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# Works of Economic Interest in the Seventeenth Century Muslim World

Abdul Azim Islahi

The seventeenth century is one of the most neglected parts of Muslim history.<sup>1</sup> This negligence is most obvious in the area of the history of economic thought. To the best of our knowledge, no study is available on Muslim economic thinking in the seventeenth century. Since the first step in any research activity is the knowledge of source material, the present paper aims at investigating the sources for Muslim economic thinking in that period.

The major part of the Muslim world in the seventeenth century was ruled by the Ottoman Turks. The heartland of Islam was also under their custody. Two other great Muslim powers of the time were the Safavids of Iran and the Mughals of India. Arabic language remained the medium of religious and juridical expression, and writings in Arabic increased enormously. But the importance of Turkish and Persian also increased because of being languages of rulers and receiving official patronage. Number of translations and original works in these two languages increased manifold. However, the dominating feature of the academic endeavor was generally imitation, repetition, and reproduction. While the focus of the paper is works in Arabic language accomplished in the Ottoman controlled territory of the Islamic world, it also introduces those written in other languages, provided that their translation was available.

## 1. Works on commentary, jurisprudence and legal decrees

In the past, works of *tafsir*, *hadith*, *fiqh* and *fatawa* were important sources of economic ideas of Muslims. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century a large number of books were written in Arabic on these subjects. A substantial number of them is still available. For example: In Hanafi *fiqh* we have *Sharh Tanwir al-Absar* known as *al-Durr al-Mukhtar* and *Sharh Multaqa al-Ab'hur* entitled *al-Durr al-Muntaqa* by Muhammad al-Haskafi (d. 1088 AH/1676\*) and *al-Fatawa al-Khayriyah* by Khayr al-Din al-Ramli (d. 1081/1669). In Shafi'i *fiqh* we have *Hashiyah `ala Sharh al-Minhaj* by Ali al-Shubbaramallisi (d. 1087/1675) and Abd al-Qadir al-Fayyumi's (d. 1022/1613) enhanced commentary on *Minhaj* of al-Nawawi. Ali al-Ujhuri (d. 1066 / 1655), Salim al-Sinhuri (d. 1015/1606) and Muhammad al-Khurashi (d. 1104/1690) wrote commentaries on

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\* Henceforth, in writing the date the first figure would mean A. H. and the second figure would indicate A.D.

*Mukhtasar Khalil*, an authentic source on Maliki jurisprudence. The great Hanbali scholar of the period Mansur al-Buhuti (d. 1051/1641) presented commentaries on *Iqna'* and *Muntaha al-Iradat* by al-Taqi al-Futuhi. All these works attracted attention of scholars and they are still used as reference books in various schools of jurisprudence. In writing the commentary or commentary over commentary, in addition to repetition, generally they concentrated on explanation of the literary meaning of words, their use in terminology, correct pronunciation, grammatical elucidation, citation of the opinions of past scholars, their differences, reconciliation or strong and preferred opinion, presentation of evidence and textual support. Their main characteristic was the vastness of knowledge and not originality. These details may be useful for general readers and jurists but have little advantage for economic researchers.

From this literature, only works of *fatawa* may provide some insight in our discipline as they came in response to various new problems, including socio-economic, faced by the society. In the following section we introduce such works:

***Al-Fatawa al-Khayriyah.*** The *fatawa* of Khayr al-Din al-Ramli (d. 1081/1669), known as *al-Fatawa al-Khayriyah*, was compiled into final form in 1081/1670. It could prove a most authentic source for intellectual history of seventeenth century Muslims but unfortunately no significant attention has been paid to use this source. This collection could have been utilized as a general source relating to the Arab lands of the Ottoman Empire or as a unique contemporary document containing vital information about the central features of life in the seventeenth century Arab region such as customs, and education, religious ritual and observance as well as legal, communal and economic relations. This neglect on the part of scholars is deplorable (Seikaly, 1984, p. 397).

