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**Muslim merchants and working-class in action :  
nationalism, social mobilization and boycott  
movement in the Ottoman Empire 1908-1914**  
Çetinkaya, Y.D.

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## **CLASSES AND THE PROBLEM OF AGENCY IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE**

The Ottoman Boycott Movement that appeared between 1908 and 1914 was a social movement comprised of different social and political actors. Political organizations such as the Committee of Union and Progress; civil societies and different social networks; various social classes such as Muslim traders and working classes; professional classes such as public officials, teachers, lawyers and the like; and the Muslim public in general played significant roles in this movement. The modernization process and the integration of the empire into the world economy in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought drastic changes to the social and economic structure of the Ottoman Empire. The transformation of the public sphere and the emergence of a modern civil society in the empire paved the way for different sections of society to play their parts. Therefore, the public sphere and the civil society, the political and social actors of the boycott movement, mass politics, modern ideologies and competing discourses are the main subjects of this thesis.

As a social movement, the Ottoman Boycott Movement made use of modern technology and embraced different agendas and interests of various sections of society. The main social actors—such as merchants, working-classes, state bureaucracy, professionals and provincial notables—had vital roles in the boycott movements and the political and social life of the empire. An expanding public sphere and a flourishing civil society provided an opportunity for the communication and organization between different social actors.

## 1.1. Non-Muslim Bourgeoisie and the State

One of the crucial features of Turkey's social history is the elimination of the non-Muslim population and the emergence of nation-states succeeding the Ottoman Empire. This elimination process is considered in the historiography as if solely a political project. According to the existing literature on Turkey, the main actor of this process was the state or bureaucratic elite. The political cadres of the Committee of Union and Progress also play a decisive role in these narratives. This tendency in the historiography is directly linked to the main arguments of the relevant historiography. The main pillars of historiography take into account mainly the state and the state elite as agent of fundamental changes in the history of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. Thus, it omits the existence of different social actors in history.<sup>1</sup> However, social and political phenomena like the Ottoman Boycott Movement afford us an opportunity to uncover the significance of these widely neglected social and political actors.

The Ottoman Boycott Movement was a crucial component of the elimination process of the non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire. In 1908, it emerged as an Ottomanist movement and targeted mainly foreign powers. Different foreign merchants and business activities of foreign countries—such as Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Italy, United States and Greece—in the Ottoman Empire were affected by it. However, af-

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1 One should also underline the fact that in the last decades there appeared a number of seminal studies on the social history of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey in which different social actors have entered the stage. However, although the quantity of these studies continues to increase, they are still marginal within the literature. Moreover, their impact on social and political thinking in contemporary Turkey is rather weak. I would like to mention Quataert's work as one of these seminal studies that deeply influenced young scholars in Turkey: Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908: Reactions to European Economic Penetration*, (New York: New York University Press, 1983). See also Quataert's article on new developments in historiography that intend to go beyond the narratives mainly focused on the political and military elite in Turkey's history: Donald Quataert, "Ottoman History Writing at Crossroads," *Turkish Studies in the United States*, (Ed.) Donald Quataert and Sabri Sayarı, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), pp. 15-30. Yet, this does not mean that there did not exist any studies mentioning social resistance practices in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey before. See the following works as very limited early examples: Çağatay Uluçay, *XVIII ve XIX. Yüzyıllarda Saruhan'da Eşkiyalık ve Halk Hareketleri*, (İstanbul: Berksoy Basımevi, 1955) and Halil İnalçık, "Application of the Tanzimat and its Social Effects," *Belleten*, No. 28, 1964, pp. 623-649. Studies on gender have also contributed to this new trend in historiography, although the quantity of monographs is still very limited. Many of the works are on prominent women or women movements, but not on patriarchy and gender relationships.

ter 1909 and particularly 1910 the economic presence of non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire gradually became one of the main targets of this political and economic protest movement. The movement slowly moved against native non-Muslims who subsequently suffered severely. The incorporation of the Ottoman economy into the world capitalist economy created favorable conditions for non-Muslim merchants, who started to operate under the protection of the Great Powers. When a Muslim protest spoke out against foreign states such as Greece, the native merchants acting under the banner of the Great Powers and those who could exploit the opportunities provided by the capitulations suffered as much as the foreign merchants. Yet, as the boycott movement strengthened its network and organization and as the resentment against non-Muslim communities increased, non-Muslim traders were also deeply affected.

Therefore, *Milli İktisat* (National Economy), which propagated the development of the Ottoman economy, was not only an invention of nationalist intellectuals or the policies of state elites, but also a social movement consisting of different social actors. The literature on the national economy, which will be analyzed in the following chapters, concentrates to a great extent on the intellectual history and does not take into account the social base of this process. The quest for the construction of a native industry, the abolition of the capitulations, and the economic development of Ottoman subjects became popular issues of the National Economy during the Second Constitutional Period (1908-1918). However, the Ottomanist element within this discourse and these practical policies evaporated, and the call for a National Economy gradually culminated into a demand for the dominance of Muslim/Turkish element in the Ottoman economy. That is why, before entering into an analysis of social relationships that resulted in the Ottoman Boycott Movement, one has to evaluate the historiography on social classes and the period in which the movement occurred.

The common assumption on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman Empire focuses to a great extent on the relationship and the struggle between the non-Muslim bourgeoisie and the reforming state elite. Although there is some merit to this interpretation, this kind of bilateral polarization misses several significant points regarding social and economic developments. In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and particularly during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the fundamental pillars of Ottoman economy and society changed drastically. Historiography on the Ottoman Empire emphasizes two dynamics behind these fundamental changes. One of them was the integra-

tion of the Ottoman Empire into the expanding world economy; the other was the reform efforts of the modernizing Ottoman ruling elite. Two distinct social groups emerged as a result of these developments: the non-Muslim bourgeoisie and the modern state bureaucracy.

The increasing trade between Europe and the Ottoman Empire in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century stimulated the rise of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie who played an intermediary role between the world markets and the majority of the small peasantry. The economy of the empire was to a great extent based on agriculture. The international trade between the Ottoman Empire and the world markets depended mainly on agriculture and small producers. Neither lands nor agriculture was monopolized in the hands of a land-owning class. The presence and persistence of small peasant producers was one of the main peculiarities of the Ottoman economy. This economic structure was the basis for the rise of a non-Muslim bourgeoisie.<sup>2</sup>

The predominance of small and independent family farms, particularly in the Anatolian agrarian structure, prevented the rise of a larger land-owning class. The lack of a large landowning class in the provinces facilitated the recentralization of the agrarian order, attempts to modernize the state and the undermining of the power of the provincial notables (*ayans*).<sup>3</sup> As a result, the agricultural production particularly in Anatolia was not based on a single crop, but on the export of various products such as grains, raw materials for dyes, ores, figs, raisins, filberts, cotton and tobacco.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it was almost impossible and futile for foreign investors and merchants to control small producers, because of their immense number and specialization in different products. The mediation between peasant farmers and the world market provided an economic opportunity, and it was the non-Muslim merchants who took advantage of this opportunity that resulted from both the expanding world economy and the agrarian structure of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>5</sup>

2 Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995), pp. 30-32.

3 Çağlar Keyder, "Europe and the Ottoman Empire in mid-nineteenth Century: Development of a Bourgeoisie in the European Mirror," paper presented at the Colloquium of the European Association for Banking History V. East Meets West: Banking, Commerce and Investment, Istanbul, 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> October 1999, p. 3.

4 Şevket Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and World Capitalism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 53 and 150.

5 For the general structures of the agrarian economy and the dominance of the small peasant producers see: Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (ed.), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, (Albany: Suny Press, 1991).

The small peasantry's domination of agriculture was not the only factor that triggered the rise of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie. It has also been claimed that non-Muslims and particularly Greeks dominated the economy before the Ottomans came to Anatolia. Greek nationalism also contributed to this point of view, stating that trade was characteristic of the Greek community.<sup>6</sup> Although Augustinos has criticized such reductionist and essentialist evaluations, he has also underlined the significance of ethnic affiliations within the rise of a non-Muslim bourgeoisie.<sup>7</sup> Cultural as well as different economic causes played their parts in the rise of the non-Muslim merchant class. European merchants preferred to consult with an intermediary native merchant class in order to avoid the instability of inter-state relationships. Such a diplomatic crisis harmed the interests of European merchants. Therefore, collaboration with a native merchant class facilitated their transactions with the great mass of peasants. Second, foreign merchants had to pay the same internal tax as their Ottoman counterparts. It was only in the export taxes that they paid less and had an advantage. As a result, they began to avoid the more difficult internal trade relationships and left the ground to non-Muslim traders. Furthermore, as many scholars have asserted, the religious affiliations between Greeks, Armenians and Europeans reinforced the intermediary position of non-Muslim merchants.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, non-Muslim traders were also eager to take an initiative in this process. They managed to receive *berats*, a type of foreign passport that secured them a position above Ottoman law and regulations. The capitulations and *berats* provided Greek and Armenian merchants legal extraterritoriality, as the official representatives of the Great Powers. These *berats* enhanced the position of non-Muslims in the economy at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the Ottoman state tried to balance the state of affairs by granting similar rights to the first non-Muslims under the title of *Avrupa Tüccarı* (European Merchant) and to Muslims under the name of *Hayriye Tüccarı* (Bene-

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6 For an example of a scholarly defense of this view see the work of Vryonis: Speros Vryonis, "The Byzantine Legacy and Ottoman Forms," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, No. 23-24, 1969-1970, p. 286.

