

- A Comparison on the Ottoman and Western European Economic and Financial Systems in the early modern period.
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- ABSTRACT
- In Western Europe, the early modern times were characterized by the rise of mercantilism and nation state. Mercantilism evolved into a complex system of both internal and external policies. While the Portuguese and Spain were the first in European expansion, in terms of modern mercantilist power the Dutch Republic was the first and the England was leading as modern industrial power. Despite some similarities in Western Europe, each nation had distinctive economic policies derived from national traditions, geographic circumstances, and the character of the state. While there were some similarities comparing to the mercantilist nations the Ottoman economic and financial system was different. And comparing to the Western nation states they were also following different economic policies in the early modern times. The Ottoman imperial policy was mostly concerned about the continuity of establishment economic, political and financial system and balance. The economic policies of the Ottomans were subsistence of the people, provisioning the major population centers, collection of taxes, and maintaining freedom of trade in extended areas of the empire. The balance and stability in society explain the priority for the Ottomans in the economy and society in long term. Moreover the function of the charity foundations (*waqfs, cash waqfs*) in the Ottoman economy and society was significant at the same times. The main aim of the economic policies of Northwestern Europeans were to use the power of the state, promote trade and economic growth and build up national industries and manufacture. In Western Europe, this experience gave birth to a new class that gradually improved its trade ability and expanding industries and markets under a capitalist system.