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A Mode of Space Production in the Nineteenth Century: Parceling (İfraz) as a Method of Land Commodification and Urbanization in Late Ottoman Empire*

Ondokuzuncu Yüzyılda Bir Mekan Üretim Tarzı: Geç Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Bir Arazi Metalaştırma ve Kentleşme Yöntemi Olarak Parselasyon (İfraz)

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Abstract / Öz

This paper deals with the urban space production of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire through the commodification of suburban lands via ifraz, namely division of land. Parceling through division of land is historically older than capitalist urbanization however in the capitalistic phase of urban history it is directly related with transforming land into a commodity. As in the universal examples, also in Ottoman case, ifraz is widely used to transform various types of lands into built areas and initiates capitalistic urbanization long before the larger scale urban plans were implemented. Behind the scenes of modernization and besides the after-fire master plans, or the urban renewal projects, a vast land turned into disposable commodities through ifraz. This commodity was mainly produced out of green areas, which means capitalism utilized infrastructure, providing neighborhoods in the nineteenth century. The fires were only exceptional practices of space production compared to the invasion of "empty" lands through privatization all around the empire. So, the state, investors and landowners were commodifying the environment, the farms, gardens, yards, and even the shores. It is also a tool of property transaction and facilitates establishing a network of roads, which is an essential part of modern urban planning and modern neighborhood establishment. Both the urbanization process of suburban areas and the commodification of natural landscape are important topics for research. The concept of ifraz contains the potential to understand diverse mechanisms of land transformation and widen urban historiography in its capitalist phase

Bu makale, on dokuzuncu yüzyıl Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun kentsel mekân üretimini, ifraz, yani arazi bölünmesi yoluyla birbirinden farklı pek çok arazinin metalaştırılması üzerinden ele almaktadır. İfraz yoluyla parselasyon tarihsel olarak kapitalist kentleşmeden eskidir ancak kent tarihinin kapitalist evresinde toprağın metaya dönüştürülmesiyle doğrudan ilişkilidir. Evrensel örneklerde olduğu gibi Osmanlı örneğinde de ifraz, çeşitli arazi türlerini imara açmak için yayqın olarak kullanılır ve büyük ölçekli kent planları uygulanmadan önce kapitalist kentleşmeyi başlatmıştır. Modernleşmenin perde arkasında, yangın sonrası üretilen nazım imar planları ya da kentsel yenileme projelerinin yanı sıra, ifraz yoluyla geniş bir coğrafyada araziler satışa ve imara açılmıştır. Çoğunlukla yeşil alanlar yapılaşmaya açılmıştır ve kapitalizm modern altyapıyı da kullanarak on dokuzuncu yüzyılın modern mahallelerini oluşturur. İmparatorluğun dört bir yanında parselasyon yoluyla boş arazilerin özelleştirilmesi ve imara açılması ortaya çıktığında yangın sonrası planlamalar görece istisnai mekân üretim pratikleri olarak kalır. Özetle devlet, yatırımcılar ve toprak sahipleri çevreyi, çiftlikleri, bahçeleri, avluları ve hatta kıyıları hızla daha geniş bir alanda etkili olacak şekilde kentleşmeye açmıştır ve bunun için temel olarak ifraz yöntemini kullanmışlardır. İfraz aynı zamanda bir mülkiyet transfer, aracıdır ve modern şehir planlamasının ve modern mahalle kuruluşunun önemli bir parçası olan yol ağının kurulmasını da kolaylaştırır. Bu makale Tanzimat döneminde ifrazın kullanımı üzerine genel bir çerçeve oluşturmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ancak ifraz, hem çeperin kentleşme süreci hem de doğanın metalaşması açısından önemli bir araştırma başlığıdır ve daha kapsamlı çalışılması kent tarihi açısından oldukça önemlidir. İfraz kavramı, arazi dönüşümünün farklı mekanizmalarını anlama ve kent tarihi yazımını kapitalizm ile birlikte anlama ve genişletmeye dair büyük bir potansiyel taşımaktadır.

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1. Introduction

This paper deals with the urban space production of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire through the commodification of suburban lands via parceling. Parceling is an important method of urbanization in capitalistic phase of urban history as it is directly related with transforming land into a commodity. In the context of this research a specific mode of space production called ifraz will be scrutinized. İfraz is the Ottoman term for division

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of land into parcels. It is widely used to transform various types of lands into built areas and initiates capitalistic urbanization long before the larger scale urban plans were implemented. It is also a tool of property transaction and facilitates establishing a network of roads, which is an essential part of modern urban planning. Based on archival research, it is understood that in the nineteenth century Ottoman empire, ifraz works in order to establish modern neighborhoods with their streets and infrastructure.

Before displaying archival research and findings, a discussion on urban historiography will be conducted in order to open up new questions. Also, relation between property transformations and urbanization will be discussed with reference to existing literature. Afterwards findings will be discussed in order to scrutinize this method of space production in addition to master plans of twentieth century, claiming that ifraz is a method which is partial, fragmented and but wider in effect in 19th century urbanization.

2. Research Methodology

This research on Prime Ministry Ottoman Digital Archive (PMO-Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (BOA)) consists of petitions, state documents, namely correspondences between various participants/ actors of space production. A few cadastral maps will also be referred to visualize the parceling method. I will refer to an inventory consisting of 590 documents demonstrating the transliterated summaries. This method of using only summaries that are found out as a result of searching the keyword "parça parça" which means "piece by piece" that is used for ifraz/ land division, will serve to obtain an overall perspective revealing a general pattern of land transformations, transactions and neighborhood establishment mechanism derived from parceling. These are mainly petitions related to dividing the land into plots and selling. This paper is a part of a larger master thesis project that also focuses on a case study that covers how ifraz works in detail (Arıkan, 2021). This second part of the research is based on an archival study carried out between 2019-2021 based on documents in Ottoman, which were transliterated by the researcher. In the boundaries of this paper, this case study will be referred as one of the examples. This paper is based on the first part of the archival research, which is a set of all digital transliterated summaries of the documents related with parceling. This method is preferred to construct a larger scale frame both in time and space, in order to reveal the historical context of parceling.

3. Historiography of the "Backstage" Of Urbanization: Redefining the Norm and Exception through Material Conditions

"Now let us consider for a moment any given space, any 'interval' provided that it is not empty. Such a space contains things yet is not itself a thing or material 'object.' Is it then a floating 'medium,' a simple abstraction, or a 'pure' form? No - precisely because it has content. We have already been led to the conclusion that any space implies, contains, and dissimulates social relationships -and this despite the fact that space is not a thing but rather a set of relations between things (objects and products)" (Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 82-83).