7 Gerasimos Augustinos, *Küçük Asya Rumları Ondokuzuncu Yüzyılda İnanç, Cemaat ve Etnisite*, (Ankara: Ayraç, 1997), p. 174.

8 Orhan Kurmuş, *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi*, (Ankara: Savaş Yayınları, 1982), pp. 18-20; Fatma Müge Göçek, *Burjuvazinin Yükselişi İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*, (Ankara: Ayraç Yayınevi, 1999), p. 211-213.

faction Merchant).<sup>9</sup> However, these countermeasures were not enough to impede this process. As a result, the cultural capital of non-Muslim merchants, which provided them with cultural and linguistic proximity to foreign investors, increased their economic and political power within the economic and social structure of the Ottoman Empire.

The Greek historians Haris Exertzoglou and Elena Frangakis-Syrett have called our attention to the Greek bourgeoisie itself. They have claimed that the rise of the Greek bourgeoisie in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was due to their economic organization and trade network. For instance, Frangakis-Syrett has argued that, when foreign merchants entered the Anatolian markets, they encountered already established Greek merchants and trade networks. Greek success, she has asserted, depended on a “tightly knit kinship organization” among the Greek merchant class and their knowledge of the inner-Anatolian markets, such as the customs and tastes of that market.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Exertzoglou has claimed that free trade and commercial organization was more significant than the *berats* and the protection of the Great Powers in the rise of the Greek merchants in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He has argued that building large “independent houses with huge capital resources, credit facilities and prestige” might just have been the result of an “elaborate organization based on extensive commercial and business networks.”<sup>11</sup>

The non-Muslim merchants who played such an intermediary role in the economic transactions mainly conducted four economic activities: collecting taxes, lending money, dealing with currency exchange, and trade.<sup>12</sup> As Kasaba has argued, the non-Muslim bourgeoisie was not a full ally of foreign economic interests. They were also struggling against them in order to secure a better place in the economic network, trying to put limits to the power of both the government and foreign capital. As a result, they became one of the dominant forces in the Ottoman Empire in

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9 For the attempts of the Ottoman state see: Ali İhsan Bağış, *Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayri Müslimler*, (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 1998), pp. 57-77 and 107-113.

10 Elena Frangakis-Syrett, “The Economic Activities of the Greek Community of İzmir in the Second Half of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” in *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism*, ed. Dimitri Gondicas and Charles Issawi, (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1999), pp. 18-20.

11 Haris Exertzoglou, “The Development of a Greek Ottoman Bourgeoisie: Investment Patterns in the Ottoman Empire, 1850-1914,” in *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism*, ed. Dimitri Gondicas and Charles Issawi, (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1999), pp. 90-91.

12 Reşat Kasaba, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Dünya Ekonomisi*, (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1993), p. 70.

the course of 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, Exertzoglou has contended that the Greek bourgeoisie was not a “comprador” class that worked for the benefit of European capital.<sup>14</sup> He has argued that they were not only involved in trade, but also in other areas such as banking, industry, mining, and the like. Apart from this mediating role, they also had to compete with foreign capital. Kasaba has also voiced doubts regarding the existence of a comprador non-Muslim class in Western Anatolia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For him, the fierce competition between foreign capital and non-Muslim merchants released the economy from the direct control of Western powers.<sup>15</sup>

The other reason for the non-Muslim bourgeoisie’s rise to economic power was the gradual development of port cities and the formation of a convivial bourgeois lifestyle within these flourishing cities. Their geographic location provided port cities and small towns on the trade routes with an advantageous place in the economy and increased their significance. The cultural traits and the transformation of daily life in these flourishing cities attracted the attention of the contemporaries as well as the students of this age. There emerged a bourgeois class who adopted a new lifestyle, new consumption patterns and new customs according to a so-called “Western way of life.” This peculiarity separated the non-Muslim class in particular and non-Muslim communities in general from the Muslim population of the empire.<sup>16</sup>

This difference reveals the fact that “culture matters” when bearing in mind the conflicts between the non-Muslim and Muslim communities of the empire, particularly after the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The difference between the life-styles contributed to the divergence and separation of the two communities. This cultural difference became the symbol of the rising non-Muslim bourgeois class, although this life-style did not represent the entire non-Muslim population of the empire. The tension between the non-Muslim merchant class (as the champion of the integration to the World Economy) and the Muslim merchants (as the

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13 Ibid., p. 74; For similar claims see: Osman Kurmuş, *Emperyalizm’in Türkiye’ye Girişi*, p. 158.

14 Haris Exertzoglou, “The Development of a Greek Ottoman Bourgeoisie: Investment Patterns in the Ottoman Empire, 1850-1914,” p. 98.

15 Reşat Kasaba, “Was There a Comprador Bourgeoisie in Mid-Nineteenth Century Western Anatolia?” *Review*, Vol. IX, No. 2, Spring 1988.

16 Çağlar Keyder, “Birinci Dünya Savaşı Arifesinde Liman Şehirleri ve Politika,” *Memalik-i Osmaniye’den Avrupa Birliği’ne*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), p. 61.

losers in this process) has not been sufficiently studied. It is quite apparent that the cultural traits of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie were the main ingredient of its identity. In the literature on Turkey, this life-style and identity and culture has been taken into consideration as a proof of its bourgeois character. It was the Western lifestyle that made this merchant class a bourgeois class. As a result, the bureaucrats of the Ottoman state and Turkey have been characterized by their Western lifestyles, and those sections of society who have not had such cultural traits have been considered traditional classes. They have been depicted as being against any social and economic change. Different cultural characteristics might have played a crucial role in the formation of the social classes, but still remains a subject for future research.

Culture matters in the formation of a particular social class, but it is not possible to freeze a cultural feature as the main determinant of a social class. Therefore, a social class may have different cultural traits at different times and in different places. The historiography on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman Empire has to a great extent focused exclusively on the relationship between the small peasantry, the central state authority and the rising non-Muslim bourgeoisie. As the small peasantry did not express itself as an agent, scholars have focused their attention only on the bureaucracy and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie.

Apart from the formation and the activities of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie, the main issues discussed in the literature on the Ottoman Empire are the activities of the state elite, their reforms in order to enhance the power of the state, and the creation of a modern bureaucracy to achieve this goal during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In most of the studies, the state and the bureaucracy appear as the only actors in the historical analysis. This is why scholars refer to concepts such as the “state class,” “bureaucratic class,” or “bureaucrat bourgeoisie” in order to define the state as a social agent.<sup>17</sup> This point of view is also widespread among Leftist intellectuals. For instance, Ahmet Insel has pointed to the state elite as the sole agent and even taken into consideration the servants of the sultan (*kapıkulları*) as the social group that deeply influenced the bureaucrats of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup>

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17 The most extreme position in this regard is the one defended by Metin Heper. See Metin Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey*, (Walkington: The Eathen Pres, 1985), or Metin Heper, “The Strong State and Democracy: The Turkish Case in Comparative and Historical Perspective,” in *Democracy and Modernity*, Ed. S. N. Eisenstadt, (Leiden: Brill, 1985).

18 Ahmet Insel, *Düzen ve Kalkınma Kısacasında Türkiye*, (Istanbul: Ayınıtı Yayınları, 1996), p. 79.

It has been argued that there appeared a tension between the Christian mediating merchants as the actors of the empire's integration into the world economy and the state bureaucracy. Keyder, for instance, has argued that this merchant class was jeopardizing the bureaucracy.<sup>19</sup> First, the social transformation that this class initiated posed a threat to the social legitimacy of the bureaucracy, by undermining the position of the traditional sectors in the Ottoman economy. This bourgeois class was also a competitor in the process of surplus extraction from the small peasantry. Thanks to the immunities and privileges that the foreign powers granted to the non-Muslim bourgeoisie, they were able to transfer the wealth that the incorporation of the empire into the world market had generated into their own pockets. Furthermore, the old tax system was not appropriate for the rapidly changing economic conditions of the time. Thus, while revenues and production in the Ottoman Empire increased, the bureaucracy's share was reduced.<sup>20</sup>

The relevant historiography has generally claimed that the conflicts between different social groups emerged due to ethnicity. Therefore, ethnic and religious conflicts in the Ottoman Empire are considered to be only a social question. However, scholars such as Keyder and Kasaba have put this view in another way. They have argued that there were class contradictions in Ottoman society; however, these were concealed by ethnic conflicts and did not engender a full-fledged consciousness. As a result, the reforms of the Ottoman elite, the creation of a modern education system and a modern central bureaucracy, as well as movements such as the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks brought with them a rivalry between the Muslim bureaucracy and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie. This struggle between the Ottoman state and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie, and the elimination of the latter by the creation of a Muslim business class are the arguments most widely accepted in the literature on the Ottoman Empire, which are questioned in this thesis.

Since the Turkish historiography is very much based on the controversy between the non-Muslim bourgeoisie and the Muslim bureaucrats, one should focus on one of the most extreme examples of these arguments. Fatma Müge Göçek in her study *The Rise of the Bourgeoisie and the Demise of the Empire* has introduced a new concept in order to grasp this relationship between the bureaucracy and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie.