In the opinion of Seikaly (1984, p. 400), 'Khayr al-Din's legal injunctions were not armchair reactions to hypothetical cases but represented actual prescriptions elicited by concrete situations'. Beside their relevance as a contemporary record, the *Fatawa* provide us with an internal and a complex view of agrarian relations (Seikaly, 1984, p. 401). Khayr al-Din's opinions bear pragmatic dimensions as he was not only a jurist but a farmer as well. He imported from Egypt a variety of seeds and introduced it in his home district Ramlah. Thus he obtained knowledge of agrarian conditions directly. In most cases, Khayr al-Din bases his decisions on the opinions of earlier Hanafi scholars or even contemporaries. However, he is not a mere follower. Sometimes he asserts his own opinion with the word '*wa ana aqul* (and I say.....) (al-Ramli, 1311 AH, I. 96).

***Al-Fatawa al-Hindiyah.*** It may be noted that all works of *fatawa* are not equally important for our period of study. Here we have such a collection. *Al-Fatawa al-Hindiyah*, also known as *Fatawa-i Alamgiri* or *al-Fatawa al-Alamkiriyyah*, was compiled in Arabic at Awrangzeb Alamgir's (d. 1707) order by a committee of eminent jurists under the supervision of Shaykh Nizam al-Din Burhanpuri (d.1092/1680). Consisting of five volumes, it is a collection of authentic, accepted and preferred rules and opinions in Hanafi jurisprudence. It is an extract of more than one hundred past works of *fiqh* and *fatawa* and arranged on the pattern of *fiqh* books. It took eight years to get it completed. It started around 1050/1640 and was concluded in 1058/1648 (Nadwi, 2001, pp.6-7). Its main purpose was to save jurists and *qadis* from the toil of going through numerous works of *fiqh* and *fatawa* and finding preferred opinion from the disputed and conflicting opinions. Although *al-Fatawa al-Hindiyah* is a collection of rules and precepts from the past works of *fiqh* and *fatawa*, its collection reflects the condition of the period in the sense that out of various decrees the one pertinent to the period of compilation should have been selected.

A comparative study conducted on Awrangzeb's *Farman*<sup>2</sup> (the royal decree) on land tax and the corresponding dicta in the *Fatawa-i Alamgiri*, Chapter on tithe and land tax, showed that 'contents of the *farman* were borrowed from *Fatawa*'s discussion of land revenue administration' (Zafarul-Islam, 1990, p. 70). It is also revealed that the *fatawa* could not be implemented in full in the changing situation of Mughal India. Only a few modified rules were selected (ibid), such as peasants' right of permanent and hereditary occupation, ownership right on bringing un-owned waste land under cultivation, realization of the land tax in case the land was leased, mortgaged or sold by the peasant. All these provisions were borrowed from the *Fatawa-i Alamgiri* (ibid, p. 72). These provisions were very helpful to tie the farmers with their lands in a situation when the empire was facing the problem of peasants' flight and abandoning the land uncultivated (ibid. p. 70), thus affecting the government revenue adversely.

## **2. Works on *al-Hisbah* and *al-Siyasah al-Shar'iyah*.**

In Islamic tradition two types of writings – works on *al-hisbah* and works on *al-siyasah al-shar'iyah* – proved a rich source of economic thought<sup>3</sup>.

In the Ottoman period, the jurisdiction and functions of *al-muhtasib* (in-charge of *hisbah* office) increased (Ata-Allah, 1991, Vol. 1, pp. 115, 120-24, 145, 149, 203) but surprisingly we could not trace any exclusive writing on *hisbah* or *ihtisab* as it was generally known by this term<sup>4</sup>. In view of the importance of

*hisbah* or *ihtisab*, there is the probability of writing on this institution in the seventeenth century as well and it will not be surprising if some day it may be discovered. But we admit that during our research we could not trace any such work.

Works on *al-siyasah al-shar'iyah* or *shar'iyah* governance are known in Persian tradition as "mirrors for princes". We have a number of such works in the period under study. The failure of the second siege of Vienna in 1663, the series of defeats that followed after it, and the humiliating treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, led to soul searching and introspection among a number of Ottoman scholars. Qoji Beg, Katib Chalapi, Naima and Sari Pasha are most prominent thinkers of the seventeenth century who wrote on causes of Ottoman decline and suggested steps for reform and restoration of the diminishing power and prestige of the Empire. Works of these writers come under the category of *mirror for princes*. They suggest many economic measures to strengthen the government and improve the condition of masses. They wrote these works in Turkish language because they mainly addressed the Ottoman Sultans whose mother tongue was Turkish. Only few of them could be translated into English or Arabic. We got information of a book in Arabic language entitled: *al-Jawahir al-Mudi'ah fi Bayan al-A'dab al-Sultaniyah* by Abd al-Ra'uf al-Munawi (d. 1031/1621) but failed to trace it. Following is a brief introduction of such works and their authors:

