

## Conference Report

### *International Congress: Crafts and Craftsmen in the later Ottoman Empire. From craft to industry in the Ottoman Empire and its "Successor States"*

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Ottoman artisans, and especially the characteristic organizations that they had developed by the seventeenth century and which continued to function well into the nineteenth, have long interested historians. Older Ottoman texts employ the term *hurfet* in addition to unspecific expressions such as *taife*, while in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century parlance, *lonca* was often used; all these terms can conveniently be translated as 'guild', provided that we do not assume a one-to-one correspondence with western and central European homologues. For the most part, work on craftsmen has been undertaken in the context of urban history, guilds attracting particular attention because they have been recognized as one of the few specifically urban institutions present on Ottoman territory. On the other hand most types of formal socio-political organization in the sultans' realm were state-sponsored and especially where the provinces as opposed to Istanbul were concerned, did not differentiate between town and countryside.

With respect to the Ottoman Empire, urban history typically has taken the shape of monographs on individual towns and cities; this is due to the source base which consists mainly of registers compiled by the scribes of urban judges *cum* notaries public (*kadi siclleri*). Scholarly concentration upon the fates of individual cities means that a synthesis of what we have learned, or imagine we have learned, by studying a multitude of artisans in different social and economic constellations still is missing. Yet such a synthesis is long overdue. For if we have learned anything at all from the work that has been done to date, it is the fact that within a broad framework set by the manner in which Ottoman state and society were organized, there was room for considerable variation both geographically and over time.

To the outsider, this statement may appear trivial, variation being the major characteristic of human behavior when viewed in a broader perspective. But to those who know how many facile generalizations about Ottoman guildsmen have been floating around, it is anything but a truism. After all if we accept that the degree to which craft guilds constrained their members varied enormously, it is no longer meaningful to say that, for example, the transition to capitalist production was impossible merely or mainly because the pressure of guilds upon their members made it impossible for the latter to turn themselves into entrepreneurs. If there were places and times where the guilds exerted relatively few pressures, and yet there was not much capitalist industrialization before the 1950s, evidently other factors, including the impinging world market and the policies of the Ottoman and later Turkish ruling classes, must have played a more significant role than the mentalities of guildsmen in bringing about this situation.

In preparing for a synthesis on Ottoman craftspeople, Suraiya Faroqhi and Randi Deguilhem have edited a volume called "Ottoman Crafts and Craftsmen: Fashioning the Individual in the Muslim Mediterranean" (London I. B. Tauris, spring of 2005, hopefully). In addition Jürgen Paul and Suraiya Faroqhi have convened a symposium on Ottoman artisans (Halle, Sept. 2004, within the framework of the Deutscher Orientalistentag. This was made possible by generous support, gratefully acknowledged, from the Gerda Henkel Foundation). The idea was to show not only how craftsmen organized themselves and were organized by the state, a topic that has been favored by scholars dealing with Ottoman artisans, but also how the latter related to the material world out of which they fashioned those items that formed the bases of their livelihoods. Some of our contributors have also shed light on the processes which at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, led to the dissolution of the guilds and the emergence of a working class in Turkey. From the perspective of a Central Asianist scholar, Ildiko Béller-Hann has acted as an insightful commentator. While we hope to produce a second collective volume on the history of crafts and craftspeople, for the time being, here are brief summaries of the papers given at the Halle sessions.

### *Guilds emerging*

A major problem, as yet unsolved, concerns the manner in which Ottoman guilds emerged. Medievalists normally posit that by the later middle ages the Byzantine guilds had more or less disappeared. In addition given the contraction of Byzantine industries during that period, the guilds of Constantinople cannot have been the models according to which their Ottoman counterparts were formed, probably beginning with the late fifteenth century. As to Egypt and Syria, the *communis opinio* has been, for quite some time already, that craft guilds did not exist in this region before the Ottoman conquest; how they were introduced after 1517 still remains a mystery. But when we consider the core lands of the sultans' empire (western and central Anatolia plus the eastern Balkans) the emergence of the guilds is equally obscure, largely due to the lack of sources on the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, when these processes must have occurred.

