

## **Wealth and Status in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire**

*Yasin Arslantaş, Metin Coşgel, Gürer Karagedikli, Choon Hwee Koh, Ali Coşkun Tunçer*

*Discussant: Suraiya Faroqhi*

To what extent was economic wealth a determinant of social status in the early modern Ottoman Empire, and how did that relationship change over time? To answer this question, information is first needed about how wealth was created, distributed, and transferred in Ottoman society. The four papers in this panel contribute to our knowledge on this issue. The first presentation by Metin Coşgel, Jose-Antonio Espin-Sanchez, and Emre Özer is an analysis of a dataset with more than 760,000 names that examines how intergenerational mobility changed in Ottoman Istanbul between the early sixteenth and late nineteenth centuries. Taking honorific titles as indicators of socio-economic status, the presenters compare the titles of fathers and children to determine upward and downward changes in status between generations.

The second presentation by Gürer Karagedikli and Coşkun Tunçer analyzes almost 10,000 notarial deeds of house sales in ten major cities of the Ottoman Empire from 1650-1870 to study housing inequality. Their results suggest that the period 1830-50 was a turning point, marked by rising non-Muslim participation in the housing market and declining inequality between religious groups.

The third presentation by Koh Choon Hwee and Coşkun Tunçer analyzes 2200 post station records to ascertain which post stations were the most profitable. Results suggest that not all stations were profitable. The postmaster's management skills as well as the location of the post station (that is, whether it was located along a high-traffic or low-traffic route) were equally important in determining revenue. This case study strengthens historiographical claims that the status boundaries between 'officials' and 'entrepreneurs' became increasingly blurred over the course of the eighteenth century.

The fourth presentation by Yasin Arslantaş and Leonard Kukic investigates the patterns of land ownership and inequality in Ottoman Bosnia over time. Using Ottoman tax registers and Austria-Hungarian censuses, they explain how the early modern transformation of land ownership contributed to inequalities.