***Resale (Risalah = treatise)***. Qoji Beg wrote a report on the state of the empire in 1630 who 'in unusually clear language described the degeneration of the empire and enumerated the causes in his treatise, *Resaleh*. Among other things, he mentioned that the sultan had made himself 'invisible', preoccupied, as he was, in his *harem* life. Because of the influence of the *harem* 'the sultan no longer governs himself and neither is the grand vazir allowed to do so; power is actually in the hands of negro eunuchs and purchased slave girls' (Armajani, p. 190).

Qoji Beg, also called Gorijeli Qoja Mustafa Beg, was a native of Gorije (Gorca, Korytza) in Macedonia. He entered the Palace service as a *devshirme* during the reign of Sultan Ahmad I and served under successive sultans. After retirement he returned to his native place in the early years of Sultan Murad IV's reign. He gained the confidence of Sultan Murad and his successor Sultan Ibrahim, and it is for his memoranda to these sultans that he is famous. His best-work is his *Resale* presented to Murad IV in 1040/1630, where he analyses the courses of Ottoman decline and suggests remedies. 'The memorandum which he composed for the Sultan in 1630 on the state and prospects of the Ottoman Empire has been greatly admired both in Turkey and

among Western scholars, and led Hammer to call Kocu Bey (Qoji Beg) 'the Turkish Montesquieu'<sup>5</sup> (Lewis, 1968, p. 22n).

According to Rosenthal (1968, p. 226), Qoji Beg emphasizes that *Shariah* is 'the basis of the existence and maintenance of empire and religion; its application is the necessary condition for the good order of both'. He stresses upon proper establishment and respect of the institution of *Shaykh al-Islam*, *qadi al-askar* and community of *ulama*. 'The rot set in when the offices of state were sold to the highest bidder and the *ulama* fell into disrepute as the result' (ibid).

**Nasihatnamah.** About 15 years later, during the reign of Sultan Ibrahim (1640-1648), an unknown author wrote a tract called *Nasihatnameh*, "Words of Advice". (Armajani, p. 190). However, this work is also attributed<sup>6</sup> to Qoji Beg. 'The *Nasihatnamah* is a straightforward description of various state institutions and government practices, interspersed with political maxims' (Imber, 1986, E. I. 5:249). Since its purpose was to guide the new and totally inexperienced Sultan, Ibrahim, he kept its language very simple.

**Dustur al-'Amal.** Commenting on Hajji Khalifah (1608-1657) and his work Armajani (p. 191) observes: 'The greatest intellectual luminary of the seventeenth century in the Ottoman empire was the celebrated historian *Haji Khalifah*. One of his books, *Dustur al-'Amal*, "Manual for Action", is very much like the Persian *Mirror to Princes*. He repeated the old familiar maxim:

"No state without *rijal*, 'men [of affairs]', no *rijal* without *mal* [Wealth], and no *mal* without subjects". Like Avicenna, he likened the state to a body with four pillars - *ulama*, army, merchants, and farmers. He claimed that the state was sick and diagnosed the reason for the illness as high taxation, oppression of the masses, and the sale of offices to the highest bidder.

Mustafa b. Abd-Allah known as Hajji Khalifah or the Katib Chalapi was called Hajji Khalifah because he performed *hajj* and he was Khalifah in his government department. The son of a 'standing' cavalryman and himself a secretary in one of the government offices, 'he deplored the neglect of the 'rational' sciences by the *ulama* of the *madrasahs*, and contrived to acquire from other sources a wide knowledge of physics, astronomy, geometry, and geography; to give lessons in them himself; and to compose a number of remarkable works' (Gibb and Bowen 1:2, p. 152). He was 'the first Ottoman learned man to acquaint himself with European scientific thought and attempt to introduce it into the Sultan's dominions' (Adnan, 1939, pp. 103-120, quoted by Gibb and Bowen 1:2, p. 152). His work *Jahan-numa* in cosmography was

