



Slave Artisans of Istanbul in the 18th Century: An Evaluation through the Surety System

XVIII. Yüzyılda İstanbul Esirci Esnafı: Kefalet Sistemi Üzerinden Bir Değerlendirme

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ABSTRACT

The literature provides a limited amount of information, however fragmented, about the slave artisans who played an important role among Ottoman artisan groups. This information, however, does not provide adequate knowledge about them. These artisans commonly appear as defendants in the Ottoman Shari'a Registers, but rarely as claimants. The relevance of the suretyship system for the slave artisans, the causes that made suretyship necessary, the officials in their guild, as well as the social rank and class of the members of this organization, are all addressed in this paper. Furthermore, the issues and objections raised by this group of artisans are examined in the light of archival documents and shari'a registers. In addition, the problems created by this group of artisans, as well as the complaints filed at the court involving these artisans, are also analyzed in the light of archival documents and shari'a registers.

Keywords: Slave, Artisans, Trade, Ottoman, Early Modern

ÖZ

Osmanlı esnaf teşekkülü içinde önemli yere haiz olan esirci esnafına dair bilgiler bulunmakla beraber konunun mahiyetinin anlaşılmasında yetersizdir. Literatürde dağınık ve az olan bilgiler esirci esnafına dair doyurucu bilgiler sunmaz. Esirci esnafı sıklıkla Osmanlı Şerhiye Sicilleri'nde davalı ve nadiren davacı olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu çalışmada bu zümrenin kefalet sistemleri için tutulmuş 1640, 1710 ve 1749 tarihli üç arşiv kaydı ışığında esirci esnafının kefalet sistemi, esnaf teşkilatındaki görevliler, esnaf teşekkülünü oluşturanların sosyal statüleri ve kefaleti gerekli kılan sebeplere dair bilgiler ele alınarak değerlendirilmeler yapılmıştır. Ayrıca, bu esnaf grubunun sebep olduğu problemler ve mahkemeye yansıyan şikâyetler de arşiv belgeleri ve şerhiye sicilleri ışığında incelenmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Esir, Köle, Esnaf, Ticaret, Osmanlı, Erken Modern



Craftsman and merchants, i.e., *esnaf* (artisans), were employees who specialized in a certain field of business producing goods and services in cities and towns and who collectively formed one of the important locomotives of the Ottoman economy¹. Artisans were divided into two groups²: those based on private enterprise and those dependent on state-run enterprises, through *dirlik*³ or *ulüfa* (allowances). Initially structured as the *Ahi* Organization, the artisans continued their existence as *Lonca Teşkilatı* (Guild Organizations) from the 17th century onwards⁴. The oldest known archival record of using the term guild in relation to the artisans of Istanbul dates back to 1667⁵. Each of the artisans based on private enterprise were affiliated to specific guilds according to the craft they were engaged in or the products they sold⁶. The working and operating conditions of the artisans were determined by laws and rules which were astringent.

Even though there were some changes in the 18th century artisans' organization⁷, it was mainly the sheikh, *nakip*⁸, *duacı*, *çavuş* or *kethüda* who were in charge. The sheikh was the head of the guild and was elected by the artisans to serve in this position for as long as he lived⁹. The *nakip*, *prayer* and *çavuş* were chosen by the artisans and each of them was affiliated to specific guilds. *Kethüdas* were the official intermediaries between the guild and the state. From the archive sources, it seems that appointment or dismissal of the *kethüdas* occurred in two ways. The artisans would choose someone from within the guild as a *kethüda* and would present this person to the qadi of Istanbul or directly to the state so that he could be appointed to the post officially. Alternatively, the state appointed an independent person

1 Mehmet Genç, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Devlet ve Ekonomi*, Ötüken Neşriyat, İstanbul 2010, p. 113.

2 Mehmet Demirtaş, *Osmanlı Esnafında Suç ve Ceza*, Birleşik Yayınevi, Ankara 2010, p. 23.

3 In the early modern Ottoman Empire that was a kind of income provided by the state for the direct or indirect support of persons engaged in its service (Halil İnalçık, "Timar", *DİA*, XLI, İstanbul 2012, p. 168.

4 The word *lonca*, which is derived from the Italian word "loggia," is found in records at the end of the 17th century, though the exact date of its first use is unknown (Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, "Osmanlı Esnafında Oto-Kontrol Müessesesi", *Ahilik ve Esnaf, Konferanslar ve Seminer*, İstanbul 1986, p. 56).

5 Sadık Müfit Bilge, "Osmanlı İstanbulu'nda Berber Esnafı", *Osmanlı İstanbulu*, İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi Yayınları, İstanbul 2014, p. 188.

6 *Lonca* (guild) is the term used for organized artisan groups in the Ottoman Empire (Ahmet Kal'a, "Lonca", *DİA*, XXVII, Ankara 2003, p. 211). In the 17th century, there were 126,400-260,000 artisans organized in 1,109 guilds in Istanbul (Suraiya Faroqhi, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, ed. Halil İnalçık, Donald Quateret, v. II, Eren Yayınları, İstanbul 2006, p. 713).

7 Genç, *op.cit.*, p. 128-129.

8 In the Ottoman Empire, the head of the executive body of the guilds organization, the *kethüdâ*, was assisted by the *nakib* (Gülgün Uyar, "Nakib", *DİA*, XXXII, İstanbul 2006, p. 321).

9 The word sheikh is generally used to refer to the leaders of religious orders, but they have nothing to do with being a sheikh of an order (Reşat Ekrem Koçu, *Tarihte İstanbul Esnafı*, Doğan Kitapçılık, İstanbul 2002, p. 16). Moreover Reşat Ekrem Koçu, "Esiriciler" *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, İstanbul Ansiklopedisi ve Neşriyat, İstanbul 1971, v. X, p. 5275.

as a *kethüda*¹⁰. There are records of both applications¹¹. The income of the *kethüdas*, whose appointments were made by the state, differed depending on the income of the artisans' organization to which they were appointed¹².

Esirci esnafı (slave artisans) were those who sold their own slaves at the price they wanted, as well as captives or slaves left to them for sale at the prices set by the owners. In return, owners used to pay money to the slave artisan at the end of the sale in the form of *nafaka* (allowance) and *dellâliye* (commission received for being a middleman). The slave artisans, who had for a long time held an important position among the Ottoman artisans, operated under their own guild. The guild members included slave artisans, those who held the positions of *yiğitbaşı* (person responsible for the internal affairs of the guild), *kethüda*, sheikh, and *dellâl* (middleman), and the head of the *dellâls*. The names of the middlemen are mentioned in all the lists of the slave artisans. *Dellâl-tellâl* was the person who sold the "item" and acted as a middleman between the buyer and the seller¹³. In the records, the term *dellâl* is sometimes used interchangeably with the term *münâdi*¹⁴.

