

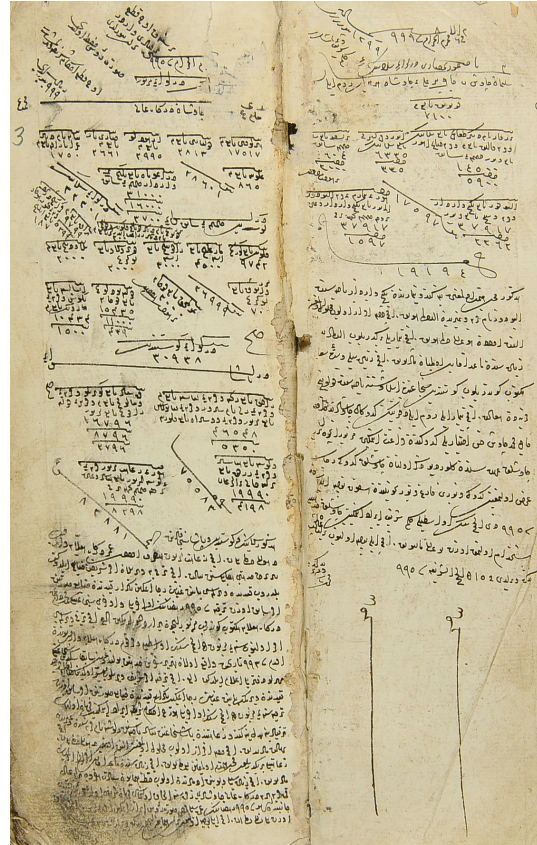


Ulama and Students (Levni)

Seminar in Ottoman & Turkish Studies



Codex Vindobonensis 8626



timar ruznamçe defteri (daybook) BOA, DFE.RZ.d100

Ottoman Timariot Cavalry in its Seventeenth-Century Twilight: A Resilient or “Zombie” Institution?

Victor Ostapchuk, University of Toronto

It has long been received wisdom that the Ottoman institution of the *timar* (“fief/benefice/prebend”)—which gave a virtual caste of cavalry and other servants of the state the right to tax peasant agriculture in exchange for military or other service—was a linchpin of that state’s organization. Moreover, the *timar* is widely considered as crucial for the successful workings of the empire during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as, for example, the *kapıkulu* (“slave of the Porte”) military-administrative institution. The argument continues that the *timar* institution essentially became defunct by the seventeenth century, thanks to the adoption of viable gunpowder weaponry, inflationary pressures in Ottoman currency, and corruption. This seminar will offer a fresh look at these commonplaces in light of the problem of the survival of mountains of documents and *defters*—today mostly unseen or ignored—that suggest an institution that did not lose its vigour in the post-classical age and will consider the question, “Who are the ‘zombies,’ Ottoman timariots or Ottomanist historians?”

Thursday | 15 February 2018 | 5:00-7:00 pm

2098 Sidney Smith Hall | Natalie Zemon Davis Room | 100 St. George Street