the first most important work printed after introduction of printing press in Turkey during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century (ibid., p. 154). He is the author of famous bibliographical dictionary in Arabic *Kashaf al-Zunun*. Katib Chalapi, while writing a work on geography, admitted that 'Muslim sources were inadequate for information of Christian lands. This was the situation when 'European literature had a vast body of writing on travel in the Levant' (Itzkowitz, 1980, p. 105). 'The Ottomans were only concerned with the political developments of Europe. They paid little heed to deeper and more significant developments in the intellectual, scientific and technological spheres' (ibid., p. 106). They tried to find out solution to their problems in the past events. 'There was no thought of innovation, no willingness to experiment with new institutions' (ibid., p. 107).

In 1653, he wrote *Dustur al-Amal fi Islah al-Khalal* (*The Guide to Practice for the Rectification of Defects*) in which 'he remarked that only the appearance on the scene of a "man of the sword" could save the Ottomans' (Itzkowitz, 1980, 99). Most of the measures of reform which he suggested fall under economic spheres such as 'to reverse the treasury's deficit', limit the excessive growth of the army and restore the peasantry to prosperity' (ibid).

Katib Chalapi (1608-57) in his work *Dustur al-'Amal* writes: 'The social conditions of man corresponds to his individual condition, and in most matters the one is parallel to the other ..... First of all, the natural life of man is reckoned in three stages, the years of growth, the years of stasis, and the years of decline. Though the times of these three stages are ordained in individuals, nevertheless these times vary according to the strength or weakness of individual constitutions .... and the stages also vary in different societies' (Quoted by Lewis, 1968, p. 210). This is reminiscent of Ibn Khaldun's five phases through which the state runs within four generations<sup>7</sup>.

Hajji Khalifah's *Dustur* is of 'special interest by reason of its semi-philosophical superstructure, which links it with al-Dawwani and Ibn Khaldun' (Rosenthal, 1968, p. 226).

The author of *Dustur al-'Amal* Hajji Khalifah had experience of working in Ottoman government as an official in the fiscal administration. 'Speaking of signs of abnormality and disharmony in the affairs and forces of the Ottoman empire, he gives this as the reason for his treatise, written in response to an inquiry ordered by the sultan' (ibid. p. 228).

**arikh Naima.** Born in Aleppo around 1665, Naima migrated to Istanbul in 1685 and joined the halberdier corps of the imperial palace where he was

trained as a secretary. In the Preface to his court chronicle of seventeenth century Ottoman history, *The Garden of Husayn, Being the Choicest of News of the East and West*, he convincingly defended Husayn Kuprili's conclusion of the Treaty of Karlowitz. In this respect, he drew principally upon the ideas and schema of Ibn Khaldun and Katib Chalabi. He justified the signing of the Karlowitz treaty with the example of the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah, which was entered into between Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and the Makkan infidels in 6<sup>th</sup> AH / 627 AD (Itzkowitz, 1980, pp. 100-101).

Like Hajji Khalifah, Naima also based his prescription of the decaying phase of Ottoman empire on Ibn Khaldun's theory who states in his *Muqaddimah* that 'a dynasty, like an individual, grows up, enters into a period of stagnation, and then retrogress. Each period corresponds to the life time of a person, set at some forty years' (ibid). Itzkowitz observes that Naima expands Ibn Khaldun's theory and postulates 'five stages in the life of a state'<sup>8</sup>: the heroic period of its establishment, the period of consolidation under the dynasty and its slave-servants, the period of security and tranquility, the period of contentment and surfeit and finally the period of disintegration (ibid. pp. 101-102). By the end of seventeenth century the Ottoman state was passing through the stage of contentment and surfeit. In fact these stages are predicted by Ibn Khaldun himself.

