

Ottoman Craft Guilds and
Silk-Weaving Industry in İstanbul

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the Ottoman craft guilds and silk-weaving industry in İstanbul. For this study, I have used both primary and secondary sources and conducted research in the Prime Ministry Archives in İstanbul. In the archives, I mainly used the *Cevdet*, *İrâdeler*, *Dâhiliye*, *Hatt-ı Hümâyûn*, *Meclis-i Vükelâ Mazbataları* and *Yıldız* classifications.

This thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 provides an historical background and investigates the debates regarding the origin of Ottoman craft-guilds. Chapter 2 examines the significance of the *esnâf* ceremonies as a source of solidarity and the participation of the *esnâf* in public processions. Chapter 3 explores the organization of the guilds and the central government regarding the internal affairs of the guilds.

Chapter 4, 5, and 6 examines how Ottoman craft guilds changed particularly during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Chapter 4 focuses on the guilds in a broader context and discusses the incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the European world economy, as well as the "decline" debates concerning the handicraft industries, central government's response to economic changes, and the early attempts for industrialization. Chapter 5 demonstrates the impact of the internal factors as to the changes in Ottoman guilds. Chapter 6 focuses on the silk guilds in İstanbul as a case study and examines the central government's attempts to control the distribution of silk in order to secure its revenue from the guilds and maintain the provisioning of İstanbul. The last chapter, in conclusion, pictures silk industry in

İstanbul, central government and its attempt to protect to protect the *esnâf*, which all served to legitimize the power besides the other functions.

KISA ÖZET

Osmanlı Esnâfı ve İstanbul İpek Dokuma Endüstrisi

Nalan Turna

Bu tez, Osmanlı esnâfını ve İstanbul'daki ipek dokuma endüstrisini incelemektedir. Bu çalışma için, hem birincil hem de ikincil kaynaklar kullandım ve İstanbul'da bulunan Başbakanlık Arşivi'nde araştırma yaptım. Bu araştırmada yer alan birincil kaynaklar daha çok, Cevdet, İrâdeler, Dâhiliye, Hatt-ı Hümayûn, Meclis-i Vükelâ Mazbataları ve Yıldız Tasniflerine dayanmaktadır.

Bu tez, altı bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm, Osmanlı loncalarının tarihsel gelişiminin yanı sıra, kökeni üzerinde dönen tartışmaları sunmaktadır. İkinci bölüm ise, esnâf törenlerinde var olan sembol ve ritüellerin önemini, törenlerin esnâf arasında sağlamış olduğu dayanışmayı ve esnâfın Osmanlı şenliklerindeki rolünü incelemektedir. Üçüncü bölüm, lonca organizasyonu ve merkez hükümetin lonca iç işlerine karışmasını konularını araştırmaktadır.

Dördüncü, beşinci ve altıncı bölümler, Osmanlı loncalarının yaşamış olduğu değişimlerin hem iç hem de dış nedenlere bağlı olması meselesini incelemektedir. Dördüncü bölüm, loncaları geniş bir çerçevede incelemekle beraber, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Avrupa ekonomisine entegre olması, el zanaatlarının "çökmesi" meselesi, merkez hükümetin ekonomik değişimlere karşı tavrı ve ilk endüstrileşme çabaları üzerinde yoğunlaşmaktadır. Beşinci bölüm ise, iç faktörlerin, Osmanlı loncalarının yaşadığı değişimlere olan etkisini anlatmaktadır. Altıncı bölüm, örnek bir çalışma olarak İstanbul'daki ipekçi esnâfı üzerinde yoğunlaşmakta ve merkez hükümetin, İstanbul'un gereksimlerini karşılamak ve ipekten gelecek gelirini sağlama almak adına ipek dağıtımını kontrol altında tutma çabalarını incelemektedir. Bu

bölüm sonuç olarak, İstanbul'daki ipekçi esnâfını ve diğer fonksiyonların yanı sıra, merkez hükümetin esnâfı korumasının kendi meşruiyetini sağlamlaştırmasıyla olan ilişkisini göstermeye çalışmaktadır.

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To my family, with love and respect

Introduction

After seeing the vast amount of archival sources preserved in the Prime Ministry Archives in İstanbul and realizing a possibility of research during the summer 1998, I decided to study the Ottoman *esnâf*, a neglected subject. By studying the *esnâf*, I aim to show that traditional Ottoman guilds began to change long before the nineteenth century. It should be noted the changes in the guilds occurred gradually. In these, besides external factors, internal factors too played important roles as the causes of change. Thus, this thesis represents an effort to understand the main issues and debates concerning the Ottoman craft guilds by focusing on how craft guilds changed during the period under study.

This study is composed of six chapters. Each chapter has its own way of topical arrangement. The first three chapters are based on a literature survey, providing a background to investigate the issues discussed in the subsequent three chapters. Although the first three chapters describe the *esnâf* by giving a general outline, the chapters that follow attempt to discuss the certain historiographical debates and problems. Since the existing literature regarding the guilds emphasizes too much on the role of the central Ottoman government, these chapters cannot escape from reflecting that. Also, secondary sources are insufficient to provide a long term historical perspective regarding the Ottoman craft guilds. This, of course, was a difficult task.

The first chapter deals with debates on the origin of the Ottoman *esnâf*. To explain the relationship between *esnâf* and *ahis* in the early Ottoman history, it provides an historical background for the *ahi* associations. The chapter also discusses some myths, legends, and stories related to the influence of *futuvva* and *ahi* traditions and the contribution of the *ahis* to the newly established Ottoman *beylik*.

Although primary sources are limited to explain this relation, it appears that, the central Ottoman government tried to form a symbolic link with the *ahi* tradition in order to legitimize the House of the Ottomans.

The second chapter examines the symbols, rituals and practices from *futuuvva* and *ahi* traditions that appeared in the ceremonies of the Ottoman craft guilds. It, therefore, aims to explore the possible influence of *futuuvva* and *ahi* cultures on the *esnâf* ceremonies. Since ceremonies were expected to provide solidarity among the Muslim and non-Muslim *esnâf*, they had an important role within and among the guilds. However, by emphasizing only Islamic symbols, rituals and ceremonies, secondary sources are insufficient to explain how solidarity between Muslim and non-Muslim *esnâf* would be achieved

The third chapter discusses the organization of the Ottoman craft guilds and their relationship with the central government. Concerning this relationship, it seems that the central government aimed to secure the tax revenues extracted from the *esnâf*. The central government's control over guilds in İstanbul and its surrounding regions was obvious. As such, it tried to appoint state officials as the guild's head when there were financial difficulties as to the payment of the salaries of the state officials. Besides discussing the role of the state, the third chapter talks about internal disputes among guild members. Internal disputes, in fact, shows that guilds might have begun to pay little attention to the moral values from *futuuvva* and *ahi* traditions, in which loyalty had its own significance. Serious conflicts, for example, between masters and journeymen came to scene when masters tended to employ casual laborers at a lower price that journeymen objected. Such was the case, when journeymen were not able to open their own shops.

The fourth chapter investigates the Ottoman *esnâf* in the broader context that includes external factors and government responses to the economic difficulties. In the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters, I try to make it clear that changes in the Ottoman economy and in the guilds long before the nineteenth century. Also, the fourth chapter focuses on the "decline" debates considering handicraft industries.

In the fifth chapter, I use both primary and secondary sources. I carefully chose specific examples from the Prime Ministry Archives that best illustrate how guilds began to change. The fifth chapter also discusses internal factors that led to the changes in the guild structure. This chapter, at the same time, investigates corruption in the guilds regarding the administration of the guilds, receiving mastership without being trained as apprentices, inter-guild disputes, disputes with non-guild members, advantages or disadvantages of the monopolistic rights over the crafts, and finally the involvement of the Janissaries into the guilds

Finally, the sixth chapter analyzes the Ottoman silk industry in İstanbul by following the changes through silk guilds including the *kazzâz*, *sandâlcı* and *kemhâcı* from the early eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century. The chapter focuses on the policies of the central government regarding the silk industry and examines the reasons why the central government was so sensitive about the distribution of raw materials concerning the guilds in İstanbul. It also explores how the central government intended to secure its control over guilds by giving İstanbul guilds a privileged and monopolistic status. In conclusion, a study of silk industry in a broader perspective help us to understand how İstanbul, as the capital city of the Empire, changed under the strict control of the central government.

I. An Historical Background of the Ottoman Craft Guilds: *Ahi* Associations

This chapter focuses on the historical background of the Ottoman craft guilds, and especially its cultural heritage from *ahi* associations.¹ Since some scholars have argued that an *ahi* had to have a craft to practice and defined *ahi* associations as the craft guilds in Anatolia, which provided both solidarity and mutual aid in towns and cities from the thirteenth century onwards,² examining *ahi* associations is necessary.

*Futuvva*³: A Basis of the *Ahi* Culture

To explain the origin of *ahi* associations in Anatolia, one needs to understand the *futuvva* tradition. *Futuvva* appeared during the pre-Islamic era when males with similar interests wished to come together and organize entertainment.⁴ Those young and single men, for example, engaged in social activity within an organization of *fityân*.⁵ Earlier accounts of *fityân* groups emphasize the role of eating, drinking and

¹In Arabic, *ahi* meant "my brother." It was derived from the Turkish word, *akı*, which meant generosity and chivalry. It is possible that with the influence of the Arabic language, *akı* began to be pronounced as *ahi*.

Refik Soykut, *Esnâf Kimdir: Esnâflukta Ahiliğe Yaklaşım*, (Ankara: Esnâf Araştırma Eğitim Merkezi, 1978), p. 86; and Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), p. 44.

² Sometimes they are considered similar to today's production cooperatives and syndicates. Hamit Koşay, "Small Businessmen's Organizasyon 'Ahilik' (Friendship) and its Tradition," *Etudes Balkaniques*, Vol. XV, No. 1, 1979, p. 101.

³ The word *futuvva* is Arabic and as an abstract term it meant "valor, gallantry, generosity, hospitality, and helpfulness." Likewise, the word *mürüvvet*, which meant manliness (*erlik*), formed the basis of *futuvva* whose singular form is *fetâ*, the young and brave man.

Deodaat Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1961), p. 9; and Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. XI, No. 1-4, 1949-1950, p. 6.

⁴ Franz Taeschner, "İslam'da Fütüvvet Teşkilatının Doğuşu Meselesi ve Tarihi Ana Çizgileri," *Bellekten*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 142, 1972, p. 302.

⁵ In Arabic poems, *fetâ* was also used to mean both noble and humane, while in ancient Arab thinking, it gained three main characteristics: *misafirperverlik* (hospitality), *sahâvet* (bravery, and valor) and *şecâat* (generosity). Ideally, hospitality was given so much importance that, it had to last until the *fetâ*

music played, as well as the free sexual life practiced among the members.⁶ Probably after its spread throughout the Arabic world, Islam changed the habits of those *fityân*. *Fityân* drunk wine or other spirits when they came together. After converting to Islam, however, it was most likely that the *fityân* began to drink salted water, *şerbet*, a drink into which sugar was added in the later centuries.

Before the Islamic religion appeared, there were *fityân*-like groups particularly in Khorasan, Turkistan, Iran and the Arabic world. After the conversion of these groups to Islam, particularly Turks and Persians adopted the virtuous qualities of the *futuvva*, which were compatible with the principles of Islam.⁷ Later on, from the eighth to the tenth centuries, the influence of the sufis brought about a synthesis of Arabic *fityân* groups.⁸

Were *futuvva* and *ahi* cultures really similar to each other? *Futuvvatnâmes*, the written documents of the *futuvva* culture that morally regulated the society, give clues to analyze this issue. Known *futuvvatnâmes* had common characteristics despite some minor differences, such as believing in one God, sacrificing for other people, behaving in a good manner, being generous, opening one's doors to guests, and loving people equally regardless of their religions and sects. Secondly, there was

became poor. In addition, *ahi*, among the members of *futuvva* was also used as a title for *futuvva şeyhs*.

Franz Taeschner, "İslam Ortaçağı'nda Futuvva (Fütüvvet Teşkilatı)," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. XV, No. 1-4, 1953-1954, p. 5; and Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 6.

⁶ Franz Taeschner, "İslam'da Fütüvvet Teşkilatının Doğuşu Meselesi ve Tarihi Ana Çizgileri," p. 208, and 210.

⁷ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, p. 1.

⁸ Sufism influenced *futuvva* by giving it its main concepts of altruism, such as love for all people and being unselfish. Hence the warlike side of *fetâ* or *fityân* groups was abandoned. In its new Islamic form, *futuvva* did not aim the *cihâd*, or holy war, but was replaced by altruistic life. Franz Taeschner, "İslam'da Fütüvvet Teşkilatının Doğuşu Meselesi ve Tarihi Ana Çizgileri," p. 216, and 218. However, the idea of *cihâd* was not easily replaced and some *fityân* groups retained their militaristic nature despite the influence of altruistic way of life.

a belief that the *futuvva*-holders were descended from the prophets. Thirdly, it was believed that *futuvva* came to Mohammed and from him it was passed on to Ali. Already loving *ehl-i beyt* (Prophet Mohammed's family) had been considered as a significant sign among the members of the *futuvva* and this characteristics appeared even partially in a sunnah-oriented *futuvvatnâme*.⁹ At this point, no serious conflict between a Sunnite and a Shiite *futuvvatnâme* came to scene.

Nevertheless, some Turkish scholars have considered *futuvva* and *ahi* traditions dissimilar. For example, *futuvva* is said to have emphasized personal virtues, while *ahi* associations were interested in society in general.¹⁰ The most important difference between these two was that an *ahi* had to have a job or practice a craft.¹¹ In addition, same comparisons have been made between *futuvva* and mystical orders. But, in this case, the *futuvva* holders sought ethical and moral perfection in this world, while dervishes were interested in the life after.¹² Over time, *futuvva* groups and mystical orders became more similar "in ethical and religious ideals, like altruism, piety, truthfulness, servitude, the ascetic attitude toward this world, the emphasis on the spiritual guidance of the novice to moral and ethical perfection, the initiation-ceremonies."¹³ It is most likely that *ahi* associations had similar characteristics with the *futuvva*.

Besides disputes over similarities and differences between the *futuvva* and *ahi* cultures, scholars have different approaches to explain their origin. There were two different points of views concerning the origin. On the one hand, scholars argue that

⁹ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 26, 27, and 57.

¹⁰ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, p. 1.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 46.

¹² Deodaa Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, p. 226.

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 225.

even if there was no direct connection, it is possible that the ancient Greek world influenced Islamic thinking, and therefore the *futuvva* and *ahi* associations. For example, Socratic thinking, "know thyself" passed to the Arabs in a Neo-Platonic form. However, the Muslims attributed this expression to the prophet Mohammed and Ali by transforming it to "he who knows himself knows his Lord," which appeared in the *ahi* culture as well.¹⁴

On the other hand, some other scholars, like Süleyman Eryiğit and Neşet Çağatay, argue that the influence of the Byzantine and European worlds over *ahi* associations was not really possible. Eryiğit points out that although the Turks inherited the Byzantine guilds, *ahis*, who practiced crafts, aimed to Turkify Anatolia.¹⁵ Furthermore, according to Çağatay, during the Crusades, many institutions of the Arabic, Turkish and Islamic world were adopted by the European world. In his view, after Latin Kingdom in İstanbul (1204-1261) was established, a close relationship between people coming from different regions of Europe and the Seljuks of Rum was created. Also, Ahi Evran and his followers had already formed an *ahi* association.¹⁶ Since we do not have enough information concerning the existence of Ahi Evran himself and his contribution to the Anatolian guild organizations by founding his own tannery, talking about the influence of the Seljuks over the European guilds seems meaningless.

Although *ahi*, and therefore *futuvva*, "culturally" influenced the Ottoman *esnâf*, some nationalistic scholars focus on the "Turkish identity" of the guilds. Refik Soykut, for example, points out to the following story. Usmanoğlu Abdurrahman

¹⁴ Sadık Göksu, "Ahilik Üzerine Düşünürken: Fütüvvetnamelerde ve Eflatun'da Yiğitlik," *Cem*, No. 94, 1999, p. 48.

¹⁵ Süleyman Eryiğit, *Ahi Birliklerinde Yönetim ve İşletme Fonksiyonlarının Temel Yapısı*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989), p. 4.

¹⁶ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, p. 71.

(Ebu Müslim Horasani) was a craftsman, challenging the Umayyad authorities.¹⁷ On his journey to Mecca, he met the descendants of the prophet Mohammed and one of them, İmam İbrahim, later on sent two black flags to Ebu Müslim to take revenge on the Umayyads. Hence, Ebu Müslim took action and gathered people around himself. Among them were young men, whom the guild members had kept for a long time. Those young people also wore black clothes, because black best represented the mourning atmosphere.¹⁸ As a craftsman, Ebu Müslim sided with the guild members against the Umayyad attacks. At this point, Refik Soykut disregards the reality that Ebu Muslim sided himself with another political power, the Abbasids. How does Soykut make a connection between the guilds existing during the lifetime of Ebu Müslim and Anatolian *ahi* associations? It is not appropriate to consider Ebu Müslim's challenge a turning point in the discussion of the Turkish guilds. The cultural lineage is much more important than that of one single person. Moreover, probably, to glorify the role of the Turks in establishing their own unique associations in Anatolia, scholars like Neşet Çağatay, argue that the Turkish guilds influenced the European guilds, despite the fact that they do not have sufficient information to prove their very nationalistic views.

Islam, with its various interpretations, seems to have contributed to both *futuvva* and *ahi* cultures a lot, despite the fact that the origins of these two cultures were obscure.¹⁹ *Futuvva* may have played an important role in establishing Muslim rule in the Near East. Arnakis argues that during the ninth century, *futuvva* holders were often volunteer "warrior guilds," whose aim was to spread Islam. Later on,

¹⁷ Refik Soykut, *Esnâf Kimdir: Esnâflukta Ahiliğe Yaklaşım*, p. 53.

¹⁸ *ibid*, p. 54.

¹⁹ Franz Taeschner, "İslam'da Fütüvvet Teşkilatının Doğuşu Meselesi ve Tarihi Ana Çizgileri," p. 205.

during the eleventh century, *futuvva* began to influence the guilds of the Islamic world.²⁰ According to Franz Taeschener, if one talks about the *futuvva* of Turkish Anatolia, he really means male warriors, namely ghazis defending the frontier zones.²¹ In addition, according to Arnakis, *futuvva* was not only interested in *Daru'l-Islam* but also *Daru'l-Harb* because *futuvva* flourished in the frontier zone rather than in settled areas.²² In this way, Arnakis gives a ghaza character to *futuvva* although *futuvva* had existed during the pre-Islamic era.

According to another argument, *futuvva* is said to have emerged in Khorasan, Iran, Iraq, and Damascus, beginning in the eighth century. In the second half of the twelfth century, it had spread to Anatolia, Egypt, Syria. During the thirteenth century, it appeared in Konya and Ankara, where at the same time, Alavi and Bektashi orders were developing under the influence of the *futuvva* culture.²³ Furthermore, Ottoman guilds inherited the principles of *futuvva*, which in fact had their origin in Sufism. Yet *ahi* associations and Ottoman craft guilds were not the same, but *ahi* associations might be the Anatolian forms of *futuvva*, which the Abbasid caliph Nasır li-Dinillah had reorganized.²⁴

An Abbasid caliph, Nasır li-Dinillah (1180-1225) used *futuvva* for ensuring his political legitimacy. He was the first caliph, who wore *futuvva şalvar* from

²⁰ G. G. Arnakis, "Futuvva Traditions in the Ottoman Empire-Ahis, Bektashi Dervishes, and Craftsmen," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. XII, No. 4, 1953, p. 236.

²¹ Franz Taeschner, "İslam'da Fütüvvet Teşkilatının Doğuşu Meselesi ve Tarihi Ana Çizgileri," p. 231.

²² G. G. Arnakis, "Futuvva Traditions in the Ottoman Empire-Ahis, Bektashi Dervishes, and Craftsmen," p. 234.

²³ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 8; and Baki Öz, "Fütüvvet'ten Ahilğe," p. 47.

²⁴ Mübahat Kütükoğlu, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Oto-Kontrol Müessesesi," in: *Ahilik ve Esnâf*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Esnaf ve Sanatkarlar Dernekleri Birliği Yayınları, 1986), p. 55.

Abdülcabbar, a patron saint of the *futuvva*. Nasır probably wanted to gain approval of the populace through the guilds, in which the *futuvva* culture was influential.²⁵ The caliph also wished to take measures against the Batinite / Shiite elements of his time, especially against the Assassins.²⁶ To spread the *futuvva*, Nasır ordered his religious advisor, Şahabüddin Ebu Hafs Ömer el-Suhraverdi (1145-1234), to write a *futuvvatnâme*. Suhraverdi, therefore, wrote a *futuvvatnâme* that was based on his former work *Avarifel-Mâarif*.²⁷ Afterwards, the numbers of *futuvvatnâmes* increased during Nasır li-Dinillah's reign. Furthermore, as argued by Franz Taeschner, Nasır's was a palace *futuvva* that did not continue in the cities. Additionally, coincident to the Shiite tendencies in *futuvva* culture, its Alavi side gained ground. Thus, for the higher posts, the Alavis were preferred. It is more likely that Ali's *fetâ*-like character became more apparent over time.²⁸ The *futuvva* tradition found support with the Seljuks as well. Refik Soykut establishes a link between Nasır li-Dinillah and Seljuk sultans that Nasır send the *futuvva* symbols, such as the *şedd* and *şalvar*, to Alaaddin Keykubad (1219-1266).²⁹

With the Mongol invasion, Nasır's type of palace *futuvva* came to an end in Bagdad, and probably all over the Near East. In fact, during the thirteenth century, the *futuvva* entered Egypt with Sultan Baybars's coming to power. He placed one of the Abbasid princes on the throne as caliph and allowed him wear *futuvva* trousers to strengthen and legitimize his political power. This Memluk *futuvva* tradition in

²⁵ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Futuvva Teşkilatı," p. 76.

²⁶ Baki Öz, "Fütüvvet'ten Ahiliğe," p. 44.

²⁷ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, p. 179

²⁸ Franz Taeschner, "İslam'da Fütüvvet Teşkilatının Doğuşu Meselesi ve Tarihi Ana Çizgileri," p. 223.

²⁹ Refik Soykut, *Esnâf Kimdir: Esnâflıkta Ahiliğe Yaklaşım*, p. 59

Egypt lasted until the fifteenth century.³⁰ While the popularity of palace *futuvva* in Egypt diminished, the *futuvva* continued to flourish among the populace just as it was in Anatolia.³¹

During the Seljuk era, *ahis* are said to have a determining role in politics. During the reign of Alaaddin Keykubad (1220-1237) the relationship between the state and *ahis* was so good that the sultan sometimes provided fief and other kind of income to the *ahis*. İzzettin Keykavus I also welcomed the *futuvva*. It appears that during the Seljuk era, the *ahis* most of the time sided with the Karamanids against the Seljuks. However, at some occasions they supported Alaaddin Keykubad, when the Cimri Event took place and they supported İzzettin Keykavus II against the pro-Mongol ruler, Kılıçarslan IV.³² Before the reign of İzzettin Keykavus II (1246-1262), when conflicts over the sultanate among leading figures became apparent, Fahreddin Ebubekir Pervane, a Seljuk vizier, for example, asked help from the *ahis* and from their *fityâns* (who formed the youth branch of *ahi* associations) in Konya. In return, Pervane offered money and fame. But, when the central government became aware of his plan, a new governor was immediately appointed to Konya, and he was well greeted by the *ahis* of the city.³³ One reason for the *futuvva* organizations' increasing power in Anatolian cities was their relationship with the sultans. Over time, the *futuvva* began to penetrate the guilds and spread to villages, where a contact with *alp* organizations was formed.³⁴ Also *ahis* are said to be very influential in political life

³⁰ Baki Öz, "Fütüvvet'ten Ahiliğe," p. 46.

³¹ Franz Taeschner, "İslam'da Fütüvvet Teşkilatının Doğuşu Meselesi ve Tarihi Ana Çizgileri," p. 228.

³² Baki Öz, "Fütüvvet'ten Ahiliğe," p. 46, 47.

³³ Galip Demir, *Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu ve Ahilik*, (İstanbul: Ahi Kültürünü Araştırma ve Eğitim Vakfı Yayınları, 2000), p. 72.

³⁴ Fuat Köprülü, *The Origin of the Ottoman Empire*, (New York: State University of New York, 1992), p. 96.

while some like Ahi Evran remained politically independent, which would be the part of the legend of Ahi Evran.

Ahi Evran was a craftsman, who was born in 1171 in Azerbaijan. In the account of an historian, Aşıkpaşazade, Ahi Evran was considered a saintly person, like Geyikli Baba, Yunus Emre, Şeyh Dapduk Emre, and Karaca Ahmed Sultan.³⁵ Ahi Evran started as a tanner apprentice, because the tanner guild was so necessary during his time in Anatolia.³⁶ Ahi Evran politically did not tie himself with any political group. The following story demonstrates this point. When Ahi Evran refused to pay tax while in Kayseri, the sultan sent his officials to Evran's tannery where an *evrân*, or dragon spitting fire from his mount, appeared. Sultan's men were so surprised that they quickly fled.³⁷ Thus Şeyh Nasirüddin Ebü'l-Hakayık Mahmud bin Ahmed was the complete of Ahi Evran, and the story of this mythologic event continued to spread among the populace.

There are other myths concerning Ahi Evran. For example, he met Nasır li-Dinillah and entered his *futuvva* organization. Later on, Ahi Evran went to Konya and offered his book, *Letâif-i Gıyâsiye*, to the sultan. Furthermore, while in Kayseri, he established a guild organization, principles of which was based on the *ahi* culture. Unfortunately, because of conflicts over the throne, his guild dissolved.³⁸ If he did not tie himself with any political group, why did Ahi Evran need to offer his book to the Seljuk sultan? Probably, people trying to legitimize Turkish guilds in Anatolia and preferring to start its origin with a Turkish man who came from the Central Asia, fabricated stories.

³⁵ Aşıkpaşazade, *Tevârih-i Al-i Osman*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi), p. 235.

³⁶ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, p. 80.

³⁷ Bedri Noyan, *Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli Manzum Vilayetnâmesi*, (İstanbul: Can Yayınları, 1996), p. 43.

The Relationship between Religious Sects and *Ahi* Associations

Some religious orders like Mevlevi and Bektashi orders had the same origin as *ahi* associations since same morality of the *futuvva* influenced them all. Moreover, despite the fact that how they influenced each other is unknown and controversial, Çağatay argues that the Brother Devotees (*İhvân'üs Safâ*, which was a religious and political association of the tenth century), Batinites, Qarmatians, Melamites, Free Masons, Assassins and European guilds might have been influential in the development of the *ahi* associations.³⁹ He also claims that although the *futuvva* tradition influenced *ahi* associations, they were different. Çağatay, furthermore, argues that no other organization similar to *ahi* associations could be found in other Islamic countries, despite the influence of the same *futuvva* culture.⁴⁰ His exaggerated claims regarding *ahi* associations imply a perfect guild organization in Anatolia, which, in fact, was beyond the imagination.

