



RURAL SETTLEMENTS FROM OTTOMAN ANATOLIA: THE CASE OF THE DISTRICT OF KIRELİ OF KONYA OF 1845

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ABSTRACT

This research article is based mainly on Ottoman archival data of 1845. They are manuscripts, written in Ottoman Turkish. Ottoman government needs cash in the years of 1820s due to wars with Russia and Iran. To achieve this, the state demands extra taxes from all peasants of Anatolia. In this study, the economic situation of 22 small Muslim villages of the district of Kireli of Konya of Anatolia was examined in outline. Agriculture and livestock were the main means of livelihood for the Muslim peasants. However, with the increase of the population, the economic resources were not enough for the Muslim peasants and the nomads (Yörük) living in this region. Many men had to leave their villages and went to the large cities to earn struggle for life. Ottoman administration founds them there and also taxes the labor. This was a very heavy practice for them. In the region, most villages were abandoned. The peasants had to be content with only rural resources. The vacant agricultural lands were immediately planted by the surrounding peasants.

Keywords: Tanzimat, Konya, Kireli, Peasants, Ottomans, Temettuat, Daftar

OSMANLI ANADOLU'SUNDA KIRSAL YERLEŞİMLER: 1845'TE KONYA KIRELİ KAZASI ÖRNEĞİ

ÖZ

Bu araştırma makalesi esas olarak 1845 tarihli Osmanlı arşiv verilerine dayanmaktadır. Bunlar Osmanlı Türkçesiyle yazılmış yazmalardır. Osmanlı Devleti 1820'li yıllarda Rusya ve İran'la yapılan savaşlar nedeniyle nakit paraya ihtiyaç duymuştur. Bunun için devlet Anadolu'nun tüm köylülerinden ekstra vergi talep etmiştir. Bu çalışmada Anadolu'nun Konya ili Kireli ilçesine bağlı 22 küçük Müslüman köyünün ekonomik durumu ana hatlarıyla incelenmiştir. Tarım ve hayvancılık Müslüman köylülerin temel geçim kaynağıydı. Ancak nüfusun artmasıyla birlikte ekonomik kaynaklar bu bölgede yaşayan Müslüman köylüler ve göçebeler (Yörükler) için yeterli değildi. Birçok erkek yaşam mücadelesini kazanmak için köylerini terk ederek büyük şehirlere gitmek zorunda kaldı. Osmanlı yönetimi onları orada da buluyor ve emeği de vergilendiriyordu. Bu onlar için çok ağır bir uygulamaydı. Bölgedeki köylerin çoğu terk edildi. Köylüler yalnızca kırsal kaynaklarla yetinmek zorundaydı. Boş tarım arazileri çevredeki köylüler tarafından hemen ekildi.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tanzimat, Konya, Kireli, Köylüler, Temettuat, Osmanlılar

Localization

The region of Kireli (Kırili) of Turkey geographically covers the plains and slopes between the eastern shores of Lake Beyşehir of Konya and the foothills of the mountains in the middle part of the Sultan Mountains. In the year of 1845, the district of Kireli, in Ottoman administrative system, was administratively organized with a small judgeship of 22 small Muslim

Araştırma Makalesi

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villages in the Anatolian province of Konya, mainly covers the eastern parts of Beyşehir Lake. From 16th century, it was a judge and district attached to the sanjak of Beyşehir generally.¹ The word 'Kireli', a Turkish word, was not the name of a settlement until 19th century, but the general geographic name. At the beginning of the 19th century, a new small town (kasaba) named Kireli consisted of the a few abandoned Muslim villages such as Yarangümi and Lağri. In fact, the first origins of Ottoman rural settlements of the region go back to the Roman period. The main reason for the establishment was related to the construction of the Roman royal road, Via Sebaste, (Uluyol in Turkish), which stretches between Pisidia Antiocheia (modern Yalvaç) and Konya. To maintain the royal road, the villages whose population consisted of slaves and workers were established at certain distances. Some of the ancient villages were completely abandoned at under the Seljuks and Ottomans. Others were re-inhabited by the newly arrived Muslims, who gave new Turkish names for ancient settlement. Few an archaic names could reach Ottoman period.

