

Nevertheless, patronage relations, in the general sense of bonds of reciprocal dependence, where one party exercises dominance over the other subordinate party, permeated relations of agricultural production (sharetenancy, taldji'a, etc.), as well as access to seats of administrative authority and allocation of posts to public office.

A word here is needed about the nature of the Ottoman state. Through a good part of the 19th century the raison d'être of the Ottoman regime was a "policy of provision", to use Issawi's term for medieval Europe (after Hecksher):

The main objectives were not to promote local production but to meet needs of the government and to ensure that the principal towns, and in particular Istanbul, would be adequately supplied. (Issawi, 1970:409).

The role of the state during this period was largely confined to the management of the taxation system in order to increase its revenues, and the installation of a proper infrastructure for that purpose (Osman Okyar, 1980: 160-161). In addition to the passage of legislation regulating the commercial code, and laws abolishing the guilds and encouraging industrial development, a chief instrument for breaking with the 'policy of provision' was the promulgation of the land code aimed at establishing private property in agriculture.

One of the main features of the tanzimat reform in the late Ottoman period was that it marked the transition from a tribute-exacting mode of extraction (based on iltizam tax farming) to a more complex system of surplus appropriation in agriculture. This change was dictated by the pressure exercised by the European powers on the Ottoman state to repay its debts and interests on massive loans following the incorporation of the Ottoman social formation into the world capitalist economy. The Ottoman state sought to increase its revenues from land by a process of eliminating the multazimun