Remembering Lefebvre's (1991) triad of space (perceived, conceived, and lived); master plan drawings convey the designed space mainly, which is called representations of space. He emphasizes the gap between the abstraction and the content by also reminding the relations that space embodies (Lefebvre, 1991). That remark provides the historian a wider and extensive perspective on the knowledge of spatial practice, the lived and the perceived aspects of the space by the inhabitants, which will lead to a better understanding of the space itself. Based on the history below approach based on the Marxist tradition, Lefebvre's contribution is vital in avoiding being stuck in definitions such as Islamic City.

"The liberal world view was inseparable from a vocabulary of European domination over non-European areas in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century. This vocabulary represents the dichotomous perception of social reality, which characterized the liberal perspective, and echoes the spatial bifurcation between Europe (the West) and non-Europe (the East). European history is cast as the privileged domain of exchange of private property, of circumscribed state presence, and of the rule of law. Non-European history, by contrast, describes a sphere of stunted commercial development or economic stagnation, of despotic states, and of the absence of law" (İslamoğlu, 2001, p.6). It is crucial to "go beyond the binary perception of the Eastern and Western histories" (İslamoğlu, 2001) and correct the fixations over analyzing the East and how this view dominates urban history. That ideologically distorted approach detaches urbanization from its relation with the capital, limits it to a idealistic state projects without people's involvement, and restrain urbanization in the apolitical discourse of modernism. Kentel (2018), in his Ph.D. dissertation, criticizes the urban histories based on "sociability and stylistic narratives of architectural history" and the conceptualization of urban processes "as a symptom of nineteenth-century Ottoman modernity and cosmopolitanism." He emphasizes this through warning against limiting analysis of space with the face values of the elite texts, maps, or architectural façades. His criticism relies on restraining urban historiography on that kind of source, so the triad that makes up space is lacking in that kind of superficial approach.

In the development of capitalism, cadastral activities or "planning" is a tool of the commodification of space that also functions to collect tax and fix land use rights (Kaya, 2016). The assumed economic stagnation (İslamoğlu, 2001) of the East, namely the Ottoman Empire İslamoğlu points out, perhaps demonstrates itself mainly in the field of the urban economy. This deficient and inaccurate reading of space is related with the Kentel's (2019), criticism of relying merely on maps to understand planning and ignoring the material conditions and relations that makes up those representations of space.

The Empire's integration to capitalism is similar to Europe; however, main stream historiography covers Ottoman urbanization as a mere mimicry of "West" in a formal and discursive level. And this led to the conclusion that the rise of capitalism, urbanization, and centralization did not affect Ottoman landscapes as their European counterparts. Terzibaşoğlu (2006) compares the Ottoman case with the European property transformation cases and places it in a more universal land privatization context. He emphasizes that the applications and regulations of the nineteenth century are too extensive to be bracketed in a conception like the "Tanzimat era." He conceptualizes the period as the first wave of privatization in a broader sense in terms of geography.

In parallel with Terzibaşoğlu's effort to bring forward a materialistic approach as an alternative to the Tanzimat era discourse, Akyürek (2012) defines Tanzimat intellectuals and bureaucrats as the subjects with power to reproduce, supervise and utilize the Western discourse through constructing a set of knowledge as a tool of power. According to Akyürek (2012), the texts Tanzimat intellectuals produced as a representation of the Western cities was strongly related to the way they perceive and could not perceive the European city realities. They were framing their observations to transfer to the Ottoman atmosphere as a transformative suggestion. This critic is essential in terms of expanding the discussions on Ottoman historiography. Mundy and Smith (2013) suggest that historiography in the Turkish language, namely post-Republican, also neglects the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries which constitute the backbone of Tanzimat legal reforms. This ignorance leads to a lack of continuity, and it also facilitate hindering the continuous rising of capitalism and Empire's process of integration. So that "narrative of modernization with orientalist tones," as Kentel (2018) defines, is too much related with the motive of hiding capitalism in the urban history. It should be noted that Tanzimat reforms were not totally irrelevant with westernization thoughts, however problem related with urban historiography is that Tanzimat is handled as an abstract, discursive project that governs the nineteenth century urbanism. Tanzimat texts were intentionally constructed for the service of a political and economic agenda. The "technical rationality that aimed to create order by geometry" (Güçlü, 2017) was elaborated in a stylistic modernization tone rather than the commodification of land. This kind of narrative serves defining Tanzimat as an exceptional period. This conception also leads to an understanding of Ottoman urbanization as a discursive and sui generis project rather than being a phase and example of capitalism that spreads in time and space. Hence, master plans produced and implemented after big fires are also covered as a miraculous opportunity for Tanzimat elites –detached from their relations with capital and property- to implement their ideas on the city.

Yerolympos (1996a) emphasized the fact that Thessaloniki would undergo this kind of transformation regardless of the fire, due to the specific historical context, but the fire crated an empty space and eliminated "obstacles" to throw away the old urban structure and facilitated the implementation of the new plan. Her argument can be extended for the Ottoman geography in general. Kaya (2016) mentions that urban fires provided a tabula rasa for the cadastral activities, a crucial component of the new property and tax regime. Many cities had recovered from fires through familiar spatial patterns however capitalistic urbanization was introducing its specific space production. Thessaloniki also suffered from fires for centuries but only in the special historical context of nineteenth century capitalistic urbanization, it was being rebuilt in a way that facilitates penetration of European capital as an important motive for public works in the cities and country side. 1917 fire destroyed a zone of 128 hectares and this, within the historical context of modern urbanization, set a clean break with the long centuries spatial pattern of growth and evolution (Yerolympos, 1996a).

4. The Age of Property, Recording, and Dissolving of Land into a Commodity: İfraz Method

"The property was no longer defined in relation to the revenues derived from land but in relation to the title to the land. This meant the end of multiplicity of claims on a single plot of land and the exclusion of many overlapping rights such as rights to passage, poaching, and grazing on a single plot, a transformation from multiple overlapping rights to individual rights. In parallel, the communal rights the nomads and the settled peasantry had on pastures, forests, and village commons, as well as the ill-defined proprietorship rights of the vakif administrations on landed property were all in a process of erosion to the benefit of individual title a use, a transformation from communal to individual rights" (Terzibaşoğlu, 2001).

The English case of enclosure and German case of Teilung and Verkopplung are well-known examples of the land regime-changing methods (Terzibaşoğlu, 2006). However, for the Ottoman urban historiography, mostly state projects or master plans had been examined as the basis of urbanization. In the Ottoman context, those concepts correspond to the terms ifraz and tevhid, and are widely used as tools of property transformations. Post-fire applications or master plans are crucial in understanding transformation of urban settings/ centers; however, for the suburban areas or empty landscapes especially ifraz is an essential keyword to trace.

