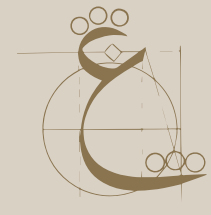
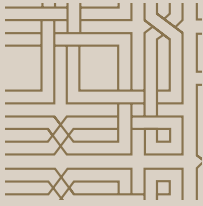




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Crafts in Shkodra on the Eve of the Ottoman Period (14th – 15th Centuries)

OSMANLI DÖNEMİ
ARİFESİNDE İŞKODRA'DAKİ
ZANAATLAR
(14. – 15. YÜZYILLAR)



ERMAL BAZE*

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the development of the main crafts meeting the social needs for food and clothing in the agrarian economy of Shkodra on the eve of the final Ottoman takeover in 1467. It focuses on two archival documents to analyze the development of crafts in the city: the Statutes of Shkodra and the Registry of Cadastre and Concessions for the district of Shkodra (1416-1417). These sources demonstrate the municipal administration of the city and summarize the normative acts of regulating crafts organization and functioning of daily life, relations between citizens, the population and the ruling class, and between the city and its surroundings. So, they provide considerable information and a framework of crafts by presenting the conditions and obligations that artisans should fulfill in their activity and the guarantee and legal protection offered by the municipalities. Thus, this paper tries to contextualize the forms of production and the means of occupation in the fifteenth-century Shkodra by departing from these two sources.

Keywords: Crafts, civic municipality, statutes, workshops, guilds.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, bir Orta Çağ şehri olan İşkodra'nın zirai ekonomi içerisinde toplumun yiyecek ve giyecek ihtiyaçlarını gidermeye dönük üretim yapan temel zanaat kollarına odaklanmakta ve bunların Osmanlı dönemi arifesindeki gelişimini incelemektedir. İşkodra'daki 14. ve 15. yüzyıllara ait zanaatları analiz etmek için nizamnameler ve 1416-1417 tarihli kadastro arazi sayımı ve imtiyaz kayıtları, kullanılabilir ana kaynaklar olarak zikredilebilir. Şehrin idaresine, günlük yaşam, şehir sakinleri arasındaki münasebetlere, halk ve yönetici sınıf ilişkilerine dair çeşitli bilgiler bulabileceğimiz bu kaynaklar, zanaat kolları ile bu kolların örgütlenme ve işleyişleri hakkında da değerli veriler içermektedir. Söz konusu kaynaklar, şehirdeki zanaat kollarının faaliyetlerine ve yerine getirmekle mükellef oldukları yükümlülüklere değinirken, idarenin bu gruplara tanıdığı kanuni haklara, sağladığı destek ve kısıtlamalara ilişkin de önemli bilgiler sunmakta, İşkodra'daki zanaat kollarına dair genel bir çerçeve çıkarmaya imkân tanımaktadır. Makalede bu iki kaynağa dayalı olarak İşkodra'nın 15. yüzyıldaki zanaat dallarına ve bu mesleklerin üretimlerine dair genel bir değerlendirme yapılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Zanaatlar, belediye, nizamnameler, esnaf, lonca.



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With its ancient¹ traditions, Albanian craftsmanship had continued throughout the Middle Ages² as a means of production and as a significant socioeconomic activity. During the late thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, the growing need for craftsmanship, technical progress, as well as the proximity of iron, lead and silver mines in Kosovo helped develop the specialization of handicrafts in Albania in various ways.³ These demands and advantages played a decisive role in processing agricultural raw materials, livestock and minerals for Albania. The processing of these materials was intended to meet food, clothing, work tools, weapons, furnishings and such items. The crafts of medieval Albania took considerable development during the second half of the fourteenth century and throughout the next century, coinciding with the Ottoman expansion in the Balkans.⁴ There are two complete documents, namely Statutes of Shkodra⁵ and Cadastre and Concessions Registers for the district of Shkodra (1416-1417), to inquiry about this topic.⁶ According to O. J. Schmitt, the former consists of 279 chapters written in the Venetian language, and the date of the design as a terminus ante quem is 1346.⁷ The first 268 chapters belong to the first decades of the fourteenth century, with annexes related to 1391–1393,⁸ and there are five provisions from the Venetian period dated between 1457 and 1469.⁹ Based on the Statutes of Shkodra, one can imagine the institutional, economic, social and religious development of the city. Thus, for the first time, this document unfolds the civil life in Shkodra almost in its entire diversity.

The following document, Shkodra Cadastre and Concession Register was compiled in the 1420s and related to the Venetian properties in Albanian lands and the fiscal system practiced on the Venetian inhabitants. It also contains data concerning structure and types of properties, socioeconomic history, diverse forms of administration, village life, and artisans and guilds. The Venetian administration (1396 – 1479) was governing Shkodra before the Ottoman takeover.