Therefore the documents that Özlem Sert has found in a mid-sixteenth century kadi register of the town of Rodosçuk (today: Tekirdag) are nothing short of sensational. In this town, which boasts registers that go back further than those of most other Ottoman towns apart from Bursa and Jerusalem, Özlem Sert has found declarations by ordinary non-titled subjects of the sultan, who appeared in front of the local judge and declared that as of now, they were making a commitment to supply the local inhabitants with bread 'in good as well as in bad times'. This means that in mid-sixteenth century Tekirdag, it was not the guild authorities -- if indeed such office-holders already existed -- that took the initiative in this sensitive matter, but the individual would-be baker himself. Moreover no guild officials are known to have claimed that this or that baker did not do his job properly and should therefore lose his shop and/or the right to exercise his craft. It is also quite remarkable that the kadi did not take any initiative in checking the qualifications of the men who declared that they would be responsible for the bread supply of Tekirdag. Whether we should conclude that the guild of bakers at this time was still in an embryonic state remains uncertain.

In a different vein, Eunjeong Yi, who has recently published a monograph about Istanbul guilds in the early seventeenth century, has taken issue with the claim that Ottoman craftsmen strove for rough equality within their guilds.<sup>[1]</sup> Stressing the need to question the notion of artisan egalitarianism the author has voiced her doubts that people who had become 'too rich' really were often expelled from their guilds by fellow guildsmen. Put differently, how rich was too rich? Were the members of a single guild really relatively undifferentiated in terms of wealth? Did their pronounced egalitarian mentality lead them to harbor hostility towards merchants in general? And was there a way through which outstanding wealth could be made to appear legitimate within a guild?

Using the inventories of deceased artisans and also rental contracts as recorded in the kadi registers of seventeenth-century Istanbul, Eunjeong Yi has shown that the disparities not only between guilds with high and those with low earning power were enormous, but also that within one and the same guild, the differences could be great. Now it is of course possible that as so often, we are here confronted with a significant divergence between ideology and real life. But even the extent to which egalitarian ideology found acceptance is open to question. For it is none too clear that many richer craftsmen were willing to accept wholeheartedly a set of beliefs that obliged them to forgo profit opportunities for the sake of intra-guild equality. In Yi's perspective, wealthy guildsmen were more likely to subvert whatever tendencies towards guild equality may have existed among the poorer masters; particularly a partnership with another artisan, a man perhaps too poor to engage in manufacturing on his own, could be used for such purposes. An equitable distribution of raw materials certainly was a matter of concern among craftsmen, which is why this issue was so often talked about; but the very frequency with which it was brought up also indicated that many wealthy guildsmen found ways of being 'more equal than others'; and we really have no indication that they suffered pangs of conscience as a result.

At the beginning of Ottoman guild studies, it was a major issue to show that these organizations were 'real guilds', that is that they were not religious or semi-religious

fraternities, such as the *ahis* of medieval Anatolia had been. Thus Robert Mantran stressed that while early (non-documented) Ottoman guilds may have had a strong religious component, this disappeared in later times, as evident from the fact that some guilds encompassed artisans of different religions.[2] In more recent studies, the religious activities of Ottoman guilds (as opposed to those of the guildsmen themselves, who of course attended services in mosques and dervish lodges) have receded into the background. However the documents analyzed by Markus Koller on Ottoman Bosnia during the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries show that at least in this border province, there existed among local Catholic artisans guilds that were also religious fraternities. These organizations were promoted by the local Franciscans as part of their missionary activities. Quite often such guild-fraternities provided for the upkeep of local Catholic churches. Sources on this 'fraternal' aspect of Muslim guilds also may surface in the future. But of course our unavoidable dependence on official Ottoman sources, for whose authors this aspect of artisan life was not very important, does tend to limit our horizons.

### *Guilds and material life*

Craftsmen as engaged in physical work, that is in producing goods, were introduced at our gathering through the work of Géza Dávid and Ibolya Gerelyes, who both focused on the art of the potter. From two sixteenth-century Ottoman provincial tax regulations (*kanunnames*) we learn that potters in Buda and Hatvan did not pay any duties from products manufactured and sold locally. This exemption must be one of the reasons why potters are so rarely recorded in registers compiled by the sultans' provincial administrations. It is also difficult to estimate the quantity of pottery marketed in Ottoman Hungary. According to a 1570s customs register from Buda, Muslim merchants brought some 2500 pots and 7700 plates to the center of the province. Christians transported 14 cart-loads of pots and 63 cart-loads of plates, involving a total of 18,425 plates, all these figures constituting minimum values.