Relationship between some religious sects and *ahi* associations is possible. In the beginning, wearing *şalvar*, girding *şedd*, and drinking *şerbet* were the three main characteristics of the *futuvva* ceremonies. As time went by, shaving one's beard and cooking *helva* were also accepted. Mevlevi, Bektashi orders and *ahi* associations did not like outsiders whom they called, *başkası*, or the other.⁴¹ Bektashis took some important practices from *futuvva* through *Babailik*. Since they were so integrated, it is difficult to distinguish Bektashis and Alavis from *ahis* in

³⁸ Galip Demir, *Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu ve Ahilik*, p. 348.

³⁹ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, p. 52.

⁴⁰ What were the reasons that *ahi* associations appeared in Anatolia? Neşet Çağatay explains the reasons as follows: to find jobs for craftsmen coming from Asia and "civilized" Turkish cities, to compete with local Greek craftsmen, to preserve the quality of goods and produce in sufficient amount. Furthermore, they aimed these associations economically independent, helped the state during wartime, and created Turkish consciousness in art, literature, music, and customs. *ibid.*, p. 85.

⁴¹ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 60.

terms of their religious beliefs. However, they differed from each other. For example, the people of *futuvva* drank salted water, while the Alavis preferred to drink plain water, and Bektashis preferred to drink sweet water.⁴²

Some other sects, like *Babailik*, are said to have influenced *ahi* associations. The Mongol invasion was regarded as a turning point in the history of *ahi* associations. Because with the invasion, many educated people and guild members migrated especially to Anatolia.⁴³ Among them were Baba İlyas and his family. Baba İlyas formed a sect in Anatolia, known as *Babailik*, which was a branch of the *Yeseviye*. Although there was no information about its direct relation, *Babailik* was believed to form the basis of *ahi* associations, as well as Bektashi and Mevlevi orders.⁴⁴

First of all, one must differentiate between the Mevlevi *ahi* and the Bektashi *ahi*. For example, Ahi Evran is known as a follower of the Bektashi order and Nurettin Caca as a follower of the Mevlevi order.⁴⁵ It is probable that there was a serious conflict between these two sects. As an *ahi*, Nurettin Caca killed other *ahis*. It seems that, at least in this case, solidarity did not really exist among different groups of *ahis*. It may be reasonable to accept Arnakis' point of view that, within time two different types of *ahis* had emerged in Anatolia. Those who had profane

⁴² *ibid*, p. 67, and 68.

⁴³ Some other people were mentioned as *ahi*, such as Ahi Mohamed, Ahi Kayser, Ahi Çoban, Ahi Ahmed, and Ahi Sadettin. Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, p. 87.

⁴⁴ Refik Soykut, *Esnâf Kimdir: Esnâflıkta Ahiliğe Yaklaşım*, p. 64

⁴⁵ Divitçioğlu says that Ahi Evran followed Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli. Ahi Evran, according to *Vilayetnâme*, said: “*Kim bizi şeyh edinmişse onun şeyhi Hacı Bektaş hünkardır.*” Sencer Divitçioğlu, *Osmanlı Beyliğinin Kuruluşu*, (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1996), p. 49.

tendencies and preferred worldly affairs, and those who were interested in a monastic way of life.⁴⁶

What about its relationship with shiite culture? According to Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, people of *futuvva* were shiites, or *müteşeyyi* (a person who assumes the qualities of a shiite). Their beliefs were in fact mixed up with superstitions, and that they really propagated the Safavid ideology against the Ottomans during the sixteenth century. In addition, the Batinite characteristics of *futuvva* slowly disappeared during the seventeenth century. Thus, *futuvva* came under the monopoly of Ottoman guild system in the later centuries. However, from the same century onwards, the Melamite-Hamzavis preserved the original characteristic of *futuvva* by keeping some part of the system under their control.⁴⁷ In Gölpınarlı's view, *futuvva* continued with Ottoman guilds. In other words, *futuvva* was not vanished but only its Batinite side. Since Gölpınarlı does not provide information, which characteristics of *futuvva* continued with the guilds remain obscure.

The members of *futuvva* separated themselves from Sufis from the beginning and they were fused with the Melamites, followers of a Sufi sect. The relationship between *futuvva* and Melamiye was apparent as well. A Melami had to have a profession, which was essential in the *futuvva* guilds.⁴⁸ Regarding this issue, there is a confusing claim that Melamiye itself was interested in ascetic life. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı disproves the claim by saying that Melamis were avoiding worldly pleasures. In order to prove his claim, Gölpınarlı provides us with an example that a representative of the Melamite-Hamzavi order, İdris Muhtefi in 1615 was a trader

⁴⁶ G. G. Arnakis, "Futuvva Traditions in the Ottoman Empire-Ahis, Bektashi Dervishes, and Craftsmen," p. 241.

⁴⁷ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 62, and 63.

⁴⁸ *ibid*, p. 72.

himself. Melamites, in general, were *peştemal* (large bath towel, waist cloth) sellers. Moreover, a large commercial building in Kırkçeşme called *Peştemalcılar Hanı*, was a center of Melamis.⁴⁹ These examples demonstrate that the *futuvva* might be considered as a mystical movement. But it did not disregard worldly affairs, as it is in the case of *peştemal* sellers. In other words, people following any of these sects or orders did not have to be an *esnâf* while at the same time, some *esnâf* did not have to believe in any of these sects. That is to say, influence of these religious sects and orders was unavoidable, but an *ahi* who practiced a craft did not have to be a follower of any of them, so did the *esnâf*. Finally, secondary sources are inconsistent when explaining the relationship between *ahi* associations and religious sects of the time.

***Bacıyân-ı Rûm* (Sisters of Anatolia)**

Since some scholars have paid attention to the *Bacıyân-ı Rûm* as the first guild organization found by women, this chapter explores this issue. It is known that the Ottoman women involved in putting-out system as non-guild members, and also become *gedik* holders. However, no information is found concerning women as active guild members.

In the earlier times of Ottoman history, women probably played a significant role. Ahi Evran's wife Fatma Bacı is said to have found the *Bacıyân-ı Rûm*. Among the functions of *Bacıyân-ı Rûm* were protecting orphan girls, helping them to get married, and taking care of elderly women. They also prepared food for the visitors who came to *zawiyas*, repaired soldier's clothing and took care of war equipment.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ *ibid*, p. 73.

⁵⁰ Galip Demir, *Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu ve Ahilik*, p. 359.

There are disputes among historians concerning the existence of the *Bacıyân-ı Rûm*. Fuad Köprülü points out that the only evidence for the existence of such an organization is in Aşıkpaşazade's account. In his view, the expression *Bacıyân-ı Rûm* might have been incorrectly read. It could have been read as the *Hacıyân-ı Rum*, or the *Bakhshiyân-ı Rûm*. According to Köprülü, if the *Hacıyân-ı Rûm* had existed, it would have been so great to have such an influential group for the Islamic world.⁵¹ The word *Bakhshi*, however meant "saintly person, sorcerer, and popular poet." So that, scholars like Köprülü suggest the possibility of such an organization surviving in Anatolia only, if the word *bakhshi* is read as *bacıyân*. Perhaps Aşıkpaşazade used the expression to refer to "the armed and warlike women of the Turkmen tribes in the march *beyliks*." Also, it is interesting to note that the fifteenth century Dulkadiroğlu *beylik* had a Turkmen force composed of both armed men and women.⁵²

Sencer Divitçioğlu, however, has criticized Köprülü. According to him, Köprülü was influenced by Broquiere's explanation, but he later changed his mind and accepted *Bacıs* as part of Sufi tradition. Divitçioğlu, also argues that both *Abdal of Rûm* and *Bacıyân-ı Rûm* had religious functions and people who were given titles like *Baba* ("Father," an honorific title used especially dervishes circles) *Derviş*, *Fakir* (like Dervish), *Bacı* (mystical orders, the title of respect given to the sheikh's wife) had both male and female followers. Those groups were also known for their heterodox beliefs and devotion of themselves to God.⁵³

In Aşıkpaşazade's account, there were four important groups in Anatolia: *Gaziyan-ı Rûm*, *Ahiyan-ı Rûm*, *Abdâlân-ı Rûm*, and *Bacıyan-ı Rûm*, with which Hacı

⁵¹ Fuat Köprülü, *The Origin of the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 98-99.

⁵² *ibid*, p. 99.

Bektaş-ı Veli had a direct relationship.⁵⁴ Bedri Noyan states that Bektashis were composed of women and men together. *Ahi* associations, on the other hand, were socio-economic organizations founded by males. It was possible that *Bakhshiân-ı Rûm* and *Bacıyân-ı Rûm* were the same, and the Bektashis were part of it. Even if such an organization existed, having a guild organization founded by women in the earlier Turkic Anatolia was not possible, because guilds then were not professionally organized.

***Ahis* During the Early Ottoman History**

Had *ahis* played important social and political roles following the dissolution of the Seljuk rule in Anatolia? Some historians have a positive response to this question. Galip Demir, for example, argues that when Muhlis Paşa, Ahi Evran, Sheikh Edebali, Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli foresaw the possible end of the Seljuk state, they invited Ertuğrul, who belonged to the *Gaziyân-ı Rûm*, the military branch of *Ahiyân-ı Rûm*, to Kırşehir, in order to found a new state. According to a story regarding this issue, Osman, the founder of the Ottoman state, was himself an *ahi*. Stories continue that like his father, Osman gained support from the *ahis*, who made the same proposition to him.⁵⁵ According to Cemal Kafadar, historians with an orientalist approach "tended to emphasize the oriental nature of the Ottomans and accepted the essentially Turco-Muslim identity of the founders of the state."⁵⁶ Briefly, all these stories concerning the issue of foundation of the Ottoman Empire seem fabricated to

⁵³ Sencer Divitçioğlu, *Osmanlı Beyliğinin Kuruluşu*, pp. 33-34.

⁵⁴ "Hacı Bektaş bunların içinden Bacıyân-ı Rûmı ihtiyâr etdi kim o Hatun Anadur. Anı kız edindi. Keşf ü kerâmetini ana gösterdi. Teslim etdi. Kendi Allahın rahmetine vardı." Aşıkpaşazade, *Tevârih-i Al-i Osman*, p. 237.

⁵⁵ Galip Demir, *Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu ve Ahilik*, pp. 240-241.

⁵⁶ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Words: The Construction of the Ottoman State*, (Berkeley: University

legitimize the Islamic heritage coming through *ahis*, who were learned and influential people of the time.

Some scholars talk about the political influence of the *ahis* during the Classical Age (1300-1600) of the Ottoman Empire. For example, Ahi Hasan joined Sultan Orhan for his campaign against Bursa.⁵⁷ At the same time, the Ottomans began to appoint "city *ahis*" in some regions. Murad I (1360-1389) himself, for example, got a belt from the *ahis*, and he appointed Ahi Musa to Malkara as an *ahi*.⁵⁸ It is also claimed that until the reign of Mehmet II, viziers, grand viziers, commanders, *kadıs*, and other state officials were originally *ahis*.⁵⁹ Furthermore, when Mehmed I's son, the so-called False Mustafa, prepared a campaign against his brother, Murad II. Then Murad II sent two *ahis* of Bursa as delegates to Mustafa to prevent a disastrous result. According to Deodaat A. Breebaart, this was the last reference to the political influence of *ahis*.⁶⁰

A claim that *ahis* found an independent state in Ankara is unsupportable. Fuad Köprülü does not agree that the *ahis* of Ankara were large landowners and established such a state and yet the Ottomans got Ankara from them.⁶¹ Köprülü's view is not shared by Arnakis, because Murad I's autocratic rule created discontent among the *ahis*. After Bayazıt the Thunderbolt succeeded Murad I, a rebellion broke out. As a result, a state with so-called "socialistic tendencies" was established and lasted almost for a decade. At that time, because of Timurlenk's attacks on Anatolia,

of California, 1995), p. 35.

⁵⁷ Deodaat Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, p.114.

⁵⁸ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, p. 91.

⁵⁹ Galip Demir, *Osmanlı Devletinin Kuruluşu ve Ahilik*, p. 343.

⁶⁰ Deodaat Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, p. 115.

⁶¹ Fuat Köprülü, *The Origin of the Ottoman Empire*, p. 97.

it became easy for the *ahis* of Ankara to survive between the years 1402 and 1413.⁶² It is also claimed that the *ahis* rebelled and held the city for twenty days. When their demands were accepted, the rebels returned to their former occupations.⁶³ The role of the *ahis* during the early years of the Ottoman *beylik* is not clearly known, despite the fact that there are several stories that emphasize their significance. They might not help the Ottomans to find the state, however, it seems that culturally they were influential.

The Dissolution of *Ahi* Associations

Ahi associations lost their significance over time. There were various social and historical factors that explain the dissolution of these associations. First of all, with the influence of the *medreses*, an increasing power of the *ulema*, their shiite and Batnite characteristics began to disappear.⁶⁴ Furthermore, within time the central state's controlling the guild affairs increased. For example, it appointed guild members, especially their stewards, *yiğitbaşı*.⁶⁵

Still, it is hard to consider increasing power of the central government as the only factor explaining why *ahis* lost their political status. Rather, the Ottoman central government tend to preserve the traditional corporative local bodies, maintain a control on them, but without directly interfering with their internal affairs.⁶⁶ The internal transformation of *ahi* associations also played a role in its dissolution. As such, from the thirteenth century to the fifteenth centuries, the title of *ahi* began to

⁶² G. G. Arnakis, "Futuvva Traditions in the Ottoman Empire-Ahis, Bektashi Dervishes, and Craftsmen," p. 236.

⁶³ Süleyman Eryiğit, *Ahi Birliklerinde Yönetim ve İşletme Fonksiyonlarının Temel Yapısı*, p. 27.

⁶⁴ Baki Öz, "Fütüvvet'ten Ahiliğe," p. 47.

⁶⁵ Refik Soykut, *Esnâf Kimdir: Esnâflıkta Ahiliğe Yaklaşım*, p. 99.

pass from father to son, without training according to the principles of *futuvva*. Besides that sort of nepotism, the accumulation of wealth and property in the hands of the leading figures led to the dissolution of traditional structure. The entrance of non-Muslims' into the *ahi* associations might have also contributed to the dissolution of the traditional *ahi* culture, if it was really Turkic and Islamic in origin. On the issue, Mübahat Kütükoğlu argues that non-Muslims did not receive *futuvva*.⁶⁷

An *ahi* had to have a craft, although a craftsman was not necessarily expected to be an *ahi*. Briefly, *ahi* associations and Ottoman craft guilds were not exclusively the same, although they deeply influenced each other. During the seventeenth century, only Hamzavis are said to represent the traditional *ahi* culture. Furthermore, tanners, barbers, and guilds in Serez were loyal to the practices that remained from the *futuvva* organizations. As demonstrated by an historian, in some parts of Anatolia, Crimea, and Saray-Bosna, there was either indirect or sometimes a direct relationship between *ahi* associations and guilds.⁶⁸ It is possible to say that Kırşehir, where the title of *Ahi Baba* was respectfully used, continued to stay as the spiritual center, especially for the tanner guilds of whole empire even during the nineteenth century. The tanner guild members throughout the Empire had to pay fees for the expenditures of the Ahi Baba zawiya in Kırşehir.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, it would not go further.

In conclusion, Anatolian *ahi* associations may have continued through craft guilds, however, they were not the same. Probably some *ahis* were *esnâf* or some

⁶⁶ Deodaat Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, p. 142.

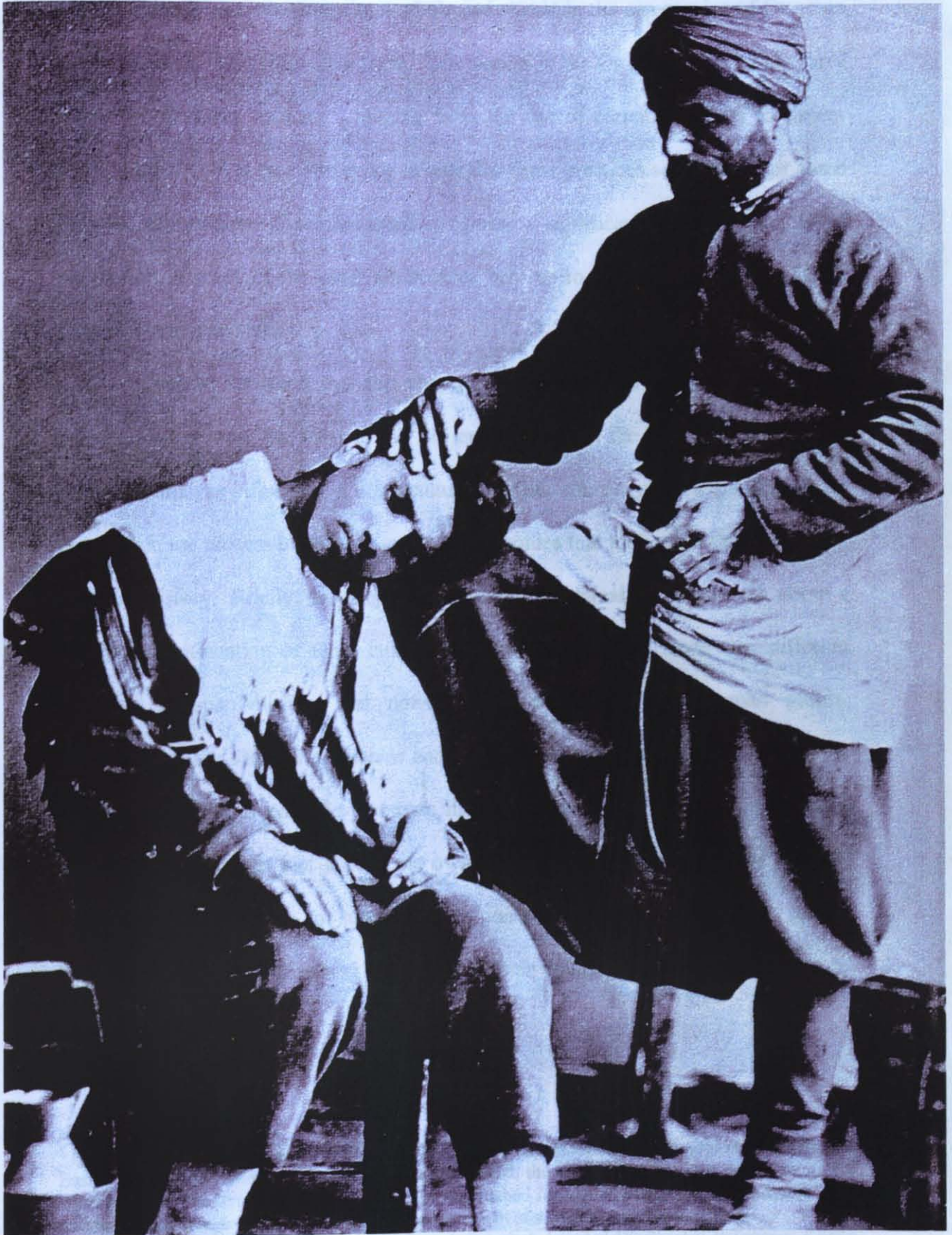
⁶⁷ Mübahat Kütükoğlu, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Oto-Kontrol Müessesesi," p. 56.

⁶⁸ *ibid*, p. 79.

⁶⁹ "Kırşehir'de Ahi Evran Zaviyesi zaviyedarlığına mutassarrıf olanların...bütün memleketteki ehl-i sanayii ve debbağ esnâfının şeyhi olup kethüdâ, yiğitbaşı, üstad ancak onların icâzet ve inâbeti ile

esnâf were *ahis*, not more than that. In short, *ahi* associations were not monolithic organizations, due to the fact that the various sects and orders co-existed in Anatolia. Nevertheless, *futuvva* and *ahi* culture symbolically continued through the ceremonies of the *esnâf*.

II. Symbols, Rituals and Ceremonies in Ottoman Craft Guilds



Osman Nuri Eğin, *Osmanlı İslam Sanatları*, İstanbul, 1974, s. 114.
İslami Dinin Başlangıçları, Yayıncı, s. 114.

II. Symbols, Rituals and Ceremonies in Ottoman Craft Guilds

This chapter examines the symbols and rituals in the ceremonies of Ottoman craft guilds, as well as their functions. Ceremonies in the Ottoman craft guilds carry important symbolic meanings, ranging from the use of certain numbers to thrice-knotted girdles. It is also interesting to note that these practices seem to mirror some imperial ceremonies. Since the *esnâf* composed a significant portion of the urban population, a study of the *esnâf* ceremonies help us to visualize the social life in Ottoman towns and cities.

It should be noted that this chapter focuses only on symbols, rituals and practices taken over the *futuvva* and *ahi* cultures due to the fact that sources are limited to analyze influences of other cultures.¹ Also, sources used in this chapter do not explain the process of changes in *esnâf* ceremonies that took place throughout the Ottoman history. Briefly, this chapter focuses on how unrealistic it is to talk about a complete continuation of these cultures in *esnâf* ceremonies, since two different religious groups Muslims and non-Muslims composed the Ottoman guilds. Nevertheless, the vestiges of *futuvva* and *ahi* cultures would be carried through the Muslim *esnâf*. It is possible that with increasing control of the Ottoman central government, which in fact applied its own rules and regulations, *futuvva* and *ahi* cultures were only able to survive in the ceremonies of Ottoman craft guilds. However, these ceremonies later began to lose their importance when they became so complicated.

¹ However, according to Osman Nuri Ergin, Ottoman craft-guilds inherited two cultural traditions, the Eastern and Islamic, and the Byzantine and Western. With the conquest of İstanbul, influence of the Byzantine and Western cultures over the newly established *beyliks* in Anatolia was inevitable. The guilds, for example, took the Byzantine collective practice of a craft in a particular area. Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyeye I*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları), p. 518.

Ottoman *esnâf* were composed both of Muslims and non-Muslims. Thus a symbiotic relationship among them existed. According to Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, non-Muslim *esnâf* were loyal to the same practices of Muslim *esnâf*. Although he does not cite any primary source to support his argument, Gölpınarlı points out that non-Muslims were involved in Muslims' praying and contributed to the *Esnâf Sandığı*, from which they could borrow money as well.² The view that all non-Muslim *esnâf* practiced these prayers seems unrealistic. Possibly the *esnâf* ceremonies served to provide solidarity among the different religious groups. Nevertheless, sources can only explain the ceremonies carrying Islamic symbols. For example, the wall of a barbershop in İstanbul had a formulation remaining from the *futuvva* tradition. Like *futuvva* holders, the Ottoman barbers devoted themselves to a patron saint, Selmân-i Farisî. The barbers performed ceremonies of girding *şedd* in his name, whom they believed to perform the craft first.³ Having a Muslim patron saint, whose chain of authorities dated back to the time of Prophet Mohammed, implies that the Muslim barbers tried to secure their monopoly over the craft. In other words, some guilds established their control over the craft by using discourses of this kind.

Chain of Authorities (*Silsile*) in the *Futuvva* Culture

The chain of authorities had an important symbolic function in the *esnâf* culture and it made people believe that, they had a glorified past. Also having the chain of authorities meant strengthening the craft in the eyes of the masses. These

² Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. XI, No. 1-4, 1949-1950, p. 94.

³ "Her seherde besmeyleyle açılır dükkanımız
Hazret-i Selmân-i pâkdir pîrimiz üstadımız."

chain of authorities in the *futuvva* culture was most of the time fabricated, as it was in the case of Nakkaş Ahmed's chain of authorities, which dated back at least to times of prophets. This connection with prophets was for political legitimacy. In other words, *futuvva* holders tried to exert power over the masses that tended to follow a so-called saintly people.⁴ Following a saintly person also appeared in the culture of the Ottoman *esnâf* as it was in the case of Muslim barbers.

***Futuvva* Membership**

Although Ottoman craft guilds received symbols, and rituals from the *futuvva* culture, the *esnâf* did not completely take and continue all the practices, rules and regulations demanded by the *futuvva*. The *futuvva* membership was, for example, not open to everybody. Nasir a Persian poet, mentioned in his *futuvvatnâme* from 1290, ten groups of people. *Kâfir* (infidels) believed in superstitions. *Münâfik* (hypocrites) were really human beings in appearance, but they acted as doglike. *Kâhin* (fortune-tellers) served for their own purposes so that they lied day and night to the people. *Sarhoş* (drunkards) were deprived of God's blessing. *Dellâk* (masseurs in a public bath) who might be good men, but when he came to the public bath, either Muslim or *gavur* (godless) were the same in his eyes. *Tellâl* (broker, measurer) who were cruel enough while selling goods and deceiving people in order to gain little more profit, thus making the others fail.⁵ *Çulha* (weavers) lied to people and did not keep their promises. *Kasap* (butchers) shed the blood of the living. *Cerrah* (surgeons) were so much involved in wounds and bruises that affected his

ibid, p. 91, and 101.

⁴ *ibid*, p. 32.

⁵ Nasiri, "Fütüvvetnâme Nüshâsı," in: "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. XI, No. 1-4, 1949-1950, p 316.

thoughts which were wounded, too. Lastly, *avcı* (hunters) could not be accepted as *futuvva* holders since they killed the living things, like birds.⁶

Furthermore, there were two other groups, who could not receive *futuvva*. The first one was *mültezim* (tax collectors), the second was *muhtekir* (profiteers). A tax collector put whatever tax he wanted on people. *Muhtekir* stored wheat for the purpose of speculation, aimed at causing prices to rise so high that it contributed to famine.⁷ Nasir in his *futuvatnâme* also lists persons, who could not be an *ahi*: drunkards, practisers of both adultery and pederasty, intriguers, hypocrites, haughty, jealous, an vindictive, liars, the guilty of treacheries, those who did not keep promise, those who keep finding faults, the stingy, slanderers, false accusers, thieves and those who acquired property in an unlawful manner.⁸

Briefly, *futuvatnâmes* served to regulate the society and instruct people to be virtuous. It seems that strict rules and regulations that remained from *futuvva* were not completely accepted by guilds. For example, unlike *futuvva* membership, the butchers and surgeons could be guild members, while, at the same time, they could form their own guilds. Despite differences, however, practices from the *futuvva* culture and practices in guilds had common points, such as both tried to prevent profiteering and demanded correct measures. Moreover, while *futuvva* did not allow everybody to be the member, Ottoman craft guilds, since they were composed of different religious groups, and non-Muslims could be a guild member. In other words, the issue that "*futuvva* and *ahi* traditions continued with craft guilds" is still problematic.

⁶ *ibid*, p. 316.

⁷ *ibid*, p. 318.

⁸ *ibid*, pp. 323-325.

among the *ahi*, probably remained from the Abbassids. At the same time, the *ahis* did not wear golden rings and wore garment produced by *futuvva*-holders or an *ahi*.¹¹

However, in all *futuvvatnâmes* and *futuvva* ceremonies, the *şedd* and *şalvar* were common, as it was in both ceremonies of *futuvva* and of guilds.¹² Girding the *şedd* was considered an important symbol among *ahis*, because it meant a pledge to avoid sinful things. To legitimize the importance of girding *şedd*, many stories were fabricated. As such, since *futuvva* passed from Mohammed to Ali, unbroken lineage of *şedd* was established.¹³ There was also common belief that the first *şedd* was girded on Adam to show his renewed loyalty to God's command after his transgression. In a way, girding *şedd* also represented a covenant between God and Adam and between God and all mankind. Based on this story, girding *şedd* in the ceremonies of the guilds might carry an important symbolic meaning that there was a covenant between the guild and apprentices, journeymen or masters, for whom the ceremonies were performed.

