

AHI-ORDER ORGANIZATION FROM OTTOMAN EMPIRE UNTIL TODAY AND ITS ECONOMICAL DEVELOPMENT RELATION

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Abstract

Economic development and a high level of welfare in connection with it is an important phase which is desired by the entire communities at all times, however it can not be caught by most of them in despite of desiring it. In this respect, just like it is today, there are quite a few numbers of countries in the history which has been successful in the topic of economical development. In the history, Ottoman Empire has been successful in this topic with the formation of Ahi-Order Organization in the economic life of the Empire by having an important role with the characteristic of being the structuring of craftsman and tradesman and also it's social and moral values, it's impacts for the production in the context of social capital are taken into consideration in this study.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire economy, Ahi-order organization, social capital, human capital, economic development.

JEL: I29, N35, Z13.

I. Introduction

When scrutinizing economic development process, material factors such as physical assets, tools, figures and techniques are generally taken into account. As a matter of course, the impacts of these material factors during the relevant period can not be ignored. However, especially when the matter is approached from psychological and sociological point of view, ‘‘human, together with his soul and with valuable and unvaluable ones’’ comes in the forefront which is important as much as the material factors. Because, when non-physical dimension of the human is not taken into consideration, it becomes impossible to understand many topics. Because, when ‘‘human’’ is taken in hand with his loving, hating, demanding, liking, unliking, refusing, grieving, happy, accepting and sheltering sides, it will be easier to understand the events. (Tatar and Dönmez, 2008; 194)

It is quite difficult to explain the reasons of the countries for their successes and failures in the economic area by only material factors. Because, behaviours of the humans are doubtlessly the basic determinants of the two main occupation of the economy which is formed by production and consumption. It is possible to line up the factors influencing the human behaviours as; historical heritage, education level, environment, climate, population, politics and religion. All of these factors may have their respective impacts and at the same time, there is also the possibility to encounter the occurrence of a different impact because of their interactions and to perceive these is not easy at all. However, religion is the most effective one among these factors and it has the determinant characteristic upon all these factors individually. Because, by being dependant to each factor, communal morals is generated as being religion-centric and it constitutes the basic parameter of the relevant community. In this context, Weber has accepted the influences of geography, history, and culture and religion data on the morals of the economy. (Weber, 1993; 228), In a similar way, when İbn-i Haldun also compared economic states of different communities, he has propounded that communal progress must not be connected only with the personal characteristics and he has emphasized that environmental and cultural factors must also be taken into consideration. (Kozak, 1984; 152).

When discussing the relation of economy and morals, Max Weber, Sombart and their contemporaries have made serious studies about the importance of morals, consequently about the importance of the religion on the economic life. Moreover, Max Weber's work named ‘‘Protestant Ethic and the Souls of Capitalism’’ has stamped 20th century. The core of this work is having the sovereignty in the economy. In this context, having frequent studies of Social Capital and Economic Development topics of the West in the literature of the economy during the last years has indirectly carried the relation of economic morals and communal values into agenda.

Ahi-Order Organization encountered in Ottoman Turk history will be taken in hand in this study with its principles and its impacts on the economic life of the state in the context of social values, morals and social capital. The purpose of this is to bring forward the values of the human and his values into the agenda while these were lost within the economic activities in our contemporary world. Because, it is witnessed that the human is sacrificed in the existing capitalist system at the cost of profit and earning and for the state in the socialist system.

II. Dynamics of Social Structure of Ahi-Order in Ottoman Empire

The most important one among the basic factors shaping the social structure in the Ottoman Empire is undoubtedly the religious beliefs and ethic system formed in the direction of these and the establishments belonging to these. Turks, who constitute core structure and primary component of the Ottoman Empire, have accepted Islam before they stepped on the land of Anatolia from Asia. There was no pressure on them for their preference and at the same time, willingness basis has been valid entirely and it is known that Turks have accepted Islam with mass crowds of people (Kitapçı, 1988; 820-284).

“One God” belief of the Turks in their previous religion and not having contradiction in Islam for the rational essentials had big influence for them to accept Islam. In essence, Islam belief addressed by the Turks has been Maturidi sect which took place among the belief sects of Maturidi and Eşari taking place in the scope of Islam’s Sunnah Follower and this sect had focus on rational constituents. This sense of belonging has shown its impacts on the social, cultural, ethic, economic, political and military areas of the Turks within a short period of time.

Consequently, by adapting themselves in a short period of time a new life that was suitable for their new belief systems, Turks have formed their entire social institutions over again. During the coming to Anatolia from Asia, Islamic belief rudiments possessed by them and also the religious and social institutions comprised within this framework had great influence when they obtained a new native country and when they established new states together with the new native country.

In Ottoman, social structure consisted of four parts and these were; compotents (*Scientists*), Janissary (*Soldiers*), the ones being engaged in agriculture (*Farmers*) and production and trade competents (*Tradesmen and Artisans*) and each one of these classes used to have its own regularity. However, common denominator of different social class arrangements was the culture of Islam and their dependancy for the ethic system. (Açıkgöz, 2008:131).

