

CHAPTER FOUR

The Social and Economic Situation of the Ulema Class in Thessaloniki in the First Half of the 19th Century

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Abstract

Thessaloniki Ottoman estate records contain important data in terms of shedding light on social and financial history. This article explores the status of the scholarly class as observed in the Thessaloniki Ottoman inheritance records. The scope of the article is confined to the scholarly class of Thessaloniki in the first half of the nineteenth century. The social status of this class has been evaluated in various subcategories under the light of identification (künye) information. Within this framework, the article aims to determine the social situation of the scholarly class by utilizing such information as the location, manner, and particular circumstances of the death of a given scholar and the titles and adjectives used to describe the deceased. The distribution of the scholarly class within the city walls is concentrated in certain neighborhoods and along an east-west axis. The study of the marital status of this class, which has been evaluated under the titles of married, single, divorced, and unspecified, has shown that polygamy was rare among the scholars of Thessaloniki in this particular time period. In accordance with the characteristics of Islamic law, the legal inheritors appear to be numerous and diverse, therefore the percentage of direct inheritors lags at 58%. Certain inferences have been made regarding the status occupied by the members of the scholarly class in the social strata and their income distribution by evaluating their inheritance in eleven different categories. Those carrying the titles of Hanım, Katip, Ağa, and Seyit appear to be in the high income category, whereas scholars with the titles Efendi, Molla, Şeyh, and İmam are placed in the low income category. The interest shown by the scholarly class in books is below what one would expect. According to the estate records, the Ahmediye book has generated much more interest in Thessaloniki than the Qur'an. No tangible correlation between the number of books owned by a scholar and his economic income could be established. A relative increase in the number of books owned by scholars can be observed towards the middle of the nineteenth century, when income levels were on the rise.

Keywords: *Thessaloniki, inheritance records (tereke), scholarly class (ilmiye), ulema*

Introduction

The Thessaloniki Qadi Registries

The Thessaloniki Judicial Historical Archives, with the large number of legal records they hold, are of primary importance due to the light they shed on the religious, legal, social, cultural, and economic history of the Ottoman State in general, and Thessaloniki in particular.

The Thessaloniki Ottoman Collection Records are comprised of: 1. The Evrenosoğlu Foundations, 2. *İkrar*, 3. *Mütalaa* Magazine, 4. The Thessaloniki Municipal Council decisions, called “*mazbata*” (Province), 5. Title deeds (*kabz* books), 6. Court Records books, 7. Tax books. The number of books mentioned total 337 in the Ottoman Collection Court archive, with the first booklet dating to 1694, and the last booklet, no. 337, dating back to 1912.¹

The *Qadi* (Judge) of Thessaloniki held the title of “*mevlevliyet*,” and he came after the Judge of Aleppo in the hierarchical order. When the *Qadi* of Thessaloniki wanted to be promoted, he would first be granted the title of Aleppo and then become the *qadi* of Aleppo. Thessaloniki ranks first in the 12 provinces and sanjaks that belonged to the second order of provinciality (Uzunçarşılı, 1965).

Thessaloniki Ottoman records are important for obtaining information about both Muslims and non-Muslims in terms of their lives and livelihoods; their agricultural and industrial production; the crafts and professions they occupied themselves with; their trade; their transactions in terms of receivables and debts; their merchandise for import and export; taxes collected; the value and assortment of moveable property in the gold and money market; the historical trajectory of inflation and devaluation; polygamy, the slave and bondswoman system; the legal inheritance of the deceased; their guardians and guarantors, in addition to many other topics.

Borders

The research is limited to the first half of the 19th century and the Thessaloniki Macedonian Historical archive, the Thessaloniki *Qadi* Records and estate/fortune records of the scholarly class. Because certain booklets were regulated later on, the time frame of the research was kept to 1790-1852.

The notion of the “scholarly class” was treated in a way contrary to what is known and in the widest scope possible. The identification section of estate records, in addition to the name and title of the person, contain the title they had among the people, as well as information on their rank and profession. As such, it is easy to determine which class and group a person belonged to by

¹ The Thessaloniki Macedonian History Archive was listed according to the order it was recorded in the online system of the Ottoman Collection’s funds archive. For an alternate listing and evaluation, see: Balta, Evangelia, “Yunanistan’da Türk Arşivleri” (The Turkish Archives in Greece), (Translation: Herkül Milas), <http://www.evangelialalta.com/kitap/arsiv.pdf>, 18.03.2016

looking at their profession or titles given to them, such as teacher¹, judge², scholar³, minister⁴, *nakîbuleşraf*⁵ (a person whose task is to look after the matters concerning those who belonged to the lineage of Prophet Muhammad), clerk⁶, chairman⁷, Imam⁸, and timber merchant⁹. In titles that begin with the phrase “member of senior faculty”¹⁰ or “*Kudâttan*”¹¹ it is evident that the deceased were indeed from the “formal” scholarly class.