According to the same story, Adam informed his son Shit with the practices of *futuvva*, which passed from father to son until the time of Noah. From Noah, it passed to his son Sam, then down to Abraham and to Mohammed.¹⁴ Furthermore, the prophet Mohammed, during his journey to Heaven called *Mirâc* (when he was at

¹¹ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 40.

¹² *Kusti* was the symbol of Zoroastrian tradition and it resembled the *futuvva şedd*. *Kusti* was started be girded a child who was at seven or between six and twelve. For girls, it was girded between age of six and nine. Most importantly, to tie knots of the *futuvva şedd* was similar to the *kusti* of Zoroastrianism, and of the *ıg-bend* of Bektashis. All the tied knots represented the expression "ele, dile, ve bele" carried importance. In earlier *futuvvatnâmes*, *şedd* and *peştemal* differed from each other. Later, instead of a woollen *şedd*, *peştemal* was girded. *ibid*, p. 83, 85, and 86.

¹³ *ibid*, p. 27.

¹⁴ Deodaa Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1961), pp. 147-148.

the Kaaba), put on a *tac*, *kuşak* (*şedd*), and was clad with *futuvva* garment. Similarly, Ali girded *şedd* on seventeen people called the *kemer-bestegân*, whose head was Selmân-i Farisî.

The origin of girding *şedd* was also supposedly dated back to the time of prophet Abraham. While building the Kaaba at Mecca and wishing to get rid of heretics, a piece of cloth made by houris of Heaven was girded on Abraham's waist, enabling him to complete his work. When Abraham finished his work, that piece of cloth was undone.¹⁵ In other words, *şedd* represented the strength to complete one's work regarding the *esnâf*. Furthermore, those girded with *şedd* by the same *ahi* were considered brothers.¹⁶ Based on this myth, it can be concluded that girding *şedd* by the guild members was to establish brotherhood among the *esnâf*.

Also, if girding *şedd* meant avoiding sinful things, what about taking it off? Taking it off meant keeping one's door open to the people, giving if he had any gold or silver, treating people well, acting in a friendly manner, and opening not only his door, but also his dining table to people at any time. All these responsibilities show the significance of hospitality and generosity among the *futuvva* holders.¹⁷ In other words, *şedd* symbolized virtue.¹⁸ The ceremony of Ottoman sultans' girding a sword on (*kılıç kuşanma merâsimi*) resembled the girding of *şedd* in the *ahi* tradition. Thus it appears that a symbolic link between the Ottoman sultans and *ahis* was established.

¹⁵ Nasiri, "Fütüvvetnâme Nüşâsı," p. 330.

¹⁶ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 29.

¹⁷ Nasiri, "Fütüvvetnâme Nüşâsı," pp. 330-331.

¹⁸ Girding *şedd* also became common in social life. A symbolic use of the *şedd* was for the eldest member of a newly married girl's family to gird her with it and admonish her to remain virtuous. Additionally, when women who did not have a child went to a *türbe*, a *türbedâr* girded a *şedd* or a woollen cord on her which she was expected to keep on until she bore a child. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 100.

That is to say, the Ottoman sultans tried to legitimize their sultanate by establishing a connection with a strong tradition.

Although based on another myth, like *şedd*, the origin of *şalvar* also dated back to the time of Abraham.¹⁹ When Abraham was thrown into fire by a catapult, all the gates of the sky were opened and angels came to watch the event. At just this moment, because of the fire, Abraham wanted to get rid of what he had on. Then the archangel Gabriel was ordered by God to put a *şalvar* on Abraham to hide his nakedness. This also protected him from a shame.²⁰ After Abraham, *şalvar* was said to pass to Hashimids, then to Mohammed, from him to Ali. According to Nasir, and from Ali, it passed to Selmân-i Farisî and from him to the other caliphs. Finally it returned to the Heaven. On the day of the Last Judgement, God would give it to *ahi* who had good qualities, such as generosity.²¹ Here, it is important to note that the garments of both people of the *ahi* and *futuvva* are said to have their origins in the time of Adam and of later generations of prophets. In short, *şalvar* represented the moral side of the prophets that people followed. Besides the garments, *şerbet* and *helva* were considered two important symbols in the *esnâf* rituals.

Importance of *Şerbet* and *Helva*

Since it symbolized solidarity among the members, *şerbet*, which was made up of water and salt, was one of the main symbols in the *futuvva* tradition and in the

¹⁹Although the main *futuvva* garments were both *şalvar* and *şedd*, *hirka* (dervish's cloak), *taç* (dervish's headgear) and *palhenk* (a kind of rustic leather shoe) of Bektâşhis were added later on. The *futuvva* garment in Şihâb-al-din Suhreverdi's *futuvvatnâme* was the *şalvar*, while the garment of the *tasavvuf* was *hirka*. Additionally Nakkaş Ahmet mentioned a belief that during the Huneyn war, the Archangel Gabriel brought *hirka* (cloak) of *futuvva* to Mohammed, whom in return passed on Ali. *ibid*, pp. 38-39.

²⁰ Nasiri, "Fütüvvatnâme Nüşhâsı," pp. 334-335.

²¹ *ibid*, pp. 337-338.

ceremony of the craft guilds. A component of *şerbet*, salt, was considered sacred. For example, during the time of Ancient Greece, salt was considered the most valuable thing at the temples, and at all banquets of the time. The Romans, too, accepted salt as a symbol of friendship, like the Arabs and Jews. To swear his loyalty to the king, a Jewish person would taste salt in the presence of the king himself. For the Turks, it meant *hak* (just), *bereket* (fertile), and *lezzet* (tasty).²² Nasiri says that Adam gave Eve salt as a dowry. Thus, it began to appear in the religious discourses.²³ Since the Islamic tradition did not allow drinking wine and other spirits, *futuvvatnâme* writers seem to fabricate stories based on the Islamic customs. Furthermore, in order to legitimize drinking *şerbet* rather than wine, the writers used stories illustrating how prophet Mohammed himself, the man of virtue, objected drinking wine.²⁴

In addition to *şerbet*, *helva* had its own significance. According to D. A. Breebaart, after performing the ceremony of *şedd*, for Adam honey and flour were brought to make *helva*. Adam picked up part of it for Eve, who was not present at the ceremony. Therefore, *helva* was sent to whoever was not at present during the ceremony.²⁵ Based on another myth, *helva* also had significant meaning since the Flood of Noah's time. Archangel Gabriel brought the *futuvva* to Noah, who thus accepted Gabriel as his *şeyh*, the archangel Mikael as his *ata*, and the archangel

²² Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 86.

²³ Nasiri, "Fütüvvetnâme Nüşâsı," p. 328.

²⁴ Before Mohammed, at the *futuvva* meetings, people were used to drinking wine. During Mohammed's young age, 400 followers of Abu Cehl, who gained fame as *futuvva*-holders, had drunken wine. When forty friends of Mohammed asked him to practice the same ceremony, so that they would drink wine, he refused to drink. Afterwards, they decided to drink salted water in the name of Mohammed. Based on this story, soon afterwards the *futuvva* holders were divided into two factions: those who drank wine and who drank salted water
Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 43.

²⁵ Deodaat Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, p. 147.

İsrafil, as his *kardaş*, brother. With the instruction of those archangels, Noah constructed his ark. Later, Gabriel brought raisin and grape from Heaven to make *helva*, which Noah ate. Sending *helva* to each other, in other words, provided a symbolic interaction among the *esnâf* of different cities.²⁶

Other Practices, Rules and Regulations

Ottoman craft guilds also paid attention to correct measures that was said to have been based on *futuvva*. They demanded correct measures of products ordered by Sharia. D. A. Breebaart pays attention to the belief that all of their transactions and the way the merchants or *esnâf* conducted their businesses would be taken into account on the Day of Last Judgement.²⁷ According to another story, when Mohammed wanted to buy wheat from the market, he saw that wheat was wet. Then the prophet asked the seller why this was so. The man confessed that he wished to gain more profit. Mohammed then said, "everyone who deceives me or my community does not belong to my people."²⁸

Another practice was to come together and had entertains when met. At the meeting place, members used to read some parts from the Koran, or tell the stories of saintly people, and of the prophets. At some of the *sobets*, people were dancing.²⁹ Music and dancing played considerable roles in the ceremonies at the beginning. Nasiri praised *sema*, whirling dance, on a higher level by saying that wind brought

²⁶ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye I*, p. 499; and Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," p. 91.

²⁷ Deodaat Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, p. 170.

²⁸ *ibid*, p. 168.

²⁹ *ibid*, p. 173.

the song of the angels.³⁰ Probably later on, when the *ulema*'s influence throughout the Empire increased, music and dancing lost their significance.

Ceremony of Apprenticeship (*Çırak Çıkarma Merâsimi*)

The ceremony of apprentices was important to maintain monopoly over the craft. Having this ceremony, the guild's committee made it clear that people who were not trained as apprentice could not open his shop and practice the craft.³¹ Also, by giving place to girding *şedd*, the ceremony expresses master's loyalty to the guild.

The ceremony of apprentices took place as follows. Through one's admission to the guilds, one guide (*yol atası*) and two fellows (*yol kardeşi*) were assigned to the apprentices. The *yol atası* was responsible in instructing in the rules and beliefs of the *futuvva* tradition. The *yol kardeşi* instructed the apprentices to be in the *futuvva* path.³² Apprentices, masters, *şeyh*, and *nakîb* attended these ceremonies.³³ Among the *şeyhs* and masters, a guide was chosen to perform the ceremony. The guide took a jar of water in his hand and went step by step back from the front of the *şeyh*, while pouring water to both sides. He took a brush in his left hand, and again came back to the front of the *şeyh*, where he then knelt. The guide swept both *şeyh*'s *seccâde* (prayer rug), and his skirt. Of course, while performing the ceremony, the guide was praying. Afterwards, the apprentice and the guide held

³⁰ "Zevk ve neş'e her adama layık değildir. Raks etmek ariflere bir gösteriş sayılmaz." Nasiri, "Fütüvvetnâme Nüshâsı," p. 349.

³¹ The ceremony girding *peştemal* or *şedd* on a *şâkird* took place during an excursion usually at the Veli Efendi, Çırpıcı, Kağıthane, Fenerbahçe, Göksu, and Beykoz. These excursions were called *Esnâf teferrüçleri*, at which the attendants pitched tent, cooked and played music. Refik Soykut, *Ortayol Ahilik*, (Ankara: Türkiye Esnaf ve Sanatkarlar Konfederasyonu Eğitim Yayınları, 1971), p. 38.

³² Deodaat Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, p. 187.

³³ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye I*, p. 503.

a jar, a pair of scales, and present to offer to the *şeyh*, as they entered to the presence of the *şeyh* and the elders of the guild. At this moment, *ayets*, and *hâdis-i şerîf* relating to the craft, for which the ceremony was performed, were recited. The *şeyh* prayed as he gave advice to the apprentice. Finally, the apprentice kissed the hands of all those who were present.³⁴ Moreover, Breebaart tells us a ceremony of the guilds of tailor:

In the guild of tailors, the *nakîb* presents the *şâkird* with a pair of scissors, a Turkish yardstick, a needle and thread, or a piece of yarn. As in the other guilds, the *nakîb* pronounces an elaborate invocation for the patron saint (Da'ud ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman), the probates, martyrs, and the companions of the prophet, the ruling officials, the *viziers*, and the *dervishes*. Presenting the *şâkird* with the tokens of his trade, the *nakîb* admonishes him to use these implements in legal way, and to refrain from cheating, to be as sharp and straight in his behavior as the cutting scissors, the *şâkird* could cut the material of his clients with the scissors of "takva" (God-fearing, piety). With regard to the "arşun" (yardstick), the *nakîb* reminds the *şâkird* to bear in mind the straight path of righteousness whenever he uses this tool. The needle also must be a reminder for the *şâkird* to follow the right path and never to transgress the *şari'ah* or *tariqah*.³⁵

Cutting the hair of the *şâkird* was an important part of the ceremony to note.

"The *şeyh* explains the hair-cutting to the cutting to the *şâkird* with the following words: 'we removed pride, vanity and hypocrisy from your head, giving (with this hair-cut) you instead meekness, humility and sincerity.'³⁶ Of course, the procedure of cutting hair might be different in other ceremonies. At the ceremony stated in *Futuvvetnâme-i Kebir*, "the *sahykh* takes the novice's right hand and they hold each others hands with four fingers, the thumbs held upwards. Care is taken that the novice's thumb is slightly lower than the *shaykh*'s, for this indicates the difference in rank between the two persons."³⁷ The hand-clasp represented Adam's covenant with

³⁴ Cemal Anadol, *Türk-İslam Medeniyetlerinde Ahilik Kültürü ve Futuvvetnâmeler*, (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1991), pp. 96-97.

³⁵ Deodaat Anne Breebaart, *The Development and Structure of the Turkish Futuvva Guilds*, p. 186.

³⁶ *ibid*, p. 189.

³⁷ *ibid*, p. 190.

God and that the novice at the same time pledged not to transgress and repented regret his past sins. By doing this, the novice was admitted among the *futuvva* people³⁸ Finally it appears that this ceremony was based on the Islamic culture and does not reflect the ceremony regarding all of the Ottoman *esnâf*.

Ceremony of Journeymanship

Since journeymanship appeared with limited number of shops, preparing a ceremony was significant to honor the journeymen. With a ceremony, the guild probably tried to make journeyman feel that he was so close to mastership. In this way, possible conflicts were prevented. This ceremony, as it was for the apprenticeship and mastership, represented the hierarchical structure of the guilds. As such, during the ceremony, the guild members sat down according to their rank.

The ceremony took place as follows. After reciting *âşır* (a portion of ten verses in the Koran), the candidate kissed the hand of all members, and offered cups of coffee to all. Afterwards, he was accepted as a journeyman. The author, Refik Soykut, tells us how a ceremony of journeymanship took place. For all masters who attended the ceremony, the young journeyman prepared a bundle in a wrapper (*bohça*), in which were a *futa* bath wrapper made of silk, a *peştemal*, a towel, and a block of soap. The relatives and friends of the candidate were called to attend the ceremony, which was performed at the mosque as well. The ceremony started with the entrance of the candidate and his guide. With his hands at his guide's shoulder, and a step behind the guide, the candidate entered the room. When they entered, the guide prayed. After that, they greeted each other four times and the guide took the

³⁸ *ibid*, p. 190.

candidate into the presence of the *kahya*. Then the candidate kissed the hands of people present there.³⁹ Moreover, while working and did the requirements of his position, journeymen had to prove that he was ready for mastership. If he do so, then a much bigger ceremony was performed.

Ceremony of Mastership

The ceremony of mastership was important to receive the right to practice the craft independently. The ceremony of mastership was mainly performed during the spring and mostly at the places of the *mesire* (excursion). Later on, those ceremonies took place in mosques, in front of the *mihrâb*.⁴⁰ After guild members was considered a candidate, ready for mastership, he had thirty days to find a workshop for himself. After he found one, his master informed the other guild members. Then they decided the date of the ceremony. The ceremony of mastership was held on the *esnâf köşkü*, which was outside the city walls of İstanbul. At the front, the *kahya* of the guild sat down while the masters sat at *kahyas'* backs. All made a circle, at the center of which was a round *sedir* for the guild dignitaries, such as for the eldest *kahya*, religious men like the *müftü*, and *imâm*.⁴¹ Finally, the candidate entered the room with his master and then they greeted all. During the master's ceremony, not only prayers were recited but also *silsilenâme* of the patron saints of crafts and biographies of the prophets were repeated. Afterwards, the candidate was advised to

³⁹ “*Esselamu Aleyküm yâ ehl-i şeriât*,” to the *şeyh*. Then the guide said “*Esselamu Aleyküm yâ ehl-i tarikat*,” “*Esselamü Aleyküm yâ ehl-i Hakîka*,” and then “*Yâ ehl-i mârifê*.” Refik Soykut, *Ortayol Ahilik*, pp. 113-114.

⁴⁰ *ibid*, pp. 112-113.

⁴¹ *ibid*, p. 114.

be loyal to the ethic of his craft guild. Finally, the old master himself girded new master's *peştemal*.⁴²

Besides all these practices and rituals, Ottoman processions was also based on the religious ceremonies and rituals. Nevertheless, processions more likely reflected participation of all *esnâf* groups. It is important to note that *esnâf* excursions show us how the Ottoman public was entertained. Ceremonies of mastership were held during these excursions, which took place at Veliefendi, Çırpıcı, Kağıthane, Fenerbahçe, Çamlıca, Göksu, Beykoz, and Sarıyer in İstanbul.⁴³ Moreover, Ottoman *esnâf* had a traditional annual meeting (*Ziyâfet Toplantısı*) held outside of the city, at the back of Hisar. All *esnâf* had the practice of attending an excursion at the places of *mesire* at a certain day of the year. Nothing about their crafts and business was discussed. However, the head of the guilds gave advises to the *esnâf*. At these meetings, the ceremonies of both journeymanship and mastership took place.⁴⁴ In the beginning, these excursions were friendly practices between Muslims and non-Muslims. Over time, not only did the Muslim *esnâf* make non-Muslim *esnâf* pay the expenditures of these feasts, but also some rude behavior came into the scene.⁴⁵

Sometimes, the ceremonies prepared by the palace showed the greatness of the sultan's power. For example, the circumcision ceremony of Prince Mehmed in 1582 lasted for twenty-one days. In addition, Mehmet IV, who was very involved in hunting, chose Edirne as a place procession (*şenlik*), in 1675, because it was also a

⁴² *ibid*, p. 115.

⁴³The last *esnâf teferücu* took place in the summer of 1880 held by the *lüleci esnâfi*. Özdemir Nutku, *IV. Mehmed'in Edirne Şenliği (1675)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1987), p. 29.

⁴⁴ *ibid*, p. 133, and 152.

⁴⁵ *ibid*, p. 132.

favorite place of hunting. The *esnâf* exhibited their occupations during these processions. Considering Mehmet IV's procession, the parade of *esnâf* lasted forty days and held in alphabetical order. They presented their *pişkeş* to the sultan, and went to eat the meal offered by the sultan himself.⁴⁶ This indicates the ideal sultan who felt himself responsible for feeding his subjects. Moreover, the *esnâf* had colorful flags on their carriages while passing. Some *esnâf* had faces be whitened with flour or paint to entertain people. Similarly, during the parade of 1836, Jews dressed in different clothing of different countries.⁴⁷ Also Mahmud II prepared a great procession when his son, Abdülmecit, started his own education.⁴⁸ All these imply how important these ceremonies and parades.

Ahi Culture, Yârâns, and the Esnâf

Ahi culture and *yârân* (friend) *sohbetis* had common points. *Yârân odaları*, which were meeting places of *yârâns*, were like small *ahi zawiya*s in terms of their ways of training the youth and offering hospitality. *Yârâns* also helped each other or each other's relatives at the time of wedding if needed, and to people who were poor, whose husband was conscripted in the army, the elderly people, and widows.⁴⁹ This resembles the function of the *Esnâf Sandığı*.

There were similarities between *yârân sohbetleri* and ceremonies of the *esnâf*. The *yârân* focused on entertainment and solidarity. In the beginning, these practices included women, but over time as religious fanaticism increased, they

⁴⁶ *ibid*, pp. 73-74.

⁴⁷ *ibid*, pp. 75-76.

⁴⁸ *ibid*, p. 27.

⁴⁹ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, (Ankara: Türk Kurumu Yayınları, 1997), p. 150.

became male practice especially after the reign of Selim I.⁵⁰ Neşet Çağatay gives an example of how *yârân odaları* were established. The villagers divided the year into two in one-hundred-eighty days each: *Kasım Günleri* and *Hızır Günleri*. *Kasım Günleri* started on November eight, while *Hızır Günleri* started on May sixth. When the harvest was over, and people were ready for the winter, they had nothing to do. Males, who were divided into three groups according to their ages (20-30, 30-40, and 40 and above), met and decided whom they would allow to attend their *sohbet*. At first, the former *yârâns* choose their head, who might also have been the former *yârânbaşı*. According to Neşet Çağatay, *yârânbaşı* represented *Ahi Baba*, while the *odabaşı*, who was responsible for ordinary businesses, organization, and necessities of the meeting place, represented the *nakîb*.⁵¹ At the *yârân*'s meeting, everybody sat down according to his or her position. At the left and right of the *ocak*, no *yârân* sat. The *şeyh*, or *yârânbaşı* sat on the right *minder* (cushion). On the left side, in the place of *nakîb*, *odabaşı* sat. When the *yârânbaşı* and the *odabaşı* came in, everybody rose. Also at the *yârân odası*, no place was given to gambling, drinking, or any rude behavior.⁵²

In addition, no *yârân* visited another room or went to coffee-houses alone. However, small groups might meet among themselves. The meeting of the *yârân odası* continued until *Hidrellez*, on May 6. On the day of *Hidrellez*, *yârâns* of Yenice village went the side of the Lake of Eğridir and with the money they collected, they bought an animal to eat. They also entertained themselves until the

⁵⁰ Tuncer Gülersoy, "Simav'da Yaren Teşkilatı," *Millî Kültür*, Vol. II, No. 11, 1981, p. 10.

⁵¹ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, p. 145.

⁵² *ibid*, pp. 146-147.

evening and then returned to their homes. After that common feast and entertainment, the activities of *yârân odası* came to an end.⁵³

In conclusion, *futuvva* and *ahi* cultures might have influenced the ceremonies of the Muslim *esnâf*. However, all practices were not completely transferred from these two cultures since guilds were composed of both Muslim and non-Muslim *esnâf*. Also because the ceremonies became so complicated and detailed, even the Muslim *esnâf* gradually abandoned them. Nonetheless, main symbols, such as *şedd*, *şalvar*, and *helva* continued to be important parts of the *esnâf* ceremonies, which were performed to achieve solidarity among the *esnâf*. This chapter has also examined the *yârân* culture because some scholars argue that this was the continuation of the *ahi* associations and they assume an indirect link with the *esnâf* culture. Although from different places, the masses and the sultans watched the same processions and enjoyed the same parade performed during the circumcision of a *şehzade*, wedding of important people, and *bayrams*.⁵⁴ Also, watching the same parade provides opportunity for the masses to show their allegiance to the sultan and for sultan to embrace his subjects.

⁵³ *ibid*, pp. 148-149.

⁵⁴ Özdemir Nutku, *IV. Mehmed'in Edirne Şenliği (1675)*, p. 9.

III. The Organization of the Ottoman Craft Guilds and The Role of the Central Government

This chapter focuses on the organizational structure of the Ottoman craft guilds and the role of the central government regarding the *esnâf*. In the ottoman context, although the underlying concept of a guild had existed for some time, the word "guild" (*lonca*) came into use only in the eighteenth century. Originally, *lonca* was used to designate the meeting place for Ottoman craftsmen (*lonca dâiresi* or *lonca odası*), but later it started to designate the committee of guild (*lonca heyeti*).¹ Although Ottoman craft-guilds were divided into two major categories as outsiders and insiders, the focus of this chapter is on the insiders: auxiliaries, apprentices, journeymen and masters as well as the other important positions such as *kethüdâ* and *yiğitbaşı*.

The Role of the Central Government in Controlling *Esnâf*

Throughout Ottoman history, the central government in İstanbul played significant role regarding the craft guilds. The Ottoman government, for example, issued decrees at various times to determine which types of professions were to be practiced. Moreover, when a guild member misbehaved, the government was informed and it took necessary measures.

It is apparent that the central government had more control on craft guilds of the capital city as compared with guilds in other cities. As demonstrated by Haim Gerber, guilds in seventeenth century Bursa were more autonomous.² Nevertheless, there were a few examples regarding guilds in İstanbul, for example, nobody entered

¹ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol. VIII-XII, No.14-23, 1970-1974, p. 111.

² Haim Gerber, "Guilds in Seventeenth-Century Anatolian Bursa," *Asian and African Studies*, No. 11, p. 86.

the *Saraçlar Çarşısı* (Market Square for saddlers or leather craftsmen), according to a custom practiced since the reign of Mehmet II.³ Such examples are, however, rare. In İstanbul, as in parts of the Empire, the government continued to strengthen the guilds by giving them certain privileges, since the taxes imposed on guilds were important source of revenues.⁴ It can also be concluded that relationship between the central government and the guilds was mutual.

Organizational Structure of Guilds

Ottoman guilds were organized hierarchically. Gabriel Baer, however, argues that the hierarchical structures of the guilds were not as strict as some researchers have claimed so.⁵ If compared with the European guilds, their counterparts in the Middle East were less strictly organized. In this view, since the Ottoman guilds were not based on class interests, no serious conflict among the guild members came into play.⁶ However, conflicts between guild members were unavoidable.

Before discussing the organizational structure of the Ottoman craft guilds, we should first look at the ranks. Initially, at the *zawiyas*, there were nine positions: *Yiğitlik* was the lowest stage. *Ahilik*, which was composed of six stages came after the *Yiğitlik*. The first three stages of *Ahilik* called the *ashâb-ı tarîk*, while the latter

³ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Esnâf Cemiyetleri," *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. LXI, No. 1-4, 1985, p. 42.

⁴ *ibid*, p. 41.

Haim Gerber seems to agree by saying that "holding a shop in the market leads to payment of guild taxes; paying taxes makes the traditional privileges of the guilds legally enforceable."

Haim Gerber, "Guilds in Seventeenth-Century Anatolian Bursa," p. 63.

⁵ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 101.

⁶ *ibid*, p. 119.

three as *nükabâ*. At the seventh stage was *halife*, while *şeyh* was at the eighth. *Şeyh* was the head of these seven positions, and at the most top was the *Şeyhü'l-meşâyih*.⁷

The Ottoman craft guilds were basically composed of two important groups: insiders (*dâhililer*) and outsiders (*hariciler*). Insiders were composed of auxiliaries (*yamak*), apprentices (*çırak*), journeymen (*kalfa*, *halifa*) and masters (*usta*). Outsiders were former guild members, who did not actively participate in business. Outsiders were also divided into three groups: the retired, feeble, and sick or disabled.⁸ The retired were the former masters who did not have to work or get assistance from the *Esnâf Sandığı*.⁹ However, with the support of journeymen, some of them could manage their shops, if they had enough capital. The feeble (*aceze*), were also former masters, but unlike the retired, they could not manage shops or workshops. They got aid from the *Esnâf Sandığı* according to their needs. Moreover, the disabled (*ma'lûlîn*) needed real care while at the same time, receiving aid from both *Esnâf Sandığı* and active masters and journeymen.¹⁰ There were three

⁷ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyeye I*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı), p. 516.

⁸ Adnan Gülerman, and Sevda Taştekil, *Ahi Teşkilatının Türk Toplumunun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı Üzerinde Etkileri*, (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Halk Kültürlerini Araştırma ve Geliştirme Genel Müdürlüğü Yayınları: 194, Gelenek Görenek ve İnançlar Dizisi, 1993), p. 17.

⁹ *Esnâf Sandığı* is where fees of the craftsmen were collected. This was also known as *Esnâf Vakfı* or *Esnâf Kesesi*. When Mithat Paşa was the governor of Tuna, he founded *Esnâf Sandıkları* with the same name, for which, the fifth percent of the goods of the subject was taken. By this way, Mithat Paşa aimed to save people from the hands of the brokers. This practice gained popularity and other branches of them were opened in various places. With the interest rate of these *sandıks*, the roads, schools and bridges and other types of social services aimed to be compensated. In 1883, *Menâfi-i Umûmiye* replaced those *sandık* but, in 1888 Ziraat Bank replaced the last one. Neşet Çağatay, "Ahiliğin Türk Ekonomisine Getirdikleri," in: *Ahilik ve Esnâf*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Esnâf ve Sanatkarlar Dernekleri Birliği Yayınları, "986), pp. 95-96.