In contrast to the scanty written evidence, we do have a comparatively rich stock of Ottoman ceramics derived mostly from the excavation of military and administrative centers, especially the castle of Buda and the adjacent right bank of the Danube, in other words the one-time tanneries quarter (Debbaghane or Tabáan). These excavations have shown that in the archaeological material from the Ottoman period, beginning with the second half of the sixteenth century, a new type of ceramics appeared in Hungary, which differed significantly both in shape and in technical execution from medieval ceramics. These new products, typically of good quality, were red-clay and monochrome-glazed footed bowls and jugs. Their archeological context unambiguously links them to the period of Ottoman rule. The long-term influence of the Ottoman potter's craft in Hungary is a complex question: direct Ottoman influences have not been discerned, rather we find that Ottoman features were interwoven with those connected to the customs and traditions of different ethnic groups from the Balkans. Certain types of vessels completely disappeared from Hungary after the end of Ottoman rule, as they were alien to the eating habits of the local population. On the whole it appears that differently from what can be observed in certain other crafts, the interaction between Hungarian and Ottoman potters was relatively limited.

Another discussion of productive activities undertaken by Ottoman artisans is the work of Gábor Ágoston; that he also is Hungarian-born is probably not a matter of chance. Rather his concern with material culture can be viewed as a result of the high level of development that post-medieval archeology has reached in Hungary. Ágoston is a specialist on Ottoman war materiel, and in his paper he has discussed the manufacture of cannons and particularly gunpowder.[3] We will focus here on the production of the major ingredient in gunpowder preparation, namely saltpeter.

Independent entrepreneurs often discovered new saltpeter deposits, initiated production by means of their own resources, later acquired the right to run the facilities as tax farmers (*mültezims*), invested in the relevant plants, lent money to the government, and ultimately supplied saltpeter to the imperial gunpowder-works. In return, they usually requested increases in the remunerations of offices that they already held, or else promotions and

appointments to new posts for themselves, and even for their business associates. The workforce consisted of fortress soldiers and retired cavalymen (*sipahis*), as well as of military auxiliaries who labored in the saltpeter works and therefore received various bonuses and exemptions, while at the same time avoiding the battlefields. Another widely employed method of production was the parceling out of responsibilities among thousands of saltpeter-manufacturing families in the so-called *ocaklik* or service villages. In return these peasants were exempt from extraordinary wartime taxes (*avariz*).

In the seventeenth century however, the quantities of saltpeter supplied by service villages declined considerably. A major problem with this system was that it discouraged innovation and investment. Moreover the loss of state control, along with the attendant economic and social dislocation, led to irregularities in the supply of saltpeter. Since the supervisors (*nazirs*) tended to view their charges as sources of profit, the burden on the villagers was considerable and by the eighteenth century, the latter often took flight in order to avoid their obligations.

#### *Guilds, composed of 'slots': the gedik and the kadak*

While the loose structure of most early Ottoman guilds seems to have made it relatively easy for artisans to enter and leave these organizations, by the years before and after 1800, this was no longer true. In the emergence of this more rigid structure, the institution of 'slots' (*gediks*) that artisans needed to acquire if they wished to practice their crafts was crucial. Moreover given the supervision needed if these arrangements were to function, administrative officers now played a more significant role than they had done in older, less bureaucratic periods.

Several papers have dealt with these two connected phenomena. Onur Yildirim has pointed out that *gediks* came into being through coordinated action between the state and the guilds, in order to address the growing difficulties experienced by many craftsmen during the early eighteenth century. This new practice came to play a significant role in restructuring property relations in the marketplace. Many artisans obtained a *gedik* certificate as a means of solidifying their control over their workplaces and gradually turned these documents into official entitlements, by virtue of which they laid claim to the tools and equipment in a given workshop.

This development provided guild members with increased room for maneuver when suffering from the vicissitudes of the market. In other words, some guildsmen who had obtained the right to exercise a craft and also the usufruct of the relevant 'slots' waived their usufruct rights and moved out to more convenient places, thereby breaking up the spatial unity of guild-based production. Based on a series of Ottoman archival documents, Yildirim's study traces the evolution of the *gedik* in the case of the Istanbul silver-thread spinners' guild from the early eighteenth century to its abolition in the mid-nineteenth. This study also addresses some of the interpretive problems related to the concept of *gedik* in the literature on Ottoman crafts and craftsmen.