However, in the records of certain deceased persons, there is no direct reference to class or category; however, the deceased person in question is believed to be, by way of strong clues, a member of the “civilian” scholarly class and not the “formal” one. These clues are titles and adjectives that describe the deceased. Titles such as *Efendi*¹², *Molla*¹³, *Seyyid*¹⁴, *Şeyh*¹⁵, *Hoca*¹⁶, *Hafız*¹⁷, *Dede*¹⁸, and *Derviş*¹⁹ are the most important among such adjectives and names.

It is necessary to note that among those who were of the “formal scholarly class,” who used the titles and adjectives listed above, there were many people who only carried the titles of *Efendi*, *Molla*, *Şeyh*, and *Seyyid*. It is understood that such people who carried titles such as *Efendi*, *Molla*, *Şeyh*, and *Seyyid* were of the “civilian scholarly” class and did not hold a high level civil servantry or diplomas. The emergence of book collections from the estates of individuals who hold such titles can be considered as proof of the existence of the “civilian scholarly” class.

In this case, if there is no clear mention of the level of civil servantry for the deceased, yet that person is described by certain adjectives, titles, and ranks which are given to the scholarly class, then my opinion is that that person should be considered as a member of the civilian scholarly class.

¹ Selanik Makedonya Tarih Arşivi Osmanlı Koleksiyonu Şeriye Sicilleri, (The Thessaloniki Macedonia Historical Archive Ottoman Collection Legal Records 182, pg. 97 (This will henceforth be referred to with acronym SŞS); SŞS, 189, pg. 196; SŞS, 215, pg. 116; SŞS, 218, pg. 140.

² SŞS, 189, pg. 196.

³ SŞS, 176, pg. 135; High ranking Qadis would be referred to as “mevali” See: Uzunçarşılı, pg. 102-104, 117, 273.

⁴ SŞS, 230, pg. 106.

⁵ SŞS, 191A, pg. 18.

⁶ SŞS, 218, pg. 73.

⁷ SŞS, 230, pg. 41.

⁸ SŞS, 176, pg. 132; SŞS, 178, pg. 65; SŞS, 182, pg. 100.

⁹ SŞS, 182, pg. 104; SŞS, 224, pg. 5.

¹⁰ SŞS, 215, pg. 116.

¹¹ SŞS, 189, pg. 174.

¹² SŞS, 256, pg. 139; SŞS, 254, pg. 186; SŞS, 248, pg. 100.

¹³ SŞS, 246, pg. 162; SŞS, 245, pg. 132; SŞS, 237, pg. 33.

¹⁴ SŞS, 230, pg. 261; SŞS, 230, pg. 139; SŞS, 224, pg. 73.

¹⁵ SŞS, 224, pg. 2; SŞS, 215, pg. 42; SŞS, 201, pg. 108.

¹⁶ SŞS, 186, pg. 102; SŞS, 219, pg. 40; SŞS, 230, pg. 116.

¹⁷ SŞS, 256, pg. 159; SŞS, 176, pg. 11; SŞS, 180, pg. 58.

¹⁸ SŞS, 201, pg. 209; SŞS, 230, pg. 19.

¹⁹ SŞS, 226, pg. 42; SŞS, 256, pg. 131; SŞS, 191, pg. 49.

The Display of Social Status

Identity Introduction Text

In order to identify the deceased and use the best terminology which connotes the social status of the person, the “*Kassam*” civil servants – comprised of a scribe, a “*çuhadar*” (Ottoman legal servant) and “*muhzir*” (person responsible for calling people to court) – would ask detailed questions about the deceased and would prepare the ID Introduction Text according to the answers they received. Even though the language used in the introductory text may have been subject to change based on the linguistic understanding of the time or the verbal skills of the scribe and the deceased person’s status in the social hierarchy, one can say that it contained a sort of unity and coherence as a whole. Because estate records underwent tight control, this led to the emergence of a unique, tasteful literary form and expression over time. This form makes it possible for one to capture details about the social status of the deceased.