¹⁰ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyeye II*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları), p. 682.

considerable strata of insiders filled by masters, journeymen, and apprentices in each guild as well as by *şeyh*, *nakib*, *yiğitbaşı*, *duacı*, *çavuş* and *kethüdâ*.¹¹

Çırak or Şakird (Apprentice)

An apprentice in the Ottoman craft-guilds held the lowest stage in the hierarchy, however, sometimes another strata, *yamak* (auxiliary), appeared before this stage. In Serez, for example, an auxiliary had to work regularly for two years to become an apprentice.¹² During that period, auxiliaries worked without any payment.¹³ Apprentices could not be below the age of ten, and trustees were responsible for their coming to work.¹⁴ Although it is not clear, many sources accept 1001 days or three years of extension for apprenticeship. The number of apprentices employed was limited, since the guilds decided how many of them had to be employed. Similarly, guilds prevented anyone from becoming a master before training as an apprentice.¹⁵ Apprentices could either work with more than one master or leave their masters without their guild's permission.¹⁶ Based on the *Çobanoğlu Futuvatnâme*, Osman Nuri Ergin lists some important duties of an apprentice, who had to be loyal to the one hundred twenty-four articles stated in the *futuvatnâme*, accept all words uttered by his *ahi*, to sacrifice his property and life for him, to get his clothes washed each week, and to have a profession.¹⁷

¹¹ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "İslam ve Türk İllerinde Fütüvvet Teşkilatı," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. XI, No. 1-4, 1949-1950, p. 98.

¹² Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 101.

¹³ Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), p. 137.

¹⁴ Mübahat Kütükoğlu, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Oto-Kontrol Müessesesi," in: *Ahilik ve Esnâf*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Esnâf ve Sanatkarlar Dernekleri Birliği Yayınları, 1986), p. 57.

¹⁵ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 100.

¹⁶ *ibid*, p. 100.

¹⁷ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye I*, p. 520.

Conflicts among guild members was inevitable. Conflicts might surface between master and his apprentice. Such conflicts usually centered on food and day of rest. Most of the time, conflict concerning food was not really between apprentice and his master; rather it was between the apprentice and his master's wife, since apprentices ate their meals at their master's home. When they did not like the food prepared by their master's wife, a serious conflict immediately arose.¹⁸

It was necessary for apprentices to acquire an education to meet the requirements of their positions. At the beginning, they received a social and moral training at the *zawiyas*.¹⁹ However, the practice of reading and writing given to apprentices was abandoned later on. The reason might be the increasing material consideration of the craftsmen who did not follow the former *ahi* practices. Moreover, many families had their children work before getting education. Parents took them away from the Koran courses, because they wanted them to add to the family income. Gabriel Baer states that Mahmud II issued an *irâde*, an official decree, to forbid the guilds from employing children before they had gotten an education. Therefore, each apprentice had to have a *tezkere*, an official certificate, given by the local *kadı*, to ensure that a candidate for apprenticeship had completed his education.²⁰

Kalfa (Journeyman)

After fulfilling the requirements of apprenticeship, one could become a journeyman. However, between apprenticeship and journeymanship, another stage

¹⁸ Süleyman Eryiğit, *Ahi Birliklerinde Yönetim ve İşletme Fonksiyonlarının Temel Yapısı*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989), p. 9.

¹⁹ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Beledîyye I*, p. 518.

²⁰ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 101.

called *şeriklik* (companionship) existed at least during the eighteenth century printing guilds.²¹ Moreover, according to some documents, there were apprentices who became a master without being a journeyman. However, it was defined that there was a real distinction between a journeyman and an apprentice.²² The guilds of seventeenth century Bursa were an exception to this, for according to Haim Gerber, there was no journeyman position in guilds of Bursa. Instead, completion of apprenticeship was sufficient to become a master.²³ Gerber concludes that “possibly, the meaning of journeyman (*halifa*) underwent some historical development that equated it with a mere wage-earner. If so, it would have meant that the formal hierarchy of the guild in seventeenth century Bursa was somewhat fluid.”²⁴

Journeymanship was added later on to the Ottoman craft guilds. As a result of some economic problems that the Empire faced, the number of shops and workshops were limited. The institution of *gedik* (the right of exercising of a craft, or monopoly) contributed to the emergence of the position of journeymanship. When a *gedik* passed not to the state treasury and, therefore, not to the apprentice, but to the heirs of the deceased *gedik* holder, apprentices who were ready for mastership had to keep working in their former workshops. This, within time, created tension.

Hence a new type of relation between the employer and his employees appeared in the working life of the Ottoman Empire.²⁵ A serious flaw in the system exposed as the number of journeymen either unable to open their own shops or could

²¹ *ibid*, p. 102.

²² *ibid*, p. 102

²³ Haim Gerber, "Guilds in Seventeenth-Century Anatolian Bursa," p. 67.

²⁴ *ibid*, p. 68.

²⁵ Süleyman Eryiğit, *Ahi Birliklerinde Yönetim ve İşletme Fonksiyonlarının Temel Yapısı*, p. 29.

not work independently increased gradually. They became a threatening factor within guilds.²⁶ Halil Sahilliođlu demonstrates the case from the guild of *simkeş* (gold or silver wire-driver). When numbers of journeymen who desired to become masters increased, a forced division of the cadres occurred. Thus some masters had to accept half of a *gedik*.²⁷

Based on another document from 1734, Halil Sahilliođlu argues that journeymen of the *simkeş* guild inhibited their masters from employing any new workers or slaves during the next eight years.²⁸ It seems that the journeymen of *simkeş* at that time really had significant pressure on their masters. And most likely, their aim was to prevent any new-comers, thus to keep their wages high. When master of a shop had a son, the journeyman working there could not easily become a master. Over time, masters tended to employ slaves or casual laborers at a lower price. Thus, it became difficult for the journeymen of *simkeş* to preserve their prices even at their current level.²⁹ Also journeymen, especially those who did not have independent workshops and had to work with their master, could not oppose their masters.³⁰

For a journeyman, it was difficult to open his own shop even when he became a master. Getting certain training, developing good relationships with other journeymen, and behaving in good manner towards customers were not enough for a

²⁶ *ibid*, pp. 29-30.

²⁷ Halil Sahilliođlu, "Esnâf Cemiyetleri İçinde Usta-Kalfa Çekişmesi," *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi*, No. 17, 1969, p. 59.

²⁸ "İstanbul *simkeşhâne* esnâfi ile şakirtlerinin *çıkırık denen alet üzerinde çekişmeleri olduğundan bundan böyle bir çıkırık sahibi öldüğünde mukâtaa şartlarına göre çıkırık, varsa ođluna, yoksa hakkı olan kalfalarına verilecektir. Bir çıkırık boş (malul) olmadıkça yeni bir çıkırık verilmeyecektir. Altı ay evvelinden beri köle veya yanaşma şakird adı altında aldıkları hizmetkârları odalarından uzaklaştıracaklardır."*

ibid, p. 59.

²⁹ *ibid*, p. 61.

³⁰ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Esnâf Cemiyetleri," p. 41.

candidate master to open a shop. Instead, he also required to have sufficient amount of capital.³¹ Yet, even if a master did not have enough capital but other conditions were suitable, he could consult the *Esnâf Sandığı* for assistance. Nonetheless, only the guild could give such permission, if there were any vacant *gedik* and journeymen really needed assistance.³²

Usta or Üstad (Master)

To be a master, one had to be a member of a guild and to have worked as a journeyman for at least three years without violating certain rules and regulations of the craft guilds. Furthermore, except the sixteenth century guilds of physicians and surgeons, no information has been found about taking any sort of test before getting the right of mastership.³³ One had to follow some basic rules even after he became a master. For instance, when a master left his *gedik* for whatever the reason, he was not allowed to work by holding the same position at least for a certain period. When he returned, he had to resume as a journeyman.³⁴

Another difficulty that masters faced with emerged when the institution of *gedik* was established. At the beginning, masters were the owners of their shops and the equipment they used for their own businesses. But, when this privilege began to pass by inheritance, it turned out that masters were not able to act independently.³⁵ Instead, they became dependent on the new hereditary system. It appears that, not only journeymen, but also masters began to work as employees, because of the loss

³¹ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 104.

³² *ibid*, p. 35.

³³ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 104.

³⁴ Süleyman Eryiğit, *Ahi Birliklerinde Yönetim ve İşletme Fonksiyonlarının Temel Yapısı*, p. 36.

³⁵ *ibid*, p. 30.

of control over their workshops. It is also important to note that, as the case of tanners guilds indicates, if a master was rich and independent enough, he might have end up as a merchant and left his own guild.³⁶

***Yiğitbaşı* (assistant to the guild's warden)**

Yiğitbaşı was the assistant to the guild's warden (*kethüdâ*) and helped him not only in training and disciplining guild members, but also in punishing any of them who had committed a crime. *Yiğitbaşı* was also responsible for distributing raw materials to artisans and girding *peştemal* on masters during their ceremonies.³⁷ Moreover they could award *gedik* and *icâzet* to the craftsmen.³⁸ In a sense, *yiğitbaşı* had both economic and religious functions simultaneously. Furthermore, the *işçibaşı* assisted the *yiğitbaşı* in controlling and preserving the quality of the produced goods.³⁹ The *işçibaşı* was responsible for choosing his workers from a specific place where they gathered.⁴⁰ During the nineteenth century, *vekil* replaced *yiğitbaşı*.⁴¹

Kethüdâ

Kethüdâ was the guild's head. To be a *kethüdâ*, one had to work as a master and be trained by at least three masters. The names, *esnâf şeyhi* (*şeyh* of a guild), *şeyh*, *mütevelli* and *kahya* were the other names commonly used for this position. *Kahya* was the title mainly used by the populace. Formerly, the title, *Ahi Baba* was

³⁶ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, (London: Phoenix, 1997), p. 157.

³⁷ Adnan Gülerman, and Sevda Taştekil, *Ahi Teşkilatının Türk Toplumunun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı Üzerinde Etkileri*, p. 14.

³⁸ Süleyman Eryiğit, *Ahi Birliklerinde Yönetim ve İşletme Fonksiyonlarının Temel Yapısı*, p. 31.

³⁹ Adnan Gülerman, and Sevda Taştekil, *Ahi Teşkilatının Türk Toplumunun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı Üzerinde Etkileri*, p. 14.

⁴⁰ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Esnâf Cemiyetleri," p. 41.

used for the guild's head. Furthermore, some guilds did not have their own *kethüdâs* depending on how heavy the work load was. If a profession did not require very much work, *kethüdâs* from other professions took responsibility for them.⁴²

Before the eighteenth century, instead of *kethüdâ*, the name *şeyh* was used for such a position. Importantly, non-Muslims did not call the head *kethüdâ*, they rather preferred *ustabaşı*.⁴³ *Kethüdâ* of the Sivas guilds was mainly responsible for the financial and external affairs of the guild. Hence the *Esnâf Şeyhi* carried out the internal affairs of the guild.⁴⁴ That is to say, the *kethüdâ* of *Bedesten (Vekil-i Fukarâ)* in Sivas and *esnâf şeyhi* were not the same person. Besides *kethüdâ* of a guild, there was a town *kethüdâ*, who together with other important people contacted with the government for guild's affairs.⁴⁵ Egyptian *esnâf* called their head as *şeyh*, while further in Arab lands within the Ottoman territories, *şeyh* was not only a spiritual but also an administrative head of a guild, unlike those in Anatolian and Rumelian parts of the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁶ A real distinction between *şeyh* and *kethüdâ* was apparent. The *şeyh* mainly carried out religious ceremonies. However, as the economic and administrative sides of the guilds gained ground, the importance of the *şeyh* diminished gradually.⁴⁷ The only known exception, from the nineteenth

⁴¹ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 110.

⁴² Samiye Baydur, *Osmanlı Esnâf Cemiyetinin Menşei, Tekâmülü ve Kaldırılması*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Felsefe Zümresi Sosyoloji Mezuniyet Tezi, 1946-1947), p. 27.

⁴³ Mehmet Genç, "Osmanlı Esnâfi ve Devletle İlişkileri," in: *Ahilik ve Esnâf*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Esnâf ve Sanatkarlar Dernekleri Birliği Yayınları, 1986), p. 116.

⁴⁴ Ömer Demirel, *II. Mahmud Dönemi'nde Sivas'ta Esnâf Teşkilatı ve Üretim Tüketim İlişkileri*, (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 10, Kültür Eserleri Dizisi: 136, 1989), p. 48.

⁴⁵ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, p. 153.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 152.

⁴⁷ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 113.

century, was the bookseller guilds that still called their head as *şeyh* regardless of their religion.⁴⁸

A *kethüdâ* had many responsibilities. First of all, he assumed the responsibility of *Esnâf Sandığı*. Secondly, he resolved the problems of his own guild and took care of buildings belonging to the guild. He employed the *davetçi*, the *çeşmeci*, the *bekçi*, and some other employees. Also a *kethüdâ* was responsible for preparing the ceremonies of master, journeyman and apprentice and attending meetings of the guilds' committees.⁴⁹

Election of a *kethüdâ* in the Ottoman guilds by the guild members indicates the autonomy that the guilds have in their affairs. However, the *kadı*'s approval of the newly elected *kethüdâ* was needed. A regulation from 1864, for example, stated that government had the responsibility for choosing *kahya* of the *sarrafs*. Nonetheless, if there were any complaints about the newly appointed *kahya*, the government (or *kadı*) took it into consideration.⁵⁰ Consider the following example from Sivas, the craftsmen and artisans of the town chose their head and then informed the *kadı*. After the *kadı* approved the head, the governor appointed him as the guild's head.⁵¹ This example demonstrates that the approval of *kadı* was not sufficient. It is reasonable to argue that practice of authorization by the government was a later invention. As examined by Ömer Demirel, in some cases, the *kadı* was

⁴⁸ *ibid*, p. 114.

⁴⁹ Adnan Gülerman, and Sevda Taştekil, *Ahi Teşkilatının Türk Toplumunun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı Üzerinde Etkileri*, p. 13.

⁵⁰ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p.115.

⁵¹ Ömer Demirel, *II. Mahmud Dönemi'nde Sivas'ta Esnâf Teşkilatı ve Üretim Tüketim İlişkileri*, p. 49.

informed by the elected *esnâf şeyhi*, who himself informed the *kadı* and then the *kadı* asked a *berât-ı şerif* from İstanbul to approve the election of the head.⁵²

The tendency to appoint state officials as *kethüdâ* began in the seventeenth century and it became a common practice since then.⁵³ During the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, the appointment of a *kethüdâ* from outside the guild was a well-established practice. Gabriel Baer demonstrates that, most of the time, guild members preferred palace dignitaries as their *kethüdâs*, since they believed this would serve for their own interest.⁵⁴ As Halil İnalçık also emphasizes, the central government was mainly concerned with maintaining autonomy of guilds.⁵⁵

Initially, *kadı*'s approval was not a requirement. After the sixteenth century, however, this changed and the government started to appoint the leading figure of an *ahi* association as its *kethüdâ*.⁵⁶ It is important to note that it is to the benefits of the government to appoint a state official as the *kethüdâ*. Since the government had most of the time difficulty in paying the salaries of its officials, such appointments would load the burden of paying salaries of at least some official to the guilds. Furthermore, by this, the government would increase its control over the guilds.⁵⁷ In fact, for an appointment of a *kethüdâ*, the consent of the majority of the *esnâf* was necessary.⁵⁸ Gerber's example from Bursa indicates that the *kethüdâs* were not government officials. He gives a specific example in which the government officials

⁵² According to Ömer Demirel, no information was found either before or during the reign of Mahmut II about how long the *esnâf şeyhi* in a Sivas guild continued in his job. *ibid*, p. 49, and 50.

⁵³ Mehmet Genç, "Osmanlı Esnâfi ve Devletle İlişkileri," p. 120.

⁵⁴ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 116.

⁵⁵ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, p. 152.

⁵⁶ Süleyman Eryiğit, *Ahi Birliklerinde Yönetim ve İşletme Fonksiyonlarının Temel Yapısı*, p. 20.

⁵⁷ Mehmet Genç, "Osmanlı Esnâfi ve Devletle İlişkileri," p. 120.

⁵⁸ *ibid*, p. 116.

could not intervene in the affairs of the guild. And, furthermore, in the same case, the *kethüdâ* did not consider himself as a government official.⁵⁹ Gerber draws the conclusion that the approval of *kethüdâ*-ship by the *kadı* in Bursa was a mere formality.⁶⁰

The guild members gained effectiveness in controlling their *kethüdâ*, at least, the seventeenth century guilds of Bursa did. At least in Bursa, the guild members had relatively much control over their own *kethüdâ* and if the *kethüdâ* failed to carry out his duties or neglected them, they could dismiss him.⁶¹ In brief, initially the guild members chose their own *kethüdâ* mostly in İstanbul. However, especially during the late Ottoman history, the government began to appoint the *kethüdâ*. On the other hand, procedure of electing *kethüdâ* shows differences in various cities.

Religion also played a key role in the election of a guild's warden. In Sivas guilds, during the reign of Mahmud II, the *kethüdâ* of the *bedesten* was chosen from among Muslims, but Muslim *kethüdâ* sometimes shared his position with a non-Muslim.⁶² If the majority of a guild was composed of non-Muslims, they had a non-Muslim *kethüdâ*, otherwise a Muslim *kethüdâ*. For example, in 1657, Muslim *takkeçiler* (seller of skullcaps) at the *Bedesten* of İstanbul, asked the Council of State (*divan*) to have a Muslim *kethüdâ*, because at that time Muslims were in the majority.⁶³ When Muslims *esnâf* realized that their numbers surpassed those of the non-Muslims, they wanted to have a Muslim *kethüdâ*, whom the non-Muslims objected. In the end, two *kethüdâs* were chosen: one Muslim and one non-Muslim.

⁵⁹ Haim Gerber, "Guilds in Seventeenth-Century Anatolian Bursa," p. 66.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p. 67.

⁶¹ *ibid*, p. 75.

⁶² Ömer Demirel, *II. Mahmud Dönemi'nde Sivas'ta Esnâf Teşkilatı ve Üretim Tüketim İlişkileri*, p. 47.

⁶³ Mehmet Genç, "Osmanlı Esnâfi ve Devletle İlişkileri," p. 120.

It appears that a guild could have more than one *kethüdâ*, and if non-Muslims made up the majority of a guild, in addition to the Muslim one, they could have a non-Muslim *kethüdâ* as well.⁶⁴

The position of *kethüdâ*-ship outside İstanbul and its surroundings was different. The *şeyh* (guild's head) in Damascus was mostly hereditary. If there was no suitable heir for this position, the guild members appointed a new one. Most importantly, in Damascus the result of elections should not be approved by the *kâdı* or the center.⁶⁵ Nonetheless, the hereditary rule regarding the position of *şeyh* in Damascus was not really an exception, but it was depended on the merits of the present head to rule during his lifetime. Only if he was successful enough in carrying out his duties, could his sons replace him.⁶⁶ Finally, a *kethüdâ* had to treat everybody equally. If not, guild members could warn him.⁶⁷ Yet, one could find numerous cases which, most of the time, seem to contradict the above generalizations.

Consider the following case from Bursa. The *bâzârbaşı* was the head of the grocers, while the *nakib* was the head of barbers.⁶⁸ This piece of information may prove why some responsibilities for the functions of both *nakibs* and *kethüdâs* were similar to each other. Perhaps, those two positions were not completely different from each other, as it was stated in some sources. The *bâzârbaşı* or the *bakkâlân*, was appointed by the grocers or sometimes by dignitaries of the city to carry out all kinds of affairs of the grocery guilds. A *bâzârbaşı* was responsible for distributing

⁶⁴ Robert Mantran, *XVI.-XVII. Yüzyılda İstanbul'da Gündelik Hayat*, (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık), p. 98.

⁶⁵ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 115.

⁶⁶ Samiye Baydur, *Osmanlı Esnâf Cemiyetinin Menşei, Tekâmülü ve Kaldırılması*, p. 28.

⁶⁷ Mübahat Kütükoğlu, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Oto-Kontrol Müessesesi," p. 67.

⁶⁸ Haim Gerber, "Guilds in Seventeenth-Century Anatolian Bursa," p. 65.

goods brought to the bazaar. He had same responsibilities as the *esnâf şeyhi* except for religious duties. This position was also seen in other Ottoman cities.⁶⁹ The *bâzârbaşı* in Sivas was appointed by the *berât*. With the renewal of the *berât*, this position might pass from father to son. Among the guilds in Sivas, the position was also given during the lifetime of the present *bâzârbaşı*. This practice created the problem that a position might remain in the hands of the same family for a long time. Ömer Demirel gives us the example that in Sivas an important family of the city, Kenanzadeler, took the monopoly of *bâzârbaşı*.⁷⁰ On the other hand, if they neglected their duties or treated the guildsmen badly, the *bâzârbaşı* could be dismissed.⁷¹ Finally, the position of *kethüdâ*-ship was replaced by the *ustabaşı* during the Tanzimat era.⁷² It was abolished with the Second Constitutional era starting in 1908.

İhtisâb Ağası

Regarding the Ottoman craft guilds, *İhtisâb Ağası* was an inspector for the market places. Practically, he applied the *ihtisâb* laws, which were really religious in outlook, but concerning the guilds, the *ihtisâb* laws fixed just prices, *narh*, and dealt with profiteering. The *İhtisâb Ağası* was a government agent, while assisting the *kadı* in economic, social, religious, and legal matters. In a sense, he had close contact with the *esnâf* in towns and cities, where he charged with examining the weights, measures, and provisions. In other words, he was responsible for deciding

⁶⁹ Ömer Demirel, *II. Mahmud Dönemi'nde Sivas'ta Esnâf Teşkilatı ve Üretim Tüketim İlişkileri*, pp. 52-53.

⁷⁰ *ibid*, p. 53.

⁷¹ *ibid*, p. 54.

⁷² Samiye Baydur, *Osmanlı Esnâf Cemiyetinin Menşei, Tekâmülü ve Kaldırılması*, p. 29.

on the *narh*, and ensuring that no one violated it.⁷³ The *İhtisâb Ağa* was also responsible for providing the basic food supplies of İstanbul.⁷⁴ However, in the seventeenth century Bursa, the *İhtisâb Ağası*'s involvement in guild matters was not frequent. He was a "tax-farmer of one of ten or so *mukataa*."⁷⁵ In Bursa, *İhtisâb Ağası*'s connection with the guilds was apparent, only when a conflict between himself and the guilds occurred.⁷⁶

To sum up, the main duties of an *İhtisâb Ağası* included the following: giving licence to craftsmen to start their businesses, collecting taxes, distributing the incomes of the *ihtisâb* (office of superintendent of guilds and markets), giving *tezkere of mürûr* (internal passport), controlling the way of dressing, and proper colors of customs belonging to each of the religious communities.⁷⁷ Regarding public security in the cities, *İhtisâb Ağası* had an important role in preserving public order.⁷⁸ The position of *İhtisâb Ağası* was replaced by the *Şehrâmâneti*.⁷⁹ Since then, important functions of the *İhtisâb Ağası* were transformed to other newly established branches of municipality. For example, some of them were passed to the *Zaptiye Müşiriyeti*, which was established in the 1840s.⁸⁰ Before that, in 1826, a new regulation had promulgated.

⁷³ Ziya Kazıcı, *Osmanlılarda İhtisâb Müessesesi: Ekonomik, Dini ve Sosyal Hayat*, (İstanbul: Kültür Basın Yayın Birliği: 21, İnceleme Araştırma:5, 1987), p. 77.

⁷⁴ *ibid*, p. 70.

⁷⁵ Haim Gerber, "Guilds in Seventeenth-Century Anatolian Bursa," p. 82.

⁷⁶ *ibid*, p. 82.

⁷⁷ Ziya Kazıcı, *Osmanlılarda İhtisâb Müessesesi: Ekonomik, Dini ve Sosyal Hayat*, p. 73.

⁷⁸ *ibid*, p. 69.

⁷⁹ *ibid*, p.235.

⁸⁰ *ibid*, p. 235.

Other Positions

In the Ottoman craft guilds, there were two groups of masters. One was an ordinary master and the other was an élite master. The élite were called the *ihdiyâr*, which meant "chosen." In fact, *ihdiyârs* did not have any official duties, but they acted as mediators between the guilds and the government.⁸¹ In some sources, there was another member, the *nâkib*, whom the *yiğitbaşıs* replaced.⁸²

There were also two other positions called *duacı* and *davetçi*. The *duacı* prayed, while the *davetçi* were responsible for calling people to worshipping. The *davetçi* were seen only in the guilds of Serez, where they assisted the head.⁸³ Another position was called *çavuş*. Although his duties were not clear, the *yiğitbaşıs* took responsibility for the *çavuş*.

The *ehl-i vukûf* and *ehl-i hibre* were two other positions which existed in the tanner (*tabakcı*), shoemakers (*ayakkabıcı*), bronze (*tunç*), brass (*pirinç*), gold (*altın*), and needle (*iğneci*) guilds.⁸⁴ Halil İnalçık, moreover, states that each guild had one or two *ehl-i hibre* who were experts chosen from among masters.⁸⁵ Putting the *narh* on produced goods, stamping, and helping the *kadı*, controlling guild members, distributing materials and other necessities of the guilds were included among their duties. *Ehl-i hibre* also had a role, if there was any conflict between guild members and administrative bodies or within the executive body of the guild. In a sense, he was an arbitrator.⁸⁶ According to Haim Gerber, *ehl-i hibre* was the right hand of the

⁸¹ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," p. 107.

⁸² *ibid*, p. 108.

⁸³ Gabriel Baer, "Türk Loncalarının Yapısı ve Bu Yapının Osmanlı Sosyal Tarihi İçin Önemi," pp. 108-109.

⁸⁴ Samiye Baydur, *Osmanlı Esnâf Cemiyetinin Menşei, Tekâmülü ve Kaldırılması*, p. 29.

⁸⁵ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, p. 153.

⁸⁶ Adnan Gülerman, and Sevda Taştekil, *Ahi Teşkilatının Türk Toplumunun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı Üzerinde Etkileri*, p. 14.

kethüdâ in textile guilds. In addition, he frequently assessed the qualities of products in Bursa.⁸⁷ Finally, duties of the *ustabaşı* replaced that of the *ehl-i hibre* during the Tanzimat era.⁸⁸

Committees of Guilds

Although sources do not give how these committees of guilds developed, both the meetings and committees of the Ottoman craft guilds were important to understand how the guilds functioned. There were five important committees, which discussed the guild matters.⁸⁹ The executive committee of a guild met on the first and third Fridays of each month. At the meeting, members discussed the former decisions and whether they had been put in practice. If implemented, they talked about the immediate results of their decisions. At the same time, new decisions would be made at these meetings.⁹⁰

Grand assembly (*büyük meclis*) also had important functions. For example, it controlled the *kethüdâ*'s behaviors towards guild members, and ensured regular meetings of the executive committees. The Grand assembly determined whether the executive committee met or not, examined the accounts of the *kethüdâ*, confirmed whether they were proper, or punished if they were contrary to the rules. Moreover, the Grand Assembly contacted the government regarding problems related to craft guilds, examining the decision of the government, if they did not serve for the purpose of the guilds. If it was necessary, an extraordinary meeting was decided.