Determinant role of the ulama has been more than all else for the formations of either Seljuk or Ottoman Empire as well as their continuations. For example, the advices of Sheikh Edabafî, who took place in the founder delegation of the Ottoman Empire and who was an Ahi and at the same time, father-in-law of Ottoman Empire’s founder esquire Osman and who was also hodja (prefector) of him, have great importance to put forward the influence of Ahi way of thinking in the establishment of the Ottoman Empire.

*“Hey Son!
You are the esquire! From now on, anger to us; suppleness to you...
Offendness to us; placate to you..
To accuse to use; to bear to you..
Impotence to us, delusion to us; tolerance to you..
Discords, conflicts, disagreements to us; justice to you..
From now on, to divide to us; to complete to you..
...
Relent for these three persons; in other words to the wise among the ignorants,
to the one who becomes poor when he was rich and to the one who loses his
Reputation when he was reputed!
Don’t you forget, the ones who hold place on high, are not secure as the ones below...
Do not be afraid of the challenge in which you are right!
The biggest victory is to get to know one’s self.
Enemy is human’s himself.
...”*

In the structuring of a state in the direction of these advices, wise men were always privileged by the administrators. *Ulama*, who strived with science, and *Kalemiyye* who administrated the state have always mutually fed each other and additionally, during the Ottoman’s classical period, leading administrators of *Kalemiyye* class were always selected from the Science class.

Second social class in the Ottoman was **janissaries**. Janissaries was a military class in the Ottoman Empire and they form the infantry part of Sultan's household troops and following the expansion of Ottoman's borders, they have been formed by bringing up (devshirme) non-muslim kids since they were little after being collected as the prisoners.

Third constituent of the Ottoman community was consisting of the **villagers**, in other words, **farmers** who were occupied with stockbreeding. *Demesne* system was forming the basis of the agricultural production in the Ottoman country and it is a quite efficient land system which puts forward the continuation of the production. In a few words, this system can be explained as the land with its bare ownership belonging to the state and usage belongs to the individuals and neither the possession understanding foreseen by the capitalism nor the equalitarian sharing targeted by the socialist system do not take place in this system. The purpose of *Demesne* system has been to render the farmer more free and to make the citizens more prosperous by generalizing ownership and saving as the most important production means. (Cin, 1992; 6). In this way, permanence of the state has been provided. Because, in this system, the lands were given to the farmers to be adequate for them to use and against the certain amount of soldiers to be brought up by them and the lands which were not used during two consequent years were transferred to another villager and thus the continuation of the production and social justice were provided. Another part of the Ottoman community were the **craftsmen** and **tradesmen** who were occupied with production and trade. *Ahî-Order Organization*, which forms the main topic of this study, is an extremely important non-governmental establishment with its foundation based on the Islamic belief and also specially arranging the entire stages of the craftsmen and tradesmen starting from their daily lives to their business lives with their most detailed nuances and trying to prompt the community and its own members continuously for the survival of the state.

Individual-community balance takes place in the heart of this social and economic system possessed by the Ottoman Empire. Religious values and culture codes possessed by the Ottoman Empire have always provided support to have this balance stand continuously. When it is compared with the other systems, it is seen that the individual has lost his own identity within the system of the state and he has become a tool to serve it. Consequently, individual has left his place to the state by losing his own freedom and personality. On the other hand, as for the capitalist system, community has been destroyed and all has remained to have meaning as long as they are for the individual. Community only has acceptance when it kind of serves for the individual, in other words, as long as it is a tool for this purpose. In an arena where individual meets with another individual, community is only a line. On the other hand in an arena where everything is for the community, individual is nothing but a line. (Türkdoğan, 1988: 125-126). But, in the system established and protected by the Ottoman and based on individual-community balance, the other factors to deteriorate the balance were not complimented.

III. Ahî-Order Organization

Ahî-Order Organization can be explained as a system which gathers ethic and art, production and trade and it was started to be observed on the lands of Anatolia starting from 13th century and after the fall of Seljuk State. Ahî-Order Organization aims to establish strong and dependable relations between the rich and poor, producer and consumer and with the citizens and the state and it has tried to establish all of its works on social ethics and social justice system. When Ahî-Order established such a system, it has succeeded to institutionalize ethical values for the first time in the world.

A. Historical Development of Ahi-Order

In the period of Khalif Omar; Egypt, which was conquered by the Islam armies without encountering difficulty, is one of the very important sources of Esoteric-spiritual school. During that period, other than the few number of Jews and Christians living in Egypt, even if the segments believing in polytheistic religions accepted Islam directly, this acceptance has not been hassle-free. Because, during the conquest, Alexandria School was also demolished when it was existing in Egypt and having esoteric characteristic and the scientists taking place in the school have chosen the side of Ali which was the political and opposing wing of Islam. With such preferences of the scientist who were coming from Esoteric tradition, they have gained the assurance of Islam because of selecting Islam and at the same time they became able to adapt their own traditional thoughts to new belief systems easier. This school has taken roles time to time for the establishments of the new states and *Fatimids* is one of these states for which it has been influential. Fatimids Empire gets its name from the daughter of Prophet Muhammad, Fatima, who was also the spouse of Hz. Ali and it has been established in the year of 909 A.D. in Egypt and it has become a Spiritual based state by being inspired from Islamic way of thinking.