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19 Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, p. 54.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 69.

She has introduced the concept of “the bourgeois class with two bodies,” arguing that in the course of 19<sup>th</sup> century there appeared a bourgeois class with two components divided across religious and ethnic features. The Muslim/Turkish bureaucratic component of this fragmented bourgeoisie eliminated the non-Muslim commercial bourgeoisie and played an essential role in the construction of a new nation-state.<sup>21</sup> In line with the general arguments of the historiography on Turkey, she has claimed that the rise of centrifugal forces and the military defeats subverted the authority of the Ottoman central government. As a result, it decided to reform the state organization, resulting in the construction of a modern state. The ultimate aim was to enhance central authority. The institutional reforms, the building of a modern bureaucracy, and a modern education system were put in force for a more efficient administration. As an outcome of these efforts, two new social classes appeared: bureaucrats and intellectuals. They were different from the previous traditional elite of the empire. The resources over which they began to achieve control were taken out of the hands of the sultan.

The basis of these new bureaucratic elite was the human resources that depended on a western education system. This modern education provided the newly growing bureaucratic bourgeoisie with a cultural capital, which gave them a distinct social consciousness. This particular consciousness motivated them to initiate reforms and revolution. The new bourgeoisie gained a distinctive identity that bestowed on it a distinguished place in society. The formation of this new class was based on this cultural capital.<sup>22</sup> Eldem has also defined the rich bureaucrats who invested their money in the Ottoman bank as Muslim bourgeoisie.<sup>23</sup>

The second social group whose economic resources were derived from their economic relationship with the world market also withdrew themselves from the direct control of the sultan.<sup>24</sup> The rise of the bourgeoisie and their increasing autonomy was linked to their relationship to the market economy. The commercial bourgeoisie was under the protection of the Great Powers, and their increasingly dominant position in inter-

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21 Fatma Müge Göçek, *Burjuvazinin Yükselişi İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*, p. 9.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 178-180.

23 Edhem Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı ve Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi Araştırma Merkezi, 1999), p. 295.

24 Fatma Müge Göçek, *Burjuvazinin Yükselişi İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*, p. 104. For Göçek, the resources from which they derived their power in the last instance was under the control of the sultan.

national trade was no longer under the sultan's control. Yet, their ethnic and religious affiliation did not lead them to undermine the sultan's power through the power they gained in the economic sphere. They were not able to form such a powerful social force.<sup>25</sup>

Göçek has argued that this process brought to the fore a bourgeois class which was divided into bureaucratic and commercial segments. Furthermore, this separation also coincided with another division based on religion. These divisions were also an expression of a difference based on their different conceptions of civilization. These distinct civilizations were related to the separation of their interests. This is why, according to Göçek, the bourgeoisie that emerged in the Ottoman Empire was not capable of producing a unique vision for the prospective transformation of the empire and creating a hegemonic position within society. Their two struggles with each other and with the sultan finally contributed to the demise of the empire. This fragmentation along religious and ethnic lines transformed into a polarization.

## 1.2. Muslim Merchants

However, there were other social actors (such as the working class, peasants, and traditional guilds) whose activities and struggles had a significant impact on social and economic developments. Their efforts were effective in limiting the penetration of European capital into the empire and in bargaining for new legal regulations with the Ottoman State.<sup>26</sup> Alongside these lower classes, there were also a Muslim merchant class and the Muslim middle classes on the Balkans and in Anatolia. Although they were generally depicted as the losers in these economic developments, they had crucial roles in economic and social life.

The old argument regarding the absence of a Muslim bourgeoisie in the Ottoman Empire holds that the Muslims in the empire were indifferent to trading activities. This argumentation is to a great extent based on an article by Sussnitzki, which was translated into English in a volume edited by Issawi.<sup>27</sup> As Hilmar Kaiser has revealed, this article was written within the

25 Ibid., p. 241.

26 For these effective instances of resistance see: Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire 1881-1908*.

27 A. J. Sussnitzki, "Ethnic Division of Labor" (originally published in German in 1917 as "Zur Gliederung Wirtschaftlicher Arbeit nach Nationalitäten in der Türkei,"), *The Economic History of the Middle East 1800-1914*, Ed. Charles Issawi, (Chicago: The University

context of pre-World War I orientalist propaganda literature and has racist features. Kaiser has portrayed this literature in detail and shown how German orientalists depicted non-Muslims, particularly Armenians, as parasites and “bloodsuckers” in the context of German diplomatic interests in the Middle East.<sup>28</sup> This literature, and especially the article by Sussnitzki, not only illustrates non-Muslim Ottoman communities as exploiters of their country, who abused Turkish tolerance, but also represented Turks as an ethnic group who lacked “racial aptitude for trade.”<sup>29</sup> Thanks to this argumentation, Germans thought about getting rid of non-Muslims whom they considered British and French allies, and collaborating with the Turks and the Committee of Union and Progress who were in need of German help. Kaiser has also revealed that the modern historiography, from Modernization Theory to Dependency and World-System Theory, reproduced this racist argumentation of German orientalist literature. However, one should also underline the fact that Turkish nationalists and the elite of non-Muslim communities repeated this argumentation endlessly in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire. As mentioned in this chapter, the non-Muslim elite attributed to their community a civilizing mission, by restricting trade and industrial activities to their own community only.

According to this widespread argumentation, Muslims/Turks were apathetic to trade, commerce, banking, industry, and so on. The Muslim/Turkish population only consisted of peasants or bureaucrats/officers of the state. This argument was repeated endlessly, also by those who wanted to create a Muslim/Turkish merchant and business class in the empire. Particularly after the 1908 Revolution, the newspapers and journals were full of variations on this argumentation and calls for the participation of the rich in commercial activities. One may consider this argumentation a representation of the truth, or the ideological discourse of a political and economic project, because the writers, elites, and intellectuals who propagated this thesis were the ones who wanted the Muslim element to prevail in the economy. Therefore, this argument was always framed within the project of *Milli İktisat* (National Economy).

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of Chicago Press, 1966). This is one of the main and extensively quoted texts that claimed the absence of Muslims in trade. However, although Sussnitzki has asserted that “trade is characterized by a very significant absence of the largest of the Turkish ethnic groups,” he does not ignore Muslim/Turkish element in different economic sectors, such as industry.

28 Hilmar Kaiser, *Imperialism, Racism and Development Theories: The Construction of a Dominant Paradigm on Ottoman Armenians*, (Ann Arbor: Gomidas Institute, 1997).

29 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

The second point to be highlighted is the fact that the statistics cited in order to analyze the state of the Muslim bourgeoisie are the 1913 and 1915 Industry Statistics published by A. Gündüz Ökçün.<sup>30</sup> However, industry is not the only basis or determinant for the formation of a particular class. Moreover, industry was not the primary economic activity in the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the Muslims' share in the industrial sector cannot provide information concerning the state of Muslim merchants in the economy. These statistics should be supported by data on the trading activities of the Muslim population. However, even these statistics on the industry indicate that the 19.6 percent (or, roughly 1 out of 5) of the workshops were owned by Muslims/Turks.<sup>31</sup> This percentage also indicates that Muslim merchants active in the industry could actually constitute a social group that could effectively support a social and economic project. Therefore, the Muslim merchant class should be taken into consideration as an agent in Turkey's history.

The historiography on the Ottoman Empire mentions the Muslim merchant class in two ways. First of all, due to the rise of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie, they lost their prominent place in the international trade. As the Greeks and Armenians of the Ottoman Empire took advantage of the opportunities provided by an expanding world economy, the economic significance of Muslim merchants and provincial notables declined.<sup>32</sup> The loss of their position in the economy has turned out to be their total disappearance in the historiography on the Ottoman Empire.<sup>33</sup> Their

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30 *Osmanlı Sanayii 1913, 1915 Yılları Sanayi İstatistiki*, ed. A. Gündüz Ökçün, (Ankara: Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayını, 1970).

31 Yet, one should aware of the fact that this evaluation and calculation was made by the journal *Sanayi*, the representative of Muslim/Turkish entrepreneurs. Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat*, p. 191.

32 Niyazi Berkes does not mention the state of the Muslim merchant class after the Ottoman classical system started to disintegrate. He has mentioned the rise of non-Muslim merchants and their relationship with the Great Powers, but claimed that there is not enough information about their Muslim counterparts. He has not claimed that the Ottoman merchant class disappeared, but rather underlined the decline of the guild system and the artisans. Yet, it is apparent for him that the main agents in the social and economic history of the Ottoman Empire were the state elite and the Great Powers, apart from the structural changes. Niyazi Berkes, *100 Soruda Türkiye İktisat Tarihi*, Vol. II, (İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1970), pp. 273-279.