⁸⁷ Haim Gerber, "Guilds in Seventeenth-Century Anatolian Bursa," p. 65.

⁸⁸ Samiye Baydur, *Osmanlı Esnâf Cemiyetinin Menşei, Tekâmülü ve Kaldırılması*, p. 30.

⁸⁹ Süleyman Eryiğit, *Ahi Birliklerinde Yönetim ve İşletme Fonksiyonlarının Temel Yapısı*, p. 16.

⁹⁰ Adnan Gülerman, and Sevda Taştekil, *Ahi Teşkilatının Türk Toplumunun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı Üzerinde Etkileri*, p. 14

Especially when negotiation with the government officials was not probable, the general meeting (*Memleket Toplantısı*) met on the following day.⁹¹ At the meeting, decisions were postponed until any proper decisions by the government were taken. If the guildsmen were not satisfied, they closed their shops. Then the agent of the *Ahi Baba* or *kethüdâs* went to the government officials. Again if, the of the guild members were not satisfied, the agent of the *Ahi Baba* left the keys as the sign of closing the shops, and left the meeting with the people who had come with him. If the government's decision satisfied the guild members, the agent of the *Ahi Baba* reclaimed the keys and the craftsmen returned to their occupations. If the government did not resolve the problem on the behalf of the guild, the agent of the *Ahi Baba* applied to the *kadı* and acted according to the decision taken at the court.⁹² Nevertheless, we do not have enough information that the procedure was always like this.

In this chapter, I have examined the organizational structure of Ottoman craft guilds and the relationship between the guilds and the state. Regarding the relationship between the guilds and the government, it appears that the government was mainly concerned with the tax revenue from guilds and also concerned with the *ih̄tisâb* laws. Though, it may seem that the government only aimed to preserve the traditional guild structure, it is obvious that Ottoman craft guilds were transformed considerably, especially starting with the sixteenth century. This chapter also demonstrates that the guilds of İstanbul and of the other regions may show differences depending on the distance to the center of power. The chapter has emphasized that Ottoman guilds began to change within a long historical process.

⁹¹ *ibid*, pp. 14-15.

⁹² *ibid*, p. 15.

Both external factors and internal factors played important roles in this change. Giving more concessions to the Europeans, abolishment of the Janissaries and some structural changes in the government policy are among these external and internal factors.



IV. Ottoman Craft Guilds in a Broader Context

This chapter examines the Ottoman craft guilds in a broader context. It aims to shed some light on the responses of the Ottoman central government towards the changing economic, social and politic conditions. It also investigates the "decline" debate, economic policies of the Tanzimat era, and the situation of *esnâf*. In order to explain transformation of Ottoman craft guilds, especially during the nineteenth century, one should give equal attention to both internal and external factors of the time.

Concerning the main factors of change, the World System Theory, for example, gives particular attention to the incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the capitalist world system. According to this model, incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the capitalist world economy means decreasing control of the state over four important areas: "production, circulation, coercion, and administration."¹ Initially, the Ottoman Empire was a powerful world empire. However, when Europe grew as a capitalist world economy, the Ottoman Empire became part of that global economy and became peripheralized.² As a result, this world empire gradually relinquishes its "self centered and self-responsive world empire image" and its "function within inter-state system."³

One of the main characteristics of such a world empire was agriculture, initially based on the *timâr* system. The other one was guilds, controlled by the

¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, and Reşat Kasaba, "Incorporation into the World Economy: Change in the Structure of the Ottoman Empire, 1750-1839," *METU Studies in Development*, Vol.VIII, No. 1/2, 1981, p. 565.

² Immanuel Wallerstein, Hale Decdeli, and Reşat Kasaba, "The Incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the World Economy," in: *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, [ed.] Huri İslamoğlu-İnan, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 88.

³ *ibid*, p. 89.

central government.⁴ In other words, this theory pays particular attention to changes in both agriculture and guilds for various reasons. For example, the *esnâf* in the Balkans experienced changes, when the central government lost its control over the area, which later on played an important role in the incorporation into the capitalist world system. As such, between 1750 and 1815, European demand for raw materials like cotton, maize, meat, hides, wax, silk, wool, tobacco, and lumber from the Balkans increased.⁵ Briefly, "the increasing power of local notables, the rise of *çiftlik*s and the emergence of predominantly Christian merchants as the wealth and powerful agents of the intensifying commercial relations with Europe created new place of accumulation in the Balkans."⁶ This theory implies that European penetration into the Balkan market means the central Ottoman government's loss of control over the raw materials, which were needed by the *esnâf*.

The government lost its control over the administration as well. For example, in provinces, *âyâns*, who rose to power in the eighteenth century, gained governmental post in their regions. Widespread bribery, nepotism, and corruption in the state apparatus and illegal collaboration between the *âyâns* and *kadıs* caused the state lose its control over the provinces.⁷ Of course, this put a heavy burden on the tax paying subjects like the *esnâf* who were also subjected to the rules and regulations imposed by the *kadi*. Furthermore, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, with its large cotton estates, Egypt became a part of the capitalist

⁴ *ibid*, pp. 89-90.

⁵ Immanuel Wallerstein, and Reşat Kasaba, "Incorporation into the World Economy: Change in the Structure of the Ottoman Empire, 1750-1839," p. 541.

⁶ *ibid*, p. 541.

⁷ *ibid*, p. 554.

world system.⁸ The rise of Mehmet Ali in Egypt as an autonomous power also led to the deterioration of the Ottoman economy in the nineteenth century. The location of Egypt as an important intersection in international trade and raising cotton for export made Mehmet Ali more independent.⁹ Therefore, a rebellion by Mehmet Ali gave the opportunity to the Europeans to obtain many privileges from the Ottoman sultan.

The "Decline" Debate

The "decline" debate regarding the Ottoman *esnâf* and industries is really controversial. The importance of the Ottoman market increased in the eyes of the Europeans especially after the Industrial Revolution in Europe in the eighteenth century. As a result, the Ottoman central government granted many capitulations to the Europeans. Besides previous privileges, capitulations gained a different meaning with the Anglo-Ottoman treaty of 1838 and the following treaties. These treaties were criticized by the Ottoman intellectuals who saw the Anglo-Ottoman Treaty of 1838 and following treaties as the main cause for the bad economic situation and so-called "decline" of the *esnâf* in the nineteenth century. For example, Vak'anüvis Lütfi Efendi criticized the abolishment of monopolies by the treaty.¹⁰ Namık Kemal also put the blame on the liberal economic policies of the leaders of the Tanzimat era. Likewise, Ziya Paşa said that the economy declined when people bought spurious and unqualified European products, however, those buyers came out to be the losers in the end.¹¹ In his criticism of Adam Smith's liberal economy theory,

⁸ *ibid*, p. 550.

⁹ *ibid*, p. 542.

¹⁰ Rifat. Önsoy, "Tanzimat Dönemi İktisat Politikası," in: *Tanzimat'ın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989), p. 256.

¹¹ *ibid*, p. 256.

Ahmet Midhat Efendi proposed that such a liberal economy was good for the economically developed European countries, but it was bad for agricultural countries like the Ottoman Empire.¹² Furthermore, the Young Ottomans discussed the reasons of the so-called "decline" and suggested that in order to support industry, institutions giving credits to local producers should have been established. At the same time, they paid attention to the absence of local merchant class and proposed both an increase in the custom duties and a restriction of raw material export.¹³ In short, these intellectuals criticized liberal economic policies of the Tanzimat leaders, when the *esnâf* had difficulty in adjusting themselves to the new market conditions.

The view, that the Anglo-Ottoman Treaty of 1838 threatened the *esnâf* because of the abolision of monopolies, needs more discussion. The treaty gave the right to Britain to receive all privileges granted to other countries. Furthermore, the British merchants and their partners in business could buy and sell goods from any region of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴ Such a privilege meant that the central government was quitting its traditional policy of prohibiting the selling of raw materials to foreigners. Furthermore, with the Anglo-Ottoman Treaty of 1838, Britain aimed to get the right of retail trade, which was actually a sign of entering the sphere of the guilds.¹⁵ Concerning the decline of the Ottoman handicrafts, Orhan Kurmuş says that the same treaty caused some damage; however, since we have no sufficient information about "the prices, costs and profit margins," no one can put blame on

¹² *ibid*, p. 257.

¹³ *ibid*, p. 257.

¹⁴ Özcan Mert, "II. Mahmut Devrinde Anadolu ve Rumeli," *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları*, No. 18, 1982, pp. 60-61.

¹⁵ Mübahat Küçüköğlü, "Tanzimat Devrinde Yabacıların İktisadi Faaliyetleri," in *150. Yılında Tanzimat*, [ed.]Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), p. 101.

those treaties only.¹⁶ However, involvement of the foreigners really forced the guilds to change.

Most of the time Ottoman guilds faced difficulty in finding raw materials, since foreign merchants offered higher prices.¹⁷ European goods affected the cotton textile industry the most. It was followed by the wool and silk industries in the later decades. According to Immanuel Wallerstein and Reşat Kasaba, cotton weaving in Anatolia, wool in Salonica and silk in Bursa were able to grow even after European competition.¹⁸ However, Donald Quataert argues that Angora mohair weavers and wool cloth makers in Salonica disappeared completely, when they were faced with European competition. In Damascus, guilds controlled the whole market of the city for a long time. Textile guilds in Damascus, for example, faced the threat of British textile goods that entered the market through merchants and peddlers, who followed the Hadj caravans. It is important to note that foreigners could not enter the Damascus market, because of its closeness to the important religious centers.¹⁹

Although the effect of the Europeans in the Ottoman markets is an undeniable fact, the claim that the Ottoman handicrafts and industry were getting smaller and smaller and unemployment increased is biased. Nevertheless, many jobs were lost as result of the penetration of the Europeans into the Ottoman markets.²⁰ Considering

¹⁶ Orhan Kurmuş, "Aspects of Handicraft and Industrial Production," *Asian and African Studies*, No. 15, p. 88.

¹⁷ Rifat Önsoy, "Tanzimat Dönemi İktisat Politikası," p. 255.

¹⁸ Immanuel Wallerstein, and Reşat Kasaba, "Incorporation into the World Economy: Change in the Structure of the Ottoman Empire, 1750-1839," p. 547.

¹⁹ Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 83, 1999-2000, p. 159.

²⁰ Donald Quataert, "Ottoman Handicrafts and Industry, 1800-1914: A Reappraisal," *Osmanistische Studien zur Wirtschafts-und Sozialgeschichte in memoriam Vanco Boscow, Otto Harraowitz, Wiesbaden*, p. 128.

the shoemakers in İstanbul by the 1870s, the local producers began to produce shoes in European fashions rather than the old-fashioned Ottoman style shoes. Thus, "the industry began its transformation into non-guild, piece-work, and highly segmented work force." However, over time, importation of shoes, despite some exception" ceased to exist.²¹ Briefly, although they almost disappeared by 1850, shoemakers in İstanbul could recover during the following fifty years. This time, local shoemakers had the opportunity of both regaining the İstanbul market and exporting to the provinces.²² As a result, the local shoemakers could preserve their status and later they were not affected by the foreign competition.

Some guilds disappeared, while some others flourished. The carpet industry became very popular in the eyes of the Europeans, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century. As a result, the "six large British merchant houses in İzmir controlled the carpet weaving from its initial stage to the final shipment for export."²³ They probably chose İzmir and its surroundings because of its export facilities. An Austrian firm, Ken & Co., entered the carpet industry, a competitor to the British at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, the British firms continued to hold their supremacy. Later, those six British merchant houses formed the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Ltd., which mainly dominated all Ottoman carpet sector in Anatolia in 1913.²⁴ Between 1870 and 1900, carpet sector expanded in Uşak, Kula, and Gördes while output in the same sector surpassed by World War I.²⁵ Briefly,

²¹ *ibid*, p. 132.

²² Donald Quataert, *Labor History and the Ottoman Empire, c. 1700-1922*, *Labor History Workshop at New York University*, 2001, pp. 9-10.

²³ Orhan Kurmuş, "Aspects of Handicraft and Industrial Production," p. 90.

²⁴ *ibid*, pp. 92-93.

²⁵ Donald Quataert, "Ottoman Handicrafts and Industry, 1800-1914: A Reappraisal," p. 129.

some jobs were lost, while some others were gained or regained. For example, 7,600 new jobs in lace making, and 50,000 new jobs in carpet making after 1870 were worth mentioning to disprove "decline" theories. It is possible to say that some industries dissolved, some declined, but some of them did survive, despite the European competition. Change in traditional guild structure became inevitable, when non-guild labor replaced guild labor in some industries.

Changes in traditional guild structure showed itself in introducing "the putting-out system," which had already existed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Such change brought a new type of employment. As a result, the manufacturing sector became increasingly "unorganized, female and rural." Sometimes women's involvement created discontent in the seventeenth century Musol where women began to dominate cotton thread making.²⁶ A poem expresses the hatred of a Musoli weaver, who had to buy cotton thread from women.²⁷ Nevertheless, women's entrance was asked for. According to Donald Quataert, because they were employed at lower wages, women were preferred in the textile sector that in fact became globally competitive.²⁸ In addition, when machines entered the Bulgarian market in the second half of the nineteenth century, opposition came not from the textile guild itself. Rather some wage-earning women opposed

²⁶ Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Musol, 1540-1834*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 137.

²⁷ He says,
 "Afterwards I turn the wheel like women
 The noise of the wheel makes me faint."
ibid, p. 138.

²⁸ Donald Quataert, "Labor History and the Ottoman Empire, c. 1700-1922," pp. 9-10

the coming of such techniques.²⁹ Probably, they were afraid of losing their jobs or of decrease in their wages.

Bursa, a center of silk industry, is an example of practice of "putting-out system."³⁰ Silk industry in Bursa included women and children, who were non-guild members producing at home, unlike the tanner guilds, where traditional division of labor was still preserved. Women and children were employed in the industries of silk-winding and cotton-spinning to earn their livelihood.³¹ For example, merchants in Bursa were active agents in providing raw materials whether or not they were well trained.³² Also, an innovation in the manufacturing sector came from using British cotton yarn in silk cloth in Bursa to lower the costs. In this case, there was at least a limited change.³³

Similarly, the stout coarse woollen cloth makers (*abacıs*) in Filibe and İslimiye did not disappear. In 1828, for the newly established army, the government ordered 10,000 pieces of clothing from the region. In like manner, stout coarse woollen cloth making in Samakov survived, because it produced for the market of the western part of the Ottoman Empire.³⁴ That is to say, with the endurance of some markets, where the influence of the foreigners did not necessarily enter, the *esnâf* could continue to operate their businesses. Briefly, European goods indirectly

²⁹ Nikolay Todorov, *Ondokuzuncu Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Bulgaristan Esnâf Teşkilatında Bazı Karakter Değişmeleri*, *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. XXVII, No. 1-2, 1967-1968, p. 34.

³⁰ Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," pp. 157-158.

³¹ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600*, (London: Phoenix, 1997), p. 60.

³² Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," pp. 158-159.

³³ Donald Quataert, "Main Problems of the Economy During the Tanzimat Period," in: *Tanzimat'ın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu*, [ed.] Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), p. 213.

³⁴ Nikolay Todorov, "Ondokuzuncu Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Bulgaristan Esnâf Teşkilatında Bazı Karakter Değişmeleri," p. 7, and 9.

affected them, the stout coarse woollen producers in Balkans continued to hold their supremacy in the Ottoman Empire even when they faced competition from European goods. Likewise, there were some other factors to explain why the *esnâf* had hard times. In Tokat, for example, artisans left the city center not due to the fact that they could not compete with the European goods, but rather because they suffered from the harsh policies of the tax-farming officials in the city.³⁵

State Economic Policies and the *Esnâf* during the Tanzimat Era

The Ottoman central government mainly exercised its control over three basic elements of the economy; land, labor, and capital.³⁶ It either dominated almost the entire mining sector, or provided capital for some core industries, such as the central buildings in the market (*bedesten*), candle factories (*mumhâne*), bazaars (*çarşı*), dye-houses (*boyahâne*), and printing establishments (*basma hâne*). Through pious foundations, it also controlled industries in its hand, and tried to retain them as public properties for a long time.³⁷ Furthermore, the government intervened the guild affairs to ensure proper taxation and to prevent private accumulation. In order to protect the *esnâf*, strict rules and regulations were applied. For example, prices and wages were fixed; this was called the *narh*. The government, at the same time, secured the supply of raw materials for the guilds, in return, however, it asked for the "supply of services and labor" from them.³⁸

³⁵ Donald Quataert, "Labor History and the Ottoman Empire, c. 1700-1922," p. 9

³⁶ Mehmet Genç, "19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İktisadi Dünya Görüşünün Klasik Prensiplerinde Değişmeler," *Divan: İlmî Araştırmalar*, Vo.I, No. 6, 1999, p. 1.

³⁷ *ibid*, p. 1.

³⁸ Immanuel Wallerstein, and Reşat Kasaba, "Incorporation into the World Economy: Change in the Structure of the Ottoman Empire, 1750-1839," p. 545.

Regarding the guilds, the main concern of the central government was to maintain its provisionist and fiscalist policies. Provisionizm means economic self-sufficiency concerning food-stuffs and other necessities. Fiscalizm, accordingly, means the maximization of state revenues.³⁹ Despite financial problems that started during the late sixteenth century, the central government did not seem to change its provisionist and fiscalist policies. Even Tanzimat leaders who aimed at establishing a modern country tried to get maximum tax revenues through new sources.⁴⁰ During the Tanzimat Era, for example, considering the *esnâf* in İstanbul, a new decree was issued to abolish old methods of taxation and to divide the *esnâf* into seven groups.⁴¹ The reason behind this division was to ensure the maximum tax revenues from various *esnâf* groups according to their profits. As this example demonstrates, fiscalist policies still continued to dominate the Ottoman market during the Tanzimat Era.⁴²

Similarly, related to central government's traditional economic policies, the *ihtisâb* laws was in general applied to short-distance merchant activities rather than the long distance, inter-regional and foreign trade. Meanwhile, the government wanted to ensure sufficient amount of goods for its imperial centers.⁴³ According to Şevket Pamuk says that the state did not want the merchant class became wealthy,

³⁹ Mehmet Genç, "9. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İktisadi Dünya Görüşünün Klasik Prensiplerinde Değişmeler," pp. 2-3.

⁴⁰ Rifat Önsoy, "Tanzimat Dönemi İktisat Politikası," p. 258.

⁴¹ BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No: 1719, 1843.

⁴² During the second half of the nineteenth century, however, both provisionizm and fiscalizm lost their importance. The former provisionizm, was almost abandoned in the 1840s. Mehmet Genç, "19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İktisadi Dünya Görüşünün Klasik Prensiplerinde Değişmeler," p. 7.

⁴³ Immanuel Wallerstein, and Reşat Kasaba, "Incorporation into the World Economy: Change in the Structure of the Ottoman Empire, 1750-1839," p. 548.

because their non-provisionist activities would hurt the economy regarding main food-stuffs and other necessities.⁴⁴

During the nineteenth century, while insisting on its conventional policies, the government achieved some of its goals in industry. It founded factories in the 1840s, such as textile, leather, food, glass and porcelain. At the same time, the private sector was encouraged to found factories, which were not successful at all.⁴⁵ Though these policies of the government, it was aimed to provide basic necessities for the Ottoman society and to prevent exports.

Economic measures were also taken to stabilize the economy. As an economic measure, *mirî mübâyâa*, for example, was put in practice to decrease the expenditures of the state. The central government bought products from producers either under the market price or even below the cost of its production.⁴⁶ This practice, in fact, injured the producers. Another measure was to increase import duties from five percent to eight percent. To protect guilds, export duties were also decreased from twelve percent to eight percent in 1861. Likewise, tax on import was decreased by one percent per year until 1869, then it remained at one percent. In 1874, internal duties were totally abolished altogether.⁴⁷

Specifically, the economic measures taken during the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz are important to note. During his reign, schools for industry were

⁴⁴ In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, neither merchants nor producers could become strong enough to change the system, although the central government was not powerful enough to stop them from doing that. On the other hand, in Europe, the merchant class increased their own power, and became influential in changing the economic policies of the state.

Şevket Pamuk, "Osmanlı Ekonomisinde Devlet Müdahaleciliğine Yeniden Bakış," *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 83, 1999-2000, pp. 134-136.

⁴⁵ Mehmet Genç, "19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İktisadi Dünya Görüşünün Klasik Prensiplerinde Değişmeler," p. 6.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 8.

established and some *esnâf* groups formed firms, while custom duties were increased and trade fairs were prepared.⁴⁸ In addition, as an economic measure, Commission for Reforming the Industry, (*Islâh-ı Sanayi Komisyonu*) was established in 1863, which was, however, abolished in 1874.⁴⁹ The Commission paid attention to the bad economic situation and suggested establishing firms, provided capital for industry, and founded schools for industry. Briefly, the central government tried to protect the *esnâf* by making them a part of the newly established firms. For example, seven firms were founded among the *esnâf* between the years 1864 and 1874. All of these firms received twelve years of privileged status and exemption from taxes.⁵⁰ Besides guilds united under companies, some guilds merged with bigger guilds to survive. Hat producers, for example, merged with the tailor's guild.⁵¹

Despite the fact that the government initiated its industrial reforms, it failed at some extent. First of all, new reforms and newly established factories cost too much. Also seeking a quick industrialization caused failure in the end. Second, inconsistencies in the export and import duties injured the *esnâf*, who had either

⁴⁸ Ömer Celal Sarc, "Tanzimat ve Sanayimiz," in: *Tanzimat I: Yüzüncü Yıldönümü Münasebetile*, (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940.), p. 430.

⁴⁹ For detailed information see Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediye, II*

⁵⁰ In the end, *Simkeşhâne*, *Toptancı Esnâfi Şirketi*, *Saraç Esnâfi Şirketi*, *Kumaşçı Esnâfi Şirketi*, *Düğmecî Esnâfi Şirketi*, *Demircî* and *Dökmeci Esnâfi Şirketleri* were founded. Despite their success, these commissions were abolished. That, according to Musa Çadırcı, meant state's giving up its protection of small artisans. Unfortunately, the commission of 1889 became involved in cotton textile but opposed the establishment of factories. After *Islâh-ı Sanayi Komisyonu* was abolished, Abdülhamid II forbade the founding of associations and firms. With the Second Constitutional Era (1908-1920), many firms were established, however, they did not survive.

Musa Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Dönemi'nde Anadolu Kentlerinin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), p. 349; Orhan Kurmuş, "Aspects of Handicraft and Industrial Production," p. 94; and Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediye II*, p. 736.

⁵¹ Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," p. 168.

Also Halil İnalçık argues that the subject guilds sometimes wished to overcome the larger guilds and refused working. However, fear of unemployment and government's siding with the main guilds prevented their opposition.

Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600*, p. 159.

united under companies or became subjected to the other guilds. Third, while the import duties were maintained at five percent for a certain time, the internal duties remained much higher than that of external. Moreover, an adviser to Mustafa Reşit Paşa, J. M. Cor, said that the Ottoman Empire, as an agricultural country, must focus on developing its agricultural sector and making roads. Instead, Ottoman Empire attempted to found new factories that were new to them.⁵² Similarly, although Western economic thoughts entered Ottoman intellectual life during the Tanzimat Era, the consciousness of industrialization really appeared between 1908 and 1918.⁵³ Unfortunately, attempts in industrialization became difficult when consecutive wars, such as the Tripoli War, Balkan Wars, and World War I broke out.

To sum up, changes of the Ottoman craft guilds took place when the central government began to lose its control over "production, circulation, coercion, and administration" in the sixteenth century. The central government, however, tried to preserve its traditional policies even during the later periods. At the same time, new reforms during the Tanzimat Era reshaped the economic policies of the Ottoman state.

The argument that the handicraft industries declined is still a controversial issue. Some scholars have argued that jobs were really lost as a result of European penetration into the Ottoman market. However, some industries had survived. The carpet industry, for example, grew to such a degree that new job opportunities were created. Also the shoemaker's guild in İstanbul recovered at the end of the nineteenth century, after its having difficulty by 1850. Similarly, stout cloth makers

⁵² Ömer Celal Sarc, "Tanzimat ve Sanayimiz," p. 433, 437; Şerif Mardin, "Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi 1838-1918," *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* Vol. 3, p. 624.

⁵³ Zafer Toprak, "II. Meşrutiyet Dönemin'de İktisadi Düşünce," *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye*

in the Balkans did not lose their market to the Europeans, despite the fact that European penetration affected the Ottoman economy. It should also be noted that there were different reasons to explain why some lost and some producers became vulnerable. Local producers in Tokat, who had difficulty to practice their jobs, for example, left the city center as a result of misconduct by the government agents rather than the Europeans. In brief, some guilds found opportunity to adjust themselves into the new market conditions; they either became subject to bigger guilds or they united under companies. In other words, changes in guilds came to surface during the nineteenth century in a more radical way. However, the very changes in guild structure that really began earlier and factors leading to changes in craft guilds were not only external but also internal. Now I will turn to these internal factors in the following chapter.

V. Ottoman Craft Guilds: Internal Factors¹

örf-i beldeye uyulması ve teâmül-i kadîme aykırı iş yapılmaması."²

This chapter examines the internal factors that led significant changes in the Ottoman craft guilds. I would argue that Ottoman guilds began to change long before the nineteenth century; for example, both population growth and the *Celâli* rebellions in the provinces during the sixteenth century had led new comers' entrance into guilds.³ Traditional guild structure was deteriorated with these new comers from different parts of the Empire. Due to wars and natural disasters that caused economic setbacks in the provinces, people either left their lands and migrated to urban centers. As a result, unemployment in the cities increased tremendously.⁴

The new comers entered both administrative and service sectors, while some in İstanbul involved in the market. That dissatisfied the guild members. For example, in 1610, the druggists were unhappy with the Jews selling coffee to the army. Some of the Jews had also secretly involved in the spheres of the gold and silver thread guilds.⁵ The following example from Musol also illustrates the same situation. Musoli *esnâf* practiced their craft within the city walls; however, illicit

¹ According to Rıfaat 'Ali Abou-El-Haj, one should not study the Ottoman Empire only as it was dependent on the European powers. He rather argues that internal dynamics produced significant changes from the sixteenth century onwards.

Rıfaat 'Ali Abou-El-Haj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire Sixteenth to eighteenth Century*, (Albany, State University of New York, 1991), pp. 61-72.

² Mehmet Genç, "19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İktisadi Dünya Görüşünün Klasik Prensiplerinde Değişmeler," *Divan: İlmî Araştırmalar*, No. 1 / 6, 1999, p. 3.

³ Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 83, 1999-2000, p. 146.

⁴ Immanuel Wallerstein, and Reşat Kasaba, "Incorporation into the World Economy: Change in the Structure of the Ottoman Empire, 1750-1839," *METU Studies in Development*, No. 8 (1/2), 1981, p. 547.