There is a crucial difference between the different conditions ifraz and tevhid occurred and their different results. For instance, the case of Palestine demonstrates a transformation through tevhid and the creation of large land ownerships of urban effendis/ absentee landlords which facilitated the colonialization (Terzibaşoğlu, 2001). In contrast, during the same period, the Anatolian story is mainly dominated by examples of ifraz that resulted in smaller, fragmented ownership patterns. Terzibaşoğlu (2001) also emphasizes that the outcome of struggles on land varied according to the existing ways of land use and forms of property and the local balance of power. Residents of Kavala, particularly merchants, demanded the land to be divided into small plots in order to prevent monopoly of few landlords. Their concern was about potential speculation on land prices. However, urbanization and parceling was transforming unproductive land into a source of profit (Yerolympos, 1996b).

Different than master plan implementation, ifraz enabled neighborhood formation with the involvement of inhabitants. Central control of the area and its economy was an important result of master plan (Yerolympos, 1996b). First step of Thessaloniki master plan process was to prohibit land owners to rebuild on their plots, because this method necessitated uniting all land in question and re-dividing it. This is also a kind of parceling however what I mention as "ifraz method" is related with parceling empty lands which were not open to construction without a large scale and central plan. Master plan uses parceling as a tool to divide land, but commodifying land through parceling in a fragmented manner is different than that. Master plan also includes extension of the urban area in several directions but this extension is predetermined within the plan. However, the ifraz method this paper examines occurs in a partial manner in order to establish new neighborhoods in various parts of the empire.

"Urban land was no longer the traditional community area, but had become primarily a form of capital and the object of private speculation. The application of city planning procedures led to the reinforcement of capitalist tendencies in the possession of urban space, with the support of a state which was becoming increasingly interventionist, but with no attempt to deepen social reforms. In short, a major alliance between the State and the urban land owners was implicitly forged and has never been contested; in order to assure their support, the State would not attempt to control land speculation, thus condemning to paralysis all urban planning institutions and local authorities' efforts" (Yerolympos, 1996b)

The property was, in its essence was the monopoly of some people on earth, excluding the others and transforming the land into a financial form (Marx, 1992). He adds that even the water was monopolized as long as it was part and parcel of the land. In this context, legal opinion was executed just like it would be in another context related to any other commodity. Both modern infrastructure and the Tanzimat regulations were capitalism's' tools for colonizing the earth into private property, an investment circulating in the market (Marx, 1992). Kaya (2016) also depicts Tanzimat Edict itself as a text opening the era of private property. He also emphasizes the strong relations between property transformations with the transformations in tax system and state bureaucracy. Yerasimos (1992) extends the aim of Tanzimat reforms and urbanization related with the reforms through the aim of control over the

space and over society in general. Also recording the property through cadastral activities was part of the aim of a centralized control.

Güçlü (2017) states that the line between the absolute space of private property and the social space is contested and the tensions are reflected in the built environment. Also, Mitchell (2014) reminds that capital and infrastructure share a long history. In the nineteenth century, their long-lasting relation gave rise to a new political and economic power. He reminds the connection of colonization and construction of urban infrastructure and the historical juxtaposition of modern banking and the expansion of finance capital through the very materiality of iron, steel, copper, lead, and concrete as construction materials.

> "Each wave of human development seems to be set in motion by a new energy system, each requiring an infrastructure that reshapes collective life, connecting humans to a new technical grids and natural forces" (Mitchell, 2014).

> "This conception implies that built environments reflect different modes of production. In a society that is increasingly becoming capitalist, the elements of the built environment assume a commodity form. That is to say those streets, for instance, as the basic layouts of a city, become commodities" (Güçlü, 2017, p.8).

In an age in which city planning was one of the most crucial tools of circulation and realization of the capital (Güçlü, 2017), property relations are the backbone of urbanization. So, the focus on formal modernization should be dissolved, and land covering the vast geography of the Empire should be studied on the basis of commodification. Elaborating on that conception of the land, the buildings, and even the streets as commodities will open up a new perspective that will shed light on the biases mentioned in the introduction of the thesis regarding urban historiography.

"Thessaloniki was credited with a metropolitan role, foreign experts and city planners were called in, and the attempt was made to mobilize the city's full economic capacity. The planning scheme was designed, publicized and carried out as if it was a business enterprise. For the first time in Greece the game of motivating land speculation was played out from start to finish consciously and successfully, by the state as it is sole originator" (Yerolympos, 1998)

Even though state established Property Owner's association to manage land speculation and regulate the process, land owners and investors could manipulate the plan and achieved to reduce open space ratio from 50% to 42% and also building land was subdivided into smaller individual plots. Even though state established Property Owner's association to manage land speculation and regulate the process, land owners and investors could manipulate the plan and achieved to reduce open space ratio from 50% to 42% and also building land was subdivided into smaller individual plots. Even though state established Property Owner's association to manage land speculation and regulate the process, land owners and investors could manipulate the plan and achieved to reduce open space ratio from 50% to 42% and also building land was subdivided into smaller individual plots. Yerolympos (1996a) emphasizes that the state acted as arbitrator among individuals and between the privates and community. Despite the fact that the state, through local parceling or through master plan, aimed to gain absolute control over space, the land owners and investors always achieved to be a part of the process. As master plan is also a tool of land commodification, landowners and investors demanded smaller plots for in order to prevent monopoly over land.

An example of the expansion of bureaucratic control over land is the 1858 regulation of the Sixth District Municipality of Galata and Pera (Kaya & Terzibaşoğlu, 2009), which cancels the imams and muhtars in rental management and paperwork authorizing the municipality and Evkaf Nezareti¹. It transferred interpersonal relations on land issues to the Evkaf Nezareti to create central control over taxation (Kaya & Terzibaşoğlu, 2009). Beforehand in 1826, Evkaf-I Hümâyûn Nezareti² had been established with the intention of gain control over the waqfs (Güçlü, 2009). The Nezaret replaced trustees who were the chief actors in waqf administration with state officials: "The expanding bureaucracy and deepening documentation within the body of the Nezaret mark the administrative and institutional constitution of a new waqf regime" (Güçlü, 2009).

¹ Evkaf-1 Hümâyûn Nezareti: Misitry of Waqfs

² Evkaf-1 Hümâyûn Nezareti: Misitry of Waqfs

"The development of the icâreteyn system from the sixteenth century onwards can also be reevaluated as the product of a pragmatist state in shaping laws and responsive to social and economic necessities. In other words, the state employed the icâreteyn system not at the expense of the rule that long-term leasing was non-şer'i, but by legalizing it based on necessity, usually resulting from fires" (Güçlü, 2009).