As the terms *kadak* (for *gedik*) and the closely related *kadak wa-khulû* indicate, Randi Deguilhem's paper takes us to Damascus. Her documents are found in the archives of the local tribunal, either in the shape of registers or else as single documents which passed through the court for registration. These materials specifically relate to commercial properties owned by various pious foundations in the city. One example stands out, since it concerns *kadak* and *kadak wa-khulû* contracts (*'aqd*) in the possession of a woman, Hafîza *khânum* al-Mûrahîlî, constituting part of the assets with which in 1880, she established a pious foundation (*mushtarak waqf*) in Damascus.

The foundation charter (*kitâb al-waqf*) for Hafîza al-Mûrahîlî's charity clearly refers to *kadak* and *kadak wa-khulû* as assets in their own right, which can become the object of a pious foundation and then be rented out. We know that these two types of contracts in the previous

century, in Istanbul and elsewhere in the empire, represented a sought-after right to exercise a given trade in a given location. However already in eighteenth-century Damascus *kadak* were sometimes assigned to certain Janissaries as a form of salary, that is they might become divorced from the artisan context. By the late 1800s, they could readily be rented out regardless of whether the holder was a bona fide artisan apt to exercise the trade in question.

But Hafiza al-Mûrahli's charity contains even more instructive features, for here *kadak* and *kadak wa-khulû* are established as separate revenue-generating properties suitable for a pious foundation, albeit connected to a specific shop in *intra muros* Damascus. Put differently Hafiza *khânum*'s foundation charter has listed the *kadak* and *kadak wa-khulû* contracts as part of the holdings of her foundation. But what were the passages and steps intervening between *kadak* in its original status, when it was a professional license occasionally used by Istanbul artisans as early as the 1620s, and its appearance as a rent contract on commercial property in the Syrian province of Damascus? Was this a specific usage in this particular province or was it more widely spread in the empire? Were changes and adaptations in the definition and use of *kadak* fairly uniform throughout the sultans' territories, both in time and in substance, or were they linked to specific local or regional circumstances? Did change in the use of *kadak* and *kadak*-related contracts radiate from the center to the provinces, or were these changes more of a local phenomenon and directly tied to local specificities? By what process did Ottoman townsmen come to transform the older type of licenses, that were closely intertwined with permissions to set up specific shops or workshops, into something that was merely another type of rental contract on commercial property? Given the distance between the two concepts: how did one get from here to there?

#### *Appointing headmen and running the guilds*

While guilds in Ottoman Cairo typically were headed by sheiks, in the central Ottoman lands the leading role was played by *kethûdas*. They were the addressees of sultanic commands, and their appointments were often recorded in official documents, something that was rarely true of their underlings the *yigitbasis*. By the early eighteenth century it was furthermore quite common for Ottoman officialdom to grant positions in the guilds, usually as *kethûdas*, to men who were entitled to a soldier's pay and willing to cede this right to the sultan's treasury. With the exception of Mehmet Genç, scholars have tended to ignore the existence of this particular type of sale, but for the guild historian the topic is worth a closer study.<sup>[4]</sup> In her paper, Suraiya Faroqhi has analyzed information culled from documents put together in the 1720s; a later study will hopefully show how this practice evolved during the remainder of the eighteenth century.

That certain guild offices could be made to produce sizeable amounts of revenue is apparent from the fact that their prices so frequently rose; this increase is worth noting even if we must make some allowance for deterioration of the currency. At the same time the sale of guild office by the Ottoman administration must have given rise to quite a few problems. Many of the *kethûdas* who had purchased their offices probably did not try to run 'their' guilds: replacements needed to be found, the resulting bills of course being footed by the artisans. In addition those military men -- and secondarily, receivers of other pensions as well -- who were willing to forgo their pay must have expected revenues that were at least as high, and probably rather higher, than those that they had ceded to the central treasury. To date, we have no indication of the amounts of money that the *kethûdas* collected from 'their' guildsmen. Artisans complaining about this state of affairs do not often occur in the surviving documents: if pressed too hard, craftsmen were more likely to run away.

