and property can be understood only in relation to the state. Definition of the dominant class is problematic in itself, and property in land, the basic source

of surplus, does not evolve into private property. In the Ottoman case interaction of classes still defines a system but with the explicit inclusion of the state, as opposed to the modern European context where state is understood as a derivative of 'class' — and 'society.'

Class

A discussion of class in the Ottoman framework raises two basic difficulties. The first is the identification of social classes in mapping out Ottoman social interaction in history. The second is identification of class as an entity separate from the concept of the state.

The Marxian concept of class 'takes its content or meaning from the analysis of the bourgeoisie, the first class for whom production and property acquire primary importance vis-a-vis both its position of power and its legitimating ideology.'[6] Marx privileges the contradiction between wage labor and capital as the driving force of all history. In so doing, he risks the presumption that control over production or ownership of the means of production translates into a medium of power in non-capitalist societies. This extension of 'productivist' logic to all history reduces relations of domination to production relations, comprehended as class antagonisms, and precludes an analysis of non-class relations of domination, stratification and differentiation.[7] Consciousness enters the analysis as an added dimension to identify classes.

In the Ottoman context no dominant social group fits into a category of social class via either ownership of the means of production or position in the production process. The core of economic activity yielding the major part of surplus in the Ottoman context was agriculture. Artisans were relatively insignificant strata both compared to the merchants and to their counterparts in south Asia or the western Mediterranean.[8] Nor did their guild organizations enjoy political autonomy comparable to that of European cities. Artisans and their guilds remained, by and large, as organizations provisioning Ottoman cities, which can best be identified as seats of bureaucracy.

In agriculture, a strata of claimants on agrarian surplus superficially resembled landlords, but they were neither independent of the central political power, nor were their claims 'property' claims. Their attempt to monopolize the surplus on 'state property' took place within the realm of state practices, without a challenge to the right of the central power to either 'property' or surplus. The claimants sought a share of state revenue through their privileged positions within the state. They did not make permanent claims on factors of production. Individuals' access to the agricultural surplus did not place them collectively in an antagonistic position against the state. It rather represented political confrontation among individuals within

a context of legitimate state practices. And, as far as the specific persons and their successors were concerned, continuity of claims were systematically regenerated, they were neither institutionalized nor associated with the emergence of privileged classes of the 'European type' such as the nobility.

Those who would choose to analyse Ottoman history through the European paradigm have two choices with respect to resolving the issue of ownership of landed-property. The first is to seek a landlord class and assume a property relationship; this option is not supported by history. The other option is to acknowledge the 'reality' of the state and consider it the dominant class. This may seem appealing since it settles the issue of ownership of the means of production, in the sense that arable land would then belong to a class — or the state. However, from a theoretical point of view this is no solution at all within this approach because 'property' here has nothing to do with the production process itself and the bureaucracy or the army in the Ottoman context does not have the active class role in production relations.[9] In Ottoman history property serves the function of establishing a legal basis to inhibit private claims and inviolable access to land. The dominant class in terms of property relations does not have a role in the production process. Nor does the state, as the *de jure* land 'owner,' have the role of a landlord in production.

The next possible group we can look to are the peasants. In terms of relative position of agents in the production process, the peasantry is the only candidate who can fill the subordinate role in a possible context of conflict, however, without a corresponding landlord class in the production process. The relation of the subordinate and the superordinate is not a labor relation as described in the materialist analyses of capitalism, feudalism, or slavery. Instead, the relation remains one of distribution of surplus within the domain of state practice. Another peculiar aspect of the Ottoman case is the locus of conflict over distribution of surplus. As opposed to the landlord-peasant pair in the accounts of European feudalism; in the Ottoman case the central government and the 'would-be landlord' were the major parties in conflict.[10]

The best candidate for a dominant class independent of the 'state' with control of its own material means of reproduction is the merchants.[11] While we could conceptualize merchants as a class on the basis of similar material interests, this does not yield a 'dominant class' in the Ottoman context. If another potential basis in addition to material interests for the emergence of class identity of merchants were ethnic or religious, the Ottoman social process simply did not give weight to such criteria. Rather, the Ottoman administration was interested in perpetuating the cosmopolitan nature of its social organization, *not* in accentuating ethnic differences that might have

led to conflict. Unification of the interests of those who could be identified as the bourgeoisie on the basis of their material interests mushroomed in the Ottoman lands only after the triumph of local nationalisms in the nineteenth century.

Turning to other criteria by which to identify the dominant class, in terms of solidarity, organization, and coherence, the bureaucratic and military strata associated with the state was the primary socially constituted category that demonstrated consciousness or cohesiveness against other categories — such as ethnic or occupational. While in this instance identification of consciousness is not problematic, classifying the conscious category as a class creates difficulties.

Specifically, the problem in treating the state as class is that any conflict which may exist within the state cannot be adequately interpreted if all the constituent elements of the state are identified as one and the same. This is of particular importance because most of the conflict that affected the structure took place among agents that can best be identified as affiliated with the government or the army. The conflict of different functional groups within the bureaucracy and the army are organized around distinct material benefits based on various forms of access to surplus. Then, the 'functional' groups themselves, rather than the greater collectivity of the state, can be better candidates to be identified as classes.

Consciousness relating to the state as a whole, however, was shared by all the constituent groups under the same rubric. Each subsection or functional group had a group identity which enhanced its solidarity based on its regional or occupational role within the administrative mechanism. Yet the identity of these groups which sometimes worked against central policies can be defined as a form of consciousness opposing the function and role of the state in the broader system.

Idiosyncracies of Ottoman Social Stratification: Class Nature of Armies[12]

While the functional categories independent of the state in social reproduction cannot be identified as dominant social classes, major functional categories created by the administrative mechanism — such as the cavalrymen and the standing army — come closer to a social category that enters into 'class-like' relations in the social structure. Their continuity and embeddedness in the social fabric is remarkable.