Various covered bazaars were allocated to the slave artisans for their trade, but the center of the slave trade was *Esir Hanı* (Slave Inn) of İstanbul¹⁵. It is not clear when the *Esir Hanı* was built, however it is known that it existed during the reign of Mehmed II. The old slave inn was abandoned before 1480 and the Süleyman Pasha caravanserai was used as a slave inn from March 4, 1489, onwards. In 1489 the slave inn was a 52-room, two-storey building¹⁶. A

- 10 Mehmet Genç discovered that the *kethüdas* began to include state officials in the 18th century, particularly in İstanbul guilds. The primary driver of the development of this practice was the state's struggle to pay the rising number of civil officials' wages. Instead of paying wages from the treasury, the state appointed officials to the position of *kethüda* and distributed the *kethüda*'s profits to these people as wages. It was claimed that as a result of this method, financial control over artisans increased while budget expenditures decreased ("Osmanlı Esnafı ve Devletle İlişkileri", *Ahilik ve Esnaf*, İstanbul Matbaası, İstanbul 1986, p. 125). Indeed, in the 18th century, janissaries were frequently appointed to the position of *kethüda* in exchange for the janissaries giving their ulufes to the treasury. (Naime Yüksel Karaçağlayan, *XVIII. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Yeniçerilerin Politik ve Sosyo-Ekonomik Rollerini: İstanbul Örneği*, Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Institute of Social Sciences, Ankara 2018, Unpublished PhD Thesis, p. 151).
- 11 Although the document is undated, it is clear from the text that the application for the position of *kethüda* for the slave artisans' guild in İstanbul in 1675-76 exists (BOA, İE.TCT, 2/232, 1086/1675-76). For examples of the granting of position of *kethüda* see Zübeyde Güneş Yağcı, "İstanbul Esir Pazarı", *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kölelik, Ticaret, Esaret ve Yaşam*, ed. Zübeyde Güneş Yağcı, Fırat Yaşa, Dilek İnan, Tezkire Yayınları, İstanbul 2017, p. 78.
- 12 Koçu, *Tarihte İstanbul Esnafı*, p. 17.
- 13 Ferit Develioğlu, *Osmanlıca Türkçe Ansiklopedik Lûgat: Eski ve Yeni Harflerle*, Aydın Neşriyat, 25th Edition, İstanbul 2008, s. 172.
- 14 This group is referred to as *dellâl* in the 1640 *narh* register and the archival record dated 1710, while it is referred to as *münâdi* in the 1749 record (BOA, MAD, nr. 10349, p. 16, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749). *Münâdi nida eden tellâl anlamındadır* (Develioğlu, *Lugat*, p. 724).
- 15 Yağcı, "İstanbul Esir Pazarı", p. 64-68.
- 16 Yaşar Baş, "İstanbul Esir Hanı", 7. *Uluslararası Türk Kültürü Kongresi*, Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yay., Ankara 2012, p. 55-56.

later inn, which was built before 1637 and then destroyed by fire, was a two-storey building with 300 rooms¹⁷. According to Evliya Çelebi, this slave inn of 300 rooms had a sizable space in the center¹⁸. In a document dated 1749, the slave inn was described as a two-story structure with 125 rooms¹⁹. Another slave inn had 54 rooms, eight of which were useless before it was closed²⁰. Aside from the inn, a slave trade existed in the slave markets of Fatih, Tophane, Üsküdar, and Kocamustafa districts²¹.

The number of slave traders, about whom there is little information, fluctuated over time. According to Evliya Çelebi, there were 2,000 slave artisans in the 17th century²². Despite the fact that earnings and profits were high, the number of slave artisans given by Evliya Çelebi appears to be quite high. At this point, it is more likely that there were 2,000 slave traders throughout the Ottoman Empire. In fact, thirty-three male and 8 female slave artisans, as well as 17 *dellâls*, were registered in Istanbul as of 1640. It was stated that there were more than a hundred slave artisans in Istanbul, but many of them were described as “*kendi halinde olmadığundan*” which means that they were dismissed due to their involvement in various wrongdoings²³. In the list prepared by the qadi of Istanbul in 1710, there are 54 male and 15 female slave artisans and 20 *dellâls*²⁴. It is mentioned that the purpose of keeping this list was to determine the remaining artisans after dismissing the “*kendi halinde olmayan*” ones. In 1723, only the number and names of the *dellâls* are mentioned, without giving any information about the slave artisans. Accordingly, a total of thirty-three *dellâls*, fifteen of whom were women, were registered²⁵. A list dated 1749 of Istanbul slave artisans contains important information. According to the list of resident slave artisans in the *Esir Hanı*, there were 165 artisans working in 125 rooms, four of whom were dismissed, and 12 male and 20 female *dellâls*²⁶.

In addition to the number of artisans, these records also provide information about their social status, the neighborhoods they lived in and their professions. The reason for keeping these records was to prevent the artisans from getting involved in crime. As will be discussed later, the number of cases in which slave artisans were involved in shari’a registries is far too numerous to be overlooked. In this context, it is necessary to mention the Ottoman surety system and to briefly explain its nature.

17 Yağcı, “İstanbul Esir Pazarı”, p. 70.

18 Evliya Çelebi, *Günümüz Türkçesiyle Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi: İstanbul*, prepared Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağlı, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul 2003, v. 1/2, p. 542.

19 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 10349, s. 17, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

20 Yağcı, “İstanbul Esir Pazarı”, p. 71.

21 Uğur Aktaş, *İstanbul’un 100 Esnafı*, İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür AŞ., İstanbul 2010, p. 79.

22 Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, v. I, p. 277.

23 Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlılarda Narh Müessesesi ve 1640 Tarihli Narh Defteri*, Enderun Kitabevi, İstanbul 1983, p. 255-258.

24 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 2483, p. 14-15, 24 Zilhicce 1121 (24 February 1710).

25 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 2483, p. 15, 8 Şa’bân 1135/14 May 1723.

26 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 10349, p. 14-17, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

Ottoman Surety System

In the Ottoman Empire, there were rules that governed people's lives and various sanctions were imposed for violations of the principles, prohibitions, orders, and edicts. In addition to the laws enacted to maintain order, it is clear that the surety system, which was an auto-control system, was in place primarily to prevent potential problems or to solve problems. Many communities had a surety system, but the one mentioned here was applied as a legal institution to regulate the state-*reaya* relations as well as the relations of people with each other. In early modern Ottoman social life people were bound to one another by *kefalet-i müteselsile* (joint surety). The purpose was to transform a person whose qualifications were unknown to society into a responsible member of the community by means of association with a reliable member. Another purpose was to avoid potentially negative consequences in the delivery of public services and to avoid actions that would disrupt social order²⁷.

The purpose of the surety system²⁸, which dates back to the 16th century, was to ensure social control of individuals who shared a common living or working space and who could be classified as a community -those living in the same neighborhood, those practicing the same profession, or those who were members of a guild²⁹. In other words, the responsibility of the individual was transformed into the collective responsibility of the group to which s/he belonged. Moreover, the state provided social control over individuals who become responsible for each other through interdependent guarantors³⁰. This practice can be observed among artisans, too³¹. They were bound to provide joint surety in the guilds. The provisions included in the surety of the artisans to each other were that they would comply with the *narh* (officially fixed prices), that the number of privileged ones would not be exceeded, and that each artisans group would implement their own professional regulations³².

Thanks to joint surety, people who resided in the same place or practiced the same profession were jointly liable before the state in case of any problem that might arise³³. As

27 Abdullah Saydam, "Kamu Hizmeti Yaptırma ve Suçu Önleme Yöntemi Olarak Osmanlılarda Kefâlet Usûlü", *Tarih ve Toplum Dergisi*, XXVIII/164 (1997), p. 8.

28 Demirtaş, *op.cit.*, p. 169.

29 For more information on the surety system and the state's autocontrol in the neighborhood via it, see: Tahsin Özcan, "Osmanlı Mahallesi: Sosyal Kontrol ve Kefalet Sistemi", *Marife*, I/1 (2001), p. 1 and p. 129-151.

30 For examples on the surety system and its function, see: Saydam, "Osmanlılarda Kefâlet Usûlü", p. 69-71.

31 The Ottoman artisan system was built on the principles of mutual control and cooperation rather than competition (Demirtaş, *Osmanlı Esnafında Suç ve Ceza*, p. 21). The state used the surety system as a self-control system to supervise the artisans in this context. The same tradesmen were grouped together in a designated space in the Ottoman Empire. Essentially, another purpose of this system, which allowed the buyer to easily access the desired product, was to ensure that the artisans had control over one another (Kütükoğlu, "Osmanlı Esnafında Oto-Kontrol Müessesesi", p. 60).

32 Suretyship of artisans was required for the practice of the profession from the 16th to the 20th centuries. Because the first archival document on the subject dates from the 16th century, it is accepted that artisans suretyship began in the 16th century, according to Nejdet Ertuğ, but he also claims that the obligation of suretyship should have existed earlier (Hüseyin Nejdet Ertuğ, *Osmanlı Kefâlet Sistemi ve 1792 Tarihli Bir Kefâlet Defterine Göre Boğaziçi*, Sakarya University Institute of Social Sciences, Unpublished Master's Thesis, 2000, p. 10).