The main source of the article

In the year of 1845, Ottoman central administration aims to tax all Ottoman peasants and townsmen in order to alleviate the economic difficulties. By the order of Ottoman Sultan, Mahmud, in 1845, a Muslim Ottoman officer, Miralay Hacı Ahmed Beyefendi² was sent to the district of Kireli to determine the income sources of the peasants. He personally came to this area and determined the income sources of the peasants living in this region one by one. He taxes the peasants according to their sources of income. I should point out that the basic data of the article were based mainly on the taxation records (*Temettuat daftars*), a group of unpublished Ottoman archive documents, prepared by Ahmed and preserved today at the Archives of Ottoman of Turkey.

Population: Muslim Townsmen, Muslim Peasants and Yörüks and Their Occupations in 1845

The area of Kirili was geographically rural in 1845. It seems form Ottoman archival documents of 1845 that Kireli, a place consisting of only four small quarters, was a small town.³ The population of the region was entirely Muslim. Only one village, Fele (modern: Yassılbel of Şarkikaraağaç of Isparta), was mixed with Muslim peasants and *Yörüks*. Small tribal groups of

¹ The district of Kireli of the sixteenth century covers a much wider geographical area than the district of the 19th century. Some of the settlements was connected to the counties of Doğanhisar and Ilgın of Konya of the 19th century, administratively. The villages of Ayas, Ayaşlar and Daştekin (Deştigin) were within the district of Kireli in the 16th century. In the 19th century, the villages were administratively removed from the district of Kireli.

² There is no biographical information about this officer. He was probably an Ottoman soldier (*miralay*).

³ Some rural settlements that existed in the 16th century did not reach until the 19th century and were completely abandoned. Muslim villages of the region, Ebulvefa, Yukarı Eznebolu, Eflatun, İleminli, Aşağı Eznebolu, Bereket, Bayadüyüğü, Bereket, Çobanlar, Hamzalı, Selmanlı, Saraycık, Şeyh Çomak, Feranez, Kınık, Karakılıçlı, Kırbademli, Külçe, Lağri, Virancık, Yarangömü, were completely abandoned. The hamlets of Akkaya, İkikuyu, Hızırlı, Döngge, Şaban, Kulfal, Karacasalar, Karalar, Göynük, Virancık and Yassı Yurd of Kireli could not be inhabited as a settlement unit. (Mehmet Akif Erdoğan, *Beyşehir Sancağının 1584 Tarihli Nüfus Sayımı (Beyşehir, Seydişehir, Bozkır)*, İzmir 2004, Ege University publication, p. 138). Ottoman archival documents contain very little data about the village of Burunsuz, near the village of Imrenler. The name *Burunsuz* was not mentioned in the 1845 Ottoman *Temettuats*. According to local legend, it was a nomadic (*Yörük*) settlement. It was not one of the old villages of the district of Kireli. Probably this village was established after the *Tanzimat* as a result of the settlement policy of the pastoral nomads. Because many nomads were settled in the area of Ilgın of Konya during the middle of the 19th century.

Horzum, a large tribal group of Harizm origin from Central Asia scattered all over Western Anatolia, and, *Sarıkeçili Yörüks*, an important pastoral nomad group, one of the *Yörük* groups in the Central Taurus of Anatolia, used to come to the plateau of the village of Fele in summer to graze their animals. The tribesmen, who were engaged in animal husbandry, were again taxed by the government, together with the Muslim peasants.

Most of the peasants were occupied with agriculture, local trade and animal husbandry. In addition to agricultural lands, the plateaus of the Davras Mountain in the middle of the Sultan Mountains, close to the district of Doğanhisar of Konya, was an important source of income for the peasants of Çavuş⁴, the richest and most tax-paying village of district, with 189 Muslim male taxpayers. This plateau, which is about 20 kilometers away from the center of the village of Çavuş, supplies them with an extra income. The peasants go to their highlands called the plateau of Davras in the spring, where they were engaged in small-scale agriculture and animal husbandry until autumn. The peasants of Üyük also had a small plateau, Almalı, in the middle of the Sultan Mountains, 10 kilometers from the center. The plateaus were also used by the pastoral nomads from the region of Antalya and environmental peasants. Sometimes problems arose between the peasants and the nomads who newly arrived to the plateau for grass and water because of the resources of the plateaus were limited. The main livelihood of the peasants was from irrigated and dry agriculture. Small streams from the Sultan Mountains supplied the necessary water for irrigated agriculture. The farmers collected the water flowing from the streams in small pools (*bend*) and distributed them through waterways (*arık*). All the labor required for the works was provided jointly by the peasants. The small pools were repaired again in the spring, and the water channels were cleaned by peasants jointly. Well waters were also tried to be used in agriculture. Çavuş, the richest village in the region due to its water and land, had at least more than 100 pairs of oxen in 1845. The main labor force for the fields, vineyards and gardens was provided by oxen. A peasant with a pair of oxen could cultivate a field of no more than 50 acres (*dönüm*). The peasants of Çavuş easily cultivated 20-30 acres a year, usually with a pair of oxen. For example, Hasan, son of Siviş Ahmed from the village of Çavuş, was able to cultivate 44 decares of field (*tarla*) each year with a pair of oxen. Ottoman administration demanded from the land-saving peasants an estimated 33 to 53 percent of their annual earnings as profit tax as *kuruş*. This rate was really high for the peasants. Most of the peasants, who did not have agricultural land, worked as laborers, shepherds, and coachmen.