In order to be able to protect themselves against the raids of the armies having sunnite belief, Fatimids have brought former artisan chambers in Egypt on their feet again and they have rejuvenated the chambers with a semi-militarian structuring. Additionally, they have formed a big military organization consisting of the artisans from Ismaili under the name of “Fütüvvet” (which had the meaning of “Scouts”). In the same way it was seen in the other Batini (Spiritual) organizations, there was also a system in Fütüvvet by being based on the degrees. Despite of the fact of having the structure of Ismaili-Order with 7 degrees, Fütüvvet was organized with 9 degrees. The degrees of Fütüvvet was; *Nazil (Lodger)*, *Tim Tarik (Road)*, *Meyan Beste (Interval Composition)*, *Naip Vekili (Deputy Judge)*, *Nakip (Oldest Dervish of the Lodge)* and 6th degree is *Head of the Oldest Dervishes of the Lodge* respectively and the most important duties of the persons having this degree was to arrange military organizing and it was also to conduct all types of ceremonies and 7th degree followers were named as “Ahi” which means ‘Brother’. Duties of the Ahis within Fütüvvet are at the level of Sheikh’s Assistanship. Subsidiary of Fütüvvet (which was widespread among the Turks) was Ahî-Order and it is estimated that it has got its name from this source. On the other hand, while 8th degree was the degree of the Sheiks who were taking place at the leader position of each organization, 9th degree was given to only one person who was the *Sheikh of Sheikhs*.

There are some who connect the roots of Ahî-Order to Turks and also there are some who claim that it was a structuring belonging to Byzantine. However, the strongest claim among these is, as mentioned above, the structuring of Egypt and Islam originated Fütüvvet structuring. According to this claim; it is said that Ahî-Order Organization was the new form of Fütüvvet structuring (who gathered artisans and tradesmen) by having it nationalised by the Turks in Anatolia. (Ülgener, 1981; 89).

İbn-i Batuta (204) (who lighted the ways of Historians and Geographers with his work written between the years of 1304-1369 with the name of “Tuhfetü’n-Nûzâr fî Garâibi’l-Emsar ve’l-Acâibi’l-Esfar”) provides valuable information about Ahis in his Anatolian part of travelling:

“Ahi-Orders taking place in every province, in every city and in every village where Turkomen lived by settling in the Country of the Greek, is an association formed by the bachelor and artifice owner youngsters. These have very close solidarity with each other. Each one of them has reputable vocation within the public. They show close concern for the foreigners coming to their locations; provide them food and drinks and they do the best they can in order to meet humane needs of the guests. On the other hand, they are also bringing the tyrants of their own regions on their knees and they remove the bad ones who participate in them for any reason. Here at this point, there is no similar and matching of Ahi-Order Association in the world in terms of these particularities. This association formed by the Ahi Persons by getting together is called as “fütüvve” (Youth). The person who is selected as the chief causes the construction of an hermitage and he furnishes inside of it with carpets, rugs, oil lamps and with the other needful articles. His friends bring him before the evening whatever they earn during the day by working. With these monies, they buy food, drinks and the other materials needed for the hermitage. If there is a visitor who comes to their region, they host that visitor in their hermitage... I am İbn-i Battuta, I have not seen anything else in the world doing more beautiful and more beneficent works.”

During Seljuk and Ottoman periods, Ahi-Order Organization has shown its influences in every stage of the community life for approximately 630 years starting with the areas of arts, trade and economy of Anatolian Turks and as the organization, it has succeeded to stand on its feet until Sultan Ahmet 3rd with its own rules and establishments. In the year of 1727, there was a new arrangement was started to be applied with the name of “Gedik (Monopoly)”. Persistence of the artworks for the members of Ahî-Order Organization on the bench and manner education in the hermitages have continued until 17th century. But, with the increase of non-muslim citizens in the Ottoman Empire has caused the compulsion of common works among the persons belonging to various religions. As the result of this, “Gedik” system which was established without having discrimination of religion and having the qualification of monopoly, had the attribution of being the continuation of Ahi-Order Organization. *Gedik* word is a Turkish word and it has the meaning of monopoly and privilege. *Gedik* owner persons had the privilege of having the assurance for their processed works not to be processed by the others and to use the rights taking place in the certificate or deed. This way of tradesmanship and artisanship have continued until the year of 1860.

After the Crimean war of the Ottoman Empire with the Russians, when the entire citizens of the Ottoman were permitted to do all kinds of artisanship, trade and vocations together with the ‘Reformation Mandate’ announced by the Ottoman Empire in the year of 1856, all of the *Gedik* Certificates have lost their powers.