*Nasihah al-Wuzara' wa'l-Umara* or *Guldeste* (*Guldastah* = flowerbed). Its author 'Sari Mehmed Pasha was one of the few Ottoman Statesmen who were deeply concerned over the decline of the Empire after the end of the sixteenth century and left descriptions of contemporary conditions together with suggestions for reform. During the first two decades of the eighteenth century Sari Mehmed Pasha several times held the office of Chief *Defterdar*, or Treasurer of the Empire, and was for many years a member of the Divan or Council of the State, through which all important government business passed. He therefore writes with authority both of the Treasury and of administration in general during a period of exceptionally rapid decline' (Wright, 1935, pp. VII-VIII). The author was himself an integral part of the Ottoman system and concerned himself primarily with matters which had come to his personal attention'. Although died in the eighteenth century, the major part of Sari Pasha's life falls in the seventeenth century. The exact date of his work is not known but it is estimated that it was written in the second decade of the eighteenth century. Since the book falls in the same line of works mentioned above, it seems appropriate to include him among the writers of seventeenth century.



Of Sari Pasha's early life no details are found. Between the ages of twelve and fifteen years he got employment in the Treasury office as an apprentice. This was in the year 1082/1671. This means that he was born during 1070s / 1650s. In 1114/1703 he was appointed chief *defterdar* or treasurer of the Empire. Until his execution in 1129/1717 he was appointed and sacked several times from various government positions.

'As *defterdar* or treasurer Mehmed Pasha had been in close and long continued contact with the financial side of the administration and therefore had ample opportunity to observe its many defects' (ibid. p. 17) '... he makes no clear distinction between what writers of the present day would classify separately as political, economic and ethical subjects' (ibid). Mehmed Pasha 'felt deeply the weakness in moral fiber of the official class of his day and regarded this as one of the principal reasons for the decline of the Ottoman Empire from its splendor under the great sultans of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries' (ibid. p. 18).

Sari Pasha 'often quotes from earlier works. His most frequently used source is the Hadith ... In addition to this there were several quotations from the Koran and from the *Asaf-name* of Lutfi Pasha who was grand Vezir under Selim I and Suleyman the Magnificent' (ibid. p. 18). 'The Kitab –*Guldeste* is divided into nine chapters and a prefatory exordium. These are of very unequal length'. No doubt, 'much useful information is provided regarding the condition of the empire in the time of the writer ..... like all Ottoman writers on the subject, he had always in mind a picture of the glorious times of Sultan Suleyman as the standard with which he compared later conditions' 'Renovation rather than evolution was his aim.'

Following is the content of his book.

First Chapter: Explanation regarding the behaviour and habits of the Grand Vezir.

Second Chapter: Explanation regarding the official position and the harmfulness of bribes.

Third Chapter: Explanation regarding the behaviour of the Secretary of the Treasury and of the holders of office.

Fourth Chapter: Explanation regarding the *Bektashi* Corps.

Fifth Chapter: Explanation regarding the condition of the *Rayas* and the harmfulness of tyranny and oppression of the poor.

Sixth Chapter: Explanation regarding the state of the Ever-Victorious Frontier and qualities of commanders.

Seventh Chapter: Explanation concerning avarice of liberality, greed and covetousness, pride and envy, humility and arrogance, good temper and bad temper and hypocrisy.

Eighth Chapter: Explanation regarding faithful friendship and the harmfulness of calumny and backbiting.

Ninth Chapter: Explanation regarding the state of the *Zi'amet*<sup>9</sup> and *Timar*<sup>10</sup>.

### **3. Works on Social and Economic Problems.**

In Islamic history, right from its beginning up to its flourishing days there had been works dealing on economic issues like public finance, market rules ..., money and inflation, etc. Such writings reached their zenith in the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century in which we saw works of Ibn Khaldun (d. 808/1406), al-Maqrizi (d. 845/1442), al-Asadi (lived in 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century), and Ibn al-Azraq (d. 896/1489).

Writing in the subsequent centuries did not stop. Some of the works of 16<sup>th</sup> century have been published. But in the first instance they were not up to the mark of earlier works. Secondly, due to non-originality they lost attraction. As far as the 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century is concerned, in this period too some works on Social and Economic Problems have been reported but their whereabouts is not certain. **We could not get any published work of this nature related to our period of study.**