In this sense, functional layers within the state can be classified as semi-autonomous social categories. These functional layers did not come and go. They represent longstanding, well-defined material interests within the bureaucratic mechanism. In the analysis of

conflicts over distribution, identification of opposing 'interest groups' within the administrative mechanism as class-like entities should be the beginning point of inquiry into the nature of socially dominant classes.

Ottoman historians often use 'class' as a descriptive gloss, but they rarely attempt to invest class with analytic value.[13] Within the military organization two categories — the *timariots* and the janissaries — provide an appropriate illustration. The peculiarity of these 'social' categories is that, while they were created within the Ottoman state practice, they functioned within both the state and the social domain. They exhibited remarkable 'social' mobility and were terminated by administrative or military action over the extended period.

Timariots:

In the fourteenth century the Ottomans were a transhumant community living side by side with the cultivators of western Anatolia. An important aspect of Ottoman organization was its attitude towards agricultural production. Nomadic war-bands were not allowed to operate within the conquered areas. This exclusion of the nomads was inseparable from the imperative of preserving the agricultural base as a continuous source of revenue. This 'policy' eventually crystallised as a structural attribute of the Ottoman state. The Ottomans, for example, deliberately pushed the nomads as far east as they could. Individuals from nomadic tribes were sent to western regions with special productive or military tasks and transformed into transhumants, military forces, or peasants, thus breaking up their nomadic tribal unity and keeping them subservient to local authorities.

The emergence of the army of cavalrymen as an institutionalized military force was a continuation of this process of incorporation of a pastoralist element with distinctly nomadic roots.[14] The cavalry force had its roots in 1) earlier Ottoman armies, and 2) agricultural organization as a basis of revenues and 3) the requirement of effectively transforming the revenue into military and 'police' service.

Timar was a 'prebend' established on conquered lands and given to a cavalryman (*sipahi*) for the upkeep of himself, his horse, and the retainers the cavalryman was obliged to take along on military campaigns. This 'prebendal' system resembles the earlier Byzantine and Seljukid forms, as well as similar organizations in other agrarian-bureaucratic systems. Ottomans managed to keep the *timar* system based on a small size; the revenue allocated to the cavalrymen was not enough to keep more than a few fighting men at their service, and hence accumulation of local power on the basis of the allocation was limited.

In addition to its original function of providing a military force during campaigns to expand territory and to add to the revenues of the state,

this land-revenue-based cavalry force served other purposes. Previously nomadic mercenaries were 'grounded,' and their material interests transformed: those who once generated 'booty' outside the system now generated land-revenue for the state. The fighting men were kept 'content' outside the sphere of war making, and could use the agricultural revenue at its source. This was especially important in a terrain where water transport was not available and the cost of alternative methods of transport was prohibitive.

At the same time, the cavalrymen were obliged to keep the revenue base intact by overseeing the peasants — however, not the actual process of production — while also protecting them against infringement of the tribal or transhumant population. This system also broke up the local powers in competition with the Ottomans, and protected the revenue base against monopolization by larger military political powers that could threaten the superiority of the central Ottoman power.

These cavalrymen had internal solidarity and loyalty to their benefactors in a manner that earlier unattached retainer armies could not. Loyalty to the state and its rules was in the cavalrymen's interest because loyalty preserved their privileges. Other administrative procedures kept the *timariots* atomistic and detached from direct involvement in agricultural activities. They were to maintain their military character and not turn into agricultural managers. Their commanders, who were provincial governors, were in charge of them only militarily. 'Civil' disputes in their 'prebends' were to be settled within a judicial system which was independent of the military organization. Furthermore, their posts were not hereditary, and the location of their 'prebends' was not permanent.

For a century this small-holding cavalry force expanded throughout the conquered areas of Anatolia and the Balkans. The *timar* system not only protected the revenue base against the claims of larger power sources, but it was also instrumental — as a military force — in actively undermining the larger power bases. The new cavalry force became the source of strength of the Ottoman state not only in external war, but also in internal mobilization and expansion of state revenue by eroding monopolizations.

Janissaries:

Another aspect of institution building at the formative period was the establishment of a new standing army — the janissary corps — at the capital. The janissary corps was to be the elite military and administrative force of the state. This army was built through the gathering, purchasing or capturing Christian youths (*devesirme*), who were educated in military camps. This army was created to be less autonomous, less mobile, and more reliable than the provincial

cavalrymen.[15] The janissaries' income was in the form of a salary detached from the source of revenue. Also, the standing army was designed such that its claims on revenue were not hereditary. Thus the janissaries' claims could exist only during their tenure.

The Ottoman land-revenue-based administration managed the flow of revenue and maintained the administrative structure. Claims on revenue were to be kept from solidifying, and the revenue itself was to remain re-allocable and fluid. In an administrative structure where most of the revenue users were also the collectors at the source, the flow had to be maintained through a network of control over the administrative structure. This entailed not only the breaking up the power of large notables, but also the creating of an army and administration which could be reshuffled with ease. From this point of view, attention was focused not on the nature of the production of revenue but on the social nature of its users — i.e., on the origins and rights of the bulk of the administration itself.

The *timariots* and the janissaries had separate collective material interests. In times of conflict they exhibited their cohesion and material interest by taking sides and fighting for their causes within the rules of the system. They had an identifiable position in the distribution process, and a social position in the communities they were a part of.

In terms of their social role, the *timariots* were instrumental in the organization of agrarian order; the janissaries had close contact with urban organizations, crafts, and brotherhoods, as supervisors and, increasingly, as members. The interesting aspect of both of these categories is the fact that while they were created by a bureaucratic mechanism, they later had a quasi-autonomous existence. In the mid sixteenth century their number did not exceed 100,000, and was probably much less. They had a relatively dominant social position and were recipients of the tax revenue associating them with the ruling class. Thus in their heyday they were definitely part of the ruling class within the constellation of the distributive order of the state.

