

# **The transformation of a Vakıf iftlik Land into an Urban Center: Functions and Disputes over the Property Rights of the Levend iftlik from a Historical Perspective**

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The fringes of the Ottoman capital were surrounded by numerous iftliks that were usually attached to some dynastic vakfs. Though all were basically agricultural enterprises, their functions sometimes changed in time and, the presence of the huge lands with complicated usufruct rights delayed the integration of these zones into the city proper. The blurred boundaries and disputes over the right of ownership turned these agricultural estates into contested areas between the imperial and the vakf authorities as well as the private third parties especially from the early 19th century onwards.

Located between Bykdere and Baltalimanı, and extending over more than 4000 hectares of lands, Levend iftlik was basically a huge landed estate attached to the vakf of Bayezid II and produced basic agricultural and dairy products. From the late 18th century on, its detached location and huge lands made it a favorable area for the military purposes. In the subsequent years, as a result of the several land transfers, the imperial strategy of attaching the big lands into the imperial treasury as well as the blurred property rights, the Levend iftlik evolved into a subject of long and complicated judicial cases between various state agents and private individuals which in the long run delayed the urbanization of the region and integration into the city.