Place of Death on the ID Introduction

When examined logically, one can see that the “deductive method” was used in the ID Introduction Texts. In this method, the city in which the deceased died always forms the universal set. Each of the *han* (caravanserai), *medrese* (madrasah), *tekke* (dervish lodge), *konak* (mansion), *kaza* (district), *kasaba* (town), village and other areas of death are all subsets under this universal set. Accordingly, in the identification evaluation, the province the person is located in is mentioned first. If the deceased is not from the province which the town he/she died in belongs to, then the universal of “Originally from...” is used, and Thessaloniki and its provinces then represent the sub-group.¹ In certain records, the deductive method is used for both his place of birth and place of death.²

Original Death

According to our data, 54 members of the scholarly class died outside of the place in which they were born and raised. This figure represents roughly 15% of the total of *ilmiye* deaths (365) in the time period we have determined for our study.

Expressed in terms of percentage, 30% of those who died outside of their city of birth were originally from İstanbul. The remainder was from various places in Anatolia, from the villages and surrounding provinces of Thessaloniki, as well as Egypt and the Hejaz region.

We see that of the 176 *Efendis*, 40 (23%) and of the 95 *Seyyids*, 17 (18 %) died outside of their respective home town. As compared to the scholarly class,

¹ SŞS, 174, pg.5; SŞS, 176, pg. 91, 93; SŞS, 180, pg. 82.

² SŞS, 180, pg. 37.

11% of the *Efendis*, 5% of the *Seyyids*, 1% of the *Müderris*, *Şeyh* and *Hafız*, and 0.6% of those who held the titles of *Hanım*, *Imam*, and *Molla* died outside of the places in which they were born and raised.

Residential Death

The number of deaths at the central district, described as “resident/occupant/as resident” and referring to a local or one who lives therein, is 225.¹ Accordingly, 62% of the scholarly class died at the city center; 3.6% in villages and residences, and the remaining 34% outside of Thessaloniki where they had gone as guests, civil servants, for the purposes of military mobilization, or were forced to live there when they actually belonged to another district or province.

One of the important bits of information in the title section is that the neighborhood in which the deceased died is noted. Whether the person is a guest or resident, this does not change. Between the years 1790-1852, the number of people who were members of the scholarly class and who died in the central neighborhood of Thessaloniki was 225.

Guest Death

40 members of the scholarly class, not included in the “residential death” group despite not being in the “original” group, are those who died as “guests.” This figure forms approximately 11% of the scholarly class. There is no clear wording as to the actual hometowns of these individuals.

Those who died as guests outside of their place of birth, or where they permanently resided, passed away in various madrasahs such as the Çınarlı, Numan Paşa, Medrese-i Latîfe, Hacı Musa², Sinan Paşa, Yusuf Paşa, and Karlı Madrasahs and various dervish lodges (*tekkes*) and *zaviyes*³ such as Seyfullah Efendi⁴, Pişmaniye, Yılan Mermeri, Hacı Musa, Yahya Bali, Perşembe⁵, and Kapû.⁶

One fourth of those who died as guests passed away in inns⁷, such as the Hâce, Aziz, Ağa⁸, Çukur, Hoca Ali Halil, Nalband Ali Konağı, and Taş Han⁹. Many of those who died were judges.¹⁰ Of those who died in inns, 90% did not have inheritors to claim their wills.

¹ This number does not include two scholarly class members who have not died.

² SŞPG., 182, pg. 116; SŞPG., 182, pg. 97; SŞPG., 241, pg. 168; SŞPG., 215, pg. 116.

³ SŞPG., 174, pg. 4; SŞPG., 252, pg. 43; SŞPG., 254, pg. 137.

⁴ SŞPG., 187, pg. 41.

⁵ SŞPG., 186, pg. 102; SŞPG., 226, pg. 42.

⁶ SŞPG., 201, pg. 15.

⁷ SŞPG., 256, pg. 162.

⁸ SŞPG., 176, pg. 9; SŞPG., 195, pg. 193; SŞPG., 196, pg. 98.

⁹ SŞPG., 255, pg. 36; SŞPG., 251, pg. 155.

¹⁰ SŞPG., 189, pg. 174; SŞPG., 191, pg. 14; SŞPG., 212, pg. 42.