The *timariots'* demise came in the seventeenth century, when they lost their prebends and their numbers decreased in a new order that did not depend on their services. The cavalrymen were deposed and demoted and slowly got absorbed by larger local armies of infantrymen, while their institution survived as a legal artefact until the mid-nineteenth century.

The janissaries' privileged position also declined over centuries into an underprivileged strata undertaking odd occupations in urban centers, as their official title survived without their function as fighting men. They were an urban class which was eventually eradicated in a bloody struggle that drove them out of the capital.

Other comparable categories were formed within the framework of the state practices. Sedentarization of nomads, for example, created

peasants. But the janissaries and the *timariots* are particularly interesting in that they emerged as 'classes' in a universe that did not contain them before. These social groups of central importance came into being in the context of the Ottoman state, taking on their own dynamism. A conceptual framework that begins from the process of production cannot help us in evaluating the social significance of these groups. They rose and they fell within a field of interactions demarcated by the state. Long after these military strata lost their privileges within the context of Ottoman administration they — particularly the janissaries — survived within the social formation with weaker linkages to the state.[16]

Despite many similarities, Ottoman history does not allow us to group the timariots and janissaries under the single rubric of state-affiliated rantiers. The two groups experienced vastly different stories of decline, demise and indeed their members ended up in quite different social positions. As *timariots* and janissaries lost their prominence within the state they functioned more and more as social groups. Estrangement from state function was accompanied by decline in position in the class hierarchy.

The unravelling of the janissaries' class position within the context of the state provides an interesting example of the distributive logic internal to the Ottoman system. Ottoman historians have described the janissaries' 'fall from grace' as part of the larger story of the deterioration and decline of Ottoman institutional structures from the end of the sixteenth century onward — a 'decline' notable for the longevity of its 'free-fall': 400 plus years. The deterioration of the Sultan's standing army manifested itself in the breakdown of the *devsirme* recruitment system and concomitant entrance of Muslim subjects into the rank and file, as well as in the janissaries' branching out into civilian or 'extra-military occupations.' In sum, many janissaries acquired a social base and social roots within the urban setting — an outcome anathema to the Ottoman system.

This new urban class is sometimes considered to be a potential basis for a social movement. Viewed from a modernist perspective, janissaries leading urban revolts, could constitute a 'threat' to the central power; but they did not. 'Even when successful [in revolts], the rebels failed to formulate alternative social-ideological goals; therefore, they did not cause significant changes in Ottoman society'[17] Were the janissaries 'rebels without a cause,' or were their revolts stunted movements towards modernity?[18] From our point of view the janissaries and their partners in crime were 'rebels *with* a cause.' The janissary revolts were not directed against the central power and toward a social transformation. On the contrary, their cause was political control of practices directly associated with the state itself, particularly, their cause was a last chance attempt to salvage what was left of their legitimate claims to

revenue and political participation within the existing 'system.' While they may have developed 'social roots' (with a lower class status), and while they may have had one foot in the military apparatus and one foot in urban communities; their consciousness was still 'state consciousness.'

In summary, to the extent that classes are defined in terms of their position within the locus of production, there were no dominant classes in Ottoman history. Consciousness which lent cohesiveness to social groups, however, can be identified along functional lines. Identifying classes in terms of the material interests of the functionaries' role in the process of distribution is the effective way to establish a material link between the social strata and the related social transformation that was continually taking place.

In the final analysis, constructions of social dynamics in Ottoman history that exclude the state from the picture and remain narrowly within the sphere of production are unable to yield socially dominant classes similar to those in European history. Social domination needs to be identified with explicit reference to the state.

Property

In Ottoman history the concept of 'property' is frequently de-contextualized and understood in the modern sense of 'private property' as an inviolable and 'natural' right. While all forms of property relations in urban and rural areas and over movable and immovable property need to be qualified, the most stark issue arises in the understanding of 'ownership' of agricultural land. The motive for establishing (private) property in land as a means of acquiring control over appropriation of surplus is always ascribed to a social class with material interests. This is then read into accounts of the dynamics of social solidarity and conflict. Hence, depending on the author, forms of political control in rural areas can be understood in terms of property relations, those who wield local power are identified as landlords, and consequently, the mode of production is seen as feudal. This approach limits the 'actors' involved to those who own the land and those who work on the land. The state in this context is left outside the dynamics of social interaction, and is understood as an extension of the dominant class.

In the Ottoman case, property, along with class and distribution, are embedded in the 'state'. The struggle over access to surplus is fought as a state-distribution process. The object for the Ottoman ruling class was to excel in the administrative hierarchy and to acquire access to surplus through distribution. Domination came from *outside* the productive organization of the peasant community; and was defined without reference to property.

Within the sphere of agricultural production there were clearly defined property rights. Improvements to land, agricultural

investments such as trees or buildings were recognized as private property. Usufructuary rights of the peasantry can also be considered a major form of agricultural property, since the state unwaveringly protected that privilege over the centuries.[19] However, none of the above provided the social agents involved with any avenue to *power* and *domination*. Accumulation of wealth took place through political participation in a state practice on rights and claims to surplus.[20]

Once property is defined in terms of control over the means of production, the peasantry seems to be the most likely candidate for a landowning class. Curiously, the definition yields only one social actor representing both the land-owner and the worker. With conflict located at the locus of state practices over the distribution of surplus from land and checking the emergence of a landlord class, the peasantry is left as manager of the production process and as de facto 'owner' of land. As in the earlier discussion under 'class,' in Ottoman history, 'property' needs to be analysed within the locus of state practices in order to be able to account for related social practices. As previously, restriction of the analysis to the sphere of production fails to capture the motion of the system.