B. Settlement of Ahi-Order in Anatolia and it's Corporate Structure

Ahi Evran-ı Veli is known as the founder of the Ahi-Order and his real name is Sheikh Nasıruddin Ebul-Hakayık Mahmut Bin Ahmet el Hoyri (1171-1261) and he is the son of an immigrant family migrated from the Central Asia. Ahî Evran has taken islamic law and islamic philosophy for long years and in the year of 1206, he has come to Anatolia and settled in Kayseri and he has established the foundations of Ahi-Order here.

In the forthcoming years, he has cemented good relations with Mevlana Celalettin Rumi by coming to Konya and by going to Kırşehir from there, he has become acquainted with Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli. As seen, Ahî Evran has been in different cities of Anatolia such as Kayseri, Konya and Kırşehir and by establishing harmony with notable persons of that time such as Mevlana and Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli, they have cooperated for Anatolia to become Turkish and Islam. These persons have reached to places to which the state could not reach and they have provided their supports in the topics of economy, politics, social, cultural and military and they have given a great effort for the amalgamation of state-nation. (Erdem, 2008; 7-8).

Ahi-Order Organization has assumed very important duty for Anatolia, for it to become the country by the Turks and it's structure is not very complicated. Taking place in Kırşehir, the Sheikh of Ahî Evran Lodge takes place on top of the entire Organization as the Ahî Sheikh. Besides, Ahi Baba (Ahi Father) is the founder of the order for the entire Ahîs in each city and he is dependent to Ahî Sheikh in Kırşehir. On the other hand, the head of each craft taking place in the provinces is called as Ahî and these persons act by being dependent to Ahî Father. The persons who were known as the *Head of the Brave* or *Server* are the deputy of the Ahî and they were in charge of providing the discipline between the artisans.

There was a system having three stages and 9 degrees applied in Ahi-Order. First stage was the door of *Shariah* and vocational knowledge, Quoran knowledge, reading, writing, Turkish, Mathematics were taught to the followers together with the thought of *Fütüvvetname* (*Fütüvvet Text*) which had the attribution of being constitution of the organization. Second stage was *Dervish Order* and at this stage, while vocational knowledge education was reaching it's highest level, also Islamic philosophy knowledge, music, Arabic, Farsi educations were given to each follower together with the military training. Sheikh level was reached at 3rd stage and it was named as *Marifet (Skill)* door. At this door, the followers are taught to believe in Allah, to kill the ego, to serve the supremes and to keep quiet against the ignorance.

According to Ahî-Order philosophy, it will become possible to be able to reach Reality only after the completion of these stages and a person can reach perfection and maturity. Each door covers three degrees, and just like in *Fütüvvet* as it's continuation, Ahî-Order was also based on a system having nine stages. These degrees are as stated below respectively:

Bravery and *Assistantship* are the first two stages and these rather cover the entrance preparations to the Ahi-Order Organization. *Apprenticeship* is the acceptance stage of the organization and it represents the third stage. The other degrees consist of *Master-builder*, *Master*, *Oldest Dervish of the Lodge*, *Khalif*, *Sheikh* and *Şey-ül Meşayih (Sheikh of the Sheikhs, Olds)* stages and essentially these degrees reflect the administrative degrees in the vocational structuring.

Passing duration from one of the mentioned stages to the other one was approximately 1000 days according to the written works of the Ahi-Order, in other words, there was the requirement for about 3 years. However, it was possible to extend or shorten this time period according to the skill of the person.

C. Acceptances and Refusals of Ahî-Order

Youthism: Basically, *Fütüvvetism* consists of the principles of Quoran and Prophet Muhammad and it has played an important role for the structuring of Ahî-Order in Anatolia. As the word meaning, *Fütüvva* word comes from the word of 'fityan' which means "Youngsters" (Öztürk, 1993; 4).

The works named as **Fütüvvetnâme** shelters religious-ethic principles of the Ahi-Order in it and these are the books containing information how humans must behave in the community, code of conduct and personal manners. Advices taking place in this work have been the basic values to direct Turkish community for centuries long. Plainness of it's language and fluency of it's wording have also increased the importance of this work even more. These works have the attribution of being the constitution of Ahi-Order and it is possible to summarize mentioned principles taking place in it with the below stated concepts.

Despite of the fact that Ahi-Order has the characteristic of being non-governmental organization vocational organism, it shelters a high level of ethic in its core as the basic condition. In this context, the members pass through the stages which give qualifications such as knowledge, patience, purifying the soul, loyalty, friendship and obeying the prohibitions and unconditional commitment, endless obedience and secrecy are requested from them. Participations of unreligious and religionists are prohibited for the organization with a strict rule. Alongside of having these qualifications; the other six principles of keeping one's Hand, Dining Table and Door, keeping one's Eye mesmerized with having control of one's semen and tongue consist of six leading principles of Ahi-Order.

Ahi-Order Organization shelters extremely sensitive moral values in its core and it strictly requests from its members the characteristics of being a good human and being a good muslim and in addition to this, negative behaviours and habits which are not wanted in its followers and which cause to be dismissed from the organization have been put forward in a certain way. These are:

Drinking alcohol, committing adultery, factiousness, passing the wording and calumny, pride and arrogance, mercilessness, jealousy, nourishing hatred, not keeping one's word, lying, misappropriation, disclosing another person's shame, losing abashment characteristic, stinginess and killing a person (Sevinç, 1978; 64).