33 Saydam, "Osmanlılarda Kefalet Usûlü", p. 8.

a result, in addition to cooperating, the same professionals screened each other to check for possible criminal tendencies³⁴. The joint surety undoubtedly did not eliminate the possibility of the artisans committing a crime, but it minimized that possibility. In fact, it is known that the system of surety was of great importance in preventing crime and ensuring that the artisans could steadily carry out their business. In the implementation of the surety system, the influence of the guarantors on the warrantee were important in terms of implementation. Indeed, in the event of a complaint or problem caused by the warrantee, their guarantors were consulted about the warrantee's situation, and in some ways guarantors held the warrantee accountable, allowing the guarantor to exert control over them. Although the *yığıtbaşı* and the head of *dellâls* were the guarantors for all the artisans³⁵, at that time the *Kethüdas*, as the guarantors of all the artisans in their guild, had wider ranging responsibilities and exerted greater influence on the artisans. *Kethüdas* could not make excuses for any problems that arose as a result of their obligation to carry out legal tasks and to ensure that everything was running smoothly. No reason could absolve them of responsibility. As a result, they were considered directly or indirectly involved in the crimes committed by guild members and were given due punishment. This was because they had not meticulously examined the person for whom they should have been the guarantor in terms of committing a crime and because that had not been able to prevent the crime from being committed³⁶.

The surety system was vital not only for the state but also for the artisans³⁷. Since the slave trade was a highly profitable commercial activity, official slave artisans suffered losses because of those who did not belong to the slave artisans guild, i.e., those who made high profits by trading captives or slaves without authorization or rights³⁸. Indeed, there were complaints about unregistered slave traders and it was stated in those complaints that these people did not have guarantors. According to the record dated 1583-4, slave artisans complained about slave traders and *dellâls* without sureties on the grounds that they made illegitimate money by trading captives or slaves. As a result of this complaint, a decree was sent to the qadi of Istanbul which ordered that slave traders without guarantors be banned from selling captives or slaves³⁹.

34 Ahmet Kal'a, "Esnaf", *DİA*, XI, İstanbul 1995, p. 424.

35 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 10349, p. 17, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

36 Demirtaş, *Osmanlı Esnafında Suç ve Ceza*, p. 171, 172.

37 Its significance for artisans can be seen in the 17th century. After losing 54,000 akçes of goods, Haçok Yani, an Armenian who worked in Mehmed Efendi's bakery, fled. Haçok Yani's guarantor, Aleksan Mercan, paid for the damage he caused (*İstanbul Kadı Sicilleri 49 Ahi Çelebi Mahkemesi 1 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1063-1064 / M. 1652-1653)*, İstanbul 2019, hk. 435, p. 304).

38 Demirtaş, *Osmanlı Esnafında Suç ve Ceza*, p. 145-146.

39 Other slave artisans complained in 1583-4 that slave artisans and *dellâls* without sureties were earning money illegally. As a result of this complaint, a decree sent to the qadi of Istanbul ordered the banning of those without sureties from the slave trade (Ahmed Refik Altunay, *Hicri Onaltıncı Asırda İstanbul Hayatı 1553-1591*, Enderun Kitabevi, İstanbul 1988).

Statistics Regarding Slave Artisans and Some Findings about Their Sureties

Based on the information found in the three archive records utilized in this study, the sureties of the slave artisans were applied in different ways. In the *narh* register of 1640, the slave artisans were bound to each other by joint surety, that is, if any of them was involved in a crime, the responsibility was placed on all of them⁴⁰. There were more than a hundred slave artisans in Istanbul, but most of them were expelled from the slave trade on the grounds that they were “*kendi halinde olmadığından*”, meaning they were involved in various crimes such as prostitution and theft as well as selling some free people as slaves. Taking the expelled ones into account, only 33 males and 8 female slave artisans as well as 19 *dellâls* were registered since they were believed to be trustworthy. In the register, the names of the slave artisans, their father’s names, their nicknames and the neighborhoods in which they lived were noted one by one. What is striking about this register is that it allows the names of the slave artisans’ fathers to be identified, which makes it possible to understand which of the slave artisans had been converted. For instance, Mehmed b. Abdullah who resided in Camcı Murat district and Mehmed b. Abdullah who resided in Mahmut Paşa district were most probably converts from captivity⁴¹.

According to the archive record dated 1710, there were ninety slave artisans in Istanbul, fifty-four of whom were engaged in the slave trade in various neighborhoods. The slave inn housed twenty of them. Fifty-four men, fifteen female slave artisans, and twenty *dellâls* were employed in various neighborhoods. Their names, nicknames, neighborhoods and titles of each of them were mentioned in detail. According to this record, the slave artisans’ guarantors were their neighbors in the places where they lived. By the order of Mevlana Ismail, the qadi of Istanbul, Ahmed Agha and the janissary agha Müezzinzade Mumcu Ahmed went to each slave artisans’ neighborhood and examined them by talking with their neighbors. In addition to investigating whether or not the slave artisans were involved in illegal activities or whether or not they were corrupt, the slave artisans’ participation in the mosque community for prayer was also investigated. In this archival record, the number of guarantors of slave artisans varies between two and seven, with three-four-five guarantors being the most common. It is noteworthy that the number of guarantors is not fixed. For example, some slave artisans had two guarantors while others had seven from their neighborhood. At this point, no definite conclusions can be drawn because no information is provided in the document, but it is possible that slave artisans who inspired less confidence or who had been involved in a crime in the past were likely to be required to provide more guarantors. As will be discussed further in this study, it is possible that some of these artisans, particularly those with a high connection

40 Kütükoğlu, *1640 Narh Defteri*, p. 258.

41 Ibid.

to prostitution, needed to show more guarantors in order to continue their profession due to their “unfavourable” behaviour. Regarding the fifteen female slave artisans, only four were registered in the neighborhood where they lived, while the rest were listed by name only without any further details being given⁴². As is customary, male slave artisans acted as guarantors for these women. Female slave artisans who were considered trustworthy in the eyes of male slave artisans were added to the slave artisans in this regard⁴³.

The guarantors of *dellâls* vary. One can see that the sheikh, *kethüda*, and prayer among the slave guild officers were guarantors of some *dellâls*, and that slave artisans were sometimes guarantors of *dellâls*. For instance, the sheikh became a guarantor for Gedik Mehmed, the *kethüda* Buhurizade Damad İbrahim became a guarantor for Hamamcıoğlu Mustafa Çelebi, and the prayer Cafer became a guarantor for Mustafa Beşe. In addition, Hasan Çelebi was vouched for by Seyyid Hasan Çelebi, a resident of Cezeri Kasımpaşa neighborhood with five guarantors; Hüseyin Odabaşı was vouched for by Seyyid İbrahim from Vefalı with seven guarantors; and Mustafa was vouched for by Seyyid Ahmed Çelebi from Kuruçeşme with three guarantors. Similarly, the *dellâl* Solak Mehmed’s guarantor was Kollukçu Hüseyin from the slave artisans group, for whom three people from the Bavzaroğlu neighborhood vouched. Hüseyin Odabaşı and Hasan Çelebi’s guarantor, Seyyid İbrahim, was a slave artisan, and seven people from Vefa vouched for him. While no information was provided about the slave artisans in 1723, only the slave *dellâls* were mentioned, and seventeen male *dellâls* vouched for each other by joint surety, with the *yiğitçibaşı* Köseoğlu Mustafa being accepted as the guarantor for all of them⁴⁴. In the case of female slave artisans, all slave artisans were accepted as the female slave artisans’ guarantor. The female slave *dellâls*, on the other hand, vouched for each other in groups of two and three, and the *yiğitçibaşı* Köseoğlu Mustafa was accepted as the guarantor for all of them, too⁴⁵. The number of examples could be multiplied, but these are enough to highlight the fact that the slave *dellâls* are each listed with at least one guarantor.