Al-Ramli (1311 AH, 2:151, 184-85) reports that Taqi al-Din al-Husni, a Shafi'i scholar of Damascus wrote a full treatise on condemnation of extra-legal and oppressive taxation. Economic discussions like validity and feasibility of cash *waqf* continued in this period. Al-Muhibbi (2: 126) mentions that the Hanif al-Din b. Abd al-Rahman al-Umari (d. 1067/1656), a Hanafi *mufti* in Hijaz region, authored, among other works, a treatise on refutation of the validity of replacing a *waqf* with cash. But we could not get information in relevant sources whether this treatise survived. Similarly a work on royal *awqaf* by Mara'i b. Yusuf al-Karami (d. 1033/1623) entitled *Iqaf al-'Arifin 'ala Hukm Awqaf al-Salatin* (al-Muhibbi 4:360) too could not be traced. In bibliographies we find one more work entitled *al-Burhan fi Awqaf al-Sultan* by Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Hijazi (d. 1035/1625). Sources have also reported a work – *Taysir al Wuquf 'ala Ghawamid Ahkam al-Wuquf* - by Abd al-Ra'uf al-Munawi. It may be noted that in *al-Fatawa al-*

*Khayriyah* the longest chapter is on *waqf* administration and related issues. It covers more than hundred pages [from p.115 to 219]. Besides, various agrarian and urban property issues are also somehow related to *waqf* provisions.

#### 4. Miscellaneous works

***Maktubat-i-Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thani.*** Ahmad Sirhindi known as Mujaddid Alf Thani (Renovator at the Second Millennium) left three volumes of his letters addressed to scholars, administrators, the king, *sufis*, his sons, and disciples. These letters, except a few of them which were written in Arabic language, were written in Persian, the official language of Mughal India. A selected and summarized version and translated into Urdu has been prepared by Nasim Ahmad Faridi Amrohi which has been used as a source by us.

Sirhindi's *Maktubat* contain his views on various religious, social, political and economic issues.

***Ruqqa'at-i-Alamgiri or letters of Aurangzeb.*** *Ruqqa'at-i-Alamgiri* or *Letters of Aurangzeb* were collected and published by Inayat-Allah Khan, one of his principal secretaries. In these letters we find Aurangzeb giving advice to his sons about the duties of a king – how to govern the state by preserving order and peace in the kingdom and by protecting the person and property of the subjects. These letters are full of many fine and instructive passages from well-known poets and thus afford a proof of Aurangzeb's Persian scholarship. Occasionally he reports advices received by his father Shahjahan. Many Qur'anic verses are quoted in these letters. This shows he was well versed in the Qur'an which he had learnt by heart. We conclude this section on certain excerpts from this work to have an idea about the economic contents of these letters.

'The tolls on merchants and travelers bring forth every year Rs. 15000 to 16000, but the district treasurer and the police officer do not send to the royal treasury more than Rs. 1000 to 2000. Truly this is not collecting the tolls but robbing the king of his property. The use of the property of the people (by the king for his private expenses) is unlawful (Bilimoria, 1972, p. 52, No. LI). 'Able and intelligent servants are the source of increase of property and of a good name to their masters' (ibid. p. 55, No. LIII).

Aurangzeb quotes his father, "The order and management of the kingdom and property simply depend upon wisdom and justice. May God forbid, if an unworthy king attains to the dignity of sovereignty and appoints ministers and

nobles having no sound judgment to posts (in the kingdom), absolute disorder will prevail in the management of the country. Then follow the ruin and poverty of the subjects, and the country yields a reduced revenue and (thus) is ruined (ibid. p. 55, No. LIV). (It may be noted that this evil prevailed among the Ottoman and many wise men had warned them of its consequences. The Mughal King himself was conscious of it). Awrangzeb addresses himself as humble creature p.59, humble mortal p. 56, needy person p. 88, sinner p. 130.

'Though to weigh the entire body of a person against gold, silver, copper, corn, oil and other commodities is not a practice of the country of our ancestors and of the Mohammedans of this country (i.e., India), many needy and poor persons are benefited by this practice' (ibid. p. 78, No. LXXVIII). This practice, known as '*tola dana*' (weighing charity), was common among the former Hindu Kings. Here Aurangzeb accepts this practice because of its beneficial effect on the poor. It is reported that in his later period, he stopped it.

For Awrangzeb, the second caliph Umar b. Khattab was an inspiring personality. In a letter to one of his governors, he asked him to follow the rules suggested by the Caliph when he dispatched his governor (ibid. p. 94, No. XCIV).