According to Güçlü (2009), transition of the land regime also included assimilating waqf property into mîrî category: "These changes aimed to increase agricultural production and enhance real estate values along with unlimited circulation of waqf and mîrî property in the economic sphere." She points out the gradual development of private property through expanding the period of rents³. The introduction of longer terms in renting waqf property the expansion of inheritance rights (Güçlü, 2009), are also related with the gradual centralization in waqf administration and the transformation of property relations.

Another problem is the conception of individual ownership that led to a blurring of the context: "Individual ownership represented an abstraction of the property of the individual from the web of multiple entitlements to revenues from land and the diverse, shared claims over land use." (Güçlü, 2009). The phrase "looking through the land" Terzibaşoğlu (2006) introduces is vital to change the mindset from state view to the social actors. The point Pinon makes is crucial to question the order of events, namely the de facto and de juro concerning the state and the landowner:

Güçlü (2018) explains how capitalist modernity provides itself through the discourses of public good, justice, honor, etc., to the context of urban remediation. Through such concepts, even the conflicts with the Hanafi law can be exceeded utilizing the necessities of the public. Those are also essential highlights in reading the documents to grasp the appropriations of the law by discourses for the sake of private property or capitalist urbanization.

Discussions on law and practice are meaningful in terms of the contribution of public into the production of space and the tension between de facto and de juro (Thompson, 2013). Urban historians should consider that laws or regulations and application have complex relations shaped by the state and the other social actors. Kark (2017) also claims that de facto land privatization afterwards became de jure privatization. Ottoman Law was not a solid, merely religion-oriented one. Instead, it demonstrates intricate relations with the circulation of the capital and actors in that process.

5. Expanding the Urban Historiography through İfraz

"Landowners never miss an opportunity to profit from their landholdings, and real estate investors exploit the chance to buy up cheap agricultural land and sell it at a much higher price. The possibility of easy and immediate profit turns owners into entrepreneurs: since this was favored by the public authority, for a long time it limited its function to the encounter- agreement and control of private initiative. Public administration adopted the same method to increase land value, either directly or through registered intermediary agents" (Pinon, 1998).

So looking through the land, negations and conflicts arose not in a linear manner and they include various class conflicts. It is not a coincidence, as Neumann reminds us, that upper-class elites, bankers, sarrafs, and landowners were the actors who established the municipal organizations of the nineteenth century (Neumann, 2011). The institution of municipality that imply "localization" was actually the tool of state centralization and penetration of capital through a vast geography, exceeding the old city centers. As Yerolympos (1998) states, capitalistic urbanization gave rise to a hegemonic group, a new urban stratum of tradesman, industrialists, bankers etc. So, the state's aim of absolute control over space production had been challenged, but the capacity of people to "participate" was class based. This remark raises questions such as: Who can negotiate? Among the actors in the rivalry, who is most likely to define the new emerging structure? The history of both master plans and fragmented ifraz implementation is the history of the property owners and capitalists. As a result, the fires occurring in the poorest parts of the cities were deporting the renters. For example, in the case of Thessaloniki, 1700 families who totally lacked economic power had to abandon their districts (Yerolympos, 1996a). On the other hand, fires didn't create the equal opportunity to the landowners in each case. Yanya residents complained that as istanbulites gained land speculation on after fire parceling, their city lacked that potential.

³ She developed her MA research on analyzing the icareteyn system, which is a long-term rent mechanism.

As a result of discussions on urban historiography and its relation with property and class, it seems that reconstructing the Ottoman urbanization history necessitates various filters. First, assuming the post fire master plans as the milestone of capitalistic urbanization is a critical point to scrutinize. Secondly, focus on İstanbul as the locus of the Empire's urban history should be challenged. Also, the western conceptualization of the eastern spatial history and the liberal approach to urbanization in an immense sense making the capital relations less visible should be questioned. This can be achieved by discussing the changing modes of property and their effects on space production. Also elaborating urban space and urbanization with material conditions and relations will facilitate an approach that goes beyond map analysis. This way transformation of property with human and non-human actors of urbanization and material conditions can be revealed, which I refer to as the "backstage of urbanization." The mechanisms of establishment of "modern" neighborhoods in an Empire in merging with universal capitalism can reveal itself on the documents related to property transactions.

"The development of London in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though based entirely on the subdivision of vast aristocratic properties through the long-term leases, has hardly been considered. In fact, parceling had been a private form of city planning that has never attracted the attention instead on the public politics of urban development at the municipal and national level" (Pinon, 1998, p.45).

Ifraz, in that sense, provides an extensive potential to uncover land history, neighborhood formation, infrastructure planning and mainly, capitalistic urbanization. However, technically it is not possible to grasp this process through large scale master plan projects. The main source for explicating this method is the demand petitions of landowners for parceling and selling their lands. Andonova (2019) states that arzuhals, meaning the petitions, display many layers of information related to legal, social, economic, and bureaucratic sides of the land history. According to Andonova (2019), those letters of complaints, demands, or objections serve as a basis for reconstructing Ottoman land history. Her focus is on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, where cadastral recording tradition is less intense; however, it is also valid for the nineteenth century as the beginning of massive land documentation. Even though the nineteenth century is marked with cadastral activities, it was only the beginning of a process. So, the primary, reliable, and detailed data remained to be in the written documents. Kaya and Terzibaşoğlu (2009), suggest that in the second half of the nineteenth century, the state gave utmost importance to the cadastral surveys beginning with the establishment of the Tahrir-i Emlak Nezareti in 1858, and pilot areas of implementation such as Bursa (1858), Yanya (1858) and Beirut (1862) and after the 1860s in İstanbul. However, they also remind that mapping was an expensive process, and main data was still on record books containing written data. This is why focusing on large-scale maps can lead one to focus on a very narrow part of urban history, which is, in my opinion, can be the reason why parceling was neglected, although it is a widely used technique.

Starting with the establishment of Tahrir-i Emlak Nezareti⁴ and the pilot applications, an experience on recording the urban land was gained, and this experience had been transformed to the text of Tahrir-i Nüfus ve Emlak Nizamnamesi⁵ in 1860. Those regulations on cities and towns were expanded to the rural areas in 1866, and in 1864 Tuna province became a pilot area of a provincial Nizamname text. Then in 1867, finally a General Province Regulation⁶ was written.