The number of scholarly class members who died in mansions is 9. Of these, 6 were *Efendi*, two were *Seyyid*, and one held the title of *Şeyh*.¹ These individuals died in the Yusuf Bey², Konakçı, Seyyid Osman, Ahmed Bahri, and and Şerif Galip mansions.³

Of the scholarly class who died as guests, two died in private homes, and one in a barracks.⁴ There is no clear statement as to where five of the scholarly scholarly deceased died. In terms of the titles they carried, one was *Hanım*, two *Seyyid*, and the remainder were *Efendis*.⁵

Inheritor-free death

Approximately 7% of the scholarly class members did not have inheritors. Because there was a three year period in which legal inheritors of a person who died without any specified inheritors had the right to object,(İnalçık and Anhegger, 1959) we can conclude that the courts did not formally investigate the legal inheritors of those who appeared to be without inheritors.

39% of the scholarly class who died without leaving behind an inheritor died in an an unknown location.⁶ The percentage of deaths in inns and mansions also totaled 39.7⁷

Death with Debt that Exceeds Estate

The percentage of scholarly class members who died when their outstanding debt exceeded their estate comprises roughly 6% of the group. Their breakdown in numbers is as follows: 9 *Efendis*, 7 *Mollas*, 6 *Seyyids*, 3 *Beys*, 1 *Imam*, 1 *Başkâtip* (chief secretary), 1 *Peştamalciyan Emini*, 1 *Pir*, 1 *Debbağ*.

Terms used in the Death Certificate

The passing into the eternal realm of many scholarly class members was recorded with the term “*vefat*,” meaning death. This term was used for 295 members of the scholarly class who held various titles and practiced various professions. The number mentioned totals 81% of the entirety of the *ilmiye* members in question. The recording of the death of an ordinary person and the recording of a *Molla* or *Efendi* were done in the same manner, but it is difficult to say that the same practice was held for every segment of society. While not a general principle, particularly for staff that held different positions within the government, certain *Şeyhs* and *Seyyids*, the term “*vefat*” was replaced with

¹ SŞPG., 256, pg. 23; SŞPG., 256, pg. 37; SŞPG., 241, pg. 110; SŞPG., 189, pg. 175.

² SŞPG., 195, pg. 22.

³ SŞPG., 226, pg. 3; SŞPG., 201, pg. 108.

⁴ SŞPG., 187, pg. 5.

⁵ SŞPG., 201, pg. 219; SŞPG., 201, pg. 121.

⁶ SŞPG., 198, pg. 74; SŞPG., 201, pg. 82; SŞPG., 191, pg. 7; SŞPG., 237, pg. 97; SŞPG., 241, pg. 61.

⁷ SŞPG., 197, pg. 80.

what we can say were more complimentary terms that were more bombastic with regard to the literature they employed. Of the scholars whose death was recorded with the term “vefat,” 143 were titled *Efendi*, 73 were *Molla*, 74 *Seyyid*, 14 were *Şeyh*, and 16 were called *Derviş*.

The death of 10% of the scholarly class members was recorded with the term “fevt.” Of these, 24 were *Efendi*, 4 *Molla*, 9 *Seyyid*, 4 *Şeyh*, and 1 was titled *Derviş*. There is no need to mention their professional titles here, because professional titles were used in conjunction with one or more of the titles mentioned above, and for the scholars, they were not titles that were used alone.

The death of 2.5% of the scholarly class was recorded with the term “veda-ı âlem-i fâni” (farewell to the temporary world). Of these, 4 were *Efendi*, 2 were *Beyefendi*, 1 was *Seyyid*, 1 *Şeyh*, and the other two carried the title of *Hanım*.

The number of scholarly class members who were included in the group of “irtihâl-i dâr-i bekâ” through one mention of the term “İntikâl-i dâr-ı beka” and two of “terk-i âlem-i fâni” were 20 in total. Of these, 12 were *Efendi*, 8 *Seyyid*, 4 *Şeyh*, and 1 *Dede*. It is interesting that the titles of *Molla* and *Derviş* are not found in this group.

It can be said that certain *Efendi* and *Seyyid* class members, who were qualified with the phrase “irtihâl-i dâr-i bekâ” by way of the titles mentioned for them, held a lofty status in society.