The workers of village origin, who works in distant places such as Aydın and Istanbul, somehow transfers the money they earn to their villages. The fertile agricultural lands of the Meanders of the Western Anatolia always attracts the workers. For this reason, the connections of the peasants of the region with the areas of Aydın and Istanbul was always continuing. The situation of the village of Balganda was interesting in terms of different occupations. Most of them went to Istanbul to earn money. Because most of the agricultural lands in the village belongs to the foundation established by a member of the Karamanid family, İbrahim Bey, from pre-Ottoman times. The peasants had little land to cultivate. They worked as boatmen and green-grocers in Istanbul. In 1845, most of the boatmen on Golden Horn of Istanbul were from the village of Balganda. Others worked in their villages as blacksmiths, coachmen and the person who produces the chickpeas (*leblebici*).

⁴ For a research on the history of the village of Çavuş, see. Mehmet Akif Erdoğan, *Göller Bölgesinde Bir Kasaba: Çavuş*, 2003, Ege University press.

The settlement of Kireli also differs from others in this respect. The only coffeehouse and barber shop of the region was located here. Two locals had been worked as a tinsmith and an antique dealer. While most of the peasants of Tuzluca were merchants and farmhands, the peasants of Selkisaray were greengrocers, boatmen and sheep merchants. While most of the peasants of Üyük were greengrocers and tenants, most of the peasants of Çavuş were engaged in marketing. The nomads, the temporary inhabitants of the region, were only engaged in animal husbandry. As documented in the documents of 1845, Ottoman central administration was taxing all animals raised by the peasants, except chickens. As it is known, since all the peasants were Muslims, they did not raise pigs. Every village had a shepherd. A herd of cattle belonging to the peasants was formed, and a shepherd, whose expenses were covered by the peasants, herded this herd every day. It was strictly forbidden for this shepherd to herd the flock outside the lands of village. If the shepherd herded the flock outside of designated areas, he often causes trouble with neighboring peasants. Especially the villages with little agricultural land like the peasants of Fele had to turn to animal husbandry. When Ottoman central administration wants to tax all animals in 1845, excluding pigs and chicken, some of the peasants wanted to smuggle some of their livestock from Ottoman official who came from Istanbul to avoid taxation. With a practice called *sirkat*, the peasants did not report the exact number of animals they own to Ottoman official in order to pay less tax. When the official came to the village, they especially took the small cattle to places far from the village and hid them from the official. *Sirkat* means not declaring correctly the number of animals they own to the central administration. It obviously means less declaring. As a matter of fact, Ottoman administration was taking heavy taxes from the peasants who owned livestock. Almost thirty percent of the animal's fair value was tried to be taxed by the government. The administration wants to impose such a heavy taxation that it even tried to tax the peasants who were too unhealthy to be a laborer or servant. Since the two headmen (*muhtar-ı evvel* and *muhtar-ı sani*) and imam of the village were well aware of the economic situation of the peasants, the laborer could be exempted from tax with their approval. Almost all occupations that provided income to the peasants were tried to be taxed by Ottoman government. Ottoman government demands the same amount of taxes from the peasants and retired soldiers⁵ living in the village, although sometimes famine occurs as locusts invades agricultural areas. Many locusts invade the agricultural lands of the village of Sergisaray in 1836 and damages the products of the area. Despite this situation, the government demands the same amount of tax from the peasants.

Abandoned villages of the region

Some of the historical villages of the sanjak of Beyşehir of 16th century was abandoned due to epidemics, banditry and economic reasons at the end of the 17th century.⁶ One of them was the village of Ebulvefa, located in the area between the villages of Köşk, Görünmez and Çukurkent of Kireli. Another was the village of Kınık, located between the village of Çavuş and the town of Kireli. Both villages were dissolved after the year of 1927. The peasants of both

⁵ After the Army of Janissary was abolished in 1826, a new army was formed by Sultan under the name of the Army of *Asakir-i Nizamiye*. Some soldiers from the district of Kireli works for the Anatolian and Rumelian Army of the *Asakir-i Nizamiye* and latter retires. Some of them returns to their villages. Ottoman administration also taxes their pensions.