The primary purposes of those regulations were to record land ownership and define land value so they would be the base for the future transactions, privatization of land and the expansion of tax extraction from the ground. For the capital city of Istanbul, the 1874 land register code⁷ was crucial. With the 1839 Tanzimat Edict and 1858 Land Code and those regulations mentioned above, nineteenth-century urbanization fits into a complex transition of land and bureaucracy of the Ottoman Empire (Kaya & Terzibaşoğlu, 2009).

In the end, this approach led to the abstraction of the urban space from the property and the web of power relations that produces space. Discourses of Tanzimat elites discussed above and the extensive usage of maps mostly prepared by Europeans have been main sources for the Ottoman historians. To elaborate the continuity, rupture, exception, or the norm from a more historical materialist perspective rather than the mere discursive/ formal one will overcome those problems.

⁴ Tahrir-i Emlak Nezareti: Ministry for recording the property transactions

⁵ Tahrir-i Nüfus ve Emlak Nizamnamesi: Legal arrangement for immovable properties

⁶ Genel Vilayet Nizamnamesi: Legal arrangement for administration of provinces

⁷ 1874 Land Register Code

In order to introduce parceling/ ifraz as a discussion in urban history I conducted archival research on property transactions covering the vast geography of the Empire in the nineteenth century. I will refer to an inventory consisting of transliterated summaries of 590 documents. Those summaries are the official records related with land/ division/ ifraz and all together they provide a general pattern of land transformations, transactions and neighborhood establishment mechanism derived from parceling. These are mainly official responds of the state to the demand petitions related with dividing the land into plots and selling. In the context of this paper, I will only demonstrate how wide ifraz was implemented geographically, how it worked as a mechanism to establish neighborhoods and kinds of lands that was commodified via ifraz⁸.

6. İfraz as a Tool of Space Production and Urbanization in the Nineteenth-Century

"Parceling involves subdividing private property (whether patrimonial, expropriated, or acquired for speculation) into lots to be sold or rented. It is phenomenon that affects the entire urban environment or any environment that is to become urbanized, including agricultural land or marshland on the outskirts of a city, abandoned industrial or military sites, areas such as gardens suitable for development, vast properties belonging to impoverished aristocratic families, abandoned convents or monasteries, and so forth" (Pinon, 1998, p.45).

Urbanization was a main tool of integration to capitalism of the Empire. Five hundred ninety documents were found in the digital Ottoman archive repeating "parça parça" (piece by piece) used with "ifrazına" (to be parceled) for various types of land such as garden, yard, forest, mansion plot, swamps, farms, fields, military lands, and even the slippery lands filled with the waves of the sea were to divide and sell. Therefore, the after-fire interventions and attempts for large-scale urban plans were only the tip of the iceberg. All types of land, all over the empire were under a rapid and continuous flow of ifraz, which was the backbone of nineteenth-century urbanization. As a result of the analysis of documents found in the archive his process begins from 1830s mainly in the capital city, İstanbul and spreads through the provinces (Table 1).

Location	Number	Location	Number
İstanbul	260	Kolonya	1
İzmir	47	Belgrad	1
Samsun	25	Karaağaç (Edirne)	1
Üsküb	10	Bodrum	1
Sultaniye (Çanakkale)	9	Bağdad	1
Yanya/ Tırhala	8	Çeşme	1
Eyüp	6	Edirne/ Tekfurdağı	1
Mersin	5	Tuna	1
Aydın	5	Nazilli	1
Urla	4	Musul	1
Kudüs	4	Suriye	1
Kesriye Sancağı	4	Trabzon	1
Aksaray	3	Mihalgazi (Eskişehir)	1
Bursa	3	Măcin-Brăila arası (Romanya)	1
Beyrut	3	Hacıoğlu Pazarcığı (Dobriç/ Bulgar-istan)	1
Akşehir	2	Adapazarı	1
Adana	2	Kalkandelen/ Tetova (Bulgaristan)	1
Drama	2	Козоvа	1
Akhisar	2	Kandiye	1
Karahisar	2	Mihaliç/ Karacabey (Bursa)	1
Sofya/Saruhan	2	Midlli	1
Karagümrük	2	Mudanya	1
Ayazmend (Karesi Sancağı)(Altınova)	2	Manisa	1

Tablo 1. Geographic distribution of ifraz all around Ottoman Empire in nineteenth century

⁸ For a detailed midro analysis on a case study, in my master's thesis I examined establishment of İcadiye neighborhood in detail (Arıkan, 2021)



Basra	2	Kıbrıs	1
Kavala	2	Kayseri	1
Bağdat	2	Filibe	1
Gelibolu	1	Selanik	1
Taşkasab	1	Musul	1
Hüdeavendigar	1	Batum	1
Düzce	1	Erzincan	1
		Zonguldak	1

Source: This table is created by the author with the data from Prime Ministry Ottoman Digital Archives

In İstanbul, Kadıköy, Bakırköy and Üsküdar districts are the main nodes of parcellation in the beginning and through the nineteenth century, all suburbs are also effected (Table 2).

Tablo 2. Geographic distribution of ifraz in İstanbul, the capital city of Ottoman Empire in nineteenth century

Yer	Sayı	Yer	
Kadıköy	43	Bebek	
Bakırköy (Makriköy)	35	Adalar	
Üsküdar	20	Anadolu Hisarı/ Küçüksu	
Büyükdere	12	Hobyar	
Küçükçekmece/ Ayastefanos	11	Horhor	
Beşiktaş	10	Çengelköy	
Edirnekapı ve harici	10	Süleymaniye	
Kartal	7	Dersaadet	
Kasımpaşa	7	Yeniköy	
Arnavutköy	6	Paşalimanı	
Ortaköy	6	Sakızağacı	
Sarıyer/ Yenimahalle	6	Büyükçekmece	
latavla	5	Teşvikiye	
stinye	5	Toppkapı/harici	
Silivrikapı/dışı	5	Hasköy	
Mirgün (Emirgan)	5	Unkapanı	
Feriköy	4	Balat	
atih	4	Çatalca	
Maçka	3	Sulukule	
Beykoz	3	Beylerbeyi	
Paşabahçe	3	Çamlıca	
Cerrahpaşa	3	Fındıklı	
Kumkapı	2	Vezneciler	
Kireçburnu	2	Maltepe	
Nevlevihane	2	Beyoğlu Altunizade	
Göksu	2	Yenibosna	
lasköy	2	Rumeli hisarı	
Kumkapı	2	Tarabya	
Sultanahmet	2	Zeyrek	

Source: This table is created by the author with the data from Prime Ministry Ottoman Digital Archives

Terzibaşoğlu (2013) points out the difficulty of writing land history since "many of the files are incomplete, that is, one file contains information only on some part of a dispute, and it is in most cases impossible to go through the history of a conflict from start to finish in one file". However, regarding this set of documents, I am not after complete stories of specific cases. Instead, I am interested in a pattern that displays the mechanism of urbanization on a larger scale throughout the Empire in approximately 70 years, starting with 1839, Tanzimat Edict. So, this nature

of the archive does not constitute an obstacle for the scope of this chapter. The aim here is to see the transformation of land into a commodity and how modern space production with all aspects was embedded in the integration to capitalism of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century.