In the archival record dated 1749, the number of slave artisans in Istanbul was noted as 165. Later, four of them were dismissed and 161 remained. The number of *dellâl* was a total of thirty-two people, twelve men and twenty women. According to the statistics in the

42 Bedařan, Beyhan, Deli Muammer, Dönme Emine, Safiye the Bosnian, Hanife, Havva, Helvacı Kızı, Kuşbazlı Vakıfı, Şevki, Ümmühani, Emine Hatun (neighbourhood: Sultan Selim), Fatma (neighbourhood: Tophane), Hadice (neighbourhood: Langa), Saliha (neighbourhood: Karagümrük).

43 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 2483, p. 14-15, 24 Zilhicce 1121 (24 February 1710).

44 Köseoğlu Mustafa bin Mehmed, Ali bin Hasan, Salih Çelebi bin Mustafa, Hasan Çelebi bin Ahmed, Mehmed Çavuş bin İbrahim, Berber Hasan bin Abdullah, diğer Mustafa bin el-Hac Ahmed, Akpoli Mehmed bin Süleyman, el-Hac Ahmed bin Veli Bey, Süleyman bin Mehmed, Mehmed bin İbrahim, Mustafa bin Mehmed, Ahmed bin Ali, el-Hac Mehmed bin el-Hac Ahmed, Gürcü Mustafa bin Abdullah, Abdurrahman bin Mahmud, Şamlızade Ömer bin Mehmed ve Kasımpaşalı Mehmed bin Mustafa (BOA, *MAD*, nr. 2483, p. 14, 24 Zilhicce 1121 (24 February 1710).

45 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 2483, p. 15, 8 Şa’bân 1135/14 May 1723.

document, there were originally 193 people involved in the slave trade, so one could say that the archive record is incomplete. In this list, 163 slave artisans are mentioned rather than 165, and the two artisans mentioned at the end of the document, Ali Bey of Kastamonu and El-hac İbrahim Mısri, had been dismissed and were therefore not included in the statistics. Concerning the sureties of the slave artisans in this document, it appears that neither the 1640 sureties nor the guarantors from the neighborhood are available, as in the case with the document from 1710. Instead, their rooms in the slave inn are described in detail. For instance, the rooms of the artisans, the number of artisans in each room, their partners, and the names of each guarantor are all mentioned. The guarantors differed according to the floors on which the artisans at the inn resided. The guarantors of the slave artisans on the lower floor were usually the owners of the rooms. The sureties of the slave artisans on the upper floor varies. In fact, even if the owner of the room was one of the partners in the slave trade, one could assume that the guarantor was still the owner of the room. At this point, it is unclear how a person could be his own guarantor or how a situation involving the need for the punishment of an artisan who was his own guarantor would work out in the case of a problem.

Some examples of guarantors can be listed as follows. Uzun Ahmed Beşe shared a room with el-Hac Hüseyin Mısri, while Uzun Ahmed Beşe was the guarantor and the room owner. Uzun Ahmed Beşe, who was also his guarantor, owned three additional rooms in the inn⁴⁶. Mehmed Odabaşı, who was expelled from the slave inn for marrying, also owned the room he was staying in and served as his own guarantor⁴⁷. Bilal Beşe's partner was his brother Molla Mehmed who lived in Aksaray, and the latter was also his guarantor⁴⁸. Although the guarantors of the artisans staying downstairs were mostly room owners, there are a few records in which the *kethüda*, *dellâl*, *yiğitbaşı*, or another artisan was also the guarantor. The *kethüda*, for example, vouched for Rizeli Abdullah Beşe, who was staying in one of the left-hand rooms downstairs. Rizeli Mehmed, one of the artisans, was one of the guarantors of Tokadi Abdullah Beşe and Seyyid Halil. *Cami altı*, which literally means "under the mosque," housed twelve slave artisans in seven rooms. While five rooms housed only one artisan and their guarantors who were the *kethüda*, two rooms housed seven artisans, and their guarantors were the room owners⁴⁹.

The difference between the guarantors of the slave artisans on the upper and lower floors of the slave inn was based on the artisans' marital status. The artisans on the top floor were *mücerred*, that is unmarried single man, who lived at their workplaces. In this context, it was highly likely that a faithful guarantor would be sought from those artisans, who might have

46 BOA, MAD, nr. 10349, p. 14, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

been considered potential criminals due to their martial status. A *kethüda*, *dellâl*, *yığıtbaşı*, or another artisan could become the guarantor of a slave artisan. However, there was no guarantor of the room owner among these *mücerred* artisans because twelve of the single artisans residing at the slave inn had been expelled from the prisoner inn when they got married, yet they continued to practice their profession⁵⁰.

A noteworthy point regarding suretyship in the record dated 1749 is the sureties of female slave artisans. Although the female slave artisans did not have guarantors in the records dated 1640 and 1710, they were the women whom the male slave artisans considered trustworthy. Therefore, all male slave artisans were guarantors for them. In the record dated 1749 there are no female slave artisans. Instead, there are twenty female *dellâls* and their guarantors. After providing the names of the twenty female *dellâls* and neighborhoods they lived in, the guarantors of each one of them were written down as in the case with the *mücerred* slave artisans. Three of them did not live in the neighborhood but rather in “rooms”. Eyüplü Emine Hatun lived in the linen makers’ rooms and Abdullah Çelebi was her guarantor. The Maltese rooms were occupied by two women. One was Hadice Hatun and the other was Şerife Hatun, whose guarantor was Burnaz Osman Beşe. Since there is no information about the nature of the rooms in which these women lived, it is unknown whether these rooms were for single occupancy or not. If the previously mentioned rooms were single, the presence of such rooms for women, also referred to as “bachelorette suites”, would be quite remarkable⁵¹.

In the 1749 archival record, there is interesting information about some people owning and renting more than one room. For example, it was noted that the janissary Uzun Ahmed Beşe had three extra rooms in his tenancy⁵². Similarly, Odabaşı Mehmed had three extra rooms⁵³. Moreover, one of the rooms was described as *miri*, which indicates that it was in possession of the state. The tenant was Süleyman Çelebi and he was vouched for by the *kethüda*⁵⁴.

Information about dismissed slave artisans is also noteworthy in this archival record. While the records from 1640 and 1710 do not mention the dismissal of those who misused their jobs and do not provide any information about them, the record from 1749 does. In the list, two distinctions were made regarding the slave artisans: *müehhilen ihrâc şod* and *ihrâc şod*. The former is used for those who were sent out of the rooms because they were married but continued to work as slave artisans, while the latter is used for those who were completely dismissed. It is observed that these people were dismissed completely upon a complaint, as

50 Ibid.

51 BOA, MAD, nr. 10349, p. 15, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

52 BOA, MAD, nr. 10349, p. 14, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

they were out of line. The dismissals of four dealers occurred in this way. These four slave artisans, whose names are written at the end of the list, were Sipahi Ali Bey from Kastamonu, el-hac İbrahim Mısıri, el-hac Süleyman from Trabzon, and Kitapsız Mustafa. Full details about two of the dismissed are given in the document. Kitapsız Mustafa's full name was Kitapsız Uzun Mustafa, and he worked alone in one of the slave inn's upper floor rooms on the right-hand side⁵⁵. El-hac Süleyman from Trabzon also worked alone in one of the upper floor rooms on the right-hand side⁵⁶. It is known that slave artisans worked with partners at the slave inn and that up to five people worked in the same room. This is why the document specifically states that these two were working alone. It is not known who their guarantor was, but the reason for their dismissal is mentioned in the document. It was because their colleagues reported them for wrongdoings⁵⁷.