'This sinner (i.e. Awrangzeb) wishes that no crime, especially oppression, should be perpetrated; the result will be that there will be order and peace in the kingdom. Kingship is not maintained without discipline' (ibid. pp. 130-31, No CXXXII). The royal property belongs to the public. The king is the trustee and the officers are appointed by the king. None but the needy and the weak can claim a share of the property (ibid. p. 141, No. CXLVI).

Aurangzeb preached simplicity in dress. 'Man should put on a simple and durable dress. Ornament and fashion are the peculiar characteristics of women. These things are proper for women' (ibid. p. 141, No. CXLVII).

'The evil passion does not allow man to do good acts and to store up provisions for the next life. Otherwise people would know that it is bad to practice oppression, but it is worse to encourage it. To render services to the avaricious is to kill the poor. To be thoroughly conscious of responsibility of the judgment of the next life which is doubted is a difficult task' (ibid. p. 146, No. CLII). These letters show that the Emperor was a great supporter of justice and great opponent of tyranny and oppression. 'You should select God-fearing and virtuous men, look carefully into their character, and appoint them,

so that both you and I will be free from responsibility on the day of judgment' (ibid. p. 165, No. CLXXE).

### **5. Concluding Remark**

The sources noted above are not very large in number. But they can prove a starting point for study on Economics ideas of Muslim scholars. Our research shows that in the 17th century, writings by Muslim scholars on socio-economic problems considerably declined. We could not find any work similar to what Muslim scholars wrote in the 15<sup>th</sup> century such as Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah*, Maqrizi's *Ighathah*, al-Asadi's *Tahrir* or Ibn al-Azraq's *Bada'i al-Silk fi Taba'i al-Mulk*. No doubt, the 15<sup>th</sup> century was the peak of Muslim intellectuals' works on social, political, cultural and economic problems. Even works similar to those of the 16<sup>th</sup> century scholars like Ibn Nujaym (d. 970/1563), al-Balatumusi (d. 936/1530), Khunji (d. 927/1521), etc. could not be traced. As the seventeenth century marked the political decline and intellectual stagnation, we find that writers of the period lost their interest in non-traditional subjects. Thus, very scarcely they wrote on socio-economic problems. This situation may be compared with the three great collections of seventeenth century English publications that are available at the British Museum, the Goldsmith's Library of Economic Literature at the University of London, and the Kress Library of Business (Appleby, 1978, P. IX). More than 1500 treatises, tracts, pamphlets, handbills and broad ideas related to economic issues were written only by Englishmen during the course of the seventeenth century (ibid. p. 4).

But this should not be a reason for disappointment. There is no doubt that whatever was written by Muslim scholars in the period under study, a very small portion of it is presently accessible to researchers. A huge number is still lying in manuscript form in various libraries of the world. Absence of knowledge does not necessarily mean absence of existence. The search for new sources must continue.

### **ENDNOTES**

1. According to Karpat (1974, P. 91), the period that started from 1603 is 'probably the most important and possibly the most neglected period in Ottoman history during its transition to the modern age'.
2. This *farman* was sent to Muhammad Hashim (1669), the *diwan* of Gujarat. For details refer to Zafarul-Islam, 1990, pp. 69, 70, 79n.
3. On *hisbah*, we had works by al-Shayzari, Ibn al-Ukhuwwah, Ibn Bassam, al-Jarsifi, Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Uqbani, Ibn Abdun, Ibn Abd al-Rauf, and al-Saqati.

Works on *siyasaḥ sharʿiyyah* in the past include Abu Yusuf's *Kitab al-Kharaj*, *Da'aim al-Islam* by Abu Hanifah al-Nu'man al-Isma'ili, *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyah*, each by Abu Yala al-Farra and al-Mawardi, *Siyasat Namah* by Nizam al-Mulk al-Tusi, *al-Tibr al-Masbuk fi Nasihat al-Muluk* by al-Ghazali, *Siraj al-Muluk* by al-Turtushi, *Qabus Namah* by Kay Kaus, *al-Siyasaḥ al-Sharʿiyyah* by Ibn Taymiyah, *Tahrir al-Ahkam fi Tadbir Ahl al-Islam* by Ibn Jama'ah (all in chronological order starting from 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century to 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century). In addition to rules for good governance, these works have been a rich source of Islamic political economy.