#### *At a time of major historical change: Ottoman artisans in a political and legal context*

Given this state of affairs, Engin Akarlı has shown that in all likelihood, the majority of

Ottoman artisans had a stake in political stability and public peace; for it was in times of disturbance, such as the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, that soldiers and robbers were most likely to extort money from defenseless artisans. Participation in violent acts was the craftsmen's last resort. In reasonably peaceful times by contrast they had other means of defending their interests and airing their grievances. Primarily, they worked through the courts and the legal process, and it is this aspect that has mainly retained Akarlı's interest.

Whenever feasible, guildsmen also managed to ignore those government decisions that they considered unfair. Petition campaigns that occasionally turned into public demonstrations helped artisans impress their interests on judicial and executive authorities as well as such third parties as proprietors of shops and khans, creditors and individuals who wanted to practice their respective trades independently of the relevant artisan associations. At least as significantly however, the guildsmen needed to act in sufficiently large numbers and in an organized manner in order to defend their interests by petitioning, going to court, lobbying, or even closing their shops as a gesture of ultimate protest. Organized artisans and traders could and did tip the political balance in Istanbul, particularly at times of tension and political crisis.

The various agents of the government wielded brute power and certainly did not merely use it in legitimate ways, for instance, in order to execute court decisions, to maintain discipline among the armed forces, and to ensure public order in general. To the contrary, they also used their physical power in an abusive manner so as to promote their own political or material interests. The officials' power was by no means absolute, however. Different factions balanced each other and the organized segments of the population, such as artisans and traders, set limits to executive abuses. Furthermore, the authorities too had a stake in a peaceful and stable public order: the Ottoman ruling class in general and the people in responsible administrative positions in particular acted within an institutionalized structure and abided by certain traditions of government, including a well-established legal culture. All this set limits to the arbitrariness of officials. And even in the troubled times before and after 1800, the guilds were part of this legal culture, so that adhering to the rules that these craft organizations had devised must have made sense to the majority of Ottoman artisans.

Craft guilds in the sultans' domains have not often been addressed as civil societal organizations, and this is a deficiency that Nalan Turna has set out to remedy. She considers the guilds to have represented civil society as long as they remained autonomous from the Ottoman state. Thus for example a case can be made that Jerusalem guilds were frequently in that position. Focusing on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Turna formulates her questions on the basis of Haim Gerber's argument that the Ottoman central government was indifferent towards urban masses, including guilds, unless something happened to disturb the peace or the orderly collection of taxes. In this context she asks herself whether the decline of guilds in the nineteenth century also meant a retreat of civil society/societies. She also takes issue with Gerber's assertion that the state was more involved in guild affairs in localities close to the imperial center, asking herself whether this was always true throughout the long period separating the late thirteenth from the early twentieth century.

In Turna's paper two major arguments stand out concerning civil society in the Ottoman context. First of all she has pointed out that the line dividing state and society was quite often blurred. Janissaries' involvement in guild activities or artisan infiltration of military units might indicate such an overlapping, that in turn may sometimes have led to the emergence of a displaced group. In Cemal Kafadar's terminology such people might be called lumpen-artisans or lumpen-janissaries, the latter another term for artisans enrolled in the janissary corps. Lumpen-artisans had probably been cut off, or cut themselves off, from the socioeconomic class with which they were normally identified. Lumpen-janissaries, however, continued to enjoy significant privileges as members of the military corps. Even being part of a displaced group thus did not uniformly mean that the men concerned had lost all connection with the Ottoman state.

Yet, in more abstract terms, claiming that state and society were closely linked through multiple instances of overlap is to ignore the difference(s) between the two categories. On the

basis of a critical remark by Partha Chatterjee, Turna has argued that crafts and trades were politically less active in the pre-nineteenth century than they were to become after 1800, so that in this earlier period, they should be viewed as groupings relatively remote from the state apparatus. In addition, overlap between state and society should not be exaggerated since crafts and trades could also be practiced outside the domain of the state and even outside the guilds. The state, the sultan, or other upper level political actors infrequently appeared in the ordinary lives of artisans unless the latter became embroiled in a major conflict that they were unable to solve among themselves.