Topographic Settlement: The Distribution of Muslim Neighborhoods within the City Walls

Of the 51 *ilmiye* members who died in the central neighborhood, the İshak Paşa Neighborhood is placed at the top with 18 people, totaling 8%, followed by the Ahmed Subaşı Neighborhood with 16 people, or 7%. The Pinti Hasan Neighborhood places third at 6.66% with 15 people.¹ The İshak Paşa, Pinti Hasan, and Ahmed Subaşı neighborhoods are subsequent to one another, from West to East respectively.² According to the information formed above, it could be argued that the Thessaloniki scholarly class was concentrated in these neighborhoods and as such, these neighborhoods were particularly concerned with knowledge and education. On the other hand, 8 people of the scholarly class died in Cezeri Kasım Paşa, 8 in Yahya Bali, 13 in Kazaz Hacı Musa, 10 in Yakup Paşa, 7 in Hacı İskender, 9 in Tarakçı, 10 in Çınarlı, 9 in Eski Saray, and 9 in Kasimiye. The neighborhoods mentioned are adjacent to one another and listed from West to East. In line with the information listed, it can be said that 60% of the Thessaloniki scholarly class had settled in between the Cezeri Kasım Paşa and the Ahmed Subaşı neighborhoods.

¹ See Table 3.

² Dimitriadia, a.g.e., 5. map.

The Marital Status of the Scholarly Class

Singles

There is no clear wording in the records of the Thessaloniki Judicial Courts that indicates that a person is single. However, it is possible to determine who was single from among the scholarly class through various clues. For example, in the title section of the deceased person, the absence of the name of the spouse or children of the deceased in the area allotted for the inheritors can be used to infer that the person was, in fact, single. In such a situation, the estate of the single person would be inherited by the mother and the father, grandmother and grandfather, and siblings. In situations in which they don't exist, other inheritors would win over the right to inheritance. We have included those who died without leaving behind an inheritor among the singles.

The Married

The members of the scholarly class who were married totaled 263. Of them, 9 had neither children nor legal inheritors. As such, their estate was divided between their spouses and the "*Beytülmal*" (the treasury of the state).

Of those who were married, 118 were *Efendi*, 69 *Seyyid*, and 61 *Molla*, while 17 had the title of *Şeyh*. It can be said that the married *Şeyhs* were open to using their second or third titles or ranks. Of them, 5 *Şeyhs* used three and 11 *Şeyhs* used two titles and ranks simultaneously.¹

Widowers

The number of widowers was 32. Because the widowers among the members of the scholarly class would be considered among the married prior to being widowers, it is necessary to add the number of widowers to the number of the married. Accordingly, the number of married then rises to 295. The percentage of the married class whose their wives died before them and, who themselves died before they could remarry is around 11%.

Those with an Unclear Marital Status

Those with an unclear marital status were generally originally from elsewhere and died while living in Thessaloniki. Unless the inheritors of the deceased were noted in the title section, it is difficult to propose arguments about the marital status of those who are from out of town.

The percentage of the scholarly class whose marital status is unknown for various reasons is slightly over 6%.

¹ SŞPG., 224, pg. 2.

The Legal Inheritors of Estate

Beytülmal (Treasury)

The number of the scholarly class who died without leaving behind any inheritors is 27. This corresponds to roughly 7.5% of the general scholarly class. Among those with no inheritors whose estate were seized by the state, 63% held the title of *Efendi*.

Spouses, Relatives, and Progeny

Regardless of age, of the 1103 inheritors, 288 were daughters, 285 sons and 269 spouses. In this case, half of the inheritors are daughters and sons, and roughly one fourth were comprised of spouses.

Along with sons and daughters, the father, mother, mother's mother and those on the mother's side, son's daughter, son's son and similar people who are from the *usul* (father, grandfather, mother, grandmother) totaled 644. In other words, roughly 58% of the inheritors were from *usul*; 37% from *fürü* (children and grandchildren); 3% from the treasury; 2% from among those who lived in other cities and whose inheritors were unknown.

Polygamy among the Scholarly Class

The most important finding of the research was that the scholarly class did not show much interest in polygamy. Of the 343 married scholars, 4 (1.16%) had more than one spouse. Among the polygamists, 3 had two¹ and 1 had three wives recorded.²

In a travel record written by a Protestant German priest about his trip to İstanbul and Jerusalem, he noted that Turks were monogamists and that divorce was not common because it was too costly (Ortaylı, 2000). In research conducted on estates, it was discovered that polygamy took place in Edirne, Bursa, İstanbul, Ankara and other towns in Anatolia at a rate between 5-12% (Öztürk, 1995).