33 Even Huri İslamoğlu-Inan who has aimed for a total history of the Ottoman Empire has mentioned the Muslim merchant class only to claim their disappearance: "merchant capital was increasingly integrated into the economic division of labour of the European market; internal trade and market networks declined relative to foreign trade and trade shifted from inland centres to coastal towns; the indigenous and predominantly Muslim mer-

disappearance coincides with the common assumption on the social history of Turkey, which claims that the Ottoman Empire and Turkey in its initial decades lacked a Muslim/Turkish bourgeoisie. As Cemal Kafadar has argued, the claim that Muslims did not participate in trade is so widespread in the historiography that there is only insufficient research on the subject, even on the periods before the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>34</sup> According to the literature, it was only during World War I and under the Kemalist regime that a “nascent” bourgeoisie was created.<sup>35</sup>

Korkut Boratav has argued that the Muslim/Turkish bourgeoisie was nascent, unorganized, and separated and did not have much capital accumulation. Thus, he has asserted that they had the characteristics of an *esnaf* (guild). Furthermore, they were to a great extent dependent on non-Muslim merchants.<sup>36</sup> Keyder has claimed that until the 1950s the class issue did not play a significant role and that this delay was due to the elimination of the Greek and the Armenian population. After they were gone, there was nothing by way of a Muslim bourgeois class.<sup>37</sup>

Muslim merchants, particularly in Anatolia, do not appear in a significant number in Turkish scholars’ social analyses on the Ottoman Empire. They have been presented as an impotent, scattered, almost dead social group who did not have any agency after the 18<sup>th</sup> century. As they were the losers in the process of integration into the world economy, their resentment regarding their decline is the only reason why they have entered academic studies.<sup>38</sup> Although they constituted the social base of the protest movements against non-Muslim communities, their role has not

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chant classes were dealt a blow as foreign merchants or their agents—the Christian minorities—gained precedence.” Huri İslamoğlu-Inan, “Introduction: ‘Oriental Despotism’ in World-System Perspective,” *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-Inan, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 11.

34 Cemal Kafadar, “A Death in Venice (1575): Anatolian Muslim Merchants Trading in the Serenissima,” *Journal of Turkish Studies*, Vol. 10, 1986, pp. 191-218.

35 For a typical example see: Feroz Ahmad, “Doğmakta Olan Bir Burjuvazinin Öncüsü: Genç Türklerin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Politikası 1908-1918,” *İttihatçılıktan Kemalizme*, (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1996), pp. 25-26.

36 Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-1985*, (İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1995), p. 15. Similar to the hegemonic view, he has claimed that it was only during World War I and Kemalist takeover that this Muslim bourgeoisie started to grow thanks to the political circumstances (p. 27).

37 Çağlar Keyder, “Mısır Deneyimi Işığında Türk Burjuvazisinin Kökeni,” *Memalik-i Osmaniye’den Avrupa Birliği’ne*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), p. 142.

38 For instance, Kasaba has mentioned them within this context. See Reşat Kasaba, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Dünya Ekonomisi*, p. 88.

been thoroughly investigated.

The second occasion on which this particular section of society has entered the narrative is the study of the motivations and ultimate goals of the political elite. They have been mentioned in the context of the state elite and the Young Turks beginning to create a native (Muslim/Turkish) bourgeoisie.<sup>39</sup> It has been claimed that their existence and eventual access to economic power was directly related to the policies of the Committee of Union and Progress, particularly during World War I. This time, Muslim merchants took advantage of rising Turkish nationalism and the elimination of non-Muslim communities. They were to fill the newly emergent social gap. The economic and political policies of the Committee of Union and Progress paved the way for the rise of Muslim provincial merchants. In this context, the Muslim merchant class has been depicted only as a dependent section of the society in Turkish historiography.<sup>40</sup>

As I have mentioned above, it has been argued in the literature that trading activities determined the general characteristics of the bourgeoisie and that the empire lacked an industrial bourgeoisie. According to this argument, the non-Muslim bourgeoisie and the Ottoman bureaucracy were two rival powers in the Ottoman Empire during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, it has been claimed that the state bureaucracy lacked Muslim bourgeois collaborators in its struggle against non-Muslim merchants and, therefore, created such a class at the close of the empire, entirely liquidating the non-Muslim communities in the empire.<sup>41</sup> For instance, according to Keyder, society did not demand Turkification, apart from the bureaucracy. It was the Young Turks who attempted to impose this project from above.<sup>42</sup> Although the economic policies of the Committee of Union and Progress played a decisive role in strengthening the position of the

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39 Ayşe Buğra, *Devlet ve İşadamları*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), pp. 67-72. Buğra has also claimed that the landowners and the merchants, who were among the founders of the banks established between 1908 and 1918, cannot be considered the origins of the Turkish entrepreneurial class. Although she does not explain why, their relationship with the Unionists should be the reason.

40 Charles Issawi, "The Transformation of the Economic Position of the Millets in the Nineteenth Century," *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, Ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, (New York: Holmes and Meier Inc, 1982); see also: Ayşe Buğra, *Devlet ve İşadamları*, pp. 73-74; Çağlar Keyder, "Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar," p. 93-95; Ahmet Insel, *Düzen ve Kalkınma Kısacasında Türkiye*, p. 138.

41 For a summary see: Çağlar Keyder, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Arifesinde Liman Şehirleri ve Politika," p. 69.

42 Çağlar Keyder, "Mısır Deneyimi Işığında Türk Burjuvazisinin Kökeni," p. 156.

Muslim merchant class *vis-à-vis* the non-Muslim bourgeoisie, particularly in the Second Constitutional Period (1908-1918), the Muslim merchant class was not a creation of the Young Turks and their economic policies.

Yet, in contrast to Keyder and Kasaba's claims, who argue that the Ottoman Empire lacked an active Muslim bourgeoisie, one can even find traces of its existence in their own studies. For instance, Keyder has argued that the Ottoman bureaucracy received support from Muslim traders and notables for their nationalist program. Muslim traders collaborated with the policies of the Committee of Union and Progress that aimed at the elimination of non-Muslims from the economy.

Furthermore, Keyder has asserted that, although Muslim merchants and guilds could not exploit the newly emerging opportunities created by the world economy, there was no decrease in their numbers. They continued to exist; however, their position in the economy became secondary.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, although it is evident that they lost power over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they continued to exist and did not disappear. For instance, Ahmad has mentioned several economic boycotts against non-Muslim communities; yet, he has not explored the activities of the Muslim merchants and notables and repeated the general thesis of the "non-existence of a Muslim bourgeoisie."<sup>44</sup> A study by A. Üner Turgay has also depicted the existence and actions of the Muslim/Turkish merchant class in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Trabzon, although he has conceded to the traditional argument in the historiography by underlining the fact that the foreign trade in the Black Sea was monopolized by the non-Muslims. However, he has also mentioned the Muslim resentment regarding the hegemony of non-Muslims in the economy. In his narrative, the Muslim merchant class, although they had lost their prominent place, has appeared as an active social group struggling against non-Muslims, by using various means. They not only established different economic ventures which were not executed by non-Muslims, but also wrote protest letters to the governors. Their resentment was also recognized by foreign observers. These ethnic conflicts had their roots in the economic sphere, and both non-Muslims and Muslims were aware of the fact.<sup>45</sup> Muslim

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43 Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, p. 51.

44 Feroz Ahmad, "Doğmakta Olan Bir Burjuvazinin Öncüsü..." pp. 25-60.

45 A. Üner Turgay, "Trade and Merchants in Nineteenth-Century Trabzon: Elements of Ethnic Conflict," *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, Ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, (New York: Holmes and Meier Inc, 1982).

merchants's resentment in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was to be transformed into concrete action after the 1908 Revolution.

Apart from the continuing existence of the Muslim merchant class in the provinces and the countryside, another significant point is that the prominence of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie was not permanent. Their position in the economy had its peaks and valleys. As Kasaba has argued, the 1873-1896 crises undermined the prominence of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie and its intermediary position within the trade networks. They began to lose their advantageous position due to the emergence of the Public Dept Administration (*Duyun-u Umumiye*), and this facilitated the economic plans of the Committee of Union and Progress and the rise of a Turkish/Muslim bourgeoisie.<sup>46</sup>

There are some exceptional studies that have mentioned the significance of the Muslim bourgeoisie and the Muslim middle classes, such as the work of Donald Quataert and Kemal Karpat. Quataert has claimed that, although international trade is easy to observe, it was never as important as domestic trade in the Ottoman Empire between 1700 and 1922, "both in volume and value."<sup>47</sup> He has argued that some studies have overstated the significance of the international trade, because it is "well-documented, easily measured and endlessly discussed in readily accessible Western-language sources."<sup>48</sup> Studies that over-emphasize international trade and world markets are mainly based on the secondary literature, or the archives of the Great Powers (such as Great Britain, France or United States). Therefore, these sources do not reveal the role of Muslim merchants and domestic trade, which is not well documented. Although the flow of goods between and within different regions in the Ottoman Empire was crucial, it is impossible to quantify this trade. Quataert has not denied that non-Muslims were dominant in foreign trade and even surpassed European merchants, thanks to the *berats* they had obtained for the Great Powers. Yet, "domestic trade overwhelmingly outweighed the international," and it was the Muslim merchants who dominated trade between interior towns, trade networks, and the trade be-

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46 Reşat Kasaba, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Dünya Ekonomisi*, p. 94.

47 Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire 1700-1922*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 124.