⁶ The problem of abandoned villages of the sanjak of Beyşehir has been examined in detail in the following book: Mehmet Akif Erdoğan, 2006, *Osmanlı Yönetiminde Beyşehir Sancağı (1524-1584)*, IQ Kültür Sanat publication, İstanbul, pp. 198-202.

villages had to migrate to the surrounding villages. The mosques of the village became ruins over time as there was no Muslim congregation. As physically material remains from the villages, only wells, cemeteries, threshing floors and very few trees planted by peasants have survived to our time. The 16th century village of Yarangümi of the district of Kireli was located somewhere between the villages of Kınık and Tuzluca. It was dissolved before 1845. The name of this village was disappeared from both Ottoman official records and local pronunciation. Before 1845, this settlement was merged with the town of Kireli and its new name was the quarter of Küçük.

Pronunciation changes

In local pronunciation, Ebulvefa, was called Münnafa because it was an Arabic word. The Turks could not pronounce this word properly. There was no problem with the pronunciation of Kınık, among the local people. From the 16th century to 1845, there were changes in the writing of some village names in Ottoman official registers. The name of the village, which was written as Sergisaray by the Court clerks in the 16th century, was changed to the word of 'Selki' in 1845. The village name, which was written as Tuzluca in 1845, later was changed to the word of 'Tolca'. A typical example of a name change was that of a quarter in the town of Kireli. Court scribes hoped to gain prestige in the Istanbul by writing the Arabic or Persian translations the Turkish place names. For example, they changed the word of Kireli's *Orta* quarter to Arabic *Evsat*. Likewise, the name of the quarter bearing the name *Küçük* was changed to *Saghir* in Arabic. Thus, in official usage, two different spellings has emerged. An interesting pronunciation relates to Suvarık. It means that the place where the water reaches, turned into Zıvarık or Zuvarik in the pronunciation of the local people. Some of the compound words in the name of the village were also abandoned later. For instance, while the original Turkish name of the village was Kaba Pınar, the word 'Pınar' was later abandoned. Since there was a spring in the center of the village, the village was called by this name. Later, the original pronunciation of the village was forgotten and it came to be pronounced only as Kaba, non-delicious water of the water spring.

As a result, Ottoman administration needs cash to feed the army, due to wars with Russia and Iran in 1828. It saw the easiest way to do this by increasing the taxes of the peasants in the rural areas of Anatolia. Within the framework of this governmental policy, the agricultural taxes of the peasants of the Kireli region of Konya were also increased. In fact, the peasants were very poor because of the heavy taxation that had been imposed over the years. Agricultural production by peasants was only sufficient for their own subsistence. Many villagers had left their villages to earn money. Ottoman government also taxed the labor of the peasants who were in the city. Most of them could not return from the cities to their villages with money. The absence of modern farming techniques allowed a male-based agricultural workforce to continue the life of barely populated villages. The sparsely populated villages were unfortunately dispersed and their lands were immediately cultivated by the surrounding villagers.

The names of villages and the quarters of Kireli	<i>Temettuat</i> (profit tax) as <i>kuruş</i>	Special tax (<i>Vergi-yi mahsus</i>)
Çavuş	215166	14534
Balganda (modern İmrenler)	213667	14376
Selki	167749	12500
Üyük (modern Hüyük)	140685	11356
Fele (modern Yassibel)	123358	7838
Göçeri	115172	10578
Budak	96412	6370
Kiçi (modern Mutlu)	89938	6714
Köşk	78404	6153
The quarter of Sağır of Kireli	77366	7020
Sadıkıacı	73674	5788
Görünmez	63890	6016
Ebulvefa (abandoned)	61842	5568
Tuzluca (modern Tolca)	60716	4979
Kaba (modern Pınarbaşı)	58775	5016
İlmen	56176	4291
Kıyakede	52765	4238
The quarter of Çay of Kireli	49217	3325
Çukurkent	45865	3833
Suvarık (modern Değirmenaltı)	43638	3436
The quarter of Orta of Kireli	36705	2625
Suludere	35063	2890
Yenice	26172	2910
The quarter of Bazar of Kireli	25419	1878
Hordu (modern Kuşluca)	15879	1264
Kınık (abandoned)	14214	1033