⁵ Gabriel Baer, "Monopolies and Restrictive Practices of Turkish Guilds," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, No. 3, 1970, p. 149.

new comers practiced crafts outside the city walls. Since they were not subjected to paying tax, the guild members had difficulty not only paying the tax but also competing with new comers.⁶

During the eighteenth century, another group, hawkers or peddlers, who sold textiles or other materials on the streets, became influential in the Ottoman markets. Consider the following case from 1582. A group of *esnâf* complained about the hawkers or peddlers, who were selling sweet on the streets.⁷ Selling on the streets was called *koltukçuluk*.⁸ Furthermore, the *esnâf* tried to prevent the entrance of in large numbers of peddlers in the market.⁹ Nevertheless, during the nineteenth century, a document proves the legal acceptance of street peddlers. At least, some of them received the right to practice their businesses by receiving title deed named *iskemle tasarrufu*, which was given by the Ministry of Religious Foundations (*Evkâf Nezâreti*).¹⁰ In other words, the central government seemed to change the structure of the guild market by legitimizing the existence of the peddlers.

Besides hawkers and peddlers, the *esnâf* complained about clumsy-handed outsiders (*hamdest*), who were not eligible to receive the right to practice the craft. For example, in Silivri, masters, whose mastership was not approved by *kethüdâ* or *yiğitbaşı* were involved in the dyeing sector, during the second half of the eighteenth century. The main concern of the dyer's guild in this case was to prevent the influx

⁶ Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," p. 156.

⁷ Gabriel Baer, "Monopolies and Restrictive Practices of Turkish Guilds," p. 149.

⁸ Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," p. 154.

⁹ Engin Deniz Akarlı, "Gedik: Implements, Mastership, Shop Usufruct, and Monopoly Among Istanbul Artisans, 1750-1850," *Wissenschaftskolleg Berlin Jahrbuch*, 1986, p. 226.

¹⁰ BOA, A. MKT. MHM., Sıra No. 518, Dosya No. 110, Gömlek No. 17, Ş.1273 / April 1856.

of the unqualified materials in the market and to hinder the entrance of the new comers.¹¹

Corruption also deteriorated the guilds. During the first half of the nineteenth century, stout coarse woollen cloth makers guild in Filibe, complained about apprentices, who opened their independent workshops without being suitable for mastership.¹² Favoritizm and bribery appeared as another source of corruption. Corruption in receiving mastership, by developing close relationships with the present master, took place. Based on the archival documents, it can be said that the central Ottoman government tried to prohibit such corruption.¹³

Another example illustrates abuses in receiving the *kethüdâ*-ship. In 1765, tailoring *esnâf* in Üsküdar witnessed intervention by İsmail, a tailor from outside the guild. Although the tailor *esnâf* in Üsküdar were pleased with their *kethüdâ*, named Mehmet Çelebi ibn-i Ahmed, İsmail himself appointed another person named Ahmed as the *kethüdâ* of tailor guild. Yet, the new *kethüdâ*, whose *kethüdâ*-ship was not agreed by the guild members, illicitly began to collect fifty *kuruş* from the *esnâf*, the *esnâf-ı mezbûre-i fukara*. So, the tailor *esnâf* objected both his collecting money illegally and his *kethüdâ*-ship at the same time.¹⁴

New appointment procedure also made changes in the guild structure. For example, during the Tanzimat Era, Ahmet Ağa, the *yiğitbaşı* of cobbler (*dikici*),

¹¹ "Bir san'atta üstada varup hizmet ve tekmil-i san'at itmeyüp *kethüdâ* ve *yiğitbaşı* marifetleriyle başka çıkmayan ham-dest kimesneler karyelerde san'atı mezburede kalp iş işlemeyüp ihtilâl virmemeleri için kanun üzre emr-i şerif viregeldiği tahrir olunmağla kanun üzre amel olunmak için yazılmışdur."

İstanbul Ahkam Defterleri: İstanbul Esnâf Tarihi II, (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı İstanbul Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayınları No. 16, 1998), p. 81.

¹² Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," p. 154.

¹³ BOA, Cevdet / Belediye, No: 5428, no date.

¹⁴ *İstanbul Ahkam Defterleri, İstanbul Esnâf Tarihi II*, pp. 89-90.

bootmaker (*çizmeçi*), shoemaker (*pabuççu* and *kunduracı*), secondhand good dealer (*eskici*), heavy boot formerly worn by horsemen (*tomakçı*) was replaced by Mehmed Ağa.¹⁵ Mehmet Ağa also wanted to get the *kethüdâ*-ship of those *esnâf* in Galata and its surroundings, on the pretext that his revenue coming from his *yiğitbaşılık* was not sufficient. However, in the end, the position of *kethüdâ*-ship was decided to be shared between the present *kethüdâ*, Hacı Süleyman Ağa and *yiğitbaşı* Mehmed Ağa.¹⁶ This archival document illustrates that the number of the above-mentioned guilds were six, but they had only one *kethüdâ* and one *yiğitbaşı*. Furthermore, dividing the *kethüdâ*-ship position into two, based on the *yiğitbaşı*'s claim, but without consulting other guild members, should be understood as a violation of the traditional rules and regulations and increasing the power of a *yiğitbaşı* within time. In other words, guild members, at least in this guild, seems to lose their power in electing their *kethüdâ*.

Since each guild was constrained to produce and sell specific goods, some *esnâf* tried to break the monopoly of the others. Guild members still enjoyed to maintain their monopoly right over their crafts or trade, despite the fact that there are various archival documents expressing how many times this rule was violated. A herbalist tried to do the business of a grocer or a grocer to sell what a herbalist had the right to sell. In 1720, pipe makers invaded the market of the pots-pans and glassmakers.¹⁷ Similarly, boatmen, day laborers or coffee house keepers sold sweet drinks despite the fact that monopoly of the making and selling of the sweet drink

¹⁵ BOA, A. MKT. MHM., Sıra No. 605, Dosya No. 111, No. 4, N.1273 / May 1857.

¹⁶ BOA, A. MKT. MHM., Sıra No. 1174, Dosya No. 116, No. 72, M.1274 / September 1857.

¹⁷ Robert W. Olson, "The Esnâf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730: A Realignment in Ottoman Politics," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, No. 17 / Part 3, 1974, p. 336.

was under only one guild named *şerbetçiler* guild.¹⁸ Gabriel Baer summarizes the reasons why each guild could produce only certain goods: "(1) to prevent clashes with other guilds (2) to preserve morals, religion, tradition and to guard economic interest."¹⁹

Changes took place, when monopolies were abolished. Initially, groceries were in the hands of the Muslims. During the nineteenth century, however, Caramanians, who were Turkish speaking Greek orthodox, could also become grocers.²⁰ Furthermore, with breaking the monopolies, some Muslims did not favor working under the mastership of a non-Muslim. According to Ömer Lütfi Barkan, Muslims spread the rumor that those who worked under the non-Muslim *esnâf* lost their faith and would annul their marriages. Barkan continues to argue that also to preserve their economically privileged position, the Muslim *esnâf* forced the state to issue a decree to forbid this so-called violation of Islam.²¹ It should be noted that abolishing monopoly rights mostly hurt the Muslim *esnâf* who enjoyed keeping certain privileges.

Besides breaking the monopoly of guilds for various reasons, journeymen appeared as producers of tension. The position of journeymen appeared when number of shops or workshops were limited. Initially, apprentices, who received the right of mastership, could open their own shops. When the number of shops were restricted too much, journeymen were dissatisfied with the situation. Similarly, wage-earning journeymen were concerned about their payments. In 1734,

¹⁸ *İstanbul Ahkam Defterleri: İstanbul Esnâf Tarihi II*, pp. 118-119.

¹⁹ Gabriel Baer, "Monopolies and Restrictive Practices of Turkish Guilds," pp. 150-151.

²⁰ Reşat Ekrem Koçu, "Osmanlı Devrinde Bakkal," *Hayat Tarih Mecmuası*, 1970, p. 15.

²¹ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Esnâf Cemiyetleri," *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. LXI, No. 1-4, 1985, p. 46.

journeymen of the *simkeş* guild, for example, inhibited their masters from employing any new workers or slaves during the next eight years. In this specific case, journeymen were effective to prevent new comers and preserve their payments to decrease.²²

The following case further indicates this point. In Bulgaria, master's partnership with journeymen was forbidden, despite the fact that it was a common practice before 1789. Accordingly, in the same year, the rights of journeymen to receive mastership was frozen for two years. According to Nikolay Todorov, this practice led to the exploitation of their labor. However, it would prevent the exploitation of journeymen. Both increasing subscriptions to receive mastership, forbidding partnership of journeymen with masters in the businesses, and finally freezing their rights to become masters must have created discontent and shaken the traditional guild composition.²³

Wage-earning masters and journeymen forced their guilds to change, when the market expanded as a result of urban population that increased almost 80 % in the sixteenth century. Then, wage-earning masters and journeymen began to act more independently and attempted to open their own shops. Competition became unavoidable, by their lowering the quality of their goods and selling them at cheaper prices. As such, wage-earning masters and journeymen of the shoemaker's guild in İstanbul introduced new fashions and techniques, like an "expensive pointed-toe style shoes." However, when the shoemaker's guild in İstanbul complained to the

²² Halil Sahillioğlu, "Esnâf Cemiyetleri İçinde Usta-Kalfa Çekişmesi," *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi*, No. 17, 1969, p. 59.

²³ Nikolay Todorov, "Ondokuzuncu Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Bulgaristan Esnâf Teşkilatında Bazı Karakter Değişmeleri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol. XXVII, No. 1-2, 1967-1968 p. 18, and 19.

government, the government prohibited selling of the new styled shoes. Similarly, conflict in leadership between some guilds and journeymen who wanted to open their own shops and introduce new techniques appeared in Musol during the seventeenth century. In 1723, for instance, the journeymen of towel makers wanted to introduce silk and cotton-made towels in a new fashion.²⁴ This specific example indicates the decreasing power of a guild over its production. Also the builder's guild in Musol complained about the non-guild labor in 1722 and the guild's lose control over the cotton industry in city during the seventeenth century.²⁵

Changes in the Ottoman craft guilds also took place as a result of different preferences of masters' sons. Sultan Mahmud II required mandatory education of apprentices in 1824. Thus, a new type of education made its difference and some guild members' sons did not continue their fathers' businesses.²⁶ Moreover, during the reign of Sultan Abdülmecid, a majority of the sons of the *esnâf* did not prefer to continue their fathers' businesses. Instead, they chose to get governmental posts.²⁷ It is probable that with the changing world and economic circumstances, master's sons preferred to have more respectful and guaranteed jobs. Besides all these changes, two other important factors, which were Janissary involvement in guilds and the *gedik* system, are important to explain the process of transformation regarding the guilds.

²⁴ Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540-1834*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 136.

²⁵ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediye, II*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları), p. 137, and 138.

²⁶“*Fî'l-hakika gerek bu tarihten, gerek Tanzimat-ı Hayriye'den sonra ca-beca mektepler küşâdına himmet olunmuş ise de sarf olunan himmetlerle esnâf çıraklarını okutmaktan ziyade doğrudan doğruya umum evlâd-ı vatanın ta'lim ve terbiyesi gayesi istihdâf edilmiştir.*”
ibid, p. 598, 600, and 601.

²⁷ *ibid*, p. 692.

Gedik, Evkâf, and the Esnâf

Gedik system had its own advantages and disadvantages in the changing of the guild structure. According to Osman Nuri Ergin, the *gedik* system was introduced, when the guilds were faced with dissolution.²⁸ *Gedik* literally means "slot" or "breach." There are two definitions of the *gedik*. According to the first one, proposed by Süleyman Sudi and advocated by Sıtkı, is that *gedik* was just a privilege and monopoly (*inhisâr*). The second argument is that the *gedik* was the name given to the necessary equipment needed by the *esnâf*. Or it was the rights, including the monopolies at the disposal of the *esnâf*.²⁹ However, for the central government, *gedik* was the means to achieve its policies regarding price and production. Accordingly, with the *gedik*, guilds ensured the right to practice their job, restore discipline, implement their rules and regulations, and preserve their hierarchical composition.³⁰ Introducing the *gedik* in the eighteenth century was an expected end to the policies taken on behalf of the *esnâf*. The butchers guilds, for example, determined their own regulations, endorsed by the state, that issued a *fermân* saying that if the *gedik* holder of butcher guild died, the *gedik* would pass on to the master's son. However, if the master did not have a son, it was given to a suitable member.³¹

There are two different arguments concerning the transfer of one's *gedik*. According to Cemal Kafadar, when a *gedik*-holder died, *gedik* passed on his son. If

²⁸There were two types of *gedik*: *Müstakâr* (fixed) and *Hevâi* (unfixed). *Müstakâr gedik* is to open a shop at a certain place and not to practice it anywhere else. If a master wanted to transfer his *gedik* to somewhere else, he had to officially apply for that: "Ahâr mahalle nakledecek olursa gediğini dañi sûret-i resmîyyede nakl ve senedini tebdil ettirmek mecburiyetinde bulunur ve bu halde tahvilen veya müceddeden *gedik* senedi it'ası hakkında olduđu gibi tahkikat u takyidat-ı nizamiyye icra edebilir idi." Furthermore, *hevâi gedik* is to practice a craft independently. *ibid*, p. 635, and 641.

²⁹ Ahmet Kal'a, "Gediklerin Dođuşu ve Gedikli Esnâf," *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, No. 8-12, 14-23, 1970-197, pp. 185-186.

³⁰ *ibid*, p. 187.

the son of the *gedik*-holder was not proper for the business and was not trained as an apprentice, the *gedik* would pass to this lesser artisans.³² On the other hand, Gabriel Baer argues that *gedik* could pass on the sons of the guild members and not to the sons of the *gedik* holders. Also somebody close to master's social, ethnic or religious group could receive the *gedik*, while theoretically foreigners did not have the right to hold one.³³ In general, if a *gedik*-holder was Muslim, he could not transfer it to a non-Muslim. However, there is an example from 1817 to argue against this. When a Muslim wanted to sell his own embroider *gedik*, only non-Muslim *esnâf* seemed to buy it, despite the fact that this was a rare practice. Thus, the *gedik* was given to the non-Muslim named Hayyum.³⁴

Foreigners, in theory, were forbidden to practice a craft or trade on the Ottoman territories and they could not be owner of a *gedik*. However, in the late centuries a Frenchman in Çanakkale received half of a *gedik*. Similarly, foreigners were given the right to become a pharmacist and sellers of clothing accessories, although their business was constrained to Galata and its surroundings.³⁵ In that way, the Ottoman ruling class wanted to prevent the influence of European fashions and innovations.³⁶ The aim was not only preventing goods unsuitable to Ottoman society enter the markets, but also avoid competition that led to price increases. As

³¹ *ibid*, pp. 181-182.

³² Cemal Kafadar, *Yeniçeri-Esnâf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict*, MA Thesis, (Montreal: McGill University, 1981), p. 61.

³³ Gabriel Baer, "Monopolies and Restrictive Practices of Turkish Guilds," p. 163.

³⁴ BOA, Cevdet / Belediye, No: 6398, Ş.1232 / July 1817.

³⁵ Mübahat Küttükoğlu, "Tanzimat Devrinde Yabancıların İktisadi Faaliyetleri," in *150. Yılında Tanzimat*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), p. 101.

³⁶ Gabriel Baer, "Monopolies and Restrictive Practices of Turkish Guilds," p. 154.

discussed before, producing and selling shoes with pointed toes was, for example, prohibited when this fashion caused price increases.³⁷

The number of *gediks* was limited. However, it could be increased, when it was in need and when a craft was popular. In İstanbul, Eyüp, Galata and Üsküdar, the number of *gedik* for making and selling snuff (*enfiyeci gediği*) was, for example, increased from forty-seven to ninety-four.³⁸ When the numbers of *gediks* increased too much, *esnâf*, in order to preserve their status quo, was obliged to get their *gedik*-papers endorsed by the *kadı*.³⁹ According to Gabriel Baer, limiting the number of shops, workshops and workers in any guild was aimed to prevent hoarding (*ihlikâr*), even though hawkers or peddlers continued to be on the streets illicitly and unorganized labor was allowed to enter the guilds. As a result, the *gedik* system, with respect to the limiting of the number of shops, could not be efficient.⁴⁰

Sometimes receiving *gedik* became a problematic issue. Consider the following case. A *gedik* belonging to the butcher guild was given to a member named Hasan. Since the shop was the property of a *vakıf* that rented it to another person, named Ali. When Ali came with his *gedik*-papers endorsed by the trustee of the pious foundation, he claimed his right over the butcher shop and wanted Hasan to leave. The butcher guild applied to the *kadı* of İstanbul to complain about Ali's violation of their rules and regulations.⁴¹ In the end, Hasan received the *gedik*. This case demonstrates the influence of a guild, and a problematic side of property rights

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 152.

³⁸ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye, II*, p. 642.

³⁹ Engin Deniz Akarlı, "*Gedik: Implements, Mastership, Shop Usufruct, and Monopoly Among İstanbul Artisans, 1750-1850*," p. 227.

⁴⁰ Gabriel Baer, "Monopolies and Restrictive Practices of Turkish Guilds," p. 146.

⁴¹ Ahmet Kal'a, "Gediklerin Doğuşu ve Gedikli Esnâf," p. 183.

with respect to the *evkâf*. Ahmet Kal'a argues that legal problems regarding the property rights were eventually resolved on behalf of the *esnâf*.⁴²

The *evkâf* played an important role as property holders of commercial buildings, where workshops and the shops rented to masters were located. Before the eighteenth century, *evkâf* was founded by sultans, valide sultans, sadrazams, başdefterdars, and other high bureaucrats. Later on, private people could found *evkâf*. By founding *evkâf*, those people aimed to escape both from confiscation and over-taxation. During the seventeenth century, when the local notables and other Ottoman bureaucrats could found *evkâf* and transfer their properties into commercial buildings. The relationship between *evkâf* and guilds was, therefore, deteriorated when high rents put heavy burden on the *esnâf*.⁴³

Immediate cash, needed by the central government, caused *evkâf* to be sold in auctions to whoever gave the highest price. In addition, in the period between 1770 and 1810, the state practiced confiscation in a very harsh way including not only the, the estate of a deceased high state officials (*tereke*) but also of private property holders. With the entrance of *iltizâm* into the *evkâf* or commercial buildings, guilds were heavily affected, especially during the eighteenth century when the guilds had to pay higher rent and taxes.⁴⁴ Thus, corruption became inevitable. During the first half of the eighteenth century, for example, three famous families living in Musol were given the responsibility of collecting taxes from the *esnâf*. However, they badly abused this privilege.⁴⁵ It is concluded that, when they could not pay their taxes, masters left their workshop or went to other places to practice their craft.

⁴² *ibid*, pp. 183-184.

⁴³ Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," p. 161.

⁴⁴ *ibid*, pp. 161-162.

Later, during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II, the *esnâf* enjoyed getting more monopolistic rights over their businesses, because the Sultan put the *evkâf* under the control of the state. Nevertheless, the *esnâf* had to pay much higher taxes than before.⁴⁶

Even after the abolition of the monopolies, some *gediks* survived, such as the Saraçhane in Fatih, some *dülbentci* (muslin) at the Çarşı-yı Kebir, as well as the soap tray *gediks* at the center of the courtyard of the Yenicamii-Şerif.⁴⁷ The *gedik* system, in brief, was meant to prevent the new comers and unsuitable masters to practice the craft. When monopolies were abolished, the *esnâf* faced difficulty despite the fact that some of them could protect and adapt themselves to the new market conditions.

"The Lumpen Esnâf": Janissaries

Janissary involvement in guild affairs led significant changes in the markets and the guilds. Initially, the corps was for the state, but with their corruption of various reasons, they began to act like as if the state existed only for the Janissaries.⁴⁸ It is probable that the infiltration of the Janissaries in guilds started, when the Ottoman government lost its control over the troops. Meanwhile, the Janissaries, some of whom began to lose their fighting abilities over time, became involved in

⁴⁵ *ibid*, p. 162.

⁴⁶ Engin Deniz Akarlı, "Gedik: Implements, Mastership, Shop Usufruct, and Monopoly Among İstanbul Artisans, 1750-1850," p. 229.

⁴⁷ "Yenicami-i Şerif havlısı ortasında bulunan sabuncu tablası gediklerinin sahipleri mürûr-ı eyyâm ile tabla yerine peyke koymuş ve üzerine bir de çadır kurmuş ve biraz sonra salaştan bir şey uydurmuş, bu suretle sergileri yavaş mahv ve isbât edip nihayet dükkan haline ifrağ ederek gediklerini daha inhisârın lağvından oralarda istikrâ ettirmiş olmalarıyla işbu gedikleri inhisârın lağvından sonra o da ibkâ ettirilmiştir."

Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye, II*, p. 645; and Neşet Çağatay, *Bir Türk Kurumu Olan Ahilik*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), p. 118.

⁴⁸ Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi I*, (Ankara: Tarih Kurumu Yayınları), p. 7.

guilds, when the state did not properly pay their salaries. This was compounding the problem in the decline of their real wages during the last quarter of the sixteenth century.⁴⁹ As a result, to operate a craft or a trade seemed like a profitable business to them. Accordingly, Cemal Kafadar calls these Janissaries involved in guilds as the "*lumpen esnâf*."⁵⁰

Privileged positions in the military class facilitated Janissary involvement in the guilds and they did not become subjected to the rules and regulations posed by the *İhtisâb Ağası* and the *kadı*. For instance, they did not have to pay tax and could work without a certificate of mastership. In the end, they became partners to masters and shared their profits.⁵¹ Moreover, as noted by Suraiya Faroqhi, in Cyprus, during the sixteenth century, military men entered the textile sector just as entrepreneurs, despite the fact that their influence differed from one place to another. Because Cyprus was a newly conquered island, Janissaries could participate in businesses easily. It is also important to note that, Janissaries, who were owners of looms in the region, were demanded to pay their shares in 1588-9.⁵² That was in fact was the central government's recognition of the Janissaries as entrepreneurs.

In 1584, the central government forbade the Janissaries to practice a craft or a trade.⁵³ However, in 1785, it decided to grant official rights to practice their craft.⁵⁴ There were also edicts issued before 1785 asserting the participation of Janissaries in commerce. Within time, Janissaries involved in guild affairs more, so that during the

⁴⁹ Cemal Kafadar, *Yeniçeri-Esnâf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict*, p. 82.

⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 91.

⁵¹ Onur Yıldırım, "Osmanlı Esnâfında Uyum ve Dönüşüm: 1650-1826," p. 167.

⁵² Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen in Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting, 1520-1650*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 128.

⁵³ Cemal Kafadar, *Yeniçeri-Esnâf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict*, p. 82; Ahmet Refik, *Onuncu Asr-Hicride İstanbul Hayatı: 1495-1591*, (İstanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1988), pp. 130-131.

seventeenth century, they received administrative positions in the guilds, on the condition that they left their *ulûfe* to the state treasury. This practice continued in the eighteenth century as well as that the state rented such administrative positions to the military men through the *malikâne* system. The central government, therefore, tried to create new sources for the military class as a result of its own economic difficulties.

In Ottoman politics, Janissaries most of the time balanced the power of the sultans and were sometimes influential in political decisions, particularly during the reigns of "weak sultans." However, during the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent, the shoemaker *esnâf*, for example, was given the privilege of punishing the offenders of guild regulations and they supported the Sultan against the Janissaries.⁵⁵ Dealing with such wrong-doings was not usually the job of guilds, but of the *kadı*.⁵⁶ In this case, the power of the shoemaker *esnâf* was undeniable. The Sultan granted such right because he needed the support of the *esnâf*. When they succeeded, the *esnâf* had four important petitions granted by the Sultan as noted by Evliya Çelebi:

That whereas formerly their apprentices after being trained and learning to read and write could raise to military posts, the janissary had succeeded in depriving them of this ancient privilege for the restoration of which they now humbly petitioned; secondly, they complained that the price of ten aspers per pair of slippers, as fixed by law, was too low and requested that it might be increased; thirdly, they petitioned for the right to execute their own members, if convicted of a crime, without interference from any outside magistrate; fourthly, they begged to be granted a separate place, within their own band, at the public processions. . .⁵⁷

Since they were the two of main groups influential in political and social life, *esnâf* and the Janissaries developed a mutual aid relationship. Nevertheless, it took

⁵⁴ Yusuf Ekinçi, *Makaleler*, (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1992), p. 145.

⁵⁵ Robert W. Olson, "The Esnâf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730," pp. 343-344.

⁵⁶ Cemal Kafadar, *Yeniçeri-Esnâf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict*, p. 64.

⁵⁷ Evliya Çelebi, (tr) Alexander Pallis, *In the Days of the Janissaries: Old Turkish Life as Depicted in*

time for the *esnâf* to collaborate with Janissaries. Before end of the sixteenth century, the *esnâf*, particularly the "lower strata of urban artisans" and the ruling military men had conflicts. The Janissaries, for example, would plunder or burn the shops, however, this changed when the Janissaries started infiltrating the guilds.⁵⁸ The *esnâf* of professional guilds usually remained neutral during rebellions. However, when they were hurt as a result of the harsh policies of the ruling class, the *esnâf* collaborated with the Janissaries and other main groups including the *ulema*. Later, after 1730, because of both increasing Janissary involvements in the Ottoman market and abuse of their businesses, the *esnâf* sided with the government to maintain the law and order.⁵⁹

Despite tension and conflicts between the *esnâf* and Janissaries, the *esnâf* and military men had to serve for the state and, therefore, relationship between these important groups was to be established. For example, there was the *ordu esnâfi*, or the army *esnâf*, who were responsible for the expenses of the army during wartime. Among the *esnâf* were ironmakers, blacksmiths, and maker of wheeled vehicles, saddlers, so on and so forth.⁶⁰ In order to receive the privilege of selling goods to the army, the *esnâf* had to pay a tax called the *ordu akçesi*. Unfortunately, the *esnâf* had difficulty to pay this tax in 1730, and it became one of the main reasons that the *esnâf* collaborated with Janissaries in the Patrona Halil Rebellion.⁶¹ The Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730 might be a good example of the solidarity between the *esnâf* and the Janissaries, some of whom had already operated a craft and a trade. It was

the 'Travel Book' of Evliya Çelebi, (London: Hutchinson & CO. Publishers Ltd, 1951), p. 153.

⁵⁸ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600*, (London: Phoenix, 1997), p. 161.

⁵⁹ Cemal Kafadar, *Yeniçeri-Esnâf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict*, p. 121.

⁶⁰ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Esnâf Cemiyetleri," p. 43.

rumored that the leader of the rebellion, Patrona Halil, was the secondhand goods dealer (*eskici*), while a fruiter and coffee house holder were his two assistants during the rebellion.⁶² In the same rebellion, the *esnâf* were against the Sultan, because of the heavy burden of taxes, such as the extraordinary campaign tax and the recently increased *ordu akçesi*.