48 Donald Quataert, "The Age of Reforms 1812-1914," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, Ed. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 824.

tween port cities and their hinterland.<sup>49</sup>

Quataert has also underscored that, although guild manufacturing declined severely due to competing imports of cheap and high-quality foreign industrial products, the manufacture structures and producers successfully adapted themselves to the changing environment. There occurred a shift in the manufacture, which also altered their production preferences in different fields in which they could survive or compete more easily.<sup>50</sup> Both Muslim merchants and Muslim producers existed during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Kemal Karpat has also underlined the significance of the Muslim middle classes in the course of 19<sup>th</sup> century. In contrast to other scholars who consider the state bureaucracy the initiator of Turkish modernization, Karpat has taken into account “the success of Turkish modernization and its popular acceptance” due to the “internal social growth that produced a middle class.”<sup>51</sup> Although he has not repudiated the notion that the sultan and his bureaucrats were significant actors in the political field, it was the new middle class that held the “true force.” Thanks to the commercialization and privatization of the agrarian economy, a significant number of people engaged in trade of agricultural products. This contributed to the rising power of the small towns and its notables (*eşraf*).<sup>52</sup>

Lorans Tanatar-Baruh in her study on İstanbul textile merchants has indicated that, apart from a few large firms, it was small business owners who competed with each other in the market.<sup>53</sup> Her information to a great extent was gathered from the *Annuaire Oriental*, which became one of the crucial sources for the economic history of the Ottoman Empire. She has confirmed the traditional assumption, by claiming that non-Muslims dominated the textile sector. However, she has underlined the existence of a Muslim element. First of all, they had a small share of around 10 percent in the textile trade. At first sight, this share reveals that they did exist. However, Tanatar-Baruh has added that Muslims “were dom-

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49 Ibid., pp. 834-841.

50 Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Quataert reveals how the patterns of industrial production in the Ottoman Empire changed after the Industrial Revolution.

51 Kemal Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith and Community in the Late Ottoman State*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 91.

52 Ibid., p. 94.

53 Lorans Tanatar-Baruh, “A Study in Commercial Life and Practices in İstanbul at the Turn of the Century: The Textile Market,” Unpublished MA Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 1993.

inant in the trade of raw materials, such as cotton, or in a traditional branch of textile production.”<sup>54</sup> Although they had a smaller share in the economy, Muslim merchants did exist in all sectors, and in some they held a significant share. Tanatar-Baruh has also underlined the fact that Muslim merchants gained more significance after the 1908 Revolution.<sup>55</sup>

Another scholar who has examined empirical data regarding the Ottoman bourgeoisie—such as the personal card catalogue of the Ottoman Bank—is Edhem Eldem. He has asserted that, with 16.5 percent, the share of Muslims using banking services was low when compared to the empire’s non-Muslim population. However, he has also added that this ratio “is probably higher than what most of the socio-economic models for the period would have predicted.”<sup>56</sup> He has demonstrated that the “surviving crafts of the time” were under-represented in the Ottoman Bank card catalogue; however, this sector was the part of economy where most Muslim businessmen operated. Thus, one may still have reservations concerning the Muslim presence in the economy.

The presence of Muslims as active actors in the economy is now gradually finding a place in the literature. For instance, Elena Frangakis-Syrett, an expert on the commercial life of Smyrna while concentrating on Greeks, has tried to underline the presence of Muslim merchants along with the non-Muslims in Smyrna’s economy. She has mentioned both Muslim and non-Muslim trading networks when referring to native commercial initiatives.<sup>57</sup> It is not a coincidence that she has referred

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54 Lorans Tanatar-Baruh, “At the Turn of the Century, Textile Dealers in an International Port City, Istanbul,” *Boğaziçi Journal Review of Social, Economic and Administrative Studies*, Vol. XI, No. 1-2, p. 39.

55 *Ibid.*, pp. 41-44.

56 Edhem Eldem, “Istanbul 1903-1918: A Quantitative Analysis of a Bourgeoisie,” *Boğaziçi Journal Review of Social, Economic and Administrative Studies*, Vol. XI, No. 1-2, p. 61.

57 Elena Frangakis-Syrett, “Uluslararası Önem Taşıyan Bir Akdeniz Limanının Gelişimi: Smyrna (1700-1914),” Ed. Marie-Carmen Smyanelis, *Izmir 1830-1930 Unutulmuş Bir Kent Mi? Bir Osmanlı Limanından Hatıralar*, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008), pp. 47, 48, 50, 54, 55. A chapter in this edited volume was dedicated to the Muslim community in Smyrna. The title of this chapter, which actually consists of an interview with Fikret Yılmaz, indicates a neglected point. The Muslim community of Smyrna is defined as an “unknown” community. The interviewers, Christoph Neumann and Işık Tamdoğan, asked him about different aspects of Muslim presence in Smyrna in the course of the town’s history. One of the main subjects of the interview was the economic activities of the Muslim social classes. Although he repeated the traditional discourse on Muslims in the economy to a certain extent, his narrative well depicted the active involvement of the Muslim classes in the economic and social life of Smyrna. “Bilinmeyen Bir Cemaatin Portresi: Müslümanlar, Fikret Yılmaz’la Söyleşi,” Ed. Marie-Carmen Smyanelis, *Izmir 1830-1930 Unutulmuş Bir Kent Mi?*

to Gad. G. Gilbar's study on Muslim big merchant-entrepreneurs of the Middle East.

Gilbar has questioned the wide-spread claim that it was the local non-Muslims and foreigners who controlled the economy and particularly the foreign trade in the Middle East. He has not only asserted that Muslim big merchants were active in international trade even during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but also that they invested in agriculture and industry. These merchants also turned into entrepreneurs and invested in "commercial agriculture, manufacture, modern industries, transportation and social services," such as education.<sup>58</sup> Gilbar has also claimed that, through the wealth they accumulated from their commercial and industrial investments, Muslim merchants found opportunities to influence the political developments in their countries, particularly in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>59</sup> Yet, to a great extent he has concentrated on the "eastern crescent" of the Middle East and underlined the fact that the merchants' role in the foreign trade in Western and Northern Anatolia and Egypt was limited. The place of Muslim merchants in foreign trade in the Western crescent was also relatively weak. The only exception was Beirut, where Muslim entrepreneurs flourished. For the port cities of Western Anatolia and the Mediterranean, he has repeated the traditional arguments as summarized above and designated states as the main obstacle to economic and commercial development. Therefore, it was the rise of the nation-states after the 1920s that brought a halt to the convivial activities of the merchant class, just like the Ottoman state, which did not want a strong Muslim bourgeoisie as a power base.<sup>60</sup> However, his claims raise significant questions regarding the presence of a Muslim merchant class in the economy of the Middle East and provoke new research on economic activities, other than international trade with Europe and the port cities of the Levant.

In a similar manner, Ayhan Aktar has made use of the journal *Annuaire Oriental* in order to gather information regarding the economic activities and professions in Istanbul between 1868 and 1938. He has drawn attention to the regions that the *Annuaire Oriental* included. He has not-

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*Bir Osmanlı Limanından Hatıralar*, pp. 71.

58 Gad G. Gilbar, "The Muslim Big Merchant-Entrepreneurs of the Middle East, 1860-1914," *Die Welt des Islams*, Vol XVIII/1, 2003, p. 9.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

60 *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 31.

ed that this collection also took into account traditional economic spaces—such as Eminönü, Kapalıçarşı and Sultanhamam—where Muslim traders were most likely to work. In contrast to these traditional places, Galata and Beyoğlu were dominated by native as well as foreign non-Muslims. Accordingly, there appears a “dual structure” in Ottoman cities in the course of the modernization process during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>61</sup> Apart from underlining the dominant position of the non-Muslim merchant class in the process of the Ottoman economy’s integration to the world markets, he has also mentioned that the traditional sectors did not disappear. They rather tuned with this transformation process, and their existence is apparent in the “yellow pages” of the *Annuaire Oriental*. The information available in these sources reveals the fact that the number of *esnaf* in this traditional area did not decrease, but rather increase. For him, it was the guild organizations (which protected the *esnaf* from drastic changes) that dissolved. However, their members did not disappear and continued to operate in the market.<sup>62</sup> According to Aktar, these two distinct social sections of society lived side by side, in isolation from each other and had distinct cultures and tastes. Yet, at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century and in the course of Ottoman Boycott Movement, these two social groups were to come face to face with each other.

Mataracı has employed a different source that uncovers the existence and activities of the Muslim bourgeoisie at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. She has analyzed the trade letters of a Muslim trading family.<sup>63</sup> Three entrepreneur brothers who were settled in Rize, Istanbul and Manchester corresponded with each other while they exe-

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61 Ayhan Aktar, “Şark Ticaret Yıllıkları’nda “Sarı Sayfalar:” İstanbul’da Meslekler ve İktisadi Faaliyetler Hakkında Bazı Gözlemler, 1868-1938,” *Türk Milliyetçiliği, Garımüslimler ve Ekonomik Dönüşüm*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006), p. 170.

62 Ibid., p. 175, 193, 196-197. Aktar has not only focused on Istanbul, but also made comparisons with other cities, such as Izmir and Bursa. See also Ayhan Aktar, “Bursa’da Devlet ve Ekonomi,” *Türk Milliyetçiliği, Garımüslimler ve Ekonomik Dönüşüm*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006), p. 224. Yediyıldız has also claimed that Muslims continued to prevail in the industry, although they retreated in commerce vis-à-vis non-Muslims. In his article, he has focused on the silk industry in Bursa and asserted that Muslims preserved their place in the economy. Although this article has been written to defend the view that Islam is not an obstacle to economic development and entrepreneurship and an outcome of the rising Islamism in Turkey, it also refers to some archival sources. M. Asım Yediyıldız, “XIX. Yüzyılda Bursa İpek Sanayi ve Ticaretinde Gayrimüslimlerin Yeri,” *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, Vol. IV, No. 4, 1992, pp. 273-280.