The Scholarly Class in Terms of Income Groups

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the scholarly class members who died between the years of 1800-1852 was 6 294 340 *kuruş*. When the total amount is divided into scholarly ranks, and when the head of the household's average income is divided into the number of inheritors, then the average wealth of the person can be determined. In such a case, the income based on

¹ SŞS, 180, pg. 83; SŞS, 226, pg. 29.

² SŞS, 241, pg. 79, 97.

the total GDP of each household head is 17436 *kuruş*, leaving a wealth of 5707 per household member.

The lowest estate among the income brackets is Zenci Derviş Hasan with 43 *kuruş*.¹ In contrast to this, the richest among the scholarly is Seyyid Ahmed Tevfik with 1,154,004. The total wealth of Seyyid Ahmed Tevfik prior to tax and debt comprises roughly 18% of the total wealth of the general scholarly class.²

Of the heads of household, 17.36% owned a wealth greater than 17436 *kuruş* and 82.64% less than 17436.

Looking at the households, 31.40% had higher wealth than the average wealth of 5707 while 69.90% had wealth lower than the average of 5707.

With the debts, taxes and other cuts totaling 2,113,041, the total net amount distributed among the inheritors was 3,956, 510 *kuruş*.

According to the data above, while 63% of the wealth was distributed among legal inheritors, the remaining 37% was spent on debt and cuts. Even though the tax percentages were higher than they should have been, the portion of personal debt within the 37% remained very high (Anastasiadou, 2001).

As is evident in Table 1, those with a total wealth between 0-999 comprised 33.24%. Of the 361 members of the scholarly class, 20.77% had a wealth income higher than 9999 *kuruş*. And those with an income between 1000-1999 comprised 13.29% of the wealth of the scholarly class. The income of 33 scholars (8.86%) was between 2000-2999 *kuruş*. Those who were in possession of a wealth between 3000-3999 and 4000-4999 comprised 5.81% and 5.54% respectively. As is evident from the table above, the income brackets divided between 1000 *kuruş* intervals decreased until 6000 *kuruş* (2.77%) in a regular fashion; however, the wealth percentages comprised of this number showed a relative fluctuation. The income bracket that fluctuated between 6000-6999 (3.60%), regressed back to 2.49% in the next income interval of 7000-7999 *kuruş*. From this point onwards, the income bracket of 9000-9999% began to decrease in terms of their percentage of the general income, dipping as low as 1.38%. We can say that the income groups decreased in a regular fashion until 0-5999 and once it reached the figure of 6000 *kuruş*, it followed an irregular, tumultuous pattern.

¹ SSS, 195, pg.193.

² SSS, 241, pg. 79-97.

Table 1. *The GDP Income Brackets of the Scholarly Class*

Income brackets (Kuruş)	0-999	1000-1999	2000-2999	3000-3999	4000-4999	5000-5999	6000-6999	7000-7999	8000-8999	9000-9999	10000 ve +	Top
Efendi	64	18	16	7	8	6	6	2	4	2	44	177
Seyyid	21	11	8	3	10	1	4	2	2	1	30	93
Molla	18	12	10	6	4	3	4	2	4	2	7	72
Şeyh (Shaikh)	10	4	1	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	2	23
Derviş	9	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	17
İmam	8	2	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	15
Hafız	6	4	3	3	1	1	1	1	-	-	2	22
Müezzin	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Hoca	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	5
Müderris (teacher)	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	6
Kadı (qadi)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Dede	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Pir	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Hacegân	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Turkish Studies from Different Perspectives

Ağa	4	5	2	3	3	-	1	1	-	1	9	29
Hanım	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	8
Kâtip (scribe)	-	-	2		-	-	-	-	-	1	8	11
Bey	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	6
Beyefendi	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	6
Other	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	13
Total	151	64	48	28	30	15	18	8	12	7	132	513
Individual	120	48	33	21	20	10	13	6	9	5	75	361
% (Individual)	33,24	13,29	8,86	5,81	5,54	2,77	3,60	1,66	2,49	1,38	20,77	100

The Scholarly Class and Books

According to estate records, 207 of the scholarly class members were in possession of books. As a percentage, 56% of the scholarly class had one or more books. It can be said that there was a parallel between the number of books and financial income. Accordingly, we can see that as of mid-19th century, the ratio of wealth possession saw a relative increase and as compared to the beginning of the same century, there was a notable increase in the number of books.