There were many reasons for the *esnâf* to participate in this rebellion. Because of both the opening of the eastern front against Iran and emigrants from Rumeli to İstanbul, the *esnâf* found itself in a bad situation.⁶³ There was a tension not only between guild members and non-guild members, but also amongst guild members themselves. Artisans, who were non-guild members, provided tension in the cities, when they were hindered from producing. To compete with artisans from the provinces, the *esnâf* of the urban centers took some measures and were partially successful.⁶⁴ Robert W. Olson summarizes the complaints of the *esnâf* during the Tulip Period: "(1) the continued debasement of the currency and the problems which accompanied it, (2) The changes resulting in the guild system of *esnâf* because of the influx of emigrants from Anatolia and Rumeli, (3) The tax (*ordu akçesi*) extracted from the *esnâf* in times of mobilization for war."⁶⁵ In addition, in July 1730, an edict was issued that the *ordu esnâfi* was demanded to pay the *ordu akçesi*. The *esnâf* paid the tax, however, the army did not depart from Üsküdar, where the *esnâf* hoped to

⁶¹ Cemal Kafadar, *Yeniçeri-Esnâf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict*, 65.

⁶² Robert W. Olson, "The Esnâf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730," p. 338; and Cemal Kafadar, *Yeniçeri-Esnâf Relations: Solidarity and Conflict*, pp. 108-109.

⁶³ Robert W. Olson, "The Esnâf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730," p. 333.

⁶⁴ *ibid*, p. 336.

⁶⁵ *ibid*, p. 335.

sell to the army. For these reasons and increasing unemployment, the *esnâf* sided with the Janissaries.⁶⁶

Despite the fact that during the rebellion of 1730, the *esnâf* acted together with the Janissaries. Later during the revolt of 1740, the *esnâf*, most of whom were the non-Muslims, supported the Porte. The reason that the *esnâf* supported Sultan Mahmud I after the 1730-31 rebellion was the Sultan's promise of annulling the extraordinary campaign taxes. Also, the *esnâf* did not like disorder that led to interruptions in their businesses and, therefore, decided not to participate in the rebellions.⁶⁷ Why did mostly non-Muslims in 1740 support the Sultan? "The *esnâf* support of the Sultan was in turn reciprocated by favors from the Sultan evidenced in the 1740 French capitulations which broadened the immunities and protection of the Jews and Christians from prosecution and taxes under protection of the European embassies."⁶⁸

Afterwards, the Janissaries still continued to become a threat to the central government and continued to determine the politics of the day. For example, they forced Sultan Selim III to leave the throne in the following century.⁶⁹ Briefly, in the cases of rebellions, it can be concluded that some Janissaries behaved brutally, while the *esnâf* demanded order. With the loss of the support by the *esnâf* in the rebellions, the power of the Janissaries decreased for a while.⁷⁰ Similarly, during the 1820s, as a

⁶⁶ M. Münir Aktepe, "Ahmet III. Devrinde Şark Seferine İştirâk Edecek Ordu Esnâfi Hakkında Vesikâlar," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, No. 7. pp. 18-19.

⁶⁷ Robert W. Olson, "The Esnâf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730," p. 200.

⁶⁸ Robert Olson, "Jews, Janissaries, Esnâf and the Revolt of 1740 in İstanbul," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, No. 20 / Part 2, 1974, pp. 185-207.

⁶⁹ Immanuel Wallerstein, and Reşat Kasaba, "Incorporation into the World Economy: Change in the Structure of the Ottoman Empire, 1750-1839," p. 552.

⁷⁰ Robert W. Olson, "The Esnâf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion," p. 343.

result of the discontent created by the Janissaries, who plundered the properties of *esnâf* in İzmir, notables and *esnâf* of the city complained about the misbehaviors of the Janissaries.⁷¹ In the end, the government decided to expel the Janissary *Ağa* to restore the order.⁷² Nevertheless, some *esnâf* participated in the *Vak'a-yı Hayriyye* in 1826, when the Janissary corps was abolished.

The *Vak'a-yı Hayriyye* was a turning point, not only for the craft guilds, but also for the military class.⁷³ According to Donald Quataert, the *Vak'a-yı Hayriyye*, which was the beginning of the "economic Tanzimat," which ended in the 1870s. It not only did mean the destruction of the political and military powers, but it also got rid of the Janissaries with regards to "the armed defenders of guild privilege."⁷⁴ An archival document from 1829-30 proves the close relationship between some *esnâf* and the Janissaries. It says that due to the *Vak'a-yı Hayriyye*, two masons were expelled from İstanbul, but they returned and created discontent in the city. The document implies that these two men, like some other *esnâf*, collaborated with the Janissaries against the government during the *Vak'a-yı Hayriyye*.⁷⁵ This also explains Donald Quataert's point about the Janissaries that they were defenders of the

⁷¹ Necmi Ülker, "Yeniçeri Ocağı'nın İlgası Öncesi İzmir'deki Anarşi'ye Dair Bir Belge," *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi VI*, 1991, pp. 36-39.

⁷² *ibid*, p. 28, and 30-31.

⁷³ After *Vak'a-yı Hayriyye*, transformation of the guilds continued with the *İhtisâb Nezâreti*, which was responsible for collecting tax from artisans and craftsmen and providing security for city. During Mahmud II's reign, when the *ihtisâb rûsümü*, kind of tax, was introduced, discontent among the populace increased. In Damascus, for example, craftsmen closed their shops and rebelled. Nonetheless, the *ihtisâb* tax lost its importance during the Tanzimat era because the *Şehramaneti* replaced it in 1854.

Musa Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Anadolu Kentleri'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1997), p. 123.

⁷⁴ Donald Quataert, "Main Problems of the Economy During the Tanzimat Period," in: *Tanzimat'ın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu*, [ed.] Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), p. 211, and 92.

⁷⁵ BOA, Cevdet / Zaptiye, No: 1252, R.1245 / October 1829.

guilds, which they were involved in. Another document says that two *esnâf*, dealer in ready made goods (*oturakçı*), and person who involved in the business of tobacco (*duhancı*) were also expelled for the same reason. However, in the end, they were both forgiven.⁷⁶

Finally, the involvement of the Janissaries in crafts and trade hurt the guild structure, since they were not subjected tax, and since they forced masters for partnership in business. If the abolishment of Janissaries was beneficial, then why their abolishment helped the system to recover? After the Janissary corps were abolished in 1826, particularly the Muslim *esnâf*, who were involved in crafts needed by Janissaries, were badly hurt. An archival document of 1880 explains why the Muslim *esnâf* remained in a disadvantageous position after 1826. After the Janissary corps was abolished, some *esnâf*, who produced for the army such as weapons, tent, tanner, stick for climbing, headkerchief, clothing, and quilts, had difficulty. The archival document shows that these Muslim *esnâf* still continued to operate coarse and insignificant crafts (*kaba ve hasîs*), while they left fine arts and crafts to non-Muslims. After 1826, rather than producing new styled shoes, shoemakers, who formerly produced for the Janissaries, did not follow the new innovation and techniques according to the preferences of the populace. Instead of adopting new techniques, both shoemakers and cloth makers had to leave their jobs. Similarly, the *esnâf* who were responsible for making shoes for the Janissary *Ağa* preferred to make the shoes of people of lower strata or destitute (*emsâl-i sefile*), like the day labores (*hammâl*). Accordingly, in the time of Janissaries, barbers' shops were in the hands of Muslims, who would recover with two-thousand *kuruş* capital. However, they

⁷⁶ BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayun, No: 25072.

preferred to continue their jobs in the old manner.⁷⁷ The document, in short, explains how these kinds of guilds had difficulty in surviving and adopting themselves to a new situation, since they continued to produce in old manner and chose to produce for non-profitable markets. Also, according to the document, the Muslim *esnâf* should produce in new styles, adopt new techniques in order to develop the sectors mentioned above and much participate in fine crafts as non-Muslim did.

Finally, it can be argued that janissaries involved especially in profitable businesses, like bakery. The central government, in fact, allowed the janissaries to continue their businesses but forbade them producing anything spoiled. In 1768, the government paid attention to the quality and the fixed price of the bread and related goods. When bakery holder janissaries tended to produce spoiled and deficient bread, or other kinds such as roll of bread in the shape of a ring (*simit*), and round cake or loaf (*çörek*), the government took action against it.⁷⁸

There are some documents to explain the relationship between the *esnâf* and the janissaries. Especially as a result of the *Vaka-yi Hayriyye*, for example, many *esnâf* were expelled from İstanbul. Nevertheless, this relationship can be understood as solidarity or conflict between two of the main groups of the Ottoman Empire that appeared in various times for various reasons. Last but not least, in the Prime Ministry Archive, Turkish summaries of the archival documents in the catalogues may sometimes give misleading information. For example, a summary of a document from the archive implies the janissary's involvement in cobbler making sector. Since who read the Ottoman Turkish word, *dikici* (cobbler maker) without

⁷⁷ BOA, Y.E.E., Sıra No. 2544, Dosya No: 79, Gömlek No: 5, M.1297 / January 1880.

⁷⁸ BOA, Cevdet / Askeriye, No. 18082, Z.1181 / May 1768.

considering the letter "d", *dikici* becomes "*yeniçeri*," (janissary).⁷⁹ Such a summary may mislead would consider janissary as cobbler makers if not see the original document.

To sum up, this chapter has demonstrated how internal factors played significant role. These factors were: new comers, wage-earning masters and journeymen, illicit receiving of mastership, corruption in guilds, involvement of Janissaries in guilds and their forceful partnership with masters, receiving *gedik* when both the guilds and the heads of pious foundations rented them to different people.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No. 1603, no date.

⁸⁰ In fact, to explain the changes in the history of the Ottoman craft guilds, one should also study the *esnâf* associations during the Second Constitutional Era (1908-1920). During this period, the CUP government tried to control the *esnâf* by abolishing the *kethüdâ*-ship while allowing each guild to have its own association. Thus, the Ottoman *esnâf*, later *esnâf* associations, can be examined in the context that they were important parts in formation of a modern state.

VI. A Case Study on Ottoman Silk Industry:
Karuzâg, Sordukçe and Kemâkçe Guilds in İstanbul from the
Early Eighteenth Century to the First Half of the Nineteenth



VI. A Case Study on Ottoman Silk Industry: *Kazzâz*, *Sandâlcı* and *Kemhâcı* Guilds in İstanbul from the Early Eighteenth Century to the First Half of the Nineteenth Century

This chapter examines the Ottoman silk industry in İstanbul as a case study and particularly the *kazzâz* (silk manufacturer), *sandâlcı* (*sandâl* is a kind of silk or satin cloth and a mixture of silk and cotton), and *kemhâcı* (*kemhâ* is brocade or silk velvet) guilds, from the early eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century. It focuses on the policies of the central government regarding the silk industry. To investigate the changes in guilds before the Tanzimat Era, the present chapter focuses particularly on İstanbul, the capital city of the Empire.¹ Since the Ottoman government had more control over its capital city regarding the economic policies, a study of İstanbul sheds more light on the government's response to the transformation of the city. Furthermore, İstanbul was indeed a "parasite giant," and it remained to be the main concern of the government through and all period of Ottoman history.² Considering the guild affairs, the central government also aimed to secure its power by giving İstanbul a monopolistic status. Briefly, this chapter concentrates on the priority to the *esnâf* in İstanbul, the role of the central government concerning the guild affairs and monopolistic status of the silk guilds, disputes among guild members, other guilds and non guild members. It does not aim to analyze all aspects of the silk industry

¹ Edhem Eldem explains the importance of İstanbul: "The overwhelming presence of the state and its appendages, the relative strength of guild structures, the enormous size of its population, all contributed to the sophistication, wealth, and overall development of the capital's markets. But beyond these, what differentiated and privileged İstanbul was the high level of monetization in trading activities, as opposed to the predominance or at least the significant presence of non-monetized or semi-monetized forms of trade in other commercial centers of the Empire."

Edhem Eldem, "İstanbul: from Imperial to Peripheralized Capital," in: *The Ottoman City Between East and West: Aleppo, İzmir, and İstanbul*, [ed.] Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman and Bruce Masters, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 178.

² *ibid*, p. 162.

Silk Industry in the Ottoman Guild History: an Overview

Silk cloth represented the wealth of the Ottoman Empire on the occasion that the sultans usually presented it as a gift to important local people, visitors, or foreign royalty.³ Ottoman sultans initially ordered silk from outside. During the early fifteenth century, for instance, Murad II asked silk cloth from China, which was a major source of silk.⁴ Before that, there were some signs for existence of silk products in Bursa, when Timur plundered it after the Ankara battle in 1402. Amongst the plundered materials were same silk products.⁵ Within time, the Ottoman government paid more attention to the development of silk industry and initiated its silk own industry. It was not only profitable but also could serve for the needs of the palace initially.

The silk industry then became one of the main sectors in the Ottoman Empire. Importing raw silk from outside, however, made the Ottoman Empire dependent to the Eastern routes, where wars with Iran hindered the raw silk trade. Treaties made with Iran usually included some articles promising to give certain amount of silk.⁶ During the mid-sixteenth century, when Italian silk began to have a predominant role, the Ottoman silk industry became vulnerable and unprotected. After the Industrial Revolution in Europe, the demand for the raw silk increased. Then, Europeans encouraged the production of silk cocoon sector in other countries. When the flow of raw silk from the East was interrupted, the Ottoman economy

³ Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 107.

⁴ Fahri Dalsar, *Türk Sanayi ve Ticaret Tarihinde Bursa'da İpekçilik*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1960), pp. 21-22.

⁵ *ibid*, p. 25. See also Murat Çizakça, "Fiyat Tarihi ve Bursa İpek Sanayii: Osmanlı Sanayinin Çöküşü Üzerine Bir İnceleme 1550-1650," *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 11, 1980, pp. 99-101.

⁶ Fahri Dalsar, *Türk Sanayi ve Ticaret Tarihinde Bursa'da İpekçilik*, p. 155.

started to produce silk cocoons. From the sixteenth century onwards, foreign clothing entered the Ottoman market, and particularly Venetian textiles took important portion in the Ottoman imports of the seventeenth century.⁷

Silk weaving was influenced by not only interruptions in raw silk trade due to the continuous wars with Iran, but also by the expansion of the Italian and French silk weaving industry. Since the Europeans produced cheap and fantasy clothing, the Ottoman producers had difficulty in competing with their qualified and expensive products in the market. Besides some external factors, internal factors also hurt the Ottoman silk industry. For example, during the mid-nineteenth century, the pébrine plaque spread from France affected the silkworms in the Ottoman Empire. After the plaque damaged the silkworms, the mulberry garden keepers transformed their gardens to arable fields. Despite the fact that the central government tried to protect its domestic silk production, its attempts were unsuccessful.⁸

Ottoman silk industry experienced drastic changes during the nineteenth century. For example, private factories found after 1800 focused in silk yarn spinning at first, such as in Salonica, Lebanon, and Bursa.⁹ Yet, silk weaving could develop, at least, at the turn of the century. There were several reasons for such a growth. First, because of the Napoleonic Wars, European demand for Ottoman raw silk and silk cocoons decreased. Second, the Ottoman producers tried to compete with European producers by imitating their light and fantasy weaving. Third, Ottoman producers adopted new technology in silk cloth finishing. As such, stone

⁷ *ibid*, pp. 306-307. See also Murat Çizakça, "Fiyat Tarihi ve Bursa İpek Sanayii: Osmanlı Sanayinin Çöküşü Üzerine Bir İnceleme 1550-1650," pp. 102-104.

⁸ Vedat Eldem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu İktisadi Şartları Hakkında Bir Tetkik*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1994), pp. 68-69.

⁹ Edward C. Clark, *The Emergence of Textile Manufacturing Entrepreneurs in Turkey, 1804-1968*, Ph. D. (Princeton University, Department of Oriental Studies, 1969), pp. 41-49.

finishing replaced fire finishing and as a result, silk became far more brighter and cheaper.¹⁰

Ottomans imported European technology and established European styled factories. For example, during the 1830s-1840s, İsmet Paşa, a local notable, tried to introduce European styles in Bursa.¹¹ Despite the initial difficulties, silk cloth production survived in Bursa, Diyarbakır, Aleppo, Damascus, and the Iraqi provinces. However, silk textile industry did not really recover in Salonica, Edirne, and İstanbul, particularly during the second half of the nineteenth century.¹²

Despite the new developments in textile sector and imitation of European textile, the number of the *esnâf* working in the Ottoman silk sector decreased during the second half of the nineteenth century. There were 2,750 textile *destgâh* both in İstanbul and Üsküdar, while the number of textile guild was reaching to 3,500 including both Muslim and non-Muslim subjects. Within three decades following 1838, the number of *destgâh* had decreased to twenty-five and the number of *esnâf* had fallen to forty. Furthermore, the number of *destgâh* of the *kemhâcı* guild decreased from three-hundred-fifty to four, while the number of people dealing with *kemhâ* decreased from seven-hundreds to four. Likewise, the number of *destgâh* and so the *esnâf* decreased for the *çatma* and *yasdıkçılar* guilds. For this reason, in 1868, the *İslâh-ı Sanayi Komisyonu* decided to unite these *esnâf* groups under a company. The company was named the *Kumaşçılar Esnâfi Şirketi*, Textile Guild Company.¹³ By establishing such a firm, the *esnâf* aimed to revive and develop textile industry

¹⁰ Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*, pp. 109-110.

¹¹ *ibid*, p. 114.

¹² *ibid*, p. 116.

¹³ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyeye II*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Yayınları), pp .728-731.

and adopt themselves to the new market conditions. An archival document demonstrates the significance of the company for the Ottoman economy and also of the silk products (*mamûlât-ı harîriyye*).¹⁴

Another attempt was to exhibit Ottoman silk products at international industrial fairs. Ottoman silk products, for example, were sent to an industrial fair opened in London in 1851. In 1863, an international trade fair was opened in Sultanahmed, one hundred twenty types of domestic silk products were exhibited.¹⁵ During the late nineteenth century, the Public Debt Administration played a significant role in the revival of the silk production. The Administration implemented the Pasteur System, founded the Institute for Silk, and encouraged people to reestablish their mulberry gardens.¹⁶ Moreover, books related to the issues of silk and silkworms were published.¹⁷ Also the *Dâr'ül Harîr*, Institute Sericole, was opened to develop silkworm sector. In the early twentieth century, mechanization of silk industry continued. In 1910, for example, the *Mensûcât Türk A.Ş.* was established. Silk industry, however, had run into real troubles with the World War I.¹⁸

¹⁴ "Mamulât-ı harîriye herkes için luzûmlu ve dâima sürümlü olmasıyle..." BOA, İrade / Şura-yı Devlet, No. 32, 1284 / 1868.

¹⁵ Fahri Dalsar, *Türk Sanayi ve Ticaret Tarihinde Bursa'da İpekçilik*, pp. 411-416.

¹⁶ Vedat Eldem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu İktisadi Şartları Hakkında Bir Tetkik*, pp. 68-69; see also Şule Gönülsüz, *Economy and Society in Bursa (1867-1927)*, M.A. Thesis, (Boğaziçi University, Department of History, 1998, pp. 79-80.

¹⁷ See, for example, Agob Hoca ve Cevdet, *İpek Terbiyesinin Talimâtname*, (İstanbul: Tabhâne-i Amire Litografya Destgâhı, 1269); Amasyan, *İpekböceği Hastalığına Dâir Malûmât*, (Bursa: Hüdâvendigâr Vilâyeti Matbaası: 1286); Cevdet Agah, *İpek Terbiyesinin Talimname*, (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1284); İhsân, *İpekçilik Sanatı*, (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1331); *İpekböcekleri Beslemesi ve Böceklere Arız Olan Hastalıklar Hakkında Muhtasar Bir Risâledir*, (İstanbul: Düyûn-ı Umûmiye Matbaası, 1313); *İpekçilik*, (İstanbul: Düyûn-ı Umûmiye Matbaası, 1323); Kevork Torkumyan, *İpek Böceği Beslemek ve İpek Böceği Tohumu İstihsâl Etmek Usûlleri*, (İstanbul: Düyûn-ı Umûmiye Matbaası, 1314); Mehmed Arif, *İpek Böceği Beslemek Usûlü*, (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Ahmed İhsân, 1326); Mehmed Emin, *İpek Böcekleri*, (İstanbul: Kırk Ambar Matbaası, Tercümân-ı Hakikat Tefrikalarından Mutehassıl Yeni Kütüphâne, 1296).

¹⁸ Fahri Dalsar, *Türk Sanayi ve Ticaret Tarihinde Bursa'da İpekçilik*, pp. 432-433.

The *Kazzâz*, *Sandâlcı* and *Kemhâcı* Guilds in Ottoman İstanbul

In Ottoman İstanbul, the central government aimed to support the silk weaving sector by establishing the *Kârhâne-i Hâssa*, also known as *Kârhâne-i Âmire*. Also the central government tried to control the industry by allowing the men of the Palace to participate in the business. In the mid-sixteenth century, for instance, twenty-eight men of the Palace had eighty-eight weaving workshops in İstanbul.¹⁹

Since the capital city reflected the sultan's power and wealth, provisioning of İstanbul was important. Considering the *kazzâz* guild, as it was true for other *esnâf* groups, İstanbul enjoyed priority in receiving raw silk secured by the central government.²⁰ In 1804, the government prohibited selling of *meşdût*, the firmly twisted silk, to foreigners (*müstemin tâifesi*), in order to provide sufficient amount of silk for the İstanbul guild.²¹ Similarly, in 1828, silk produced in the Hüdavendigâr Sancağı was ordered by İstanbul.²² Another document demonstrates that *meşdût* was considered indispensable (*havâyîc-i zarûriye*) for people living in İstanbul.²³ Therefore, the government intended to control the distribution of silk. The following case from the eighteenth century also shows how strict these rules and regulations were. The *sandâlcı* guild in İstanbul, belonged to the Foundation of the Sultan Selim Han (*Sultan Selim Han Evkâfi*), remained dependent on Bursa silk. Until required

¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 155.

²⁰ Despite the fact that the number of guildsmen restricted, the *kemhâcı* guild, or silk-weaving guild, tried to increase their numbers at the end of the eighteenth century. Furthermore, in 1802, the monopoly of the silk spinners in İzmir was broken. It seems reasonable to argue that İzmir was a significant urban center also with its port and hinterlands, breaking the monopoly in the city might be easier than in other urban centers regarding at least the *kemhâcı* guild.

²¹ BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No. 1074, S.1219 / July 1804; Cevdet / Evkâf, No. 13911, S.1230 / January 1815; and Cevdet / İktisat, No. 1240, C.1242 / January 1827.

²² BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No. 1298, C.1244 / November 1828.

²³ BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No. 1804, no date.

amount of silk was to be provided to the *sandâlcı* guild in İstanbul, silk could not be exported any other to places.²⁴

Regarding fire and stone press (*mengene*), the Foundation of the Sultan Mustafa (*Sultan Mustafa Evkâfi*) in Mahmutpaşa also had monopolistic status.²⁵ To establish stone press in other places was, therefore, forbidden. According to an archival document from 1816, for instance, the government was informed that a stone press was established in Bursa, where a fire press had already been present. Since a stone press was established to serve the *sandâlcı* guild in İstanbul, founding it in other places was considered illegal. The government, therefore, decided to abolish above-mentioned press in Bursa to maintain the monopoly of the İstanbul *sandâlcı* guild.²⁶ This document, in brief, deals with both the preservation of the monopoly rights and quality of silk. However, had the central government really concerned about the quality of silk, it would not have prohibited the stone press in other silk centers. According to another document, furthermore, the central government ordered that all types of silks produced in İstanbul were to be finished at the press of Mahmutpaşa. And, therefore, it was asked to abolish presses established in anywhere else. At the same time, the government intended to help maintain the revenue of the press in Mahmutpaşa.²⁷ These archival documents imply that to abolish the monopoly of this press was difficult. However, its monopoly was broken later on. It appears that the textile producers in various centers and even other textile guilds in İstanbul exerted too much pressure on the central government to abolish the monopoly of Mahmutpaşa.

²⁴ BOA, Cevdet / Evkâf, No. 13911, S.1230 / January 1815.

²⁵ Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*, p. 110.

²⁶ BOA, Cevdet / Belediye, No. 4720, Za.1230 / October 1816.

²⁷ BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No. 163, B.1154 / September 1741.

The following document from the archive illustrates that the *Mirî Damgâhâne* aimed to maintain a monopoly on the arrangement for textiles weaved in İstanbul on the loom, such as *atlas*, *kutnî*, and *sandâl*. In 1760, people violated this rule by arranging those textiles on the loom other places like Galata, Beyoğlu, and Üsküdar, where the height of textile wires was said to be either short or defective. Considering this specific case, it can be argued that, the Ottoman government's intention was not only to maintain its control on the textile sector, but also to prevent the production of unqualified items.²⁸

Even though the government tried to preserve the status of the İstanbul *sandâlcı* guild, Bursa preserved its monopolistic status regarding *meşdût* purchased by the İstanbul *sandâlcı* guild. In fact, a document from the Ottoman Archive implies that despite Bursa's monopoly, İstanbul had happened to produce *meşdût* as early as 1812. Based on this fact, the *sandâlcı* guild in İstanbul asked to produce *meşdût* later, as it was used to be.²⁹ Why was the government concerned with preserving the status of the *esnâf* in İstanbul, despite the fact that Bursa was a center of silk? It appears that the central government was aimed to make other silk centers be dependent on the capital city and it desired to consolidate its power in other textile centers.

Despite the fact that the central government cared to preserve the privileged status of guilds in İstanbul in order to provide the basic necessities of the city, numerous archival documents including various complaints and petitions, which demonstrate how the monopoly of a guild in İstanbul was also broken. Sometimes, monopoly of guilds was shaken due to the foreign competition. Although the

²⁸ BOA, Cevdet / Belediye, No. 290, Z.1173 / July 1760.

²⁹ BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayûn, No. 52309, 1227 / 1812.

following case is indirectly related to the *sandâlcı* guild, it demonstrates how guilds needed the support of each other. The following archival document from 1812 illustrates the point. The Paper Dealer's Guild in Beykoz, managed by the *Darbhâne-i Âmire* (the Imperial Mint) had difficulty in competing with the foreign paper dealers. The *sandâlcı*, *dülbentci* and *bezzâz* guilds, good customers for the paper dealers, used paper to cover their textiles. It appears that these textile guilds were important customers, who had been buying high volume of papers, but they were now inclined to buy cheap products from foreign merchants. Since the Paper Dealer Guild in Beykoz did not want to lose its customers to foreigners merchants, the director of the *Darphâne-i Âmire* asked the government to force these guilds continue to buy paper from the Paper Dealers Guild rather than from foreign merchants.³⁰ The main concern of the *Darphâne-i Âmire*, by making the central government take such a measure, was to maintain its revenue from the Paper Dealers Guild as it used to be.

The archival documents used in this study imply that the central Ottoman government aimed to protect the *esnâf*. However, sometimes the government took contradictory decisions. The *esnâf* became unprotected, when the central government decided to abolish monopolies. Sultan Selim III abolished the *gedik* monopolies during his reign, however, this was not really implemented until 1839. In 1807, however, an archival document implies that monopolies for *sandâlcı* guild had already been abolished.³¹ According to the same document, when the *sandâlcı* guild petitioned the government to prevent the additional *destgâhs*, the government reminded the *esnâf* that monopoly (*inhisâr*), for weavers of *sandâl* and its related

³⁰ BOA, Cevdet / Dahiliye, No. 51, Z.1226 / January 1812.

³¹ BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No. 1324, S.1222 / May 1807.

products had already been abolished. How was it possible that the government abolished the monopoly right of the above mentioned guild and prohibited to establish new *destgâhs* at the same time? If the government was really concerned to preserve the monopolistic status of this guild, why did not it take measures on the behalf of weavers of *sandâl* and related materials? It seems that the transformation of the city took place through changes in government's approaches to the *esnâf* in İstanbul. Nevertheless, the government did not give up protecting the *esnâf* in the long run.