Changing Profile of the Slave Artisans

The three Ottoman archival records utilized in this study reveal differences in the artisans' identities, their social status, as well as important information about their changing profile over time. One of these distinctions has to do with the artisans' country of origin. While the records dated 1640 and 1710 contain limited information on the artisans' hometowns, the record dated 1749 contains more information. Within artisan organisations there were members who had ties with other members due to being "fellow countrymen" and this seems to have been common among Ottoman slave artisans in the 18th century. Although there were other countrymen among the artisans, the Rize artisans were the most prominent. Slave artisans from Atina, the former name of the Pazar district of Rize, formed another frequently mentioned group. Aside from the artisans from Rize and Atina, there were also many slave artisans from Trabzon and Egypt.

The social status of the artisans, as well as the social classes to which they belonged, changed over time. In this context, the titles of the slave artisans and *dellâls* provide helpful clues for understanding the situation. Among the slave traders were *seyyids*⁵⁸, hadjis, mullahs, and janissaries. Even the *müezzin* of the Sultan Ahmed Mosque belonged to this guild. This indicates that people from various social classes were drawn into this lucrative trade. *Seyyids* are one of the notable groups among the slave artisans. It should be noted that the *seyyids* in the Ottoman Empire were a group of people involved in different professions who came from different social-economic backgrounds. They were not homogeneous except that they had a noble lineage obtained at birth⁵⁹. The basic power dynamic of this community was that the

55 BOA, MAD, nr. 10349, p. 15, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

56 BOA, MAD, nr. 10349, p. 16, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

57 BOA, MAD, nr. 10349, p. 15, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

58 The term 'seyyid' is a title that refers to the Prophet's descendants born to Prophet Ali and Fatima and their descendants (Mustafa Sabri Küçükasçı, "Seyyid", *DİA*, XXXVII, İstanbul 2009, p. 40).

59 Rüya Kılıç, *Osmanlı'da Seyyidler ve Şerifler*, Kitap Yayınevi, İstanbul 2005, p. 74.

seyyids were “reputable” in the eyes of both society and state due to their noble lineage. The fact that some of the slave artisans included in the slave trade were seyyids can be discussed in different ways. To begin with, the reason why *seyyids* were involved in this highly profitable, but also highly corrupt, trade might be due to their “reputability”. One could speculate that being deemed trustworthy on the part of the state caused *seyyids* to become slave dealers. When the aforementioned archive records are examined, it is noteworthy that, while there were two *seyyids* in the list of 1640, there were as many as six in the list of 1710. According to a record dated 1749 five *seyyids* were slave artisans. While there is no mention of *seyyid* as a *dellâl* in the 1640 document, Seyyid Hüseyin is mentioned as a *dellâl* in the list of 1710. According to a record dated 1749, Seyyid Ahmed, a resident of Nişancı, was also a *dellâl*⁶⁰.

The janissaries are unquestionably the most notable group of slave artisans. The term *beşe* was a military title reserved for janissaries. This title was important in determining whether or not a person was a janissary⁶¹. In this context, the title *beşe* found in some of the names of the slave artisans given in the list indicates that some of the janissaries were also involved in the slave trade and that the state granted them the right to do so. Generally, the artisan groups, including the Janissaries, worked in professions that did not require a certain skill and which could be learned in a short period of time⁶². The Janissaries’ involvement in this line of work was influenced by the fact that the slave trade required no special skills or learning processes and that it was a highly profitable business. Although it is known that janissaries first appeared in guilds in the 16th century, their numbers in guilds increased in the 18th century, particularly in the guild of slaves⁶³. The increasing number of janissaries working as artisans is evident in the archive records from three different time periods. While there was only one janissary (Suleyman Beşe from the Little Hagia Sophia neighborhood) on the slave artisans list of 1640, according to the record of 1710, there were eleven janissaries⁶⁴ in this trade. One of them was a law enforcement officer and the other was an archer⁶⁵.

The record dated 1749 shows that the Janissaries almost completely monopolized this trade. The list in which the name, hometown, company or community of the slave artisans are mentioned, provides information on 163 slave artisans. It can be observed that many janissaries from different units and communities were involved in the slave trade. The point

60 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 10349, p. 16, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

61 There is extensive information on the entry of janissaries into guilds and their involvement in trade. Karaçaglayan even provides a list of janissaries among the artisans of Istanbul. For detailed information on the subject, see, Karaçaglayan, *op.cit.*, p. 137.

62 Karaçaglayan, *ibid.*, p. 153.

63 Janissaries began to participate in guild organizations as early as the late 16th century, and this situation persisted until the forced disbandment of Janissary corps (Karaçaglayan, *ibid.*, p. 137).

64 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 2483, p.15, 24 Zilhicce 1121 (24 February 1710). There were three *odabaşı*, but it is unclear if they were janissaries. Some of the slave artisans were given the honorary title of *odabaşı*. As a result, the three slave artisans referred to as *odabaşı* are not counted as janissaries. See, Yağcı, “İstanbul Esir Hanı”, p. 83.

65 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 2483, p. 15, 24 Zilhicce 1121 (24 February 1710).

that should be especially emphasized is that the slave artisans who shared the same room were usually from the same unit or community. At this point, it can be said that an affinity similar to that of fellow countryman existed within the units or the community to which the Janissaries belonged. In particular, the 25th *bölük*⁶⁶ and the 64th and 100th *cemaat* (one of the divisions of the Janissaries) formed the largest groups among the slave artisans. Apart from these, janissaries from sixteen different units and twenty-two different *cemaat* were involved in this trade⁶⁷. In total, one hundred and fifteen artisans among the 163 slave artisans were janissaries. In fact, the Janissaries appeared to be in control of two-thirds of the organization. Five of the artisans were *seyyids*, while three were *sipahis* (cavalryman). There is no specific information provided about the affiliation of forty-five of the artisans. Moreover, a similar reflection of the Janissaries' growing influence in this lucrative trade can be found among the *dellâls*. In 1640, three of the seventeen *dellâls* were janissaries, and in 1710 eight of the twenty were. In 1749, seven of the twelve *dellâls* were janissaries from various units and *cemaat*⁶⁸.

A complaint sent to Istanbul in 1691 by Mehmed, the nazir of Kili, is an example of military men attempting to use their privileges. Köse Deli Mehmed, Süleyman Beşe, Ali Beşe, Mustafa Beşe and three janissaries were slave artisans who refused to pay the stamp tax. They claimed that they were exempt from the tax since they were from Bender and Kamanîçe (Podolia), which meant that they belong to the military class. The nazir of Kili Mehmed consulted the capital and obtained the reply that those who worked as slave artisans had to pay a stamp tax of two kuruş (piasters) per slave, and that those who refused to pay should be barred from practicing their profession.

Since the second half of the 16th century the military group that had turned to economic activities took their place in economic life in the role of artisans, and by the 17th century they had obtained guild membership as well as performing military service. By the 18th century, some military individuals were managers in various branches of tradesmen while using their military privileges⁶⁹. In 1692 another order was sent to the nazir of Kili, instructing him to collect the stamp tax of two *kuruş* from the slave artisans and to prevent the janissaries from failing to pay the tax so that the state would not suffer any financial loss⁷⁰.

The point that should be emphasized is that the janissaries took part in the slave trade but refused to pay taxes by hiding behind their military status. Perhaps the most important turn

66 A military unit varying in size from 20 to 200 men. A Janissary *bölük* had about 100 soldiers. Gustav Bayerle, *Pashas, Beks, and Effendis: A Historical Dictionary of Titles and Terms in the Ottoman Empire*, The Isis Press, İstanbul 1997, p. 23.

67 Karaçaylayan, *Yeniçerilerin Sosyo-Ekonomik Roller*, p. 32.

68 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 10349, p. 14-17, 28 Zilhicce 1162 (9 December 1749).

69 The 18th century is known as the "age of the janissaries" because it was filled with merchant janissaries who owned farms or became increasingly wealthy through trade (Abdülkasım Gül, *18. Yüzyılda Yeniçeri Teşkilatı*, Erzurum Atatürk University, Institute of Turkic Studies, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, 2020, p. 771).