63 Aliye F. Mataracı, *Trade Letters as Instances of Economy, Ideology and Subjectivity*, (İstanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Center, 2005).

cuted their business. Although Mataracı was very much influenced by the existing literature abrogating the significance of a Muslim merchant class, she has contextualized these letters as a sample “confirming the existence of a Muslim bourgeoisie dealing in trade within and without the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire.”<sup>64</sup> Their identity, which was strongly defined by Islam and based on their relationship with non-Muslim merchants within the empire, is significant for this case study of the Ottoman Boycott Movement.

Similar to Göçek, Karpat has also suggested that the Ottoman middle class was divided into two groups, in line with the ethnic and religious divisions within society. However, according to Karpat, the Muslim bourgeoisie did not consist of state bureaucrats, but rather of the provincial merchant class, landowners and notables. He has also insisted that the privileges that the non-Muslim communities acquired thanks to the reform edicts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the privileges that they acquired caused a deep resentment among Muslims. The Muslim middle classes considered these reforms and privileges as an economic freedom for non-Muslims, which they lacked. Similar to Quataert, Karpat has argued that local retail trade was controlled by Muslims. The divide between the Muslim and non-Muslim counterparts of the Ottoman middle class widened because of the permanent immigration of Muslim populations from lost Ottoman lands. Not only did the ratio of Muslims in the population increase, but also the “cultural-ideological orientation” of this new middle class changed.<sup>65</sup> The rapid expansion of education, modern media and new forms of associations provided for the middle classes the infrastructure to express their interests and transform their identities. Karpat has taken into account different ideological standing points and programs such as Islamism, Ottomanism, and nationalism, as expressions of a growing middle class and their aspirations.<sup>66</sup>

As a result, one can argue that there was a Muslim bourgeois presence in the countryside, with economic sources and an organized civil society. The modernizing reforms of the state elite—such as the construction of a modern education system, transportation, press, industry,

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64 Ibid., p. 8.

65 Kemal Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith and Community in the Late Ottoman State*, p. 97.

66 Ibid., p. 103.

voluntary associations, and so on—also contributed to the power of the Muslim middle class. The divide between the non-Muslim and Muslim elements of the Ottoman middle class was crucial for further economic and political developments. The rise of Islam and its popularization as an ideology of the lower and middle classes increased in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly during the reign of the Abdülhamid II. However, this divide became more important in the Second Constitutional Period, when the theories and policies of National Economy came to the agenda. The tension and struggle between the two sections of the Ottoman middle classes became apparent. During the 1908 Ottoman Boycott, the merchant class did not eagerly take part in the movement. Merchants who had economic links with the boycotted parties tried to uphold their relationships. The boycott in 1908 and 1909 was against Austria and Bulgaria and occurred under the fraternity atmosphere of the 1908 Revolution. However, particularly after the Balkan Wars, the Muslim merchant class became active in the economic and social clashes between different ethnic and religious communities. This thesis takes into consideration the Muslim merchants as social agents within a social movement.

Different social actors who were also influenced by these novel developments had a deep impact on the historical process. First, there had always been different dynamics and groups within the state elite and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie with their diverging goals. Secondly, different sections of society—such as the working class, provincial Muslim merchants, the petty bourgeoisie, and professionals—also played their parts. To exclude these groups and classes from an analysis would lead to misinterpretations; therefore, this thesis attempts to place the Muslim merchant class and working class into the historical context and evaluate their place within a social movement.

### **1.3. The Muslim Working-Class**

The historiography on Turkey constantly repeats the lack of adequate information on the history of the lower classes in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. This lack of information is due to the lack of a history or even the existence of working-classes in the Ottoman Empire, according to most studies. Although there have appeared numerous studies on the history of the working class in Turkey, younger scholars still refer to the “pover-

ty” of the present state of the literature.<sup>67</sup> Scholars who are interested in the history of the working-class in Turkish history relate this “poverty” to the mentality of the historians, as they are primarily preoccupied with the actions of the state and the political elite. This is why historians have not focused on the history of the working class.<sup>68</sup> Apart from the mentality, scholars who deal with labor history also mention difficulties related to the sources and archives, which are said to be unproductive.

Interest in labor history emerged when social and leftist political movement gained power in Turkey. Work that appeared in the 1960s and 1970s were to a great extent focused on the history of the worker’s movements and their organizations. Before, research on working-class history had been left to amateur historians, journalists and union activists. Their studies brought to the fore crucial information concerning workers’ movements and their first attempts at establishing unions and political organizations. Hüseyin Avni [Şanda] wrote in 1935 on the 1908 Strike Wave, which was one of the flourishing periods of workers’ strikes in the history of Balkans and Middle East.<sup>69</sup> He has analyzed different aspects of the 1908 Strikes, such as the actions in various industrial and service sectors, women and child labor, foreign capital, the suppression of the state, the political elite’s treatment of the workers, the organizations of workers, and so on. In 1951, Lütfü Erişçi published a booklet on the history of the working-class in Turkey. His book is similar to Hüseyin Avni’s study and has mainly focused on occupational and political organizations that emerged during the labor struggles.<sup>70</sup> Both writers have contextualized the labor struggles in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey in relation to semi-colonialism. In addition to these two works, Kemal Sülker has also mentioned the history of the working-class and labor struggles in his book on trade unions in Turkey.<sup>71</sup>

These early studies have not had a significant impact on the historiog-

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67 Yüksel Akkaya, “Türkiye’de Emek Tarihinin Sefaleti Üzerine Bazı Notlar,” *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 91, Kış 2001/2002, pp. 285-294; Yiğit Akın, “Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Emek Tarihçiliğine Katkı: Yeni Yaklaşımlar, Yeni Kaynaklar,” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, No. 2, Fall 2005, p. 75.

68 Donald Quataert, “Giriş,” *Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye’sine İşçiler (1839-1950)*, Ed. Donald Quataert and Erik J. Zürcher, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1988), p. 14.

69 Hüseyin Avni [Şanda], *1908’de Ecnebi Sermayesine Karşı İlk Kalkınmalar*, (İstanbul: Akşam Matbaası, 1935).

70 Lütfü Erişçi, *Türkiye’de İşçi Sınıfının Tarihi (özet olarak)*, (İstanbul: Kutulmuş Basımevi, 1951).

71 Kemal Sülker, *Türkiye’de Sendikacılık*, (İstanbul: 1955).

raphy on Turkey, although many of these writers' articles were also published in newspapers. However, as social and political movements in Turkey experienced a revival in the 1960s, activists and young scholars became more curious. Under these circumstances, two crucial studies have appeared, one of them the continuation of Sülker's research, but in a much better organized version,<sup>72</sup> and the second by Oya Sencer [Baydar], who has brought together information of workers' movements and their organizations in unprecedented detail and scale.<sup>73</sup> Although this PhD thesis did not result in Sencer receiving the PhD degree, for political reasons, her subsequent book has been based on a survey of primary sources. The events surrounding this thesis and book has also demonstrated why historians avoided the study of working-class history in the university circles.

The relationship between workers and socialists has also been another subject that these narratives concerned with. The studies of socialist Turkologists—such as Rozaliyev, Şnurov and Şişmanov—which were translated into Turkish during the 1970s took working-class movements into consideration, as a determined outcome of historical progress. Accordingly, the industrialization process in Turkey had given birth to a working-class that was to pioneer socialism in Turkey. Obviously, these books were only a Turkish variation in the field of international labor history. This is why they neither included detailed information, nor were based on in-depth research.<sup>74</sup> However, they provide significant information and a particular point of view regarding labor history, at a time when historiography virtually ignored the lower classes and excluded them from the narrative. Numerous socialist periodicals published in the 1970s simplified and repeated the general findings of this literature. Although this political tendency paved the way for an academic critique of labor history for being reductionist, a significant amount of information was gathered as a result of this process.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, not all histories

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72 Kemal Sülker, *100 Soruda Türkiye'de İşçi Hareketleri*, (İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1968).

73 Oya Sencer [Baydar], *Türkiye'de İşçi Sınıfı –Doğuşu ve Yapısı*, (İstanbul: Hobora Kitabevi, 1969).

74 A. Şnurov and Y. Rozaliyev, *Türkiye'de Kapitalistleşme ve Sınıf Kavgaaları*, (İstanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1970); A. Şnurov, *Türkiye Proleteryası*, (İstanbul: Yar Yayınları, 1973); Y. N. Rozaliev, *Türkiye Sanayi Proleteryası*, (İstanbul: Yar Yayınları, 1974); Y. N. Rozaliyev, *Türkiye'de Kapitalizmin Gelişme Özellikleri*, (İstanbul: Onur Yayınları, 1978); Dimitir Şişmanov, *Türkiye İşçi ve Sosyalist Hareketi Kısa Tarih (1908-1965)*, (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1978).