The central government also used the distribution of raw materials as a control mechanism. The government punished people who violated rules and regulations concerning the *esnâf*. Consider the following example in 1824, when a silk trader behaved improperly, the government expelled him to Bursa.³² Similarly, people who damaged the mulberry trees were punished because they were important for the development of silk industry.³³

The central government tried to prevent the smuggling of silk indeed to secure its tax revenues from silk.³⁴ This policy at the same time was to protect the *esnâf* from the abuses of profiteers and smugglers. To protect the *esnâf*, the government tried to implemented new rules and regulations. The smugglers would probably sell silk to foreigners and non-guild members, despite the fact that it was considered illegal. The government's concern was to prevent a possible shortage that smuggling could produce. As argued in before, for this very reason, the government restricted short distance merchant activities.

³² BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No. 1243, S.1240 / October 1824.

³³ BOA, DH. MUI., Sıra No. 2002, Dosya No. 29-2, Gömlek No. 25, Z.1327 / January 1910.

³⁴ BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No. 1975, 1219 / 1804.

The monopolistic status of guilds was sometimes broken as a result of internal pressure from the non-guild producers.³⁵ The non-guild members' imitation of guild styles for example, had lowered the quality of silk products. The government prohibited non-guild members to imitate the *sandâlcı* guild, in order to preserve the monopolistic status of the guild. İstanbul *Sandâl Bedesteni* had the monopoly to sell the *sandâl* and anything related to this product. However, non-guild members secretly tried to sell unqualified and spurious products outside the *Bedesten*. The producers of these unqualified products defended themselves by saying that they had produced these *sandâls* for makers or sellers of quilted turbans. Based on this claim, they meant that the products they produced for the Guilted Turban Guild did not have to be qualified.³⁶ The last example shows that within time, non-guild members developed kind of defence mechanism in order to legitimize their situation. For this very reason, these non-guild members implied that they had already have customers who were ready to purchase their products, as in this case, makers of guilted turbans.

Disputes within and among the Silk Guilds

The government's involvement in guild matters is not limited to the monopoly rights. The Ottoman government was also concerned and involved with the administration of the guilds in the eighteenth century. The government, for example, preferred one *yiğitbaşı* for each religious group. This was indeed an old practice to prevent the inter-guild disputes. Consider the following example from 1727. The *bürümcük* (kind of crep made of raw silk), *ibrişim* (silk thread) and *ipek*

³⁵ BOA, Cevdet / Evkâf, No. 17412, S.1258 / April 1848.

³⁶ BOA, Cevdet / Belediye, No. 147, B.1137 / March 1725.

(silk) *bükücü* (spinners) guilds in İstanbul each had more than one *yiğitbaşı* and each *yiğitbaşı* was responsible for the members of the same religion. When Osman, the Muslim *kethüdâ*, claimed supervisory authority over the non-Muslim *esnâf*, they complained about Osman's misconducting in guild affairs. The judge (*kadı*) however, gave the responsibility for both groups to the Muslim *kethüdâ* and warned Osman not to disturb the Christian *esnâf*.³⁷ According to the same document, the Muslim masters were worried about Christian *esnâf*, who had promoted many apprentices to mastership. It seems that promoting many non-Muslim apprentices was a challenge to the Muslims, because of the limited number of *destgâhs*.

The custom, which requires transferring or selling one's *gedik* to only persons from the same religion, supposedly, prevented disputes. Yet, there are some exceptions. Take, for example, the following case from 1816. A non-Muslim sold his equipment in his *kazzâz* workshop to a Muslim women named Ayşe.³⁸ It should be noted, however, that especially regarding the *Kazzâz* guild, disputes did not take place as a result of transferring one's *gedik* to a person from different religious group. Most of the time, these kinds of transfers occurred peacefully. Given that the number of shops and workshops were highly restricted, as it was discussed in the previous pages, apprentices, who were expected to become masters and open their own workshops, could not get this right. Then, the only option was to become a journeymen and to work as skilful apprentices with their masters. Conflict, therefore, became unavoidable. An archival document regarding the Silk Thread Spinners guild (*ibrişim bükücü*) demonstrates that most of the time journeymen had difficulty in receiving a *gedik* or a *destgâh*. As a result, they would not receive their

³⁷ BOA, Cevdet / İktisat, No. 1138, Ca.1139./ January 1727.

³⁸ BOA, Cevdet / Belediye, No. 3222, L.1231 / September 1816.

own *destgâh* by the time, when they were considered capable of being master. Concerning the *destgâhs* at the Fazlı Paşa Palace, for example, two journeymen from the Silk Thread Spinners guild petitioned the judge. They said that the *kazzâz* guild at the Fazlı Paşa Palace had seventy silk thread spinners *destgâhs*. Therefore, a master's having more than one *destgâh* would be harmful, in terms of job opportunities of others. These journeymen also pointed out to the limited number of the *destgâhs* and asked the government to prohibit masters to have more than one *destgâhs*. The judge, *kadı*, decided in favor of the journeymen, based on the fact that each master had to maintain only one *destgâh*.³⁹

Disputes also took place between the silk dyers and *kazzâz* guild. The silk dyers at the Fazlı Paşa Palace complained about violation of their rules and regulations. These dyers maintained four dyeing factories and had the monopoly over silk dyeing. For this reason, they aimed to prevent outside dyers from involving in the dying business. These dyers also complained about the *kazzâz* guild, which allowed their products to be dyed outside the Fazlı Paşa Palace. The dyer's guild aimed to produce high quality products tried to maintain the quality of their silk, and increase endurance of dyed materials even under the harmful effects of sun, air, and water. The guild not only tried to protect their monopoly rights over the dying silk sector, but also made it clear that the influx of products dyed with low quality materials on the markets were not their own products.⁴⁰ In this way, the dyer's guild tried to restore their authority over the dying business and prevent outsiders from practicing this job. Furthermore, probably some members of the *kazzâz* guild made their products, dyed with cheap and unqualified products in order to compete with

³⁹ BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayûn, No. 30847, 1240 / 1825.

⁴⁰ BOA, Cevdet / Belediye, No. 778, Ca.1206 / February 1792.

the imported materials and to gain more profit. They then asked the government to monitor other silk dyer and to make sure that each dyers should only dye the products under his monopoly. Also the dyer's guild in İstanbul tried to prevent competition from local dyers in the rural areas, who had become a serious competitor to urban dyers.⁴¹

Among other problems, insufficient payments, should also be mentioned as a source of tension. For example, the *kethüdâ* and masters of the *sandâlcı* guild in Üsküdar petitioned the judge. The members of guilds wanted an increase their weekly payments. Despite that fact, the judge decided a two *kuruş* increase. However, the *sandâlcı* masters were not satisfied with this amount of increase, because they claimed that this amount would not be enough to support their families. As a result, the judge decided to increase the weekly payments of *sandâlcı* masters from forty to forty-five and a half *kuruş*. In sum, it appears that, the judge, as the government agent, is concerned with preventing the conflict. Also, the well being of the *esnâf* families appear among the concerns of the government. It is clear that such a discourse based on the welfare of the family is used by the *esnâf* to legitimize their specific case.⁴²

The Central Government, the Protection of the *Esnâf* and Legitimization

A quick examination of the available documents in the Prime Ministry Archive illustrates the discourse based on "the protection of the *esnâf*." The central government played a significant role in the legitimacy of power. The documents

⁴¹ BOA, Cevdet / Belediye, No. 6063, L.1203./ July 1789.

⁴² BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayûn, No. 30985, 1235 / 1819-1820.

imply that the *esnâf* used a similar petitioning language to legitimize their own position with respect to the central government.

Though, this chapter does not cover the Second Constitutional Era, it should be noted that the central government was still concerned about its subjects whose support was really needed as it was in the earlier centuries. The İstanbul government, for example, allowed exportation of silk at least in 1915 when grasshopper catastrophe in the Cebel-i Lübnan damaged silk industry. The Cebel-i Lübnan was an important center for its silk production, which was a livelihood for the people living there. The document implies that if exportation of silk was prohibited, the subject people of the region would fall in poverty. The main concern of the central government by taking such a measure was to secure its power even in the periphery.⁴³ Consider the following example from 1807, when the *kazzâz esnâfi* had difficulty in finding cash to purchase silk. They went to the *sarrafs* (moneylenders) borrowing and with high interest rate seemed as a short-term solution to their problem. This was, in fact, disadvantageous for the *esnâf*.⁴⁴ The document emphasizes that the *esnâf* would be in trouble if borrowed money from the moneylenders. Also, the *kazzâz* guild might be in difficulty to provide necessary amount of silk. Or was the aim to expand the silk industry despite the fact that the document did not give any clue to infer this point.

Another document gives the impression that the central Ottoman government was mainly concerned with the protection of the subject. It, therefore, was intended to protect the guild members from the misconduct and abuses of the other members.

⁴³ BOA, DH. İUM., Dosya No. 77-1, Sıra No. 1-25, No. 1333 / July 1915.

⁴⁴ BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayûn, No. 13873, 1222 / -1807; See also, Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*, p. 109. He argues that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, *sandâlcı* and *bezzâz* guild complained about the rising prises.

The following example from the *kemhâci* guild illustrates the point. The members of the *kemhâci* guild in İstanbul petitioned to the sultan when the wealthy (the *gânî*), guild members misbehaved. These wealthy guild members tried to get the administration of the guild in their hands by establishing additional *destgâhs* among themselves and selling and buying *gediks* at 400 *kuruş*. Furthermore, they declared that ones who did not have enough money to buy a *kemhâci gedik* at this price would lose his right to receive the *gedik*. The guild members petitioned the sultan and asked him to abolish the additional *gediks* established by the wealthy members. Since the number of the *gediks* was restricted, establishing new ones and selling them at a higher price without taking the consent of all of the guild members, was not considered legitimate. The central government, as a result, reminded that the number of the *kemhâci destgâhs*, which was 432, was sufficient, and there was no need for additional *destgâhs*. With this act, the government intended to prevent the unskilled masters from operating the business. According to the argument of the document, additional *gediks* would hurt the *ibâdullâh*, the people of Allah, meaning in this case the subjects of the sultan.⁴⁵ This discourse emphasizing the protection of the sultan's subjects was one of the main themes in this kind of documents, which supposedly lend legitimacy to the rule of the sultan. The government did not probably want the traditional guilds to change.

The documents indicate that the government also used the protection of consumers of guild products as broader legitimation. Lowering the quality of silk, preference of other cheap materials instead of silk and low quality of dye resulted in economic setbacks of the silk industry. When the supply of qualified silk became

⁴⁵ BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayûn, No. 57568, 1212 / 1797-1798.

difficult, low and high quality silk began to be woven together.⁴⁶ An archival document from 1827 illustrates how carelessly the *kazzâz* guild began to produce silk and it sheds light on the discourse framed around from the protection of the consumer subject.⁴⁷ Since price increases led the subject fell in poverty, the sultan did not desire his ideal image, based on the feeding his own people, would be destroyed. In other words, preventing price increases carries both pragmatic and ideal meanings.

In this chapter, the silk guilds in İstanbul from the early eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century are examined. Based on the archival documents, it is demonstrated that the central government was involved in the affairs of the *kazzâz*, *sandâlcı*, and *kemhâcı* guilds, since they were related to the provisioning of İstanbul. To provide the needs of İstanbul, the government then ordered raw silk, such as *meşdût*, from other places particularly from Bursa. The privileged position of the capital city helped İstanbul *sandâlcı* guild to maintain its power over the stone *mengene*.

Archival documents also imply that despite the central government's strictness in preserving the monopoly position of the *esnâf* of silk guilds in İstanbul, they still had to compete with foreigners and non-guild members who came from the provinces as a result of demographic movements of the previous centuries. Non-guild members and involvement of foreigners in the market lowered the quality of silk. And, therefore, tension and conflict between guild members and non-guild members became inevitable. In such crisis conditions, in order to protect the *esnâf*, the government prohibited the production and selling of unqualified products.

⁴⁶ Fahri Dalsar, *Türk Sanayi ve Ticaret Tarihinde Bursa'da İpekçilik*, pp. 310-312.

⁴⁷ BOA, Hatt-ı Hümayûn, No. 32328, 1242 / 1827.

Among other measures, the central government also tried to protect the *esnâf* against the moneylenders, who asked for high interest rates.

Preventing possible disputes among guild members was also among the concerns of the Ottoman government. As such, the central government tried to make it sure that each confessional group had its own *yiğitbaşıs*. However, sometimes the confessional groups interfered in each other's affairs. In such cases, the government tried to arrange concessions between the competing groups. Also, Ottoman government intended to prevent conflicts regarding the silk guilds. Despite the government's attempt to secure order in the market, however, there were other sources of conflict. Journeymen in the silk guild objected the masters, who maintained more than one *destgâh*.

This chapter has explained why the government mostly intended to preserve the privileged position of the guilds in İstanbul and to prevent possible disputes within the guild. It is also emphasized that protecting the *esnâf* would secure the revenue of the central government. The archival documents examined in this chapter show that in most cases it was the *evkâf* that had the property rights of the workshops and shops of the silk guilds in İstanbul. Therefore, the control of these workshops and shops were indirectly under the central government. Since the *esnâf* were tax paying subjects and shops and workshops were sources of revenue for the *evkâf*, the central government was highly concerned with the continuous flow of tax income from the *esnâf*. Based on the study of archival documents, this chapter has demonstrated how the central government strictly implemented the rules and regulations regarding the guilds. In other words, the central government's relative power in the capital city made it more difficult for İstanbul guilds to by-pass the rules and regulations imposed by the state.

VII. Conclusion

This thesis thematically has examined Ottoman craft guilds. By discussing the main issues and debates, I have tried to demonstrate how Ottoman craft guilds had changed before and throughout the nineteenth century. In Chapter 1, I have discussed the possible relationship between *ahi* associations and the Ottoman *esnâf*. Also the argument that *ahis* played important role in the formation of the Ottoman state is not very supportable. Nevertheless, stories based on the relationship between important *ahis* of the time and the founder of the Ottoman Empire as well as other successive sultans were widespread. To the ruling class, this relationship probably helped legitimize the sultanate in the eyes of the masses. Secondary sources are inconsistent by saying that *ahi* associations lost their significance over time when, for example, influence of the *medrese* and power of the *ulema* increased. However, the central government had increased its control over the guilds by establishing its own system and regulating the market to secure its tax revenues from guilds. As a result, in terms of economy, *ahi* associations did not remain within the Ottoman craft guilds. Moreover, if *ahi* associations came to an end with corruption, nepotism, and various other reasons, as argued by scholars, how can one talk about a continuous relationship with guilds? I have also argued the issue that "entrance of non-Muslims contributed to the dissolution of *ahi* associations since non-Muslims did not receive *futuvva*" is problematic. This would be, in fact, the ignorance of non-Muslim *esnâf* and this is also contradictory to the composition of mixed-guilds and guilds formed only by non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. In this thesis, I have also demonstrated that *ahi* associations and Ottoman craft guilds were not the same. For example, *ahi* had to have a craft although a craftsman was not expected be an *ahi*. Symbolically, however, both *futuvva* and *ahi* cultures remained in the *esnâf* culture.

For example, the tanner guilds, most of the time, respected the institution of *Ahi Baba zawiya* in Kırşehir since *Ahi Baba* was recognized as the head of the tanners' guilds throughout the Empire. However, archival documents show that during the nineteenth century, the rule that *Ahi Baba zawiya* in Kırşehir appointed *kethüdâ* and *yığıtbaşı* was violated by tanners' guilds. In other words, though the name "*ahi*" symbolically appeared, the culture had already lost its significance.

Chapter 2 has attempted to describe the *esnâf* ceremonies and their origin, dated back to *futuvva* and *ahi* cultures. Since guilds were composed of both Muslim and non-Muslim *esnâf*, all practices would not completely be the same. Also, gradually, the Ottoman *esnâf* abandoned some of these practices, since the ceremonies were too complicated to be performed. However, a symbolic heritage through main symbols, such as *şedd*, *şalvar*, and *helva* continued to be the important parts of the *esnâf* ceremonies performed to achieve solidarity among the *esnâf*. Thus a cultural link with guilds was established. The chapter has also emphasized the fact that the Ottoman *esnâf* joined processions where both Muslim and non-Muslim *esnâf* appeared. In other words, public processions were another means of providing solidarity among the masses and also between the masses and the sultan. In these parades, the *esnâf* found the opportunity to exhibit their craft during the processions, which symbolized the productiveness of the country.

In Chapter 5, I have examined the organizational structure of the Ottoman craft guilds and the relationship between the guilds and the state. Regarding the relationship between the guilds and the government, it seems that the government, most of the time, was concerned with the tax revenue coming from guilds. Moreover, the government tried to balance its budget by appointing state officials as the *kethüdâ*, which was mostly the case in İstanbul and its surroundings. Chapter 3

also demonstrates that the structures in the guilds of İstanbul and in other regions, depending on their remoteness from the center.

In Chapter 4, 5, 6, I demonstrated how Ottoman craft guilds had been changed throughout time. Changes in guilds did not happen linearly. Rather, with its ups and downs, they took place gradually. It should be noted that both external and internal factors played important role in such changes. Chapter 4 has discussed an issue as to whether or not the handicraft industries declined as a result of European penetration into the Ottoman markets. I have argued that, as a result of European penetration, some jobs were lost but some were gained. The *esnâf* became vulnerable throughout this process but stout cloth makers in the Balkans for example, did not lose their market share to the Europeans. Though it might have been difficult, some guilds adjusted themselves successfully to new market conditions. They either merged with the bigger guilds or united under companies.

Chapter 5 analyzes how before the nineteenth century, internal factors forced the guilds to change. Various internal factors played role in this process, such as new comers to urban centers, wage-earning masters and journeymen, illicitly receiving mastership, corruption in guilds, receiving *gedik* when both the guilds and the heads of pious foundations rented them to different people, and involvement of Janissaries in guilds and their forceful partnership with masters.

In Chapter 6, I have investigated the silk guilds in İstanbul from the early eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century in order to explore changes in silk guilds despite the government's control. Based on the archival documents, I have demonstrated that the central government was too much involved in the affairs of the *kazzâz*, *sandâlcı*, and *kemhâcı* guilds of İstanbul because the government most of the time concerned with the provisioning of İstanbul. Silk

guilds in İstanbul had to compete with foreigners and non-guild members due to the fact that their involvement in the market lowered the quality of silk. Thus, to protect the *esnâf*, the government prohibited the production and selling of unqualified products.

The government mostly intended to preserve the privileged position of the guilds in İstanbul and aimed to prevent possible disputes within the guild. Also among the concerns of the government was allowing each religious group has its own *yığitbaşıs* in order to prevent the possible disputes. The reason behind government's protecting the *esnâf* was too pragmatic. Since the *esnâf* was tax-paying subjects and their shops and workshops were sources of revenue for the *evkâf*, the central government was highly concerned with the continuous flow of tax income from the *esnâf*. Finally, contrary what the teachings of the main stream Ottoman historiography may have implied, the changes of silk guilds in İstanbul began long before the Tanzimat Era. In this process, both external and internal factors played significant role. Based on examination of archival documents, this chapter demonstrates how the central government strictly implemented the rules and regulations regarding the guilds. In other words, the central government's relative power in the capital city made it more difficult for İstanbul guilds to by-pass the rules and regulations imposed by the state. However, the guilds in İstanbul too were not immune to the long-term social and economic changes.

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IX. Appendices



عصا بنع لریکه

اصحاب بعضی است که ترا کما مالکاء عین لزن اولی رسم نقای ائمه نقطه سنک فی الوصل
 وضعی استانبولن نسج و اعمال افکاره فطیحه و صندال و نلی و نسز کرسود و بیبا و سالی اولوی
 و بونم و نلی و نسز طیفه وضع و نسج و قوشاق و حلولی قوشاق و برنجان و سار هرز
 منسوج اولی اسماء متنوعه افرا و جبادون اعتباراً قب ایلوب نام جید اهل ایچونه
 ضایه لساہ میری غناخانه ده جوڑیوب آخر معتدود جوڑی و اولوی او علیما اوزن
 بالرفعات تنہات اینج بی جا و ارا و امردین صا و اولیکنی خیر فرین خلاف فطیحه و نسج
 و مغار مناد و قدیم لکدر و انوب و غلط و بیک او علی و شکطانی و نلی قلم و سوری شوی
 و نخال سار و ده نلی و قدر و غرضی ناقص و قب البیع جوڑی سلی جا و ان غنہ ہم سب اغراد
 عباد و ہم باوی کسری و اختلاف نظام اهلین قب غنا احدان و احوالہ حیارت
 و اولوی جملہ خلاف شرط خاص و جب سلی جوڑی مکہ بنا و ت ارنر جوڑی معتدود اخذ
 و ضابطی معرفتہ نادب اولی ایچونہ برہب شرط امرتلف ضروری و حلسہ سخیالی
 ابرار استانبولن واقع رسوم نقای ائمه صندال و اطلس و نوانی منظمہ و دو نور
 میری ایچونہ ایچہ مال ابرجین اغا و عبد اکرم بان محمد اشرف و محمد سعید بان و حسن بان
 و سیمانہ بکال منزکام مالکاء عین لزن اولی و نسج و استانبولن منکناہ قطیفه و فوط و منفرم
 و صندال و اطلس و قوشاق و قوشاقی قوشاقی و حلولی قوشاق و نلی و سار ائمه نیک ہرز و اخذ
 برداچہ و دستک اہرہ منکناہ نلی بونم و سار نیک ہرز و اخذ برداچہ و ایچکی ذراع الخ
 اولی صندالک ہرز و اخذہ و در اچہ رسم النوب و بونہ مرا عبد میری ایچ ماراہ
 طائفہ ایچکی جا و جده الموب ایچ افخر برزن الوب مرین و بریجہ کا و خاز دن خیر
 خا و بر فرود و سحر منکناہ شروطنہ ایچک دو کا و اکترو منامہ حضور بود لزن
 شرط منبرم و سنجیخہ امرتلف خیر بانع فطیحه و نسج سار و سلطام منفرتند

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کتابت درویشی
۱۳۰۲

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کتابت درویشی
تفسیر فضیلت افری
عربی لغت و معنی
۱۳۰۲

کتابت درویشی

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ممکنه، بقا طاعتی مسافرتی در شان جوارح کاف قفا اولو بقید اولود صوره فروضت ایدر اون بری کرد کون احوالی هرچی مسافرتی
 باصورت برعدد کونکه نهضت اولون کجی ارفاغا کون مذکور فروضت اکلک مراد انشی ایسه سلم ممکنه شناخته طایبی اولو بقید
 اصناف مذکور سلم و رعایا اولو ساری کونجا و کیت با شیدک رای و معرفت لر برود کجی ارفاغا اولو صدوق و بوجها فیها بعد
 اولو شرطی ضالیونیه ممکنه مسافرتی حیون اولو غوی نام زومی و لغین و قصیر ایچی بانه کون فرود و سومک عهده نه قید و نوبه سلم
 بدینه بر فطه صورتی عطا یوسنی کونجا و کیت با شیدک و باطله سلم و رعایا اولو ساری نیاز واستعا ایدر کونیه سمکتی حاکم ایچی خولدر
 مهورا انجا تکله کون مذکور سلم ممکنه اضافه بیع انشی زکی بقضی نماندن ایچی رعایا و بر مال خلاف شرط اولو بقید
 ضانی فرود سلم اقسا لر برود چند نفر اولو ساری فرقا، کلام، حبس به استقامه اولو فرود کون مذکور شرطی مویشی اکرجه
 رعایا و بر یوب سلم اضافه بیع و فرودت اولو نظای مقضا سند ایسه سلم اضافک اشته اقدار کون
 اولو بقید بالذاتی هرک حیون زومی و بر لشی اولو بوجه جمله تک وضایبه یکون نکل و بر لشی قبول انشی اولو بقید
 و قصیر ایدر به بقدرجه کون مذکور سلم اضافون طایبی کف بر ایوب وضایبه سفدر زومی قصیر ایدر لشی اولو بقید
 بقوت بوجه ادا ایدر ایسه عمل و غبار او غماق شویبه کون مذکور قیدی مویشی هرک حیون ولد انخونی زومی عهده نه فرود
 و شرطی و بجه بدینه بر فطه صورتی عطا یوسنی اورو فرود اولو ساری ادا و سولم شرطی

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باد سلیم

بیم و دریم

هفتون تقریرات و کلماتی در فروع قبله الیه بیدیم تقریریه بوردی صورتی ظهور و معلوم می شود بود و در وقت نظام در حاله ای می باشد منتقد معلومی
منظم اول بعد بعد تقریرات بانه اوله یعنی اود در تنظیم و اجرائه ابتداء اوله

توضیح

گرامتو

مربانو

قدراو

و نظم افتم

قرآن اصنافك اعمال بدعوى استبانك اهتمام فرمودند و فیما بینك عدم اعتدال در طولی عباد الله مصلحتی موجب فساد و قوی و در هر صورت
استحسان و نسه هم عباد الله خبری و هم جانب بری بر منصف معلومی مودی در صفتی خبر الیه بفرمودند اصناف مرقومك کتبی اود
عبد اللطیف اغا حور و قد بنو اصناف مذکوره ایچده بولنده هب حال دینه و قوی جنبه بارع البینه جب و اصناف مرقومه نك احوالی بفرمودند
و صورت نفسی سوال و استظهار به استیای مذکوره نك اعلمانه و صورت نظام و نظامه زار واقع اوله اودانی بوجه صورته فکالدرج
و بوجه مذکوره محرر اوله یعنی وجه تنظیمی تقدیرنه استانبول قیسی قندی داعیلینه خطه با اصداری لازم کلام بر نظم بوردی مسوده سی دخی
با بولرس اطلعه اعمال بفرمودند نمونه اینه برابر ظهور معلوم فور مولی نك بولرس اجوم عرصه و تقدیم قندی واقعا اوله بفرمودند تنظیمی تقدیرنه
اصناف مرقومك واقع اوله مفاد بربك انرفا عبیده هم عباد الله خبری و هم سوی او بویز بربك غرض قدر ابراد معلومی مستحب
اور صفت نظر مناسب و شکر کورنخ اوله لاجه مذکوره ده محرر اوله یعنی اوزره کتبی مرقوم دروم جارنوده بر مناسب جمله مستفاد
تفاضله شکله بر او طه کرابجا افقا ایدنه رفتار و کاتبی بربك ایدرک بر وجه امانت اواره ایدرک و کند و سنک طوبه یعنی اوله و بربك
ایده یکی کاتب ماهیبری و مصارف نامر بچوم ماهی ای بربك غرض معارض تقیبه اوله و حاصل او بوجه واردان مذکوره عساکر مخصوصه
مقاطعات خزینده سه تخصیصی فتمه اوزره تنظیم و تسویبی خصوصی موافقه ارام سینه مالک نری بویز بربك مسوده مذکوره و بجه اندکی بویز
داعیلینه خطه با بیاض اوزرینه بر نظم بوردی اصدارینه صورت تسویب نك اجزاسه ابتداء قندی مطع علم نیک بوردی اوزرینه
مربانو قدراو و نظم افتم باد سلیم خطه بربك