Distribution

In the history of English capitalism access to surplus was established through ownership of means of production, or of resources — i.e., land. That is, this form of access was i) not challenged, and ii) constituted the ruling classes' major source of income. Hence, material wealth and property rights determined the limits of distributive activity. Relations in the sphere of production defined the intensity of extraction. The sovereign's access to surplus, however, was more problematic. It was a claim on the resources that were either private or were being privatized. The sovereign's claims remained secondary and less privileged compared to private claims as English transformation to capitalism progressed. Two different forms of claims belonging to two different distributional processes respectively in the sphere of production and in the sphere of the state are quite clear. The claims to surplus were a source of dispute and conflict between the sovereign and the ruling class whose social position was defined in terms of their property — nobility with land and bourgeoisie with capital. Of the two sites where distribution took place, production established itself as the basis of social conflict and change.[21]

The same duality can also be observed in the Ottoman case, again giving rise to a dynamic social interaction, but within the locus of the state. The emphasis on the state brings two qualifications with it: i) Ownership of resources and means of production did not constitute a major source of income for the ruling class, although it determined

access to revenue for the producers and merchants. ii) As in the European case the central power attempted to appropriate from the domain of 'private' property and unlike it the center's appropriation attempts were successful.

It is in the case of the common form of access to surplus that the two systems differed the most. In the Ottoman case there was no private property in arable land which was the major source of surplus. Any claim on agrarian surplus went through the state. There were to be no hereditary claims or monopolizations, and hence no distribution based on inviolable property rights which would have been antithetical to the Ottoman historical process.

In Ottoman history property rights in arable land did not become a social issue. The fight was rather over claims on surplus that took place as a part of state practice — a sign of separation of distribution and production. In those areas where private property existed, such as real estate or investments in agriculture, it did not constitute an ideological foundation against the infringement of the 'state' or an inviolable right as it did in English history. Existence of property did not necessarily make it an inviolable right as it evolved in the English case. Hence, property as a social relation had a different meaning in the Ottoman case that cannot be identified within productivist logic. Private property and production were not variables connected to the ruling class's share in distribution. Distribution was strictly a political process embedded in the state.

The State

In Ottoman history the practice of distribution is the medium that achieves conceptual decoupling of class and property from the sphere of production, and places them in the context of state practices. The distributive process is regulated by two sets of rules. In the first set legitimate claims or rights of access to surplus are assigned on the basis of political participation within the administrative structure. The second set of rules is on the role of the privileged in facilitating the movement of surplus. Lesser functionaries filling the lower ranks of the administration, such as the *timariots* and the janissaries, also had a share in the distributive structure. For them, being at the employ of the state was a prestigious occupation which lasted for a lifetime. Their position was defined in terms of their location in the flow of surplus: they were the recipients and hence members of the state machinery.

The dynamism of Ottoman history is to be found not in the relations of production but in the continuous division and redivision of the surplus product among the state-functionaries who possessed legitimate claims to surplus. There were two types of distributive

practices. The first occurred between the central power and its resource base via its functionaries — taxation. Here the center strove both to protect and enhance peasant usufruct rights and to contain and prevent the emergence of solidified, or long term claims by the intermediaries.

The second distributive practice involves the continual struggle on the part of the state functionaries to maintain and if possible increase their personal share of surplus product. To the extent that this is successful, the state loses its effectiveness in the distributive process. And to the extent that reforms or expropriations for the 'state' can take place by eliminating these claims, there is an expansion of distributable resources — albeit without physical expansion — thereby enhancing the practice of distribution within the state. This leads the functionaries to participate further in the process of distribution within the state and hence to the centrifugal attribute of a seemingly explosive state of affairs. Redistributive cycles follow fiscal crises resulting from solidification efforts on the part of the functionaries.

Even as it positions itself against solidification of claims, the central power attempts to incorporate those 'outsiders' who successfully gain control over surplus. This seeming contradiction illustrates the interaction between two types of distributive practices that is in fact characteristic of the system. Preventing the 'siphoning off' of surplus from peasant to center might entail incorporating the 'culprit' into the state practice and thereby contribute to class conflict — or solidarity — within the context of the state as the pie is redivided and various social categories find themselves jockeying for power to protect their claims on surplus.

In the Marxist model of capitalism, property-based exploitation is a form of domination that determines the mode of appropriation of surplus and the distribution of surplus product. There the site of these practices is production. In the Ottoman social formation there is a division between appropriative and distributive practices. The site of distribution is the state. Property is not a social relation that entitles a person to 'something' as in capitalism. Rather, property here is a concept that prevents the coalescence of appropriative and distributive processes in the sphere of production. In other words, property rights maintain a separation of sites so that practice of appropriation take place in the production site, whereas distributive practice occurs in the context of the state. 'Property' in this case organizes flow or distribution of surplus product — not its extraction.

Another feature of Ottoman history lies in the nature of conflict intrinsic to its workings. The major form of conflict took place among the ruling strata within the locus of the state over the process of distribution. It is in this conflict that the dynamism of the system is

located. Hence, we would maintain, inability to find corresponding conflict at the productive base points to mistaken identification of the system — not its stagnancy. The Ottoman state was a locus of interaction involving property, class and distribution. This argument opposes liberal and Marxist theory, where the competing locus is the sphere of production.

There are two separate contexts in which class, property and distribution gain their meaning. They are no more invariant concepts with universal applications but need to be understood within the proper setting or locus. Applying a concept such as property or class as understood in a productivist setting to a framework such as Ottoman would therefore be analytically wrong. On the other hand, only one of these contexts or loci (production) is well studied and understood. State remains an enigmatic category frequently considered a derivative of some other social category such as class. Therefore it is paramount to understand the state as it reveals itself in a non-capitalist historical setting in order to lead to an analysis of its contextual nature.

What Keeps the Process Together?

With competing claims on the same source of surplus and a history of continuous attempts to monopolize surplus by individuals of rank, how could these interactions remain coherent? What kept it from falling apart? The secret lies in the incorporative ability of the state, the quality of private property which did not become inviolable, and continuous adaptations of the state to new redistributions. Those who threatened the flow of surplus did not threaten the legitimacy of 'state' action.