IV. Ahi-Order Organization and Economic Life

When it is taken into consideration that Ahi-Order Organization is a non-governmental organization formed by the tradesmen and artisans, it will be seen clearly that its organising and principles have directly effected economical life of the relevant community. Because, when we compare Ahi-Order Organization's functions with the equivalent organizations of the recent days, we can see that it is the peer with many number of organizations. It is possible to sequence these as the chambers of industry and commerce which have the purpose of solving the common issues of the industrialists and tradesmen, worker and employer syndicates which regulate the relations of the workers and employer, competition board which tries to prevent monopolization, commodity and service standards institutions which inspect the qualities of the commodities and services and protect the consumers.

As it is seen, alongside of having one single organization doing the duties of many number of organizations in a much better way, it is really required to have intensive examinations on Ahi-Order because it has provided places in the context of community and individual, in other words social and human capital with the expressions of today. Now, let's try to handle the principles and working system of Ahi-Order Organization shortly as stated below which have made it so successful.

A. Principles of Ahi-Order and Social Capital

In classical economy teaching, concept of capital is defined as only money and physical values; however it will be more realistic to separate it to three parts as **financial (physical) capital** in the meaning of money and material accumulation which can be bought by money, **social capital**¹ in the meaning of communal security level and **human capital** in the meaning of trained, healthy labour force. In the history and in today's economic, social and military areas, social capital fact it is the type of capital definitely owned by the communities which have reached a certain power. Because, any nation has the possibility to obtain other required capitals besides the social capital for its economic development and economic production factors from abroad. The only production component which can not be provided from the outside is the social capital. Because, social capital actually belongs to community itself and it can be shaped according to ethic values, cultural and political structure and education which steer them. Because of this reason, it is not possible to deny the the role of the non-material values such as justice, tolerance, beauty, goodness, love, friendship and confidence for the future with their positive influences on the community. (OECD, 2001; 41).

Strikingly different results have been obtained in many empirical studies done during the last years in the topic of the relationship between the economic growth and social capital. In this context, Putnam (1995); has determined positive influences of the social capital had influences for the decreases in the crime rates, for the governments to work more productively and also for achieving decreases in the corruptions. Fukuyama (2000; 57-86); has determined that the cost were reduced by the courtesy of the processes based on trust, Coleman (1998); has determined increases of successes in education, Wilkinson (1996); has determined corrections in income distribution and Whiteley (2000; 541); has determined accelerations in the economical growth by the social capital.

There is the need to have good analysis to comprehend what are the economic, social and cultural dominants for the economic development which are prerequisite but not required this much, but forming the social capital. In this context, ethical structure owned by Ahî-Order Organization and its developed interpersonal relation level have formed relations between the persons and institutions in the relevant community with their quantity and quality undoubtedly was not anything else but an intensive social capital accumulation. Ahî-Order wants whole correctness, generosity, hospitality, tolerance, sacrifice, respect for human, solidarity, right, justice, freedom of conscious, equality, modesty, living for the nation, being religious, having the feeling of being ashamed, not to lie, not to drink alcohol and not to do adultery from its members which are the constituents to establish communal peace and to increase the level of confidence. Naturally, in a community having this kind of ethics, the point of views of the persons taking place in the community will be at communal level rather than being on an individualist line. This means that the persons will consider the interests and benefits of the persons around them in their behaviours before their personal interests and benefits. This is the obvious indications showing the development of the social responsibility and social capital accumulation has reached to a certain level.

In a country; settlements of solidarity, tolerance, love can only be implemented with the percentage of having these comply with custom and manners and moral values. In Anatolia, during the time period when Ahî-Order Organization existed and these rules were applied, income distribution was obtained in equitable and justifiable way and the foundations of national integrity were laid. Tranquility and richness lived in Anatolia has had broad repercussion in the West as well. (Demir, 2009).

As it is seen, social capital phenomenon taking place in the academic works having economic theme in the western countries during the last years can be clearly seen that they have taken place in Ahî-Order Organising and also in the Ottoman community hundreds of years ago. Economic, political, cultural and military development level reached by Ottoman Turk community was at the level which is envied even today by all segments as it was during its own age. There may be many material factors of this stage reached to be mentioned. However, the essential issue was to provide peace within the community with the contributions of Ahî-Order Organization, with the economic expression of today, was not something else but having the social capital accumulation reach adequate level.

B. Training and Human Capital in Ahi-Order

Human Capital can be defined as knowledged, educated and healthy human and it has extremely important role in the production process (Karagül, 2002; 24). Since the share of information and technology increases gradually in the production, the need for the human capital also increases with every passing day under the conditions of our recent days. Education level and productivity of the labor force form the basis of the human capital and it is clearly seen from the observations and also from the analyses done that there is a close relationship with these and economical development (Barro, 1992, 200-2002 and Kats, 1992, 217-218).