*Out of the frying pan, into the fire: workers on the margins and outside of the guilds*

How from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the guilds lost the position they had held in the 1700s and early 1800s, is a fascinating and all too little researched field. As John Chalcraft has pointed out in an important article, soon to be published, the emergence or growth of rural manufactures and an increasing use of minimally paid female labor resulted in the guilds losing relevance in the eyes of their members. After all, peasants and women were *ipso facto* extraneous to the guilds. These economic processes in turn led to the gradual withering away of this previously so predominant form of artisan organization.<sup>[5]</sup> Similar developments are on record for the Ottoman central provinces as well; thus Florian Riedler has shown that in nineteenth-century Istanbul unorganized immigrant workmen, usually still unmarried (*bekâr*), competed with organized craftsmen, especially in jobs that demanded more physical force than technical competence.

As in the case of other underprivileged groups, there is not much information available about these migrants. Official documents often display the hostility that the Ottoman state entertained towards this group, so mobile that it could not be easily controlled. Historians need to be on guard against taking over the biases of their sources; in our case this is best done by approaching the problem in an oblique manner. At least for mid-nineteenth century Istanbul we can exploit the information contained in registers of people inhabiting the city's khans, among whom there were numerous young -- and perhaps not so young -- unmarried men. From these registers, a typical set of *bekâr*-specializations emerges, e.g. rowers, day laborers, porters or diggers of sewers and ditches. At the same time, the geographical scope of this type of migration becomes visible as well. Migrants predominantly came from four distinct regions of the empire, namely Kosova with its central town of Prizren, the Black Sea coast around Kastamonu, Central Anatolia with its urban center of Kayseri and the Eastern Anatolian region surrounding the town of Erzincan. These khan-registers thus offer snapshots of the *bekâr*-migration as it existed, and in some instances had existed for hundreds of years, before the late nineteenth-century economic boom and political factors changed the picture beyond recognition.

The trials and tribulations of laborers without either guild or trade union protection have also been discussed by Erdem Kabadayi, who has focused on the working conditions that prevailed in the late nineteenth-century Istanbul state factory known as the Feshane-i Amire (Imperial Fez Factory). During a recent research stay in the Prime Minister's Archive in Istanbul, Kabadayi has had a chance to work on a group of documents that have become accessible only recently, namely the Hazine-i Hassa (Special Treasury; call numbers HH.FSH and HH.THR, covering the 1840s to the 1920s). His paper presents the preliminary results of his work on this rather novel documentation. The collections in question contain petitions from factory workers, almost all of which were probably written by professional scribes. Nevertheless, they convey the problems, wishes and requests of the laborers. Moreover these documents also allow us to figure out what means and methods were available to state factory workers attempting to improve their working conditions, and in some cases, which institutions could be involved in mediating the resulting disputes.

Kabadayi's study encompasses six years, from the beginning of 1870 to the end of 1875. In 1870 the Feshane administration had begun to implement a series of measures that today we would call downsizing, but that bureaucrats of the time preferred to describe as "*islahat ve tenkisat*" (reform and reduction [in the number of workers]). Details and even the exact dates

of these measures as yet remain unknown, but the author presumes that *islahat* and *tenkijat* commenced in 1870. This period was characterized by serious financial stringency; after all in 1875 the Ottoman state announced bankruptcy. On the other hand, the administration wanted the factory to continue producing, as the latter's major output were woollens used for military uniforms. As a result, while the positions of non-skilled laborers in the early 1870s were anything but secure, some of the skilled workers who did wish to leave were not allowed to quit their jobs.

Donald Quataert's study of labor recruitment in the coal mines of the Anatolian Black Sea coast (Zonguldak) has highlighted the central state's use of village authorities, namely the headmen and councils of elders, in order to discipline workers. The power of village headmen had remained formidable since the 1870s, despite state efforts to undermine an important foundation of their sway over villagers. For in 1892, legislation stripped headmen of the legal authority to collect and distribute wages owed to village miners. Thereby the central state gave another nod to free market capitalism and took another step to dismantle state control over coal mining. Henceforth, the miners from villages or town quarters were to be paid directly by mine operators. Nonetheless in practice headmen retained wage-distributing authority over their fellow villagers; and the collective payment system was still operating several years after its legal abolition. Thus side by side with the power of the state's enforcement apparatus, local authorities retained a good deal of control over workers.