70 BOA, AE.SAMDII, 4/344, 20 Cemâziyelevvel 1103 (8 February 1692).

that led to the integration of the janissary corps with the artisans was the practice of buying and selling the *ulûfe* in 1740-41⁷¹. In fact, it was mostly the artisans who bought the *ulûfes* in order to obtain the privileges of the janissaries. Explaining the increasing numerical superiority of the Janissaries among the artisans in the 18th century, Karaçağlayan stated as follows:

The integration of these two classes was not limited to the transition of soldiers, who had two professional titles, namely civilian and military, into the artisans, but also by the entry of some artisans into the janissary corps⁷².

It is evident that there are converts among the slave artisans and *dellâls*, too. In this context, it is worth noting that among the slave artisans and *dellâls* were people who had previously been captives or slaves. In the *narh* register dated 1640, slave artisans are mentioned by their father's names. It seems that three of the slave artisans and six of the *dellâls* were converts. Except for the name of one person and his father, there is no mention of father's names in the archival record of 1710. It is highly probable that this man, noted as Abdullah b. Abdullah, was also a convert. The converts in the record dated 1723, on the other hand, can be determined because the names of the fathers of *dellâls* are given. Mustafa b. Abdullah the Georgian, and Hasan b. Abdullah, a barber, were two of the seventeen male *dellâls*. It is very likely that they were converts as well. Among the female *dellâls* who were most likely converts, Naime b. Abdullah, Muammer b. Abdullah, Hadice b. Abdullah, and Crimean Ümmühani b. Abdullah are mentioned. In the record dated 1749 the names of the fathers are not mentioned at all. For this reason, it is not possible to say anything about the existence of converts among the slave artisans. However, given the predominance of janissaries in this highly profitable artisan group in the 1749 record, it is likely that converts were not involved in the slave trade during this period of time.

Regulation of the Slave Artisans and the Problems They Caused

As previously stated, information on slave artisans, people who were from various social classes, can be found in the registers. The reason why the surety of the slave artisans is so important can clearly be seen in the cases reflected in the registers in this context. The use of the phrase *kendi hallerinde olmadiğı*, which is repeated many times in the archival records, is particularly visible in cases in which this group of people were involved or were liable. Thus, it is critical to examine the cases involving slave artisans.

The slave artisans were overseen by the *muhtasib* or *ihtisap* agha -the *ihtisab* collector (*ihtisap* was a type of market tax in the Ottoman Empire)- who had a broader role in regulating and taxing markets⁷³. The slave artisans' commodity was *mal-ı natık* (property-

71 Karaçağlayan, *Yeniçerilerin Sosyo-Ekonomik Roller*, p. 89-92.

72 Karaçağlayan, *Yeniçerilerin Sosyo-Ekonomik Roller*, p. 92. Also, see: Gül, 18. *Yüzyılda Yeniçeri Teşkilatı*, p. 772.

73 Ziya Kazıcı, *Osmanlı'da Yerel Yönetim (İhtisab Müessesesi)*, Bilge Yayıncılık, İstanbul 2006, p. 120.

with-voice), that is, human beings. The possibility of corruption was high because their commodity consisted of human beings and the price of the slaves they sold was determined by themselves. In other words, there was no fixed price like the state-imposed *narh* for other commodities. As a result, the state toughened its control even more⁷⁴. Indeed, it is well known that these artisans committed serious crimes such as using slaves in prostitution, selling defective “property,” selling slaves to non-Muslims, using slaves in theft, and selling free people as slaves. The various orders issued regarding the inspection of slave artisans and the problems they caused indicates that the problems were not completely eliminated until the slave inn was closed in 1846⁷⁵.

Edicts were issued in 1560, 1569, 1576 and 1583 in order to prohibit artisans from selling slaves to non-Muslims⁷⁶ because it was forbidden to sell a Muslim slave to a non-Muslim. In order to prevent this, the names of slaves who became Muslims were recorded in a register. Then the register was given to the *kethüda* of slave artisans. An example of this can be seen in the order sent to the Istanbul Gümrük Emîni, who was the superintendent of custom duties, in 1721. The aim was to prevent the sale of slaves who had become Muslims to non-Muslims thus preventing the possibility of their “conversion”⁷⁷. In 1723, it was stated that certain *dellâls* were dismissed because they had sold young children to Christians or Jews and had converted them from Islam.

... etrâf ve eknâfdan Âsitâne-i Saâdete fûrûht için gelen kul ve cevârîden bâliğ ve bâliğa ve küfr üzere mukırr ve mukırra olanlardan mâadâsı kefare ve yahûdâ fûrûhtu memnuattan olup bir tarik ile müsaade yoğ-iken esir pazarında yahud ve yahudiye nasara ve nasraniye tâîfelerinden bazıları mücerred edyân-ı bâtılalara hizmet kasdıyla zâhirde maîşeti kendülere bahane esirci dellâllığı kaydında olup ve daima fırsatıyâb oldukça hafada her birleri zümrelerine fûrûht ile katı çok sıbyân ve kelime-i şehâdet ile müşerref olanları devlet-i İslâm'dan mahrum etmeleriyle gereği gibi nizâm ü intizâmı akdem ve elzem-i din ü devlet-i âliyyeden olmağın...⁷⁸

As seen in this passage, the sale of slaves to non-Muslim subjects was prohibited due to the possibility of Muslims being converted, or in order to prevent young children from becoming Muslims by selling them to non-Muslims⁷⁹. In 1725, for example, a slave artisan

74 Demirtaş, *Osmanlı Esnafında Suç ve Ceza*, p. 76.

75 The 1583 -dated archival document showing complaints about slave artisans, the 1640 -dated *narh* register showing that some slave artisans were dismissed from the profession due to corruption, and the 1805 regulation on slave artisans are all important in terms of demonstrating the situation (Kazıcı, *İhtisab Mîsesesi*, p. 123-126).

76 Baş, “İstanbul Esir Hanı”, p. 61.

77 BOA, *MD*, nr. 130, hk: 377, p. 128, evâil-i Ramazân 1133 (25 June-5 July 1721).

78 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 2483, p. 15, 24 Zilhicce 1121 (24 February 1710).

79 A complaint was filed against Thessaloniki's slave artisans at the beginning of the 17th century, alleging that some of the slaves who had previously converted to Islam had been sold to Jews and Christians and subsequently reconverted. The artisans were given the order to prevent the sale of slaves to non-Muslims, return sold slaves to their Muslim owners, and have them renew their faith (BOA, İE.DH, 5/437, 19 Cemaziyelahir 1011/4 December 1602).

named İvaz was barred from the trade and exiled to Egypt for selling a female Muslim slave to Christians⁸⁰. In another case, Ahmed and Mehmed sold their slave Ayşe to the Shabbethai for 290 *kuruş*, but the sale was canceled when it was discovered that Ayşe was a Muslim⁸¹. The cancellation of this sale raises several issues. First and foremost, when did Ayşe become a Muslim? The information in the register is as follows:

...mülkleri olan işbu orta boylu açık kaşlı sarı elâ gözlü Âişe nâm câriyelerini kâfire olmak üzere merkûm Sabetay'a iki yüz doksan guruş...⁸²

The slave artisans knew Ayşe as a non-muslim. Although we do not know if the name Ayşe, which is commonly used by Muslims, was also used by non-Muslims, we can assume that these two owners were aware of the situation at the time. The state was concerned with preventing slaves who had converted to Islam from converting to Christianity and with preventing minor slaves from becoming non-Muslims. Indeed, the absence of non-Muslim slave artisans on the lists demonstrates the state's conservatism on the subject. There is evidence of a non-Muslim slave artisan in the 17th century. Sara, a Jewish slave artisan residing in Hasköy, petitioned the qadi to free her Russian slave Bane, according to an entry in the Hasköy registers. Although this is a specific example, new information on non-Muslim slave artisans will emerge as research into the slave trade expands⁸³.