In the contemporary scripture, education and production relation is accepted as the human capital and it has a very important place in Ahî-Order Organization which had determinant role in socio-economic life of Ottoman community. Because, when primary purpose of Ahî-Order Organization is taken into consideration as being to bring up well-behaved humans, the role of education in the system will be seen clearly.

Ahî-Order education, was based on ‘lifelong learning’ with its expression of today. This education was starting from the childhood and it had the characteristic to cover the entire life of the Ahi. It is possible to line up the purposes of Ahî-Order’s education system as follows:

- * To bring up honest and well-behaving citizens, persons,
- * To bring up humans not having tendency for the consumption but for the production,
- * To bring up individuals having vocational and art successes,
- * When required, to prepare military poser for the defense of the country and to fill the authority gap.

In order to be able to implement all these purposes, Ahî-Order education and training starts from apprenticeship and communal values, traditions, customs, basic religious knowledge, Quoran knowledge were given together with the knowledge of ethics, knowledge of life, honesty, cleaning and literature, beautiful writing and music lessons.

Vocational trainings were implemented in the workshops and these were focused on application more than theory and at the same time, they were based on master apprentice relation and were given after personality, ethic and religion knowledge. (Şimşek, 2002; 162).

C. Economic Frame of Mind of Ahi-Order

a. Contentment:

Contentment is one of the indispensable principles of Ahi-Order and it has very strongly influenced community's economic frame of mind. When the negative impacts of profit maximization is taken into consideration as the basic tool of capitalist economic thinking is taken into consideration, it will be clearly seen how profitability is an important characteristic. Because, the companies which sustain their economic activities with the purpose of maximizing the profit do not adequately take notice of the rights of the personnel they employ and also the rights of their commercial partners and at the same time, it is known that they do not show sensitivity for the exhaustion of the environmental factors or for the pollution of them. Right at this point, contentment, as ordered by Ahi-Order; appears before us as prerequisite characteristic to consider the rights of the other persons and also to be much more sensitive in the topic of environment. Besides, continuation of the disagreements between the companies aiming uncontrolled profit maximization and the employees is an inevitable consequence. This situation leads to recession as quantity and quality in an absolute manner and at the same time, disbelief environment formed by the disagreements between the partners cause decreases for the commercial activities and increases for the costs of the processes (Erdem, 2008; 61).

b. İddihar (Under-the-Mattress):

As indicated by K. Galbraith, despite of the fact that today's capitalist market economy has basically solved the production issue, however it was not able to solve the sharing issue (Ölmezoğluları, 2003; 86). Consequently, all of the criticism directed to this system becomes intensified at this point. In order not to cause such an unjustness, **İddihar** was not recommended in *Fütüvvetname* which collects the principles of the Ahi-Order in it, and known as '**Under-the Mattress**' which emphasizes the hiding of the capital which is more than needed. According to this way of thinking, which gets its application from Zakat (Obligatory Alms) based on the Islamic way of thinking, it is ordered that the person who owns assets with the value of 81 grams of gold other than the actual need must use 1/40 of this as the obligatory alms. The purpose of this is to provide equitable income distribution by not giving change to the capital to be accumulated in certain hands.

There is a consensus in the topic of poverty in our day's world that poverty takes the lead among the basic economic issues. Additionally, it is also the known fact that under developed countries encounter most of the difficulties with the inadequacy of the capital and foreign loans as the economic matters. Consequently, either resolving of the poverty or for the solution of all these issues, there is the requirement to distribute the capital on the bottom end. The importance of **İddihar** system can not be denied for the implementation of this. In *Fütüvvetname*, there is also forehead sweat (great effort) understanding for the earning and this is an important factor inducing the persons to work economically. Because, with their order, persons are promoted to work and to earn money through halal (legitimate) means by producing positive values. Specially, it is clear that this advice will assume an important role to overcome the stagnancy which is observed in the entire Islam communities during the last few centuries.

c. Work Sharing:

Work sharing is another principle taking place in *Fütüvvetname*. While this principle provides specializing in the production, it was not looked with favour on it because changing the jobs so frequently will be the kind of practice which will be applied by inconstant and changeable individuals (Ekinci, 1989, 63). Idea of Specializing, which was brought in the agenda of the west for the first time with the book of Adam Smith names "**Welfare of the Nations**" (1776) and which is one of the most basic principles of today's contemporary economy, has already taken place among the principles of Ahi-Order Organization many years before that and it has been practiced throughout the centuries with success. Work Sharing provides specializing and thus implements increases productivity and additionally it also provides the possibility for discipline and process of auto-control among the tradesmen and artisans.

d. Cooperation:

Today, against the principle of achieving extreme profits and free competition all over the world, as these were valid in the Middle Ages and in Europe, there were the valid principles of helping each other and solidarity between the tradesmen as the principle of Ahi-Order Organization.