Shkodra was the most crucial craftsmanship center in North, specializing in the crafts related to agriculture and livestock. The crafts that meet the social needs for food, the

1 Neritan Ceka - Muzafer Korkuti, *Arkeologjia* (Tiranë: Shblu, 1998), 395-399.

2 Giuseppe Valentini, "Le corporazioni Albanesi," *Studime e Tekste*, Dega I Juridike (Tirana-Roma, 1944), 1/144-195.

3 Aleks Buda, *Shkrime Historike* (Tiranë: Toena, 2002), 3/133.

4 Robert Mantran, *Historia e Perandorisë Osmane*, trans. Asti Papa (Tiranë: Dituria, 2004), 44-102; Halil İnalçık, *Perandoria Osmane (Periudha Klasike 1300-1600)*, trans. Edvin Cami (Tiranë: Dituria, 2013), 18-41; Mehmet Maksudoğlu, *Historia Osmane dhe Institucionet*, trans. Enilda Meidani (Tiranë: ALSAR, 2013), 114-249; Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, *Instituti i Historisë, Historia e Popullit Shqiptar* (Tiranë: Toena, 2002), 1/373-378; Marin Barleti, *Rrethimi i Shkodrës*, trans. Henrik Lacaj (Tiranë: Naim Frashëri, 1982).

5 *Statuti di Scutari della prima metà del secolo XIV con le addizione fino al 1469*, (a cura di Lucia Nadin, traduzione in albanese a cura di Pëllumb Xhufi, con saggi introduttivi di Giovan Batista Pellegrini, Oliver Jens Schmitt e Gherardo Ortalli) (Roma: Viella, 2002).

6 *Rregjistr i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve për Rrethin e Shkodrës 1416 – 1417*, ed. Injac Zamputi (Tiranë: Instituti i Historisë, 1977).

7 Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Arbëria Venedike 1392 – 1479*, trans. Ardian Klosi (Tiranë: K&B, 2007), 113.

8 *Statuti di Scutari*, 271 – 272.

9 *Statuti di Scutari*, 232 – 234.

Statutes and Cadastre of Shkodra, mentions mills¹⁰, bakeries¹¹, and butchers¹². All of these had to be reasonable in profit-making.¹³ The city government particularly paid attention to crafts concerning the provision and marketing of the most demanded items such as meat. Animal slaughter was restricted to slaughterhouses.¹⁴ Butchers had to pay daily slaughter tax that was charged depending on the type of animal. For example, two groshas were charged for oxen or cows, a folar for a pig, a half grosha for a sheep, and two groshas for a buffalo.¹⁵ Also, another craft related to food production was the processing of fishery products. In Shkodra, some fishermen used salt to dry large quantities of fish exported outside Albania.¹⁶

In terms of clothes' craftsmanship, Statutes and Cadastre refers to shoemakers¹⁷ who had to produce at reasonable prices and based on the skin type and quality.¹⁸ There was also the production and fabrication of silk, where the tailors adorned the garments with embroideries and woven gold.¹⁹

The handicraft production in the function of the agrarian economy was represented by the craftsmanship of iron,²⁰ production of plows²¹ and other agricultural tools,²² and by the farrier²³ and the rasp.²⁴ The city's leading authorities commanded the craftsmen of agricultural tools to process and trade at acceptable prices concerning production processes and quality of materials.²⁵

The government protected and guaranteed artisans producing tools and agricultural equipment against robbery. This provision was to defend and support the production of the plows, the most effective tool for land productivity.²⁶ There were also hoe,²⁷ spade,²⁸ goad,²⁹ the yoke of oxen³⁰ and such others in the repertoire of agricultural tools produced by the craftsmen of Shkodra.

10 *Statuti di Scutari*, 180.

11 *Statuti di Scutari*, 181; *Regjistri i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve*, 23, 30,

12 *Statuti di Scutari*, 188, 109.

13 *Statuti di Scutari*, 181.

14 *Statuti di Scutari*, 188

15 *Statuti di Scutari*, 188.

16 Buda, *Shkrime Historike*, 134.

17 *Statuti di Scutari*, 185; *Regjistri i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve*, 30, 39, 44, 46, 47.

18 *Statuti di Scutari*, 185; *Regjistri i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve*, 30, 39, 44, 46, 47.

19 Buda, *Shkrime Historike*, 134.

20 *Statuti di Scutari*, 185 – 186; *Regjistri i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve*, 35, 44, 47.

21 *Statuti di Scutari*, 220.

22 *Statuti di Scutari*, 221.

23 *Regjistri i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve*, 31.

24 *Statuti di Scutari*, 187.

25 *Statuti di Scutari*, 185 – 186.

26 *Statuti di Scutari*, 220

27 *Statuti di Scutari*, 185 – 186.