Individuals' claims to surplus did not work through an ideological structure that confronted the state's dominance in the allocative process. Individuals used their power, privilege, or advantage to carve out a niche for themselves while defeating the center's attempt to keep revenues flowing for central allocation. To keep such a process going, the monopolizing individual had to be able to maintain his influence within the administrative structure through alliances, or to keep the central power at a distance. In this process, while the monopolizing influence was working against the 'proper' operation of the distributive mechanism by taking in more than the central allocation saw fit; the legitimacy of the state-distributive framework itself was not challenged. Interestingly enough, this attempt to monopolize surplus *reinforced* its legitimacy, since the niche that was carved out could only be preserved through functioning within the confines of the state. Monopolizations were as temporal as power was, and power could not be institutionalized through monopolization

of resources. Whenever surplus was monopolized through military strength keeping the forces of the central government at bay; the 'rebel' was decorated with a post and official title, and got integrated into the political process.

This did not work to the benefit of the state alone. For the individual there was also an attractive element: the direct access to the surplus by associating with the state. The administrative organization had the goal of eliminating solidified interests. It was a relatively open institution for different strata to join in many capacities, such as fighters, clergy, or tax collectors. Such an abundance of potential claimants worked against the ideology of solidification to take root.

As a result, while it was a fight over shares and rights or a struggle against competing parties, it was not a front against the principle of distribution, or against the dominance of the state. Thus the viability of the 'Ottoman state' was not due to the 'power' of the so-called 'monolithic state' but due to the convergence of the interests of the participants of the distributive game at a locus demarcated by the state. There was a common interest in participating in the redistributive process as opposed to being excluded from it. Rebellions developed on arguments over shares and not on principles. The Ottoman state tended to accommodate those problematic grievances it could not defeat. Threats to its viability were primarily external to it. Confrontations resulting from external threats reveal themselves as geographic and political conflict taking place on the frontiers, as wars between two independent distributive states, which could incorporate only the geographically contiguous regions. Separationist movements from within did not arise until the rise of nationalism. Consequently, despite the outside threat, the 'system' could preserve its integrity and cohesiveness because distribution was central to the interest of all.

The ruling strata being embedded in the state, their conflict did not confront the state. In the distributional struggle the rules of the game were accepted by the participants. Hence, their struggle for shares did not remove the state from being the site of distributional interaction.

Conceptualizing the State

From the viewpoint of a Eurocentric approach which considers class to be the conceptual basis of the state, the above formulation would be unfamiliar. However, from the viewpoint of Asiatic social formations it is conceivable. For example, according to Maurice Godelier the state of the 'east' is the historical antecedent of 'class society.' In his search for 'forms of transition from classless to class society,'[22] he argues that basic observations such as the primacy of the state in 'classless societies' can remain as a starting point in a framework

where Asiatic forms can be compared with their European counterparts on the basis of their differences. It is revealing to contrast Godelier's approach to a class-based analysis such as Theda Skocpol's.[23] The meeting gound for Skocpol's 'autonomy of the state' approach with Godelier's revision of Asiatic mode of production is the *comparability* of Asiatic and European social structures. Both have in their analysis the state, class(es) and their interaction. While the synthesis of the two approaches would cover a very broad spectrum, the two independent visions do not reach beyond their meeting ground. For Skocpol an 'autonomous state' in a 'classless society' is not a prospective issue, and for Godelier, a 'non-autonomous state' — the conventional paradigm that Skocpol departs from by challenging it — is not the end point in the transformation of the Asiatic mode of production. On the other hand, the common goal of the two indicates that the twain do meet.

For the Ottoman case, the particular significance of the opposition between Godelier's approach and that of Skocpol's is the specific nature of interaction between state and class. In European history dominant classes occupy a much more central role than they do in Ottoman history and the assumption of the analytical priority of the class to the state is not questioned. At the same time class has a persistence and invariance that cannot be replicated in a similar fashion in Ottoman history.[24] This difference strongly points to the unexplored complementarity of the two conceptualizations.

Turning the argument around, 'autonomy of the state' does not necessarily entail autonomy of the dominant class. In the Ottoman context, the state was the most visible and *dominant* element in society. Hence the issue of the 'autonomy of the state' is unproblematic. However, a *dominant* class is impossible to define without incorporating the state directly in the argument. This is true even for the strata of warlords who took an antagonistic position against the central power in the process of distribution. In contrast, the autonomy of dominant classes from the state in Europe — specifically in England — can be taken for granted. Class appears as the eminent social category in the locus of production. It is not enough to acknowledge the 'autonomy of the state' in order to make inroads into the enigma of the Ottoman structure. It is crucial to recognize the dependence of the dominant class on the state in order to preserve its own dominant position.

In Europe the dominant class was the bourgeoisie and in the Ottoman context it was a state–associated class. Literature on the comprador bourgeoisie or lament for the lost opportunity of having 'nation's' own bourgeoisie is a common indication of that 'missing' class in Ottoman history. In the nineteenth century Ottoman context the problem was posed in terms of the state not having *its own* bourgeoisie.[25] Development of a foreign sponsored bourgeoisie in the

period of imperialism within the boundaries of the Ottoman empire, yet independent of the state, is indicative of the nature of the Ottoman framework which did not span over commercial networks as it did over distributive relations. As the internal organization of many churches was autonomous of the Ottoman state, so were the commercial if not the dominant classes. In the resulting picture the state and the bourgeoisie did not come together in the 'familiar' context of 'production.'

The focus of the foregoing discussion has been on the context within which the components of social analysis acquire their meaning. Specifically, we discussed class, property and distribution in the context of the state. In this sense the state is a 'locus' or 'site' similar to 'production.' The latter is a household concept in social science as the only context of materialist analysis, laying the groundwork of the 'productivist logic.' While the triumph of capitalism rises on the production site, it is unable to explain the dynamics of an interaction taking place in the other context — the state.[26] In a similar vein, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis also argue that 'societies normally exhibit a variety of interrelated but mutally irreducible structures of domination, including in addition to property-based class forms, state–subject, kinship, and international relations as well.'[27] They also dismiss as untenable a corollary of the 'class-exploitation-domination reduction' — 'the location of system-transforming contradictions of the social formation directly within its organization of property-based extractions.'[28] In sum, they challenge the productivist logic of Marxism.