For the nineteenth-century environment in terms of land uses, one can grasp three general tendencies of space production:

- Turning various types of land categories into private property through parceling
- Transformation of miri or waqf lands to private property through uniting plots
- Claiming housing rights of the landless people over empty plots

This set of documents, as mentioned before, focuses on the first category. All results demonstrate common characteristics that enables to construct a frame for a specific kind of space production. Ottoman phrase for parceling is ifraz in legal terms. The very repetitive phrase of "parça parça" which means "piece by piece" appears in each document with "ifraz". The documents state that the landowners are allowed to divide their land into pieces and sold those "pieces" to the people who wanted to buy (*parça parça ifraz edilerek taliplerine füruhtu*). The phrase "*parça parça*" had never been used referring to land before 1839. They are either demand from the state to parcel and sell the land or permissions from the state to parcel and sell the land. They all involve the establishment of a neighborhood, construction of infrastructure and building residents on the plots as the main content of the operations. Following the commonalities, a pattern of land commodification and urbanization from empty lands becomes evident.

7. Land categories that are parceled and sold

Until 1839 no implication of land can be divided and sold in the market is mentioned in the archive. This absence doesn't mean that there was no application of parceling before 1839; however, it is clear that it was not applied in the manner of others, land as commodity.

In the pre-Tanzimat period, the goods that are sold piece by piece are: Ammunition (mühimmat), cereal (zahire), poll tax (cizye), debt (borç), bread (peksimad), wire (saf tel), money (para), paint (boya), the sum of money (mebaliğ), expenditure (masraf), wheat (buğday), rent (kira), subsistence (harcırah), revenue (irad), lead (kurşun). With the introduction of the Tanzimat Edict, the land was listed as a commodity that can be circulated in the capitalist market. Proceeding from that moment, there are 590 entries, covering approximately 70 years span. Early records, almost until the 1880s, are primarily from various parts of İstanbul and gradually spread towards provinces.

Yerasimos (1994) mentions that in the pre-Tanzimat period, for İstanbul, it is estimated that for between a guarter and a third of the city's land was waqf bequeathed property. Existing mode of property transformation was exchange of property, with condition to protect income of the waqf. Although waqf property was considered as irremovable, for construction of mosques for example, administrations would decide to exchange land with another. Compensation was necessary for that kind of transaction, as mentioned before. However, this cannot be compared with nineteenth century urban upheaval and also, very different form nineteenth century expropriation. Wagf model of land control was freezing the urban space and Ottoman administration of Tanzimat period would see this system as an obstacle to a comprehensive planning policy and urbanization. Ministry of Waqfs was established in 1826, in order to transfer property of waqfs to a more centralized model. Ten years later, Mustafa Resid Pasa's letter from 1836, which is considered as the founding document of Ottoman town planning, treats waqf property as ordinary property. He emphasizes the difficulties of opening streets as an example of hardship waqf system imposes. In following documents related with the issue the emphasis on compensation of waqf as transferring the property is weakened (Yerasimos, 1994). Also, the archival research I base my arguments on display property transformation from waqfs to small land owners, with the permission of the state institutions. Two kind of land owners appear in approximately 590 registers: individuals and waqf. 56 entries are related with parcellation of waqf land to be sold, and 49 of them are located in İstanbul. İn İcadiye example, although the land owners are Karabet Kalfa in the permission document, the process of land transaction reveals involvement of three wagfs and a complicated process⁹. Work of Yerasimos (1994) is crucial to understand the passage through waqf based urbanization to the capitalistic mode of urban space production. He defines the waqf based urban space as "frozen" and ifraz, namely parcellation of capitalistic urbanization introduces land into the flow of the capital as an ordinary commodity. Another important point mentioned by Yerasimos is the introduction of increasing density or height in order to compensate the loss due to

⁹ This case is analyzed in detail in the unpublished master thesis but will not be opened up in the limits of this paper. For further details: Arıkan, Burcu. 2021. A mode of space production in the nineteenth century: İcadiye neighborhood as a case of ifraz. Boğaziçi University, İstanbul.

smaller surface areas, which is an important break and also an important feature of economic rent derived from the urban space. This process reveals the stapes of nineteenth century land commodification that rises with Tanzimat. Figures 1,2 and 3 demonstrate the density of ifraz implementation thorough the Ottoman geography. The capital city is the main node of the parceling and it is clearly seen in Figure two how it dominates the course of capitalistic urbanization. Also Figure 3 shows that parceling and land commodification is the main motive of urbanization and urban expansion in 19th century, which is clearly more effective than post-fire planning cases.

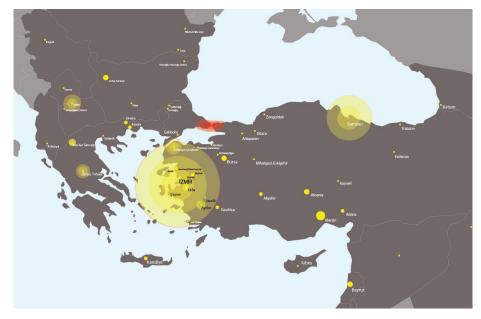


Figure 1. A Distribution and density of ifraz implementations in Ottoman Empire (The weight of Istanbul is not represented) *Source:* This figure is created by the author with the data from Prime Ministry Ottoman Digital Archives

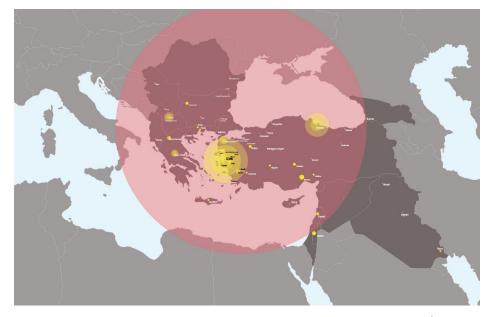


Figure 2. Distribution and density of ifraz implementations in Ottoman Empire (The weight of İstanbul represented) *Source:* This figure is created by the author with the data from Prime Ministry Ottoman Digital Archives

In the documents, farms (çiftlik arazisi), fields (tarla), gardens (bahçe), vegetable gardens (bostan), police station (karakolhane), backhouse (müştemilat), forest (orman), terrain (arazi), vineyard (bağ), ruined vineyard (harap bağ), waqf terrain (vakıf mahalleri), waterside residence (sahilhane arsası), waqf garden (vakıf bostanı), public/state land (mîrî arazi), mountain terrain (dağ mahalli), candle production center (mumhane arsası), vacant land (boş arazi), graveyard (kabristan), private-registered land (tapulu arazi) and even as an extreme of case shore land occurred as a result of the waves (deniz dalgaları sonucu meydana gelen arazi) are mentioned as the types of lands that were divided into plots and sold.