28 *Statuti di Scutari*, 185 – 186.

29 *Statuti di Scutari*, 221.

30 *Statuti di Scutari*, 221.

Besides agrarian crafts, the Statutes and Cadastre also highlights building masters,³¹ carpenters,³² bricklayers³³ and roof covering carpenters.³⁴ The municipality commanded carpenters to seek a reasonable price for their income. In autumn and winter, their payment was quadrupled and even included a meal.³⁵ Ethnographic studies also illustrate the aesthetic work of Shkodra carpenters. There were wooden coffers or wooden boxes, small ones for delicate items and large ones for clothes, generally made by local carpenters from developed markets such as Shkodra.³⁶

Compared to the masters of carpenters, roof-covering carpenters were more privileged in receiving rewards.³⁷ During the fifteenth century, there were also the crafts of precious metals and jewelry.³⁸ Each artisan had to work correctly and honestly³⁹ and not take new orders without ending the work they had in their hands.⁴⁰

The Statutes of Shkodra also refers to the physician, whose work was considered more of crafts than a skilled occupation. The doctor had to cure his patient carefully and not abandon him before the patient completely recovered.⁴¹

It should be noted that despite the variety of crafts throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, statutory provisions and cadastral records do not speak about the development of specialized crafts and the creation of guilds or crafts corporations. There is also a lack of information regarding the internal organization of craft workshops in this period. The Statutes of Shkodra and Cadastre refers to artisans but do not provide information on the size of the workshops and the number of the labor force working on them. Doubtlessly, only a master worked in some shops, but there were also occasions in which kalfas (apprentices) and workers. Thus, a provision of the document in hand proves the a worker's performance in his job and honesty to his patron.⁴²

Although the sources do not mention the development and organization of craft corporations, they do exist in Shkodra in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. There are references in many domestic and foreign sources proving a high level of crafts organization and develop-

31 *Statuti di Scutari*, 181, 183.

32 *Statuti di Scutari*, 185; *Regjistri i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve*, 24.

33 *Regjistri i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve*, 26, 37.

34 *Statuti di Scutari*, 186.

35 *Statuti di Scutari*, 185.

36 Andromaqi Gjergji, *Mënyra e jetesës në Shqipëri në shekujt XIII – XX* (Tiranë: Kotti, 2002), 12.

37 *Statuti di Scutari*, 49.

38 *Regjistri i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve*, 22; Milan V. Šufflay, *Städte und Burgen Albaniens* (Wien und Leipzig, 1924); *Qytetet dhe Kështjellat e Shqipërisë, Kryesisht në Mesjetë*, ed. Luan Mallezi (Tiranë: Onufri, 2009), 95.

39 *Statuti di Scutari*, 185.

40 *Statuti di Scutari*, 186.

41 *Statuti di Scutari*, 186.

42 *Statuti di Scutari*, 182.

ment, reflected in the Venetian period (1396 - 1479) and Ottoman (1479 - 1912).⁴³

The Cadastre shows the existence of craft corporations in Shkodra in 1416: “La scuola, overo fragtalia di Santa Barbara [school or brotherhood of St. Barbara]” owned land property under the fortress of Rozafa. “Scuola o frataglia di Santa Mercurio” had land assets in the southeast of the city. “Scuola, overo frataglia di Santa Croce,” on the other hand, owned lands and vineyards in a place called Pedrella.⁴⁴ The existence of these schools or brotherhoods of artisanal-religious character clearly indicates the corporate system Shkodra was in full development on the eve of Ottoman rule. Also, there is no doubt that craft companies developed under the direct influence of the Venetian corporations and the management of the Italian and Dalmatian cities during this period. With the establishment of Ottoman rule, craft corporations or guilds experienced further development, organization and excellence in Shkodra and in other important cities such as Elbasan, Berat, Korça, Ioannina, Prizren, Skopje.

43 Zija Shkodra, “Qytetet Shqiptare Gjatë Dy Shekujve të Parë të Sundimit Turk,” *Ekonomia Popullore*, 3 (1963), 23, 33; Zija Shkodra, “Statuti më i Vjetër i Esnafëve në Krahinat e Ballkanit Nën Sundimin Turk,” *Studime Historike*, 2. (1965), 119 – 133; Zija Shkodra, *Esnafet Shqiptare* (shek. XV – XX), (Tiranë: Mihal Duri, 1973); Xhyher Cani, *Argjendaria dhe mjeshtrit shkodranë*, (Elbasan: Sejko, 2005).

44 Fulvio Cordignano, *Catasto Veneto di Scutari e Registrum Concessionum* (1416–1417) (Roma: 1942), 1/52–53, 66; Shkodra, *Esnafet Shqiptare*, 83; *Regjistri i Kadastrës dhe i Koncesioneve*, 34–35.



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