In contrast, Bowles and Gintis argue that contradictions 'are located not within the economy, but rather within the structure articulation of sites of domination within the social formation as a whole.'[29] They define a site as 'a region of social life with a coherent set of characteristic rules of the game.'[30] Our understanding of the loci being similar to theirs, we can utilize this conceptualization towards a the study of unlike dynamics with common analytical concepts.

In adopting this formulation, we define the state as a site in the social formation. It is central: it organizes a major part of social action, social interaction, and social life; and it is instrumental in social change. With those attributes, the state resembles the site of production in Marxist models of the history of capitalism. As would be the case with the production–site, several fundamental practices are embedded in the state–site, including distribution. The state-site is to be distinguished from the alliances of ruling classes and bureaucracy which are associated with state practices.

We define the Ottoman state–site in terms of its structural position in determining modes of access to surplus. Production and state are sites in a space of social relations, each have attributes of ordering

that social space. While production has the central role in capitalism, state has the greater explanatory power in Ottoman history. The two are not mutually exclusive, and can either reinforce or challenge the other. In bringing out the characteristics of the state as a site, study of Asian history is instrumental, providing an account where the locus of the state provides a central organizing context without the 'competition' of the site of production.[31] The study of the Ottoman state provides a convenient foundation to characterize the state–site, with a historical foundation pre-dating the rise of capitalism and with its internal dynamics continuing into the nineteenth century. In this undertaking, expanding the characterization of the state beyond the limits of productive relations is crucial in order to reach a general framework with an applicability beyond the experience of capitalism.

Characterizing the Ottoman State

The concept of the state needs to be redefined for the purposes of the study of non-modern forms which have their own institutional forms and shared knowledge systems as in the case of the Ottoman and also the Safavid and Mughal empires. The following description of the Ottoman state gives a flavour of an alternative dynamic and a medium within which Euro-centered approaches can be questioned. Here we characterize the state in the context of other social phenomena, and from a historical foundation.[32]

In Ottoman history the state enters into the formulation of social interaction simply by virtue of its being so obviously there. 'Ottoman' stands for the dynasty, the empire, the state, cosmopolitan origins of the ruling strata as well as its empire–wide politics. All of the above were called by the same name: or the 'grand state of the Ottomans.' There were mechanisms at work where a general level of jurisdiction was enforced, legitimacy of the state was defined, and conflict was effectively incorporated. In contrast to the modern, the Ottoman state neither was nor claimed to be the ideologically unitary and socially over-arching force across all the communities that it taxed and policed. Yet, the seeming autonomy of those communities — in a contemporary sense — did not pose a challenge to it. Ideologically, the Ottoman state was at home with social differences and heterogeneities. Ottomans were organized as any other ethnic or religious community under their rule, while the Ottoman order, law and rule evolved into a heterogenous set of social and religious relations defined across the multitude of communities. This needs to be contrasted with the early form of the west European national state formation based on principles of exclusion and enforcement of homogeneity, or the Habsburg Empire where heterogeneity was mainly confined to christianity. An attempt to base the definition of the state on another category — such as a class or a

church — radically influences the formulation by changing its Ottoman character. While communities and churches were central in defining social spaces, the state provided an added dimension that characterized social interactions among communities.

Despite the functional centrality of the state, its relationship to the communities that it ruled over was not as extensive in Ottoman times as it is in modern 'societies.' Integral components of the Ottoman social space — whether they are functional categories, occupations, ethnic or religious communities — had an independent existence, with separate institutions that ordered daily life and resolved conflict. Groups within the elite pay units themselves could also have semi-autonomous status within the state with their own legal order. Education, exchange, and ideologies could be realms autonomous of the 'state' for the greater part of the Ottoman social constellation. This connection between the state and social space is totally different in nature from the modern 'state–society' relation.

The practice of the state thus emerges as a medium connecting social spheres while taking over parts of their characteristics and transmitting some of its own. Seeing the state in this light shifts the attention from a physical 'core' akin to a bureaucracy that could be identified as an ethnic group or a cosmopolitan bureaucracy. In this sense, the more fluid 'interactions' of the state with the heterogeneities it finds itself embedded in, yields a description of the connections. It is that connective process that yields the character of the state in an evolving interaction rather than the 'thing' that may identify the actors in the 'core.' It was its adaptive character that gave the Ottoman state its longevity and accommodative nature.

Without an appropriate conceptual treatment of the state's place in social space, it frequently turns into a gigantic residual category, the analytic centrality of which is nonetheless presumed. However, no single theory of the state has become paradigmatic despite the extended period of intellectual scrutiny of the Capitalist state. The latest epoch of state theories was the initially promising debate on the relative autonomy of the state which 'ended with a sense that its problems had been exhausted rather than solved.'[33]

Our approach has been a critique of articulations in social science approach while taking account of the histories, attempting to bring the motion of exotic histories of the non–modern world to complement the motion of modernity. We expect that this task will raise at least as many questions as the answers it will provide. Hopefully, the resulting activity will put social scientists in contact with area studies to yield a mutually beneficial interaction in the study of a generalized conceptualization of the state.

By employing a spatial conceptualization of the state and production process as locations of social interaction based on different but

comparable rules, we are able to describe the interaction on the basis of the historicity of the phenomenon. In this process we question the applicability of Euro–centered conceptualizations which alters the historical foundations of the Ottoman practice and yields an alien story. Such a conceptualization serves to highlight the concept of the state in the Ottoman context in contrast to the more familiar concept of production process in the context of modern societies. Thus, we define the dynamics of the Ottoman state by contrasting it to a model based on a productivist dynamics of social science theories of Marxist-liberal denomination.