This system was named as “*Life and Commodity Partnership*” and having the tradesmen distribute the parts of their earnings which are more than their compulsory needs to the poor people, unemployed individuals and to the ones who are in need has been accepted as the basic ethical value. In the result of such an application, unwanted circumstances such as poverty, social conflict, theft, ... etc becomes reduced to the minimum level. Because, in a community having the dominancy of this system, it becomes possible to accumulate a very intensive social capital with the expression of today.

e. Mentor System:

In Ahi-Order, either the ethical training or vocational training have been implemented at the level of master-apprentice relation in an absolute manner. By the courtesy of this system, continuation of the system has been provided together with a quality education and training and additionally, there was an auto-control mechanism operated. For example, if a master disemploys his apprentice because of a fault of his, that apprentice will either come back to his job by the forgiving of the master or that same person would be subjected to the permission of his former master for him to be accepted by the other person.

By the courtesy of this system, apprentices had the compulsion to live in a complete commitment and dependence to their masters, vocations and to the principles of the organization. And this has been a powerful principle to provide continuation of the system in a healthy way. Master-apprentice relation forms the basis of in Ahi-Order Organization and it used to provide the implementation of the vocational training and education within a certain discipline and at the same time, it was also providing vocational and general ethics needed by the persons and it was even providing determinations how to act within the community by taking place in a very broad discipline. Because, master-apprentice relation was not only employer-employee relation, it was a relation rather looking like the relation of father and son. Accordingly, this relation was not only production indexed, but it was rather the kind of much more comprehensive relation by having emotional and responsibility dimensions. (Ekinçi, 1991; 28).

f. Ahi-Order and Production:

In Fütüvvetname's; strict requirements of working determination, forehead sweat (in other words, legitimacy of the earning) and that each Ahi must definitely own a business to run were recommended as the topics (Erdem, 2008; 65-68). In consequence, there is no doubt that all these orders and proposals will promote and increase the production in the country. Working and production were promoted in Ahi-Order Organization with every chance and there were strict inspections about what were produced, how and how much these were produced. In the understanding of Ahi-Order, making extreme productions by being parallel to be formed for the extreme consumption by accepting the needs as limitless and lashing the consumption and also the waste generated by this way and the usage of the resources inappropriately were not welcomed. In this framework, production was evaluated as a function of compulsory needs and in the result of this, production was limited in a way no to produce more than the needed.

In this context, the purpose of the production in Ahi-Order Organization was not to obtain extreme profit but it has been to meet compulsory needs of the community. Within this framework, in Ahi-Order Organization there was the strict condition of having the economical activities to be connected with the ethical values and the productions and commerce of the products and services obtained through illegal and unethical ways which could cause harm for the people were prohibited. When all of these particularities were implemented, in order to accomplish independency of the state economically, self sufficiency has been accepted as an important principle in order not to be address to foreign deficit and foreign loan.

g. Ahi-Order and Product Quality:

Standardization system has been considered as the most important economical gain of the contemporary world and it is becoming widespread with every passing day and at the same time it's importance is also increasing. It is claimed that this system has come into the picture in the Western Europe for the first time together with the industrialization, however, it is possible to encounter this in the Ottoman community during the dates much earlier when Ahi-Order Organization was practiced. *Kanunname-i İktisab-ı Bursa (Bursa Law of Acquisition)*, which was enforced by Beyazıt the 2nd following Fatih (Conquerer) Sultan Mehmet, encounter us as an important document in this topic (Hamitoğulları, 1986; 126). Standards determined in Ottoman Country used to be entered into the *registries of the muslim judges* during that period. In Ahi-Order system, tradesmen and artisans who produced similar commodities and services have carried on their activities in the same market place even if this was not like today's big market system taking place under the same roof.

By the courtesy of this system, it has become possible for the producers and tradesman to control each other, to achieve a competition medium between the sellers in terms of price and commodity quality and to have solidarity among the tradesmen. At the same time, this system has enabled the consumers to make comparisons among the commodities so that they could purchase the best commodity within the shortest possible period of time. Additionally, it is also known that Ahî Evran and his khalifs used to visit the market place time to time and they used to control the commodities (Erdem; 2008; 76).

Ahî-Order Organization encounters us as an institution by being the equivalent of TSE (Turkish Standards Institute) of our recent days which has activities to protect a certain quality level for the commodities and services produces in a much more complicated economic structure, however it was doing more than of today's TSE. In Ahî-Order Organization, the persons who produced commodities under the standards and caused the losses of the consumers were imposed to various penalties when these persons did not mind the warnings and continued their acts the same way and these penalties were based on the seriousness of their faults. These penalties used to start with the exposings of themselves and their products and were up to closing their shops by the administrators of the tradesmen and by the relevant establishments and if they used to get further, there were penalties accordingly including their dismissals from their tradesmenships (Demir, 1993; 14).

h. Automatic Inspection System in Ahi-Order:

Existing production principle in Ahî-Order system was never shaped according to personal profit, benefit and powerful one. On the contrary, production activity was always implemented, entirely and with sincerity, on the basis of making the productions by working with full force in order to produce commodities for the others and for the welfare of the community and with the understanding of sharing according to justice and right. Such a system like this has inevitably developed strict auto-control system in the course of time.