75 Two studies can be regarded as outcome of this accumulation: Tüm İktisatçılar Birliği (Union of Economists) *Türkiye İşçi Sınıfı ve Mücadeleleri Tarihi*, (Ankara: TIB, 1976); and

in the political journals were a repetition. For instance, Zafer Toprak has published an article in one of these socialist journals and thereby written a crucial contribution to the literature on the 1908 Strikes.<sup>76</sup>

Most of these studies on working-class history in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey have concentrated on the activities of the trade unions, organizational initiatives, political struggles, the leaders' deeds, and strikes. Yet, this tendency to limit working-class history to such fields is not peculiar to Turkish historiography; it is a universal trend in labor historiography.<sup>77</sup> Different facets of working-class history—such as daily life, gender, ethnicity and race, culture, religion, identities, and the like—have entered historiography as novelties, particularly after the 1960s.

The working-class found mention in the works of the elite as well as scholars only within the framework of debates regarding socialist thought in Turkey. Intellectual history is one of the most developed areas in the historiography on Turkey, when compared to social and cultural studies. Historians and political scientists often mention the working-class when analyzing socialist thought in intellectual circles. The literature has asserted that socialism was restricted to a few personalities. Moreover, some of these, like Hüseyin Hilmi (*İştirakçi*), were not aware of what socialism really was. This was so because socialism did not have a social base in the Ottoman Empire. That is to say, an industrial revolution did not take place in the Ottoman Empire, and as a result there was no sizeable working-class population that would have triggered the emergence of a socialist ideology. There was nothing by the way of a capital-labor contradiction.<sup>78</sup>

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the popular illustrated three-volume history of the Turkish working-class: *Resimli Türkiye İşçi Sınıfı Tarihi*, Vol I-II-III, Ed. Süleyman Üstün and Yücel Yaman, Illustrated by Tan Oral, (Istanbul: Vardiya Yayınları, 1975).

76 Hakkı Onur [Zafer Toprak], "1908 İşçi Hareketleri ve Jön Türkler," *Yurt ve Dünya*, No. 2, March 1977, p. 277-295.

77 For a classification of different trends in the historiography on the working class see: Marcel van der Linden, "Labour History: The Old, the New and the Global," *African Studies*, Vol. LXVI, No. 2-3, August-December 2007, p. 169,

78 Aclan Sayılğan, *Türkiye'de Sol Hareketler*, (Istanbul: 1972), p. 70-72; İlhan Darendelioglu, *Türkiye'de Komünist Hareketler*, (Istanbul: 1973), p. 16-17, 34; Muzaffer Sencer, *Türkiye'de Siyasi Partilerin Sosyal Temelleri*, (Istanbul: 1974), p. 55-58; Feroz Ahmad, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Son Dönemlerinde Milliyetçilik ve Sosyalizm Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler," *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyalizm ve Milliyetçilik (1876-1923)*, Ed. Erik J. Zürcher and Mete Tunçay, (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995), p. 16-17; Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi*, (Istanbul: 1992), p. 206-207; Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar-I (1908-1925)*, (Istanbul: BDS, 1991), p. 22.

These arguments take into account a particular definition of working-class. The narratives of the Turkish historiography, to a great extent, assume the working-class as a population of men working in a modern industrial plant. Workers who operate in service sectors, such as transportation, are not even counted among the members of the working-class. That is to say, a member of the working-class is a blue-collar worker. Once more, this approach is not peculiar to the historiography on Turkey. Marcel van der Linden has argued that a significant number of interpretations on the working-class are based on “free” wage-earners. He has claimed that the working-class is comprised of different types of labor. Capitalist relationships may even be compatible with unfree labor. For him, the main point is the commodification of labor, and “this commodification may take on many different forms.”<sup>79</sup>

Scholars who belong to similar schools of thought may have different definitions and classifications. For instance, E. J. Hobsbawm has pointed out the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the period in which a working-class was formed. He has mainly focused on blue-collar workers operating in the modern industry, who subsequently created a particular way of life and culture.<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, E. P. Thompson has not restricted his definition of the working-class to industrial labor. His seminal work on the making of the English working-class concentrates mainly on the experience of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and ends at the very beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thompson was interested in various formations of the working-class as comprised of declining artisans and their experience and consciousness. He has considered class as a historical phenomenon against the structuralist definitions and uncovered how the workers were active and conscious participants in the process of their own making. This is why he has concentrated on the real experience of the working-class, through which they emerged as an agent in the historical process.<sup>81</sup> The port workers in the Ottoman Empire, “the heroes of the Boycott Move-

79 Marcel van der Linden, “Labour History as the History of Multitudes,” *Labour/Le Travail*, No. 53, Fall 2003, pp. 235-43. In a similar vein, Hanagan and van der Linden have asserted that a definition of labor should include “the vast world of unfree labor, including apprentices, bonded laborers, soldiers, serfs, indentured labor, prison labor, and slaves, as the world of the underemployed and the part-time worker.” Michael Hanagan and Marcel van der Linden, “New Approaches to Global Labor History,” *International Labor and Working-Class History*, No. 66, Fall 2004, p. 1.

80 Eric J. Hobsbawm, “The Making of the Working Class, 1870-1914,” *Worlds of Labour*, (London: 1984).

81 E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working-Class*, (London: 1963).

ment,” were also present in the formation of their class and, as this thesis will discuss in the following pages, their agency in this movement contributed this process.

Although Thompson in his book occasionally referred to different sections of the working-class—such as unskilled workers, casual laborers, paupers, and agricultural laborers—he has been accused for mainly concentrating on skilled artisans.<sup>82</sup> As mentioned above, this particular point is crucial at this conjunction, since the literature on Turkey has delineated a sharp distinction in between industrial laborers and artisans, or guild workers.<sup>83</sup> The presumption underlying this distinction is the equation of capitalism with industrial revolution. Therefore, for a many Turkish historians, it is nonsense to speak of capitalism, bourgeoisie and working-class, since there was no industry in Turkey until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. For them, the Turkish case has been a unique example from which notions such as class and social agency are absent.<sup>84</sup> However, as Sewell has argued, the class-conscious workers’ movement was not an outcome of factories and industry, until the 1871 Paris Com-

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82 Geoff Eley, “Edward Thompson, Social History and Political Culture: The Making of a Working-class Public, 1780-1850,” *E. P. Thompson Critical Perspectives*, Ed. Harvey J. Kaye and Keith McClelland, (Philadelphia: Temple, 1990), p. 24.

83 Some critiques also accuse Thompson of concentrating on the activities of artisans, rather than the struggles of the working-class. See, for instance, Craig Calhoun, *The Question of Class Struggle: Social Foundations of Popular Radicalism during the Industrial Revolution*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). For Calhoun, the people that Thompson discussed were not even the workers, only dissolving artisans. Therefore, his critique was very different from that of Eley and more similar to the approach of Turkish historiography.

84 This claim is not unique to the historiography on Turkey. These types of claims are generally based on the comparison of a particular country with an ideal model that has experienced a “proper” modernization process. This country is generally Great Britain. For instance, a similar tendency also appeared in German historiography regarding the place of the bourgeoisie in national history. It has widely been claimed that Germany had its own way of development (*sonderweg*, or special path). Roughly speaking, the German bourgeoisie was weak and shy before the landed aristocracy (*junkers*) and, therefore, failed in its supposed struggle against it. For a critique of this point of view see: David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984). This approach presupposes a conflict between the rising bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy in England during the emergence of capitalism. Yet, many studies have refuted this theory and shown how capitalist relationships emerged in rural areas and in agriculture. Robert Brenner, “The Agrarian Roots of European Capitalism,” *The Brenner Debate: Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe*, H. Aston and C.H.E. Philpin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 213-327; Ellen Meiksins Wood, *The Pristine Culture of Capitalism: A Historical Essay on Old Regimes and Modern States*, (London: Verso, 1991).

muné. These workers were to a great extent artisans. Yet, he has also underlined the fact that there no longer were any “traditional” urban crafts, since capitalism and new exploitative practices had already transformed crafts long before the invention of machinery.<sup>85</sup> Therefore, one should focus not on the level of industrialization, but the development of capitalist relationships in the Ottoman Empire, in order to evaluate and analyze the social classes.

Christopher H. Johnson has argued that proletarianization was not an outcome of technological development only. The division and specialization of labor, the increasing control over the means and knowledge of production, the disciplining of labor, and the existence of replaceable labor units were all there before the emergence of modern industry.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, before the industrial revolution, capitalism had already degenerated many artisans and journeymen into a proletariat. Producers had lost their ownership of and control over the means of production. This separation of producers from the means of production turned them into wage laborers.<sup>87</sup> Many master artisans lost their control over the means of production if they were unable to become capitalists. “Capitalism and proletarianization are two perspectives on the same historical phenomenon,” and there were many different routes to the formation of a working-class.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, as Raphael Samuel has once underlined, it was not only the factory system that, together with capitalism, emerged as a new mode of production, but also a proliferation of small producers. Samuel has referred to the combined and uneven development of capitalism and revealed how steam-power and handicraft skills went hand in hand in the mid-Victorian Britain.<sup>89</sup> That is to say, the absence of large

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85 William H. Sewell, Jr., “Artisans and Factory Workers, and the Formation of the French Working Class, 1789-1848,” *Working-Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States*, Ed. Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 50-51.

86 Christopher H. Johnson, “Patterns of Proletarianization: Parisian Tailors and Lodève Woolens Workers,” *Consciousness and Class Experience in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Ed. John M. Merriman, (London: Holmes and Meier, 1979), p. 67.