Conclusion

Measured in terms of the structural achievements of western Europe (i.e., emergence of capitalism), Ottoman history looks very stagnant. Yet, this 'stagnancy' is too frequently attributed to another European phenomenon: the Absolutist state. Between the Ottoman state of the sixteenth century and our perception of it lies the formation of our consciousness under the shadow of the 'Absolutist State' as it is worked out by writers of the Enlightenment. Somehow, attributes of 'state' are assigned to the 'Asiatic forms' and then carried on elsewhere. Thereby we get accounts of oppressed, motionless social formations. When we look at their material base for some hope of 'movement' we can hardly detect any credible action. We argue that the reason for the failure of the search for action is the mistaken identification of the site of 'action.'

What seems stationary and motionless in terms of the European accounts owed its continued existence and 'motionless reproduction' to considerable movement in the state–site and a corresponding circulation of the ruling class. This aspect of social mobility and distributive malleability has the potential to explain the dynamics and the inner logic of the Ottoman framework. It is particularly noteworthy that the characteristic of malleability provided the Ottoman state a remarkable staying power that survived the recirculation of its ruling classes, transformations in its revenue base, and structural blows from outside.

From the reformulation presented above, Ottoman history was not going the capitalist way. However, it is clear that eventually the Ottomans did sway. Although we cannot identify where the Ottoman state would have gone, a proper conceptualization of its institutions would enable us to move along the tracks that it has laid. If that road is well identified, we can follow the Ottoman journey down *its* road to elsewhere without an illusion to get there.

Similarities between Ottoman and capitalist histories can indeed be divulged. Both have cyclical rhythms: capitalism's, prosperity and

depression; the Ottoman's, incorporation and exclusion. Logics of motion exist in and underlie both, but their loci differ; and this makes all the difference. In capitalism, growth for growth's sake — the ever present search for profit sweeps away 'all fixed, fast-frozen relations'[34] as it renders 'machinery, buildings and even whole urban infrastructures and life-styles...prematurely obsolescent.'[35] In the Ottoman process, 'distribution for distribution's sake' — the ever present drive for the liquid flow of revenue pumped into the center and sent cascading down the hierarchies of segments of the ruling class — led the state to cultivate control and domination over movement (of classes and revenue flows) in space and over time. Under capitalism, 'all that is solid [read "privileged and established"] melts into air.'[36] With the Ottomans, privilege and establishment of the ruling classes, ephemeral and contingent as they were, rested on movement of public-revenue. Processes of solidification were counter-intuitive and counter-productive to the logic of the state-site. In the end, capitalism's attempts to impose ossification from without (private property, etc.) and the erection of boundaries — thanks to modernity's gift of nationalism from within — capped the life-springs of the state. All that was motion solidified into oblivion and disappeared behind the curtain of the enlightenment's own experience of absolutism.

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Notes

[1] The argument is not whether there is a capitalist history outside western Europe. The paper addresses the nature of indigenous dynamics that do not involve a capitalist route.

[2] Since social science, and particularly sociology is built upon the experience of Europe in modernization and industrialization, this outcome maybe regarded as inevitable. However it is remarkable that social sciences did not undergo a transformation to accommodate the history of the rest of the world. Bruce Mazlish, 'The Breakdown of Connections and Modern Development,' *World Development*, 19 (1), 1991, pp.31–44; and *A New Science: The Breakdown of Connections and the Birth of Sociology*, New York: OUP, 1989.

[3] Surely, this is not to mean that they are the best theories of a specific historical development. However, their failure to explain capitalism and West European history adequately is not a topic that we will address in this paper.

[4] In a recent essay, William Roseberry compares the two historical styles that prevail in contemporary anthropology (i) history as cultural difference ii) history as material social process) and points to their incompatibility.

> [the former] sees the Other as different and separate, a product of its own history and carrying its own historicity ... [the latter] sees the Other as different but connected, a product of a particular history that is itself intertwined with a larger set of economic, political, social, and cultural processes. (*Anthropologies and Histories*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989, 12ff)

Since this argument is made in reference to contemporary societies that anthropologists study, it presumes that the broader history with which any given society or culture intersects is the story of the development of industrial capitalism and European imperialism.

This doesn't leave us much in the way of analytic tools for studying the interconnection of local histories with wider social processes before the advent of capitalism. This is true for the unclassifiable period of the 14th–16th centuries in Europe (see the Dobb-Sweezy debate in Rodney Hilton, ed., *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*, London: Verso, 1978; and Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, 'State and Class in European Feudalism,' manuscript, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, 1982. A shorter version is published in Charles Bright and Susan Harding, eds., *Statemaking and Social Movements: Essays in History and Theory*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984), and it has a longer term validity for the third world histories.

Our general argument should not be construed as yet another call for studying a social structure in terms of its own characteristics and history in isolation from larger processes. Rather, our general purpose is to be able to formulate a more general approach to capture the dynamics of non-capitalist formations with wider historical processes. In other words we would like to approach the issue of *wider* applicability without falling into the trap of identifying 'wider' with capitalist.

[5] As it will be clear we include neo-Marxist theories of development, the dependency school, and world systems approach under the rubric of modernization theories.

[6] Jean Cohen, *Class and Civil Society*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982, p.91; C.Castoriadis, 'On the History of the Workers' Movement,' *Telos* 30 (3), 1976/77, p.20.

[7] Cohen, *Class and Civil Society*, p.89.

[8] Gabriel Baer, 'The Turkish Guilds,' part 3 of *Fellah and Townsman in the Middle East: Studies in Social History*, London: Frank Cass, 1982, pp.147–211; Engin Akarli, 'The Uses of Law Among Istanbul Artisans and Tradesmen: The Story of Gedik as Implements, Mastership, Shop Usufruct and Monopoly 1750–1850,' paper presented at the workshop on the Political Economies of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals; held in Istanbul, June 16–20, 1992; to be published in a volume of the proceedings.