It is understood that the books of Ahmediye and Muhammediye – which cover the life of Prophet Muhammad and his practice of Islamic principles – were in demand more than the Holy Qur'an among the scholarly class of Thessaloniki. There are records of 101 Ahmediye and 12 Muhammediye books in the estate records of 81 deceased. Among them, 10 of the deceased had one Muhammediye book while only two of the deceased were in possession of two Muhammediye books each. According to data gathered, the Thessaloniki scholarly class had a high inclination towards the book of Ahmediye.

The “Şifa-i Şerif” (The Holy Remedy) which is a book in the style of the Ahmediye and Muhammediye, had reached a fair deal of fame in other areas of the Ottoman state; however, it cannot be said that it gathered that level of interest in Thessaloniki.⁴⁷

The “Delail-i Şerif,” which is book of supplications, *dhikir* (remembrance of Allah) and sending salutations on the Prophet, saw twice the level of interest that the Şifa-i Şerif saw. However, in estates, the number of deceased among the scholarly class who were found to be in possession of the Delâil-i Şerif or the Delâil-i Hayrat totaled 27. The book, which is held in high regard in *tariqahs* (orders of Sufism), was found to be mostly in the estates of those with the title *Seyyid* as compared to other titles.⁴⁸

Conclusion

Conducted under the light of the Thessaloniki estate records, this study shows that in the Ottoman Empire there was an independent civil scholarly class existing alongside the official scholarly class, which was organized around a hierarchical structure. Even though they did not belong to the official scholarly class, it has been established that individuals carrying such titles as *Efendi*, *Seyyid*, *Molla*, *Şeyh*, etc. belonged to a civil class of scholars.

It has been established that the identification information (*künye*) in the estate records includes important and codified data regarding the social status of the individual in question. The titles describing the profession of the

⁴⁷ For more than one “Şifa-i Şerifleri” deceased See. SŞS, 182, pg. 116; SŞS, 246, pg.165.

⁴⁸ For those holding the title of Seyyid who were in possession of the book “Delâil-i Şerif” “in their estate See. SŞS, 201, pg. 29; SŞS, 201, pg. 38; SŞS, 241, pg.79.

deceased were not selected in a haphazard manner; rather, they were applied in a way that would best describe the social status of the deceased. The staple expressions used to record the death of an individual, such as “death”, “passing away”, “departure from the mortal world”, “journey to the abode of permanence”, “abandoning the mortal world”, etc. provide important clues in determining social status.

Those members of the *ulema* whose deaths were recorded with the expression “death” consisted of 143 *Efendis*, 73 *Mollas*, 74 *Seyyids*, 14 *Şeyhs*, and 16 *Dervişs*. In other words, the deaths of 81% of the *ulema* were recorded using the word “death”. 10% of the deaths were recorded with the expression “passing away”; 2,5% with “departure from the mortal world”; and 6,5% with the expression “journey to the abode of permanence”. This order is in a way a representation of the status of the *ulema* in the lower, middle, and upper classes of society.

While it cannot be established as a general principle, it has been observed that the deaths of individuals employed in the higher echelons of civil service, as well as those with the titles *Şeyh*, *Seyit*, *Hanım* and *Ağa* have been recorded predominantly using the phrases “departure from the mortal world”, “journey to the abode of permanence”, “abandoning the mortal world”. We see that this preference has been employed in order to express implicitly that the deceased belonged to the upper class, whereas the expressions “death” and “passing away” were used to suggest that the deceased most likely belonged to the lower or the middle class.

In terms of location of death, roughly 62% of the scholarly class died in the city center, 3.6% in the countryside, and 34% outside of Thessaloniki where they were forced to live, or where they had gone as visitors, on expeditions, or on civil service.

It has been determined that important and certain repeated phrases were used in the title section of estate deeds in determining the social status of the individual. In this regard, the title, profession and class of people were not chosen haphazardly, and the terms which would best describe the social status of the deceased were chosen.

In terms of marital status, it has been observed that 94% of the scholarly class were married and 6% were single. The most important finding of the study was that polygamy was found to be a very rare occurrence in the scholarly class. Accordingly, of the 343 *ilmiye* members, only 4 (1.6%) were polygamous. 62% of the scholarly class died in Thessaloniki. And of the same class, 26 died without leaving behind an identified inheritor. Within the time frame in which the study focuses on, the number of inheritors who claimed an estate was 1103.