However Quataert does not merely depict the state as increasingly intruding into the lives of its subjects, his work also helps to demystify the central Ottoman state, that too often has been seen as all-powerful. Indeed, the story of the miners more often demonstrates the total and complete failure of the state to achieve its most basic goal, namely the assurance of adequate coal supplies in wartime. Notably, despite all efforts of the government and the policing infrastructure that it had created, the mines during the crisis years of World War I produced no more coal than they had done four decades earlier, during the 1870s.

The reasons for this failure of the central authorities have been detailed elsewhere. Simply put, the state could not overcome the forces in Ottoman society that acted against official objectives. Workers refused to work, or else they fled after being dragged to the mines, and while headmen might exploit villagers quite badly, they also might act to protect their clientele. The persistent shortages of mine workers during World War I, when the state's demand for coal reached unprecedented heights, meant that the headmen, elected by the villagers and appointed by the state, were not fulfilling the tasks assigned to them by their superiors. Miners and headmen might, in times of dire need, unite in passive resistance against the central authorities.

Resistance from below was also a powerful factor leading to the abolition of guilds in Egypt, the only (ex)-Ottoman province where this process has been examined in great detail. The decline and disappearance of the Egyptian guilds 1800-1914 is usually seen as a top-down affair in which decaying and passive traditional trades and guilds were destroyed by European imports on the one side and abolished by official decree linked to reforming projects of modernizing elites on the other. However John Chalcraft has revised this picture by recovering the grassroots history of guilds, crafts and service workers.

In Chalcraft's perspective, the guilds were broken up as much as by economic restructuring and adaptation as they were by the disappearance of traditional trades: monopolies were undermined by the loss of customary rights and duties and the growth of competition related to the spread of market relations. The rapid expansion of certain trades further weakened guild organization. The ruralization of the textile industry, not its economic collapse, broke up the guilds in this sector. The emergence of new forms of production (larger workshops, putting out systems, contracting networks) and intensified forms of exploitation made guild organization more difficult, or created conflicts which guilds could not contain. In short, economic changes, spurred on by the adaptation of guild members themselves, worked to break up the guilds.

Even more important was contentious interaction with the state. It was not that modernizing

elites sought to abolish the traditional guilds and eventually got their way. Instead, nineteenth century officialdom sought to use the guilds for new purposes, and guild resistance to such policies (not their members' passivity) played a major role in the official abrogation of 1890. Furthermore, the protests of guild members against local exploitation dragged the state and new regulations into guild affairs, undermining the autonomy of the guild from within. The corporate order was unable to solve the problems thrown up by new forms of adaptation and protest, which built new sub- and extra-guild networks. Protests against new forms of regulation and exploitation under colonial rule resulted in new kinds of social organization where they were successful, and contributed to the ramification of new kinds of informal networks where they were not. In these ways the guild order was broken up from within as well as from without. It yet remains to be seen whether the same model applied to the central lands of the Ottoman Empire.

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[1] Eunjeong Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul, Fluidity and Leverage* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2004).

[2] Robert Mantran, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Essai d'histoire institutionnelle, économique et sociale* (Paris, Istanbul: Institut Français d'Archéologie d'Istanbul and Adrien Maisonneuve, 1962)

[3] Gábor Agoston, "Ottoman Artillery and European Military Technology in the Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries", *Acta Orientalia Hungarica*, 47 (1994): 15-48. His book *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire* is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.

[4] For a brief reference compare: Robert Mantran, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Essai d'histoire institutionnelle, économique et sociale* (Paris, Istanbul: Institut Français d'Archéologie d'Istanbul and Adrien Maisonneuve, 1962): 373. See especially Mehmet Genç, "Ottoman Industry in the Eighteenth Century: General Framework, Characteristics and Main Trends," in Donald Quataert ed, *Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey 1500-1950* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994): 59-86.

[5] John Chalcraft, "The End of Guilds in Egypt: Restructuring Textiles in the Long Nineteenth Cent" in "Crafts and Craftsmen of the Middle East, Fashioning the Individual in the Muslim Mediterranean," ed. by Suraiya F and Randi Deguilhem (London: Tauris, scheduled for the spring of 2005).