Another issue frequently complained about was the sale of free people as slaves. In 1710, the janissary agha Müezzinzade Mumcu Ahmed Beşe and Ahmed Agha, who were appointed by the qadi of Istanbul, Mevlana İsmail, to investigate the dependability of the slave artisans, went to the neighborhoods of the artisans, investigated them, and certified that the slave artisans did not sell free people. A case that appears in the court records of 1691 serves as an interesting example. Ayşe, a female slave who claimed she was originally free and who lived with her parents, Şoride and Dimo, in Belgrade in the town of Berkofça, had changed hands several times before being sold to Seyyid Abdülhalik. After it was proven that she was indeed originally free, it was determined who her sellers had been, going all the way back to the first seller⁸⁴. It is noteworthy that during the re-conquest of Belgrade, the state took very strict measures to prevent the *reaya* from being taken captive, and orders were immediately sent for the release of those who had been taken captive. Furthermore, in addition to the seals of the *başmuhasebeci*, chief accounting officer, and *defterdar*, treasurer, which were always

80 BOA, C.BLD, 6350, 19 Şevvâl 1137 (1 July 1725).

81 *Galata Mahkemesi 259 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1137-1138 / 1724-1725)*, v. 63, p. 187, article no: 174.

82 *Galata Mahkemesi 259 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1137-1138 / 1724-1725)*, v. 63, p. 187, article no: 174.

83 *Hasköy Mahkemesi 10 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1085 - 1090 / M. 1674 - 1679)*, v. 30, p. 94, article no: 95. According to Yaşar Baş, by the end of the 17th century, the slave trade was in the hands of Jews. ("İstanbul Esir Hanı", p. 61). Due to the limited archival evidence on non-Muslim slave artisans, this inference should be approached with caution. However, with new information and documents, the nature of the problem will be better understood.

84 *Bab Mahkemesi 54 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1102 / M. 1691)*, v. 20, p. 373-374, article no: 453.

stamped on a *pençik* certificate⁸⁵ (Pençik Tezkiresi), a third seal, that of the qadi, was also ordered to be affixed as a precaution to prevent the *reaya* from being taken captive. In this way, the sale of captives without a *pençik* certificate was prohibited⁸⁶.

The main complaint raised against the slave artisans was that they used slaves for prostitution. Despite measures taken by the state, cases of prostitution were observed. Some slave artisans, for example, would take female slaves from their owners and sell them at the market. The *levant*⁸⁷, with whom the slave artisan had made an agreement beforehand, would come to the market disguised as a customer and outbid everyone to buy the female slave. The *levant* would claim that he wanted to inspect the condition, demeanor, and service of the female slave he had purchased. After paying the *pey akçesi* (earnest money), he would take the slave to his bachelor's room, use her in prostitution for a few days, and then return her to the slave artisan, claiming that he did not like her. He would, of course, leave the money he paid to the slave artisan. A woman who appeared to be a buyer at the market but was actually the slave owner's wife was another case. After paying the earnest money, she would take the female slave at the highest price imaginable before bringing her to the *levants*. After a few days, she would take the female slave from the *levants* and hand her back to the slave artisan, claiming she was unpleasant. Again, there would be no refund of the earnest money given to the slave artisan⁸⁸. In the *narh* registers of 1640, it seems that some slave artisans would take female slaves from their owners in order to sell them to the ambassadors of Poland and Moldova. However, they used them for prostitution for a few days before returning them to their owners, claiming they did not like them. There are records of slave artisans being fired from their jobs because they were making money from their trade⁸⁹. In 1710, the locals were asked whether the slave artisans sent slaves to the homes of criminals or bachelors as part of the investigation into the slave artisans⁹⁰. In 1697, the slave artisan Mehmed was banished to Rhodes Island on the grounds that he had used male and female slaves in "improper" activities under the pretext of selling female slaves. Eventually, he was sent there as a prisoner⁹¹. In another example, residents of Kuyumcu Bahşıyış neighborhood gathered and complained to the qadi that Ayşe, a slave artisan who lived in their neighborhood, gathered men and women in her house under the guise of selling slaves, but actually she furnished an occasion for them

85 In the Ottoman military system, it refers to the recruitment of one fifth of the captives captured during land and naval campaigns into state service (Abdülkadir Özcan, "Pencik", *DIA*, XXXIV, İstanbul 2007, p. 149-151).

86 Üsküdarî Abdullah Efendi, *Vâkı'ât-ı Rûz-merre*, haz. Recep Ahışalı, TUBA, Ankara 2017, c. II. For detail information on this, see: Esen Salarcı Baydar, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Savaş Esirleri Üsârâ-yı Mîrî (1650-1720)*, İstanbul University Institute of Social Sciences, Unpublished PhD Thesis, 2020, p. 26-27.

87 A term used in the Ottoman Empire for naval soldiers and the men who accompanied the governors in the provinces. Mücteba İlgürel, "Levent", *DIA*, XXIX, Ankara 2003, p. 226-228.

88 Koçu, *Tarihte İstanbul Esnafı*, p. 72-73.

89 Kütükoğlu, *1640 Narh Defteri*, p. 257.

90 BOA, *MAD*, nr. 2483, p. 14-15, 24 Zilhicce 1121 (24 February 1710).

91 BOA, *MD*, nr. 110/1042, evâhır Muharrem 1109 (8-18 August 1697).

to engage in prostitution. They requested Ayşe to be removed from their neighborhood since she continued to act the same way despite being warned⁹².

Another complaint leveled against the slave artisans was that they used their slaves to commit theft. One of the interesting examples is an archive record from 1732. While staying at the slave inn in Istanbul, a slave artisan known as Ömer, nicknamed Bitli Ömer, sent some of his female slaves to steal in bathhouses and houses. He was found guilty and sentenced to the galleys. It is unknown for how long he was sentenced to the galleys, but later we find out that Ömer was exiled to Bursa again on the charge of having made his slaves steal. Bitli Ömer returned to Istanbul following his exile. When his Arab female slave was caught stealing, she accused her master Ömer of forcing her to do so and claimed the items she stole were still in his room. When the slave inn was searched, some of the items were found in Ömer's room. He claimed that he had had nothing to do with the theft and that he was a member of the janissary corps, but this was a lie. Bitli Ömer was eventually sentenced to exile in Lemnos⁹³.

The sale of defective “properties” was another offense perpetrated by slave artisans. In other words, selling someone who was not really a slave as well as concealing slaves' diseases or other physical indicators. The sale of defective property is the subject of numerous complaints in the registers. For example, Mehmet Sadık Efendi bought Ahmet Efendi's black female slave for 1.800 *kuruş* through Ömer, the slave artisan. When the slave began to show signs of illness, Mehmed Sadık Efendi took her to the physician Abdülhak Efendi, who diagnosed her with rheumatism and obtained a certificate to that effect. Despite his warnings that the slave he had sold to him was diseased and that he should return her, Ahmet Efendi refused, and Mehmet Sadık Efendi filed a complaint⁹⁴.

Another example is that of Mustafa who claimed to have paid 80 *kuruş* for a female slave named Mülayim whom he had purchased from Şerife ten days prior for 110 *kuruş*. However, since the slave had one short tooth, he requested that Şerife return his money. When Şerife refused, the matter was brought before the court. She admitted to Mustafa that she had received 80 *kuruş* from him, but claimed that he had rejected Mülayim as defective and was aware of the problem with her teeth. In response to this claim, Mustafa swore that he was unaware of it and stated that he wanted to return the slave and receive his money. The case was resolved in favor of Mustafa, and Şerife was ordered to return his money⁹⁵.

In another case, court physicians were consulted as experts and a decision was made based on their advice. Mustafa, a slave trader, sold Emine Hatun a female slave named Muammer

92 *Bab Mahkemesi 150 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1143-1144 / M. 1730-1732)*, v. 65, p. 536, article no: 681.