The distribution of the scholarly class in terms of their title, status, and profession saw that 176 were *Efendi*, 95 *Sayyid*, and 75 *Molla*, in the three most frequent spots. It was observed that the *Molla* deceased busied himself with many professions outside of scholarly work such as: *debbağ* (leather craftsman), *leblebici* (maker or seller of roasted chickpeas), *nalbant* (blacksmith), *saatçi* (watchmaker), *keresteci* (woodsman), *berber* (barber),

maytapçı, and *yazıcı* (scribe). The distribution of the scholarly class in the inner citadel neighborhoods was concentrated from East to West in a series of adjacent neighborhoods. Namely: Cezeri Kasım Paşa, Yahya Bali, Kazaz Hacı Musa, Yakup Paşa, Hacı İskender, Tarakçı, Çınarlı, Eski Saray, and Kasımiye. According to this concentration, roughly 60% of the scholarly class lived in the 12 neighborhoods located in between the Cezeri Kasım Paşa and the Ahmed Subaşı neighborhoods, with the remaining 40% living in the other 39 neighborhoods.

The GDP of the accumulated wealth of the scholarly class who died between the years 1790-1852 totaled 6 294 340 *kuruş*. The total of their debt, taxes and other cuts came to 2 113 041 *kuruş*. The total net amount divided between the inheritors came to 3 956 510 *kuruş*. According to these, macro data has been formed: 64% of the wealth was distributed among their legal inheritors. The remaining 37% went towards debt and other cuts. According to the same macro-data, the amount of income per person, based on the total wealth (6 294 340 *kuruş*) divided by the number of people in homes (1103 people) was 5707 *kuruş*. Of the family heads, 17.36% had an income higher than 17436 while 82.64% had an income lower than that amount. When examined in terms of people living in households, 114 homes (31.40%) had an income higher than 5707 and 249 (69.90%) had an income lower than the average listed.

One of the most interesting groups of data that can be seen in the income groups table belongs to women who had the title of *Hanım*. Of the women titled *Hanım*, approximately 88% placed in the 10,000 *kuruş* or above income bracket, while only one *Hanım* placed in the 2000-2999 income bracket.

Titles such as *Keza Kâtip*, *Bey*, *Beyefendi*, *Ağa* and *Pir* feature incomes that were similar to those with the title of *Hanım*. Those in possession of wealth at 10000 *kuruş* or above and thus considered rich, held the titles of *Hanım*, *Kâtip*, *Beyefendi*, *Kadı*, *Pir*, *Hoca*, *Müderris*, and *Ağa*. Titles such as *Müezzin*, *Dede*, and *Hacegan* never placed in the higher income groups, while those who carried the titles of *İmam*, *Hafız*, *Shaikh*, *Derviş*, and *Molla* maintained a relatively low income.

Of the scholarly class, 56% were found to have been in possession of books, including the Holy Qurán. The *Ahmediye* book, which revolves around the Prophet's life and his practice of Islam, numbered in 101 in the estate records, belonging to 81 scholars. The prevalence of the *Ahmediye* shows that the scholarly class in Thessaloniki had a particular tendency towards this book.

Şifâ-i Şerif, a book that has attained considerable renown in other parts of the Empire, failed to make a similar impact in Thessaloniki. In contrast, *Delâil-i Şerif*, which is a book of remembrances and prayers, commanded double the attention that *Şifâ-i Şerif* did. Held in high esteem in Sufi circles, *Delâil-i Şerif* occurs more frequently in the estate records of the *Seyyids*.

It was noted that there was a correlation between the number of books owned and financial income. It can be seen that in this regard, the possession of wealth increased comparatively and that in the middle of the 19th century there

was a considerable rise in the number of books as compared to the beginning of the same century.

In conclusion, the Thessaloniki scholarly class also occupied itself with fields other than its main profession and did not limit itself exclusively to its own field, with the *ilmiye* members asserting themselves within each venue that would bring them financial income. In accordance with this, there was a considerable rise in the accumulated wealth of the said group towards the middle of the century. In terms of marital status, they preferred monogamy and did not prefer polygamy. The scholarly class' interest in books remained lower than what it should have been; however, almost half of their estates contained various books.

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