Table: Profit-related taxes of the district of Kireli of Anatolia in 1845
(Source: *Temettuat Daftars*, Archives of Ottoman of Turkish Presidency, Istanbul)

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No. 10203. The village of Tuzluca

No. 10204. The village of Yenice

No. 10205. The village of Kaba

No. 10206. The village of Balganda

No. 10207. The quarter of Çay

No. 10208. The village of Fele

No. 10209. The village of Köşk

No. 10210. The village of Sadıkıacı

No. 10211. The village of İlmen

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No. 10212. The village of Çukurkent

No. 10213. The village of Hordu

No. 10214. The village of Kiçi

No. 10215. The village of Suvarık

No. 10216. The quarter of Bazar

No. 10217. The village of Ebulvefa

No. 10218. The quarter of Sağır

No. 10219. The village of Kınık

No. 10220. The village of Kıyakede

No. 10221. The quarter of Orta

No. 10222. The village of Selki

No. 10223. The village of Budak

No. 10224. The village of Üyük

No. 10225. The village of Suludere

No. 10226. The village of Çavuş

No. 10227. The village of Göçeri

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This research article is mainly based on Ottoman data of 1845. These are manuscripts and were written in Ottoman Turkish. The Ottoman government needed cash in the 1820s due to wars with Russia and Iran. In this study, the situation of 22 Islamic villages in the district of Kireli of Konya of Anatolia was examined. The region of Kireli (or Kirili) of Turkey geographically covers the plains and slopes between the eastern shores of Lake Beyşehir of Konya and the foothills of the mountains in the middle part of the Sultan Mountains. In 1845, in Ottoman administrative system, the district of Kireli was organized as a small judgeship of 22 small villages in the Anatolian province of Konya, mainly covering the eastern parts of Beyşehir Lake.

In 1845, the Ottoman central administration aimed to tax all Ottoman peasants and townsmen in order to alleviate the economic difficulties. By the order of the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud, in 1845, a Muslim Ottoman officer, Miralay Hacı Ahmad Beyefendi was sent to the district of Kireli to determine the income sources of the peasants. He personally came to this

area and determined the income sources of the peasants living in this region one by one. He taxes the peasants according to their sources of income. The basic data of this article were mainly based on these taxation records (Temettuat defterleri), unpublished Ottoman archive documents, prepared by this person and preserved today in the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul of Turkey.

The Kırili area was geographically rural in 1845. The population of the region was entirely Muslim. Only one village, Fele (modern Yassılbel of Şarkikaraağaç of Isparta), was mixed with Muslim peasants and *Yörüks*. Small tribal groups of Horzum, a large tribal group of Harizm origin from Central Asia scattered all over Western Anatolia, and, *Sarıkeçili Yörüks*, an important pastoral nomad group, one of the *Yörük* groups in the Central Taurus of Anatolia, used to come to the village of Fele in summer to graze their animals. These tribesmen, who were engaged in animal husbandry, were taxed again, together with the Muslim peasants. Most of the peasants were occupied with agriculture, local trade and animal husbandry. The peasants, who did not have agricultural land, worked as laborers, shepherds, coachmen and farmhands. Workers transferred the money they earned to their villages by working either in their own villages or in distant places such as Aydın of Western Anatolia and Istanbul (Deraliyye). The fertile agricultural lands of the Meanders of the Western Anatolia always attracted these workers. For this reason, the connections of the peasants of the region with the areas of Aydın and Istanbul always continued. Also the only coffeehouse and barber in the region was located in Kireli. Two locals had been worked as a tinsmith and an antique dealer.

As a result, the Ottoman administration needed cash to feed the army, due to wars with Russia and Iran in 1828. It saw the easiest way to do this by increasing the taxes of the peasants in the rural areas of Anatolia. Within the framework of this governmental policy, the agricultural taxes of the peasants in the Kireli region of Konya were also increased. In fact, these peasants were very poor because of the heavy taxation that had been imposed over the years. Agricultural production by peasants was sufficient for their own subsistence. Many villagers had left their villages to earn money. The Ottoman government also taxed the work of these peasants in the city. Most of them could not return from the cities to their villages with money. The absence of modern farming techniques allowed a male-based agricultural workforce to continue the life of barely populated villages. The sparsely populated villages were unfortunately dispersed and their lands were immediately cultivated by the surrounding villagers.