87 Ronald Aminzade, “The Transformation of Social Solidarities in Nineteenth-Century Toulouse,” *Consciousness and Class Experience in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, p. 102.

88 “Introduction,” *The Workplace before the Factory: Artisans and Proletarians 1500-1800*, Ed. Thomas Max Safley and Leonard N. Rosenband, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 6-10.

89 Raphael Samuel, “Workshop of the World: Steam Power and Hand Technology in mid-Victorian Britain,” *History Workshop*, No. 3, Spring 1977, p. 8, 39. According to him, “capitalism in the nineteenth century grew in various ways. Mechanization in one department

industrial plants does not necessarily mean the absence of working-class formation and working-class movements.

The refrain of the Turkish historiography on labor and the history of the lower classes as well as the agency of different sections of society is based on evasion and theoretical assumptions. Yet, different theoretical backgrounds and approaches might also shed light on the history of different classes in the course of Ottoman and Turkish history. Crucial contributions in this vein are the articles by Sherry Vatter who has written on the struggle of journeymen in Damascus. Her studies has demonstrated that the structure of guilds or a production based on artisanship was not an obstacle to the emergence of a labor struggle and the emergence of a working-class. Moreover, the traditional organizational structure of guilds and their traditional ideals facilitated and legitimized their struggle.<sup>90</sup>

#### 1.4. Culture, Class Consciousness, and Islam

This thesis will show how different sections of society and different social classes played a central role in an empire-wide social movement and represented themselves and their particular interests under the guise of national ideals. The actions of the port workers within the Boycott Movement, for instance, prove how a particular guild organization transformed itself within the modernization process in general, and during the Boycott Movement in particular. The port workers even succeeded in building an empire-wide network. One can argue that their tradition survived until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Their legacy was not dead, contrary to the claims that guilds had vanished in the course of the modernization process. Yet, it is quite apparent that their organization and discourse also adapted well to the changing circumstances.

Unfortunately, the historiography on the Ottoman Empire and Turkey does not offer enough information for an analysis and evaluation of

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of production was often complemented by an increase of sweating in other; the growth of large firms by a proliferation of small producing units; the concentration of production in factories by the spread of out-work in the home” p. 17.

90 Sherry Vatter, “Şam’ın Militan Tekstil İşçileri: Ücretli Zanaatkarlar ve Osmanlı İşçi Hareketi, 1850-1914,” *Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet Türkiye’sine İşçiler 1839-1950*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1998), pp. 55-9; “Millitant Journeymen in Nineteenth-Century Damascus: Implications for the Middle Eastern Labor History Agenda,” *Workers and Working Classes in the Middle East: Struggles, Histories, Historiographies*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 1-20.

the transformation of the guilds' structure in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Neither is there enough knowledge on how Muslim urban notables and merchants coped with this process of modernization and integration into the capitalist world economy. Thanks to the studies by Quataert it is quite obvious that Ottoman manufacturing did not completely perish in the age of industrial revolution. As mentioned above, some of the sectors in the Ottoman economy were able to take advantage of the newly emerging opportunities, while others could not. As Quataert has argued, although the place of the Ottoman Empire in the world economy diminished, its total production did not decrease. Manufacturing and production was able to transcend the regulations and confinements of the guild structure. He has well depicted that manufacturing is not necessarily machine-based production in a factory and indicated how native traders adapted to the transformation process resulting from the integration into the capitalist economy.<sup>91</sup>

As noted above, there is not enough information available on the Muslim/Turkish merchant class and urban notables. It has widely been claimed that Turkish history lacks a Muslim bourgeoisie similar to the bourgeoisie found in Western history, a bourgeois class that struggled against the landed aristocracy and the state and finally brought democracy to its country. Yet, the literature on the emergence of capitalism in England and the revisionist literature on the French Revolution have also undermined these theoretical postulates.<sup>92</sup> Turkish historiography has assumed that the merchant class should have lived according to a Western life style and, to a great extent, looked for Western patterns of daily life and culture. As a result, private property, the process of commodification, commercialized social and economic relationships, and the transformation of life style in a different manner did not enter the historians' agenda. In order to conduct an analysis of Muslim merchants, land owners and entrepreneurs, further research is needed, on their trading networks, their relationship with the foreign and non-Muslim bourgeoisie, their social relationships, their life styles, and their class discourse, which were to a great extent dependent on Muslim identity.<sup>93</sup>

91 Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*.

92 For a good review of the mentioned literature see: George C. Comninel, *Rethinking the French Revolution: Marxism and the Revisionist Challenge*, (London: Verso, 1987).

93 Similarly, a significant number of German historians have accused the German bourgeoisie for assimilating into the culture of Junkers and compromising with the Bismarkian revolution from above. As a result, for them, liberalism did not flourish in Germany, when

However, even though the structure of guild organizations in particular sectors had degenerated and paved the way for good fortunes in business, others succeeded in preserving their organizations, particularly the ones comprised of laboring classes. They survived and continued to affect the social and economic life of the Ottoman Empire. The process of modernization and the integration of the empire into the capitalist economy were not smooth processes.<sup>94</sup> On the contrary, they provoked many different types of popular resistance, and social organizations with traditional roots, such as the guilds, found for themselves a space to act.

The historiography on working-class experiences in France and Britain has indicated that the transformation of pre-existing discourses, popular and religious traditions, trade, and community solidarities played significant roles in class formations and the emergence of a class consciousness.<sup>95</sup> Yet, as Sewell has argued, these existing organizations and their traditional discourses also underwent a transformation and recruited Universalist arguments and vocabulary in order to include other workers

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compared to West European patterns. Therefore, Germany did not have a proper German bourgeoisie. Geoff Eley, "Liberalism, Europe and the Bourgeoisie 1860-1914," *The German Bourgeoisie*, (London: Routledge, 1993). Yet, neither are French historians entirely enthusiastic about including the concept of the bourgeoisie into their narrative. They have claimed that the French economy was dominated by agriculture and small-scale manufacturing. Therefore, for them, capitalism was marginal in the French economy until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As a result, the French bourgeoisie did not exist. No particular social group called itself bourgeois, and this fact is a confirmation of this argumentation for some historians. Sarah Maza, *The Myth of the French Bourgeoisie*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). Last but not least, Perry Anderson, in his famous article, has also argued that the English bourgeoisie could not develop a coherent world view vis-à-vis the aristocracy. Because of its compromise with the aristocracy, the English revolution was the least bourgeois revolution. The superstructure stayed intact, and the pre-modern state system and anachronistic culture survived. Britain did not have bourgeois revolutions, as did Western European countries, particularly France. The revolution was never finished, and democracy did not mature in Britain, even in the 1960s. Perry Anderson, "Origins of the Present Crisis," *New Left Review*, No. 23, January-February 1964, pp. 26-53. I have referred to these studies in order to indicate that, even in the historiography of these countries, which are considered as ideal models in the Turkish historiography, the presence of a bourgeoisie is controversial in terms of economy and culture. These arguments depend on different definitions and understandings of the concepts and the intellectual discussions and agenda concerning a particular era.

94 Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908: Reactions to European Economic Penetration*.

95 For a theoretical discussion on both Thompson's work and the literature on class formation see: William H. Sewell, Jr., "How Classes are Made: Critical Reflections on E. P. Thompson's Theory of Working-class Formation," *E. P. Thompson: Critical Perspectives*, Ed. Harvey J. Kaye and Keith McClelland, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), pp. 68-71.

or legitimize their actions.<sup>96</sup> In a similar vein, port workers in the Boycott Movement referred to their traditional rights, which they claimed to have had for centuries. Their guild organization facilitated their activities within the Boycott Movement. The balance of power in the national movement provided them with a shelter under which they were able to preserve significant elements of their traditional organization. Furthermore, thanks to the Boycott Movement and their political affiliations, they also strengthened their empire-wide network.

Moreover, they made use of nationalist arguments and presented themselves as representatives of Ottoman and national interests, and as defenders of the rights of consumers and people. They also cited the ideals of the new constitutional regime in defending their so-called traditional privileges in the Ottoman ports. Therefore, they were quite successful in developing a class discourse based on different cultural elements, while their positions in the harbors were undermined by capitalist relationships.<sup>97</sup>

New relevant information will help to better understand how people played a part in the making of their own history. Yet, this thesis is not a study on class formation and class consciousness; it will only analyze the social origins of a popular social movement. Therefore, it focuses mainly on different patterns of mobilization and the agency of different segments of society. This study gives us an opportunity to see the Muslim merchant and working classes in action within the Boycott Movement. Their actions and their social movement invoke new questions regarding the formation of classes and the culture, which was to a great extent based on Muslim identity. The answers to these questions may facilitate our understanding of the social base of Muslim/Turkish nationalism, which was not only an intellectual current, but also a social and mass phenomenon.

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96 William H. Sewell, Jr., "Property, Labor, and the Emergence of Socialism in France, 1789-1848," *Consciousness and Class Experience in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, pp. 52-57.

97 Therefore, Mustafa Oral was not correct in claiming that porters had no class consciousness during the Boycott Movement. Mustafa Oral, "Meşrutiyet'ten Cumhuriyet'e Antalya'da Yunan Karşısı Sosyal Hareketler: Giritli Göçmenler ve Kemalist Hamallar," *Toplumsal Tarih*, No. 138, Haziran 2005, pp. 64.