This first document is about selling a vegetable garden (bostan) through division into plots, called "ifraz," as mentioned¹⁰. Ownership patterns of the lands range from individuals to state institutions or waqfs. In this example an individual is allowed to sell his property, which is an agricultural land. The land is in Maçka, a quarter of İstanbul and for a period of time İstanbul is the core of privatization of land through ifraz.

The summaries contain the aim of building and infrastructure construction (ebniye inşa olunmak üzere) which implies that those divisions are intended for construction. As most of the lands in question are agricultural lands, this is also a substantial environmental transformation. Some of them are related to the production of agricultural land but that kind of transformation doesn't dominate the main pattern: "Samsun ile Çarşamba arasındaki Gelemiş sazlığının ıslah edilip numune çiftliği yapılarak ziraate açılıp parça parça satılması."¹¹ (The development of the Gelemis reeds between Samsun and Çarşamba, making a sample farm and selling them piece by piece)



Figure 3. Distribution and density of ifraz implementations in İstanbul **Source:** This figure is created by the author with the data from Prime Ministry Ottoman Digital Archives

The tool of ifraz is utilized to transform land in terms of property and environmental interference, and social structuring. Those documents are the records of the birth of nineteenth-century neighborhood. Ifraz becomes an effective tool to elaborate the abstract spaces into socially and physically constructed economic commodities through dividing land into plots, constructing the infrastructure that will establish the network connecting the urban space as a whole and streets that will connect the new emerging neighborhoods to the web of transportation of capitalistic urbanization (Figure 4, 5 and 6).

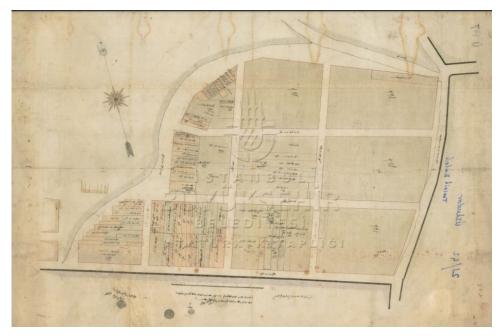


Figure 4. Parcellation map of İcadiye, Üsküdar/ İstanbul Source: İ.B.B.Atatürk Kitaplığı Sayısal Arşiv ve e-kaynaklar (Hrt_Gec_000858)

 ¹⁰ BOA, HAT/ 682-33206- 1254-1839 "Musahib Mehmed Said Efendi'nin Maçka'daki bostanının ifraz edilerek parça parça satılmasına"
¹¹ BOA, , ML. EEM/1209-5. 13 Teşrinievvel 1322 (26 November, 1906)



Figure 5. Street network map of İcadiye, Üsküdar/ İstanbul Source: 1913- 14 German Blues



Figure 6. Water infrastructure map of İcadiye, Üsküdar/İstanbul *Source:* İ.B.B.Atatürk Kitaplığı Sayısal Arşiv ve e-kaynaklar (PLK.p.02037)

Going into detail of the 590 documents, main themes related to this concept of "mahalle teşkili" can be extracted:

1. Construction of sewage system and division of the cost to the land owners:

"Bakırköy'de daha önce sahipleri tarafından yollar açılmadan parça parça satılan ve üzerine binalar yapılan arsaların lağım masraflarının ilk sahiplerinden alınmasının Şehremanti'ne bildirildiği". (Cost of the sewer system that will be built on the land that was parceled and sold by the owners without planning and opening the streets will be collected from the first owners.)

2. Expropriation of land from the parceling to establish a road network:,

"Sultan Bayezid Evkafi'ndan Ayastefanos karyesinde çeşitli kimseler olan ve yola bırakılacak yerler dışında kalan kısımlarının parça parça satılmasına karar verilen bağlar" (Decision about the parceling and sale of the yards that belongs to the waqf of Sultan Bayezid in Ayastefanos village –piece by piece-).

¹² DH. UMVM/ 103-21. 20 Cemaziyelahir 1339 (1 March, 1921)

¹³ A. MKT. MHM/468-82. 28 Şaban 1290 (21 November, 1873)

3. Expropriation of land from the parceling in order to establish school:

"Osman ve Ohannes Beylerin Tarabya'daki arazilerini parça parça satarak mahalle oluşturdukları bu sebepler ayrılması gereken mektep yerinin harita üzerinde işaretlenmesi gerektiği"¹⁴ (Decision about the parceling and sale of the yards that belongs to Osman and Ohannes in Tarabya district –piece by piece- in order to establish a neighborhood and reserve a proper land for school construction)

- 4. Expropriation of land from the parceling to establish place of worship
- 5. Expropriation of land from the parceling in order to establish police station

"Defter emin-I esbak mütevaffa Hacı Yusuf Rıza evkafından olup Kuyumcu Agopa'a ait olan Kadıköy'ünde Kuşdili adlı mahallede bulunan bağının imar düzenlemesi yapılarak taliplerine parça parça satılmasına ruhsat verildiği ve bu bağın bir kısmına karakolhane yapılacağı"¹⁵ (Decision about the parceling and sale of the yards that belongs to Agop – over the waqf of Hacı Yusuf Rıza- in Kadıköy Kuşdili district –piece by piece- after planning and reserve a proper land for police station).

6. Mapping the transactions

"Makriköy'de, gediği Sultan Mahmud Han-ı sani Hazretleri ve zimmeti merhum Sadullah Efendi vakıflarından olan arazinin, parça parça olarak taliplerine satılmasına izin verildiği ve bunun için de haritasının Şehremaneti'ne gönerdildiği"¹⁶ (Decision about the parceling and sale of the land that belongs to the waqf of Sultan Mahmud Han and Sadullah Efendi in Makriköy (Bakırköy) district –piece by piece- and registration of the map of parceling to the municipality).