[9] An additional shortcoming of this approach is the specification of the state as a 'thing' equivalent to the bureaucracy and thereby limiting the more general understanding of the state of a locus or a context.

[10] Bowles and Gintis, 'State and Class...,' elaborate on this issue at length as it applies to European feudalism, and discuss the elimination of the state and the church from the conflict.

[11] In the Ottoman system, curiously, there was no emphasis on the regional or ethnic denomination of the merchant. As opposed to European mercantilism or the trade-based south European city-states, the Ottoman system seems to have emphasized the presence of trade over trader, and of flows over identity. Furthermore, it accepted merchants of different denominations rather than to associate with one ethnic or regional group. See for example Giles Veinstein, 'From the Italians to the Ottomans: The Case of the Northern

Black Sea Coast in the Sixteenth Century,' Mediterranean Historical Review 1/(2), 1986, pp.221–237. Regulations and administrative practices were regional and eclectic, accommodating the needs of regional merchants, both local and foreign. Class solidarity and consciousness were consequently not locally generated.

[12] Ottoman social and economic history is principally written in Turkish. However there is an excellent body of literature in English also. The following list has a wide coverage of topics and periods despite its brevity:

Suraiya Faroqhi, *Peasants, Dervishes and Traders in the Ottoman Empire*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1986.

Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen in Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts, and Food Production in an Urban Setting, 1520–1650*, New York: CUP, 1984.

Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali (1541–1600)*, Princeton University Press, 1986.

Halil Inalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: Conquest, Organization and Economy*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1978.

Halil Inalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300–1600*, trans. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.

Halil Inalcık, *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1985.

Norman Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition*, New York: Knopf, 1972.

Mehmet Fuat Koprulu, *The Origins of the Ottoman Empire*, trans. and ed., Gary Leiser, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991.

Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants: The Transformation of Ottoman Provincial Government, 1550–1650*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1983.

Rudi Paul Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1983.

Thomas Naff, and Roger Owen, *Studies in Eighteenth Centruy Islamic History*, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977.

Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*, London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1938.

[13] To give a few examples from a very diverse group of authors from diverse fields and schools: Hamilton Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, 2 vols., New York: OUP, 1950, take the bureaucracy, the military, and the clergy as classes. Halil Inalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300–1600*, trans., N. Itzkowitz and C. Imber, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973, uses the concept to refer to any social or administrative group. For Halik Berktay, 'The Feudalism Debate: The Turkish End — Is 'Tax-vs.-Rent' Necessarily the Product and Sign of a Modal Difference?' Journal of Peasant Studies 14(3), 1987, pp.291–333, classes for the Ottomans are defined by a particular understanding of European history. For Caglar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*, London: Verson, 1987, the state can conveniently be identified as a class.

[14] Nomads possessed tribal organization and political loyalties separate from and potentially antagonistic to the state.

[15] For an evaluation of the development of the Ottoman trdition within a broad framework of experience see Joseph Fletcher, 'Turco Mongolian Monarchic Tradition in the Ottoman Empire,' *Harvard Ukranian Studies* 3–4, 1979–80, pp. 236–251, especially pp.244–45.

[16] Cemal Kafadar, 'Yeniceri-Esnaf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict,' unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1981; Howard Reed, 'The Destruction of the Janisseries by Mahmud II in June 1826,' unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1951.

[17] Kafadar, 'Yeniceri-Esnaf...,' p.ii.

[18] Edmund Burke, III, 'On *Yeniceri* Rebellions, 17th and 18th Centuries,' paper presented at the Workshop on the Political Economies of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires; held at Harvard University, March 17–20, 1991.

[19] The same state policy continued across regimes well into the Turkisk Republic.

[20] The state did recognize the claim to improvement. Fruit trees, canals, barns were considered to be private property.

[21] Bowles and Gintis, 'Class and Society...'

[22] Maurice Godelier, 'The Concept of the 'Asiatic Mode of Production' and Marxist Models of Social Evolution,' in David Seddon, ed., *Relations of Production: Marxist Approaches to Economic Anthropology*, London: Cass, 1978, p.251.

[23] Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*, New York: CUP, 1979.

[24] Classes are recognized as a legitimate social category in Europe and its feudal past, which is closely related to the development of private property. However in Ottoman history the same observation cannot be made.

[25] Yusuf Akcura, *Turk Yurdu*, No. 63, April 3, 1330H [1914], pp. 2102–3; and No. 140, August 12, 1333H [1917], pp.2521–22; quoted in Niyazi Brekes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964, pp. 425–26. See also David Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism, 1876–1908*, London: Cass, 1977, pp. 5, 13–14, 99.

[26] Note that talking about the state as a site is not the same as considering power relations. Power can exist in any context. Here the state-site is an alternative material context for social relations to take shape in.

[27] Bowles and Gintis, 'Class and Society...,' section 1, pp. 2–3.

[28] Bowles and Gintis, 'Class and Society...,' section 1, p. 3.

[29] Bowles and Gintis, 'Class and Society...,'

[30] Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Democracy and Capitalism*, New York: Basic Books, 1986, pp. 98ff.

[31] Similarly European history provides an account where the production site is predominant to the extent that it may seem that the state is incorporated into the analytical primacy of the production relations — or subservient to the class. In order to bring out the characteristics of the dynamics of the state–site in capitalism, a study of non–capitalist structures with this conceptual framework would be instrumental.

[32] Tosun Arıcanlı and Ashraf Ghani, 'Conceptualizing the State in Social Space,' *A World of Empires: Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Dominions, 1500–1800*, eds., Tosun Arıcanlı, Ashraf Ghani and David Ludden, forthcoming.

[33] Philip Abrams, 'Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State (1977),' *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1 (1), March 1988, p. 60.

[34] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The Manifesto of the Communist Party, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972 [1848], p. 35.

[35] David Harvey, *Money, Time, Space, and the City*, Cambridge, England: Granta, 1985, p.32.

[36] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*.