4. Tash Kuprizadah, a sixteenth century author who presented a valuable bibliography of works written in the Ottoman empire, complained the absence of writing on *hisbah* or *ihtisab*. However, in our study on *Muslim economic thinking and institutions in the 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century* we could trace at least two titles but they contain hardly new ideas (Islahi, 2007, p. 87). That may be the reason for not catching the attention of scholars.
5. Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu (b. before January 18, 1689 in Bordeaux – d. 1755), was a French social commentator and political thinker who lived during the Era of the Enlightenment. He is famous for his articulation of the theory of separation of powers, taken for granted in modern discussions of government and implemented in many constitutions throughout the world. He was largely responsible for the popularization of the terms feudalism and Byzantine Empire.

Source:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_de\\_Secondat%2C\\_baron\\_de\\_Montesquieu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_de_Secondat%2C_baron_de_Montesquieu)  
[Accessed on 22. 9. 2007]

6. Another treatise entitled *Nasihatanamah* attributed to Qoji Beg was apparently compiled from memoranda submitted to Sultan Ibrahim on the Sultan order. The same treatise is attributed to the Grand Vizier Kemankesh Kara Mustafa Pasha (Imber, 1986, E. I. 5:249).
7. Following is a summarized account of these stages as discussed in *Muqaddimah* Ibn Khaldun:

Supported and strengthened by group feeling and social cohesion a new dynasty comes into being by overthrowing all opposition. This is the first stage. 'In this stage the ruler serves model to his people by the manner in which he acquires glory, collects taxes, defends property and provides military protection' (Rosenthal (tr), 1967, I: 353). At another occasion he says: "...that at the beginning the dynasty has a desert attitude. ... It has the qualities of kindness to subjects, planned moderation in expenditures, and respect of other people's property. It avoids onerous taxation and the display of cunning or shrewdness in the collection of money and the accounting (required) from officials. Nothing at this stage calls for extravagant expenditure. Therefore the dynasty does not need much money" (ibid. II: 122-23).

In the second stage 'the ruler gains complete control over his people, claims royal authority all for himself excluding them and prevents them from trying to have a share in it' (ibid. I: 353). Thus it is a stage of stabilization and consolidation of forces, strengthening further the group feeling and rewarding his supporters through benevolent expenditure.

The third stage is stage of economic prosperity and enjoyment of the 'fruits of royal authority'. Increasing attention is paid to collection of taxes, administration of public revenue and expenditure. Development of cities, construction of large buildings,

increase in allowances of officials and general public attract the attention. The burden of luxurious expenditure and taxation increases even though tranquility and contentment prevail. “This stage is last during which the ruler is in complete authority. Throughout this and the previous stages, the rulers are independent in their opinion. They build up their strength and show the way for those after them” (ibid. I: 354-55).

In the fourth stage, ‘the ruler is content with what his predecessors have built: He limits his activities, ‘follows closely in their footsteps’ (ibid.). He takes no initiative by himself. Expansion in politico-economic power stops and some sort of stagnation starts.

In the fifth stage, the ruler indulges in extravagance, lives an extra-luxurious life, wastes the resources accumulated by previous rules. Incompetent and unqualified followers are entrusted the most important matters of the state. Idle court men are rewarded, and sincere critics are humiliated and punished. The ruler loses all kind of sympathy and group feeling. In this stage taxes increase, while revenue declines. The economy is shattered and social system is disturbed. The government suffers from incurable disease, which leads to its downfall (ibid.) and takeover by a new dynasty, supported by strong group.

8. These stages have been mentioned by Ibn Khaldun himself. See the note no. 7 above
9. *Timar* a grant of land for military service or more exactly a kind of Turkish fief, the possession of which entailed upon the feudatory the obligation to go mounted to war and to supply soldiers or sailors in numbers proportionate to the revenue of the *appanage*’ (Deny, 1934, vol.4, p.767)
10. *Ziamah* or *ze'ame* (in Arabic, *za'amah*) was a kind of Turkish fief with a minimum annual revenue of 20,000 aspers (akce) (Deny, 1934, 4:767).

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