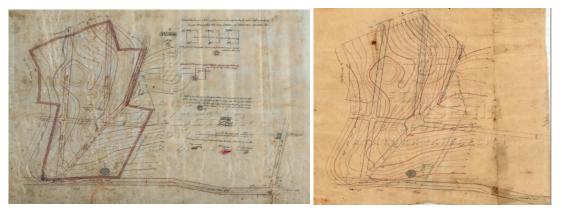


Figure 7 and 8. Municipal maps of parceling and expropriation for roads, Çamlıca, İstanbul *Source:* İ.B.B. Atatürk Kitaplığı Sayısal Arşiv ve e-kaynaklar

Those categories also reveals that method of expropriation in order to produce urban space was an inseparable part of parceling. In addition to those categories, there are also records mentioning the fees expected for the municipal operations, which is also part of the mechanism with of expropriation (Figure 7 and 8). Maps demanded to be represented to confirm the validity of the divisions and licenses for building constructions. Those issues are loaded with conflicts and discussions between landowners and state of in-between various state institutions. All these records represent a process of de facto and de juro constructing each other in a dialectical relationship.

An early document dated 1860 states that excess or deficient division of land between landowners should be appropriated during the division of vineyards, fields, and gardens. The issue of justice is a pervasive theme in the documents, whether related to the land area or the fees demanded by the official processes.

"Maksud Tarabyan'ın Erenköy Cisr-I Derbend isimli mahallede sahibi olduğu araziyi parça parça satarak mahalleye dönüştürmesinde kendisinden kanunsuz para taleb edildiğine

¹⁴ MF. MKT/1165-35. 7 Muharrem 1329 (8 January, 1911)

¹⁵ A. MKT. MHM/ 446-84. 5 Zilhicce 1289 (3 February, 1873)

¹⁶ DH. MKT/ 691-33. 25 Muharrem 1321 (23 April, 1903

dair müracaatının tahkiki."¹⁷ (Investigation of Maksud Tarabyan's application that she was illegally demanded for money for selling the land she/he owned in Erenköy Cisr-I Derbend, piece by piece, and converting it into a neighbourhood)

In this example, there is an objection to the fees related to the establishment of the neighborhood. There are also discussions on the expropriations and the ratios of the plot areas, the population of the district, and the area spared for the social functions, especially for schools¹⁸. In a document dated 1883, a regulation about the areas of school plots per neighborhood is suggested as editing in the Ebniye Nizamnamesi, probably due to the feedback from the actors in the process of land transactions.

When the land is mîrî type of land, it is seen that the expression "to be sold" is exchanged with "distribution." This difference is grasped however it should be studied in detail whether this sale and distribution implies different processes:

"Bağdad vilayeti dahilinde dört muhtelif isimle dört kısma ayrılan mîrî arazinin parça parça ahaliye taksimi hakkında."¹⁹ (About the division of the mîrî land, which is divided into four parts with four different names within the province of Baghdad, piece by piece to the people)

As briefly analyzed over the 590 entries in the archive containing the phrase "parça parça," it is seen that parceling was not merely an operation to renewing old fabrics or after-fire areas. Indeed, it was a tool to produce urban spaces out of "empty" landscapes of various types.

8. Epilogue

The spotlights shine on the Tanzimat intellectuals' texts or the western approaches to Ottoman lands, and historiography, in general, shaped a framing that sets more exceptional cases as the norm. To break this view, I used archival documents that deal with on-the-ground applications of space production.

Infrastructure, educational facilities, or functions related to the public life came out to be the fragments detached from capitalism and the space it produced. The land was the backbone of this process and urban space was the new emerging commodity of the market.

Behind the scenes of modernization, the emphasized after fire plans, or the urban renewal projects, a vast market opened by dividing land into disposable commodities. This commodity was mainly produced out of green areas, which means capitalism utilized infrastructure, providing neighborhoods for urbanites in the nineteenth century (Figure 9 and 10). The fires were only some exceptional practices of space production compared to the invasion of "empty" lands through privatization all around the empire. So, the state was commodifying the environment, the farms, gardens, yards, and even the shores, and in this context, landowners were negotiating for their share.

It is widespread, usual information that people, especially in the 1990s were burning their wooden houses in the twentieth century. The motivation behind that act was to abolish the constraints of the cultural heritage over estate development rights. De juro reason for these events was that the historical buildings were registered only in the building itself. So de facto burning was enough to eliminate the juridical obstacle and produce an empty lot for construction according to the current building limits and permits. Then in the 2000s, the law changed, the registration was to be over the plot rather than the building itself, and the owner was obliged to rebuild the structure following the original one. This regulation stopped the historical building fires. However, it initiated a rising restoration sector. Especially in the 2010s, speculators' attention was on the historical buildings that were hard to manage by their lower-class habitants. It ended up with a massive transformation of property and also an internal migration within istanbul. Property owners who couldn't effort to restore their houses sold and moved. Similar to my case, capitalism could hide itself behind in the backstage through the spotlights of conservative intellectual discourses. Property transformation happened in the archives of municipalities, but they didn't demonstrate themselves in the texts on urbanization that much.

¹⁷ BOA, DH. MKT/2301-20. 4 Şevval 1317 (5 February, 1900)

¹⁸ BOA, I.MMS/ 74-3365

¹⁹ BOA, Y.A. RES/ 37-16. 20 Cemaziyelahir 1304 (11 August, 1906)

From that example, one can even speculate –retrospectively- that the fires of nineteenth century that occurred in a condensed period, just on the peak point of the land transformations and emerging land codes, maybe hiding that kind of narrative behind the scenes. That kind of speculative questions may help integrate urbanization with its actual context, the capitalist market. It can also be compared with many disasters and their relation with real estate market incorporation with discourses that hindered the existing processes, i.e., the urban transformation in the early twenty-first century in Istanbul, after the earthquake of 1999.

Both the urbanization process of suburban areas and the commodification of natural landscape are important topics for research. The concept of ifraz contains the potential to understand diverse mechanisms of land transformation.

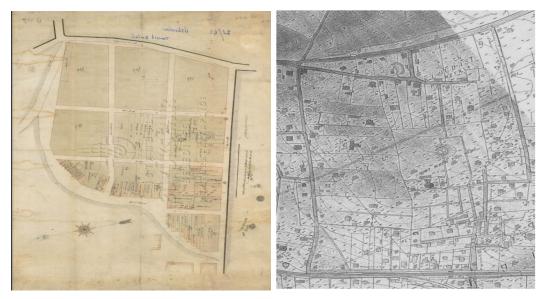


Figure 9 and 10. Map of ifraz in İcadiye/ Üsküdar in nineteenth century (Arıkan, 2021)/ Map of ifraz in Feneryolu/ Kadıköy in nineteenth century (Arıkan, 2013) *Source:* İ.B.B. Atatürk Kitaplığı Sayısal Arşiv ve e-kaynaklar (Hrt_Gec_000858)/ Kadıköy Municipality Archive

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