In Ahî-Order system, either the quality and the amount of the produced goods or the openings of the business places by the individuals were primarily inspected by the state itself and then the inspections were implemented by the tradesmen and artisans themselves at places where the state could not reach. For example, when a master-builder wants to open a new business place, it was compulsory for that person to prove his own mastership first in the presence of a delegation. Further, even if that master-builder had all the conditions fulfilled and obtained his mastership certificate, if he was not able to find a suitable place to execute his works (with the expression of those days "*if there is no vacant gedik*") he was not let to open his business place. Because, the number of the business places were limited and it was the Organization to decide whether or not this number would be increased.

At the same time, Ahi Fathers were at the leader position of the community and they have applied and caused to be applied the rules of the Ahi-Order like a law because they were determined according to the demands of the public. In this context; many topics and rules such as establishing a new business place, procurement and distribution of the raw material; price, standard and production's inspection; consumer complaints, training and commerce people; code of conduct, product guarantee, working principles, opening and closing the business; apprentice, master-builder and mastership rules, borrowing and solidarity can be taken in hand within this framework. On the other hand, in Ahi Production Unions, the success has been achieved to generate powerful and independent economy of the country by giving priority to produce and to consume domestic products and by operating the resources of the country fully productive. (Demir, 2009).

i. Business Ethic and Ahî-Order:

Business ethics, even though it is not applied by everyone in relation with the vocation, it is the entire behaviour principles which is rationally believed for its correctness and benefit. Ethic principles generally are not in written format in, however, since they are accepted by the community, they are tried to be exercised by everyone. The ones who behave on the contrary are exposed to denunciation, being ashamed, leaving for loneliness and not cooperating and they are punished with these ways by alienating them from the community (Şahin, 1986; 110). When under developed countries of our recent days are observed in terms of their economies, a serious erosion takes place in the acquired ethic values and by being connected to this, there is social disintegration observed together with the distrustfulness observed in the relations. It depends on having confidence in themselves and to adapt ethic principles to establish good relations for these communities in order to be able to reach the points deserved by them. These principles will naturally consist of their own values.

k. Fall of Ahî-Order Organizastion

Ahî-Order Organization has successfully sustained its efficiency from the last years of Seljuk Empire until the last period of the Ottoman Empire and just like it happens in all social thematic events, it has lost its efficiency slowly in 17th and 19th centuries due to many factors and it has stepped out of the life of the community. It will not be wrong to indicate below stated factors by having their influences in the fall of Ahi-Order Institution after it had extremely positive motives in the social life (Erdem, 2008; 89-93):

- By being connected with the weakness of the state's establishment, commencements of the losing the effectivenesses of the entire institutions and establishments,
- Together with the increases of the migrations from the village to the city, the openings of the business places by the individuals who did not have Ahi-Order educations and trainings,
- During the same period, due to not being able to keep the pace by the Ahi-Order Organization for the industrialization process started in Europe,
- With the capitulations [which started with Kanuni Sultan Süleyman (Suleyman the Magnificent)], when the commodities produced by the foreign producers started to take place the commodities produced by the domestic producers,
- Ethic range encountered in the community have caused alienation of the tradesmen from the principles taking place of Fütüvvetname and this has caused confidence lost for the citizens for the tradesmen.

Besides than this, together with the ‘‘Reformation Mandate’’ of Abdülmecit 1st in 1856, possibility of doing all kinds of arts, works, trades and profession was provided to be done freely by all the nationals taking place within the state. By being connected to this, the practice of ‘‘GEDİK CERTIFICATE’’ was ended in the year of 1860 after being for so many years starting from the year of 1727 and which was providing authorization and privilege to its owners to do production and trade in the relevant areas. Together with all these developments, Ahi-Order Organization as actually lost its functionality and in the end, with a law enforced in the year of 1912, Ahi-Order establishment has been annuled.

VI. Evaluation

Beyond doubt, success and failure are integrated events for every country. What is meant here is that a community is all together successful in military, politics, economic and cultural areas or there is a failure for these. For example, it is not possible to have failure in economic and military areas and to be successful in political and cultural areas. In this context, it is seen that specially economic success and a healthy social structure have one to one relationship. If the community is able to establish healthy relations within itself by being based on confidence and if the individuals are able to behave for each other with honesty and with the feeling of mutual responsibility, it will be a natural result for this community to achieve success in economic, political and military areas.

Basic economic and political matters encountered in the world of today and disturbing the communities can be sequenced as inequitable income distribution, corruption, bribe, selling fraudelant goods and poverty. In history, in the result of the activities of the Ahî-Order Organization developed by the community of the Ottoman, above stated issues of our recent days were reduced to minimum level because the aim of this organization of the tradesmen was to bring up individuals with good ethics and quality before the production of commodities and services. Ahî-Order Organization was a vocational civil structuring by being based on a powerful education and training system with the aim of bringing up individuals who had good social ethics and having the conscious of responsibility for their elders, community and the state. In this structuring, first the persons having high level of good manners have been brought up. Consequently, by way of bringing up persons who had high level of ethics, having responsibility, having educations and trainings in religious and vocational areas, Ahî-Order Organization has placed both communal order and also economic activities to a healthy structure and it has also provided contributions for the continuation of the state by establishing the relation of the nation and the state with the strongest way.

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