93 BOA, C.ZB, 89/4444, 12 Ramazân 1144 (9 March 1732).

94 *Anadolu Sadareti Mahkemesi 2 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1251-1257/ M. 1835-1841)*, v. 94, p. 260, article no: 215.

95 *Bab Mahkemesi 3 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1077 / M. 1666-1667)*, v. 17, p. 473-474, article no: 569.

for 125 *kuruş*. Fifteen days after the purchase, the slave exerted herself to the utmost ending up literally “breaking her belly” which also figuratively means the former in daily language. Emine then claimed that the slave was defective and demanded that her money be recovered. Mustafa refused to pay the money, claiming that the slave had not been defective when she had been sold and that the defect had been caused by Emine overloading the slave. Mustafa Efendi, one of the court physicians, examined the female slave and reported that she had broken her belly due to carrying too much weight, but added that this had not happened suddenly; the problem had been present for some time. Mustafa was then found to have sold the slave despite knowing about her defects, and he was ordered to return the money to Emine⁹⁶.

Two examples of Mehmed, the slave artisan, who can be called quite brave and reckless, are worth mentioning. Mehmed sold Fatma, a mentally handicapped female slave, to Naima Halil Efendi. When the buyer discovered this, he filed a complaint against Mehmed, who promptly returned the money to Naima Halil Efendi and took back his slave Fatma⁹⁷. In another case, Mehmed, who had bought a female Georgian slave named Zeynep from the slave artisan Halil for 780 *kuruş*, asserted that the slave had syphilis and insisted that the money he had paid be returned to him. This time, the case was resolved in Mehmed’s favor⁹⁸. Fatıma Hanım, who had purchased a Russian female slave named Fethi from the slave artisan Ümmühani in 1691, soon discovered that the slave had tuberculosis and demanded a refund. Since Ümmühani refused to accept her illness, the case was taken to the court, and she was ordered to pay the money to Fatıma Hanım and take the slave back⁹⁹.

Although the aforementioned examples constitute the majority of the instances in the registers, this does not imply that there were no cases which were decided in favor of the slave artisans. For instance, Mehmed, a slave artisan, sold a female slave named Timurhan to Mustafa for 140 *kuruş*. He took 110 *kuruş* immediately and later demanded the remaining 30 *kuruş*. Mustafa claimed the female slave was deaf and refused to pay the last 30 *kuruş*. Mustafa was ordered to pay the 30 *kuruş* after the case was referred to the qadi, who determined that the slave was not deaf¹⁰⁰.

One of the criteria for the trustworthiness of slave artisans in inquests was whether they had taken someone’s slaves and paid for them or if they had avoided making the payment¹⁰¹.

96 *Bab Mahkemesi 3 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1077 / M. 1666-1667)*, v. 17, p. 618, article no: 781.

97 *Bab Mahkemesi 150 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1143-1144 / M. 1730-1732)*, v. 65, p. 328, article no: 326.

98 *Bab Mahkemesi 197 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1162-1163 / M. 1749-1750)*, v. 73, p. 490, article no: 657.

99 *Bab Mahkemesi 54 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1102 / M. 1691)*, v. 20, p. 294, article no: 349.

100 *Bab Mahkemesi 3 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1077 / M. 1666-1667)*, v. 17, p. 880, article no: 1150. These are just a few of the many cases documented in the registers. There are numerous cases of defective goods in the Qadi Registers, as well as cases that remain only as complaints because they cannot be proven. For more examples see, *Bab Mahkemesi 397 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1255-1256 / M. 1839-1840)*, v. 95, p. 330, article no: 486; *Bab Mahkemesi 197 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1162-1163 / M. 1749-1750)*, v. 73, p. 506, article no: 683; *Bab Mahkemesi 397 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1255-1256/M. 1839-1840)*, v. 95, p. 332, article no: 490.

101 BOA, MAD, nr. 2483, p. 14, 24 Zilhicce 1121 (24 February 1710).

Despite the “successful” inquests, there are examples in the records of those who did not receive their money back from the slave artisans. Contrary examples can also be found. When the slave artisans could not get their money they went to court.

Saime Hatun sold her Russian female slave, Gülistan, to Ömer, a slave trader, in 1666. However, while in the market, the slave fell and died. Saime Hatun demanded the money. Ömer initially refused to pay her, but after Saime Hatun complained, he agreed to pay 40 *kuruş*¹⁰². In another example, Ali Bey delivered his Russian slave Kalender to the slave artisan Mehmed in 1666 to sell him for 130 *kuruş*, but he never received his money. Mehmed admitted to Ali that he owed 130 *kuruş* and promised to pay the debt in a short time¹⁰³. Before the case went to court, the slave artisan presumably refused to accept the debt, forcing Ali to appeal to the qadi. The same year, Saliha Hatun bought a slave named Mülayim from the slave artisan Hızır, and when the slave proved to be defective, after reaching an agreement, she returned the slave to Hızır. She demanded the 68 *kuruş* she had paid for the slave, but Hızır refused to pay the money and make a deal, despite the fact that she had returned the slave. Hızır accepted the debt and agreed to pay it after the case was brought to court¹⁰⁴. Among the cases, there was once of Mehmed the slave artisan’s sale of the female slave Georgian Rüstem to Ahmet for 368.5 *kuruş*. Despite the passing of 46 days, Mehmed did not receive the remaining 120 *kuruş*. The case was concluded when it was sent to the qadi and Ahmet was ordered to pay Mehmed the 120 *kuruş* as soon as possible¹⁰⁵.

Another common issue in payment cases was the sale of people as slaves who had originally been free and the purchasers’ demand for the return of their money¹⁰⁶. Abdülgani, a slave artisan, sold Georgian Şehriban to İbrahim for 120 *kuruş*, but İbrahim demanded his money back after Şehriban proved that she had been free originally. Abdülgani claimed that he had purchased the slave for 115 *kuruş* from Yağcı Ebubekir and Hacı Süleyman, but the decision was against him. Abdülgani was ordered to return 120 *kuruş* to İbrahim after Şehriban proved her freedom¹⁰⁷. In the following entry in the record, Abdülgani is seen demanding money from the slave artisan Ebubekir, Ebubekir is seen demanding money from Hasan Agha, and Hasan Agha demanding money from the slave’s previous owner Mahmud Efendi. As a result of the court case in which the sequence from the first seller to the last buyer

102 *Bab Mahkemesi 3 Numaralı Sicil* (H. 1077 / M. 1666- 1667), v. 17, p. 98, article no: 15.

103 *Bab Mahkemesi 3 Numaralı Sicil* (H. 1077 / M. 1666- 1667), v. 17, p. 337, article no: 384.

104 *Bab Mahkemesi 3 Numaralı Sicil* (H. 1077 / M. 1666- 1667), v. 17, p. 415, article no: 489.

105 *Bab Mahkemesi 197 Numaralı Sicil* (H. 1162-1163 / M. 1749-1750), v. 73, p. 126, article no: 59.

106 *Bab Mahkemesi 3 Numaralı Sicil* (H. 1077 / M. 1666- 1667), v. 17, p. 775, article no: 1011; *Bab Mahkemesi 54 Numaralı Sicil* (H. 1102 / M. 1691), v. 20, p. 373, article no: 453. Archival records occasionally show that the opposite situation occurred. It is seen that those who are still slaves applied to the qadi claiming to be originally free, essentially testing their luck (*Bab Mahkemesi 197 Numaralı Sicil* (H. 1162-1163 / M. 1749-1750), v. 73, p. 255, article no: 267).

107 *Bab Mahkemesi 197 Numaralı Sicil* (H. 1162-1163 / M. 1749-1750), v. 73, p. 157, article no: 106.

of the originally free female slave and the sums they paid to each other were all presented, and Mahmud Efendi was ordered to pay the money back¹⁰⁸.

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108 *Bab Mahkemesi 197 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1162-1163 / M. 1749-1750)*, v. 73, p. 157, article no: 107-108.

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