

Slavery in Ottoman Empire

Köleliğin Osmanlı'daki Yeri

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Abstract

Slavery was not a phenomenon exclusive to the Ottoman Empire, but rather a result of the struggle between the powerful and the vulnerable that has existed since the earliest stages of human history. It gradually evolved over time as part of the human experience. The Ottoman Empire, upon acquiring new territories, applied its own perspective on slavery shaped within the context of Islamic civilization, attempting to introduce solutions that were relatively humane for its era. However, it's important to remember that the countries the Ottomans interacted with were often in states of war. The close association of slavery with the concept of warfare, both in a narrow and broader sense, inevitably tested the limits of human nature. Nevertheless, from the Ottoman standpoint, the fact that this concept did not transform into outright colonialism necessitates that it should be regarded as relatively distinct when compared to their counterparts.

Keywords: Slavery in the Ottoman Empire, Piracy in the Mediterranean, Maritime Trade

Öz

Kölelik, Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda ortaya çıkan bir konu değildir. Aksine belki de insanlığın ilk dönemlerinden beri güçlü ile güçsüz arasındaki mücadeleden bir sonucu olarak insanlık tarihinin zaman içerisinde evrimleştiği bir olgu olmuştur. Osmanlı ele geçirdiği topraklarda İslam medeniyeti içerisindeki şekillenen kölelik bakış açısını da uygulayarak, dönemine göre oldukça insani çözümler getirmeye çalıştı. Ancak muhataplarının savaş halinde oldukları ülkeler olduklarını da unutmamak gerekiyor. Köleliğin dar anlamda ve geniş anlamda savaş kavramıyla ilintili olması, her halükarda insan tabiatını zorlamış olabilir. Ancak, Osmanlı açısından bakıldığında bu kavramın sömürgeciliğe dönüşmemiş olması nedeniyle, muhataplarına göre daha müstesna tutulmasını gerektirmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı'da Kölelik, Akdeniz'de Korsanlık, Deniz Ticareti

Introduction

Is the Ottoman State a slave-owning state? Or, if we ask from another point of view, what were the contributions of a non-marine, land-based army and maritime states to the structure of the slave society? Has there been an aspect of Islam that encourages slavery? Or how was slavery practiced in Christianity? How did the countries with a class-style society structure and the states that were not formed according to a class-style society structure look at slavery? Such questions constitute the main subject of the article.

It is generally expressed by western researchers that the Ottoman Empire was a slave-owning state. However, did the Ottoman State really want to perpetuate slavery? In fact, slaves were the mainstay of the Ottoman military bureaucracy and administrative bureaucracy. There wasn't much to change this situation either. Why was the bureaucracy of the Ottoman Empire dependent on slaves? For one thing, the existence of the local bureaucracy was a factor that reduced the power of the Ottoman Empire. In other words, each indigenous element also brought with it connections, sentiments and relations of interest that weakened the power of the state. Therefore, according to tradition, it was reducing the power of the state, which should be the most powerful. According to Ottoman thought, the state was always superior to the interests of individuals. Every personal passion and favor was seen as a virus inside the state and they tried to keep the idea of delete as sterile as possible. The most important material in this sterilization was the slaves they brought into the state in a controlled manner and the devshirme, who were originally non-Muslims.

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Place of Slavery in Ottoman Trade

Turks were interested in maritime trade in every settlement with a sea coast. Even in the Caspian Sea, which is a closed sea, it is reported that the Turks were engaged in maritime trade with Islamic countries. İdrisî mentions the Turkish communities dealing with ship trade in the Caspian Sea and Lake Baikal in his work. At the same time, it is understood that the Turks had experience in the slave trade from the Caucasus. "Trade developed between the southern shores of the Caspian Sea and the ports in the north. Apart from their own product, fish glue, the Khazars export many things from Russia and Bulgaria, such as slaves, fish, wax, beaver skins, and furs; In return, they provided clothing materials from Curcan and Taberistan."¹

North African States in Ottoman Administration

The Ottoman Empire was trying to show all the features of being a dominant state on land and sea. It had a strong army and a rich country to support the army in terms of soldiers, weapons and finances. At the same time, it is necessary to include the ruler's ability to manage, which is shaped within the traditional management approach. The Ottoman sultan had an undisputed power of authority over all elements. He always had this authority in his hands to use it whenever necessary. Whether it was the Tatar forces or the Berber rulers in West Africa, it could not be excluded. An edict to be sent to both kings had the authority to determine its end. However, this use of force, whose power and loyalty can be explained, aimed to preserve and improve the existing advantages for both religion and the state.

The Ottoman sultan always envisaged the expansion of the religious sphere in favor of Islam. The subordinate kingdoms had to provide this in their own way. Otherwise, it may mean losing the existing gains. For the kings, this could mean losing life and the kingdom. For this reason, the kings in the border countries could have the right to regulate their international relations against the outside world, just like an independent king. Sending the peoples of foreign countries captured as slaves to the warring countries as a gift in order to show goodwill and improve international relations could often carry the peace and Ottoman interests further.

We can say that it is possible to evaluate the perspective of Ottoman society on the concept of slavery and the perspective of western societies on slavery. First of all, the Ottoman society did not accept to take part in a class life with the influence of the religion of Islam.² There is no privileged upper class in the Ottoman Empire.³ The society is more democratic, lives according to business lines; the distinction between rich and poor is designed with more worldly efforts. A more livable city life has emerged with the practical solutions of the concept of tolerance for the social life of Islam,⁴ where religious discrimination is reduced. The society is differentiated only in terms of its duties; we can say that it is divided into two divisions of labour, namely military and reaya. This distinction was by no means a class distinction. While the military section performed their duties related to civil service, the reaya section did the work related to production. In this respect, it can be said that the general view is a cross-section of natural life, just like a beehive.⁵

¹ İdris Bostan, Salih Özbaran, *Türk Denizcilik Tarihi 1, Başlangıçtan XVII. Yüzyılın Sonuna Kadar*, Vol I, p.14.

² Colin Imber, *Şeriattan Kanuna Ebussuud ve Osmanlı'da İslami Hukuk*, Translation: Murteza Bedir, İstanbul 2004, p.88.

³ Fazlur Rahman, *İslam*, İstanbul 1981, p.13.

⁴ Ahmet Özel, "Esir", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol.11, İstanbul 1995,p.387

⁵ Halil Inalcık, *Rönesans Avrupası Türkiye'nin Batı Medeniyetiyle Özdeşleşme Süreci*, İstanbul 2011, pp.3-13.

For the Ottoman Empire, the slave trade is closely related to its geographical location. The Ottoman Empire, which had a very wide geography, was faced with slave trade routes at many points. The Ottoman Empire was on the diagonal slave trade route. On the one hand, white slaves and concubines from the north of the Black Sea were transported; on the other hand, the Nile River route of Africa and the coasts of Central and West Africa were active centers of the slave trade. In addition, the layered bureaucratic representatives of the Ottoman State structure always sought to find more skilled slaves. Although this seems like a whim, it has never been as enthusiastic as the desire of western countries to acquire slave labour in sugarcane and tobacco fields in America. Under normal conditions, the main element in the slave-slave trade in the Mediterranean was based on reciprocity. In other words, the most practical way of rescuing citizens who had been held captive in one way was to provide for the citizens of that country, who were obtained in another way. The payment of the money, which was otherwise determined as the salvation money, was mostly idle or was slow to overcome the bureaucratic obstacles between the countries. Although the kings and the Ottoman sultan gave special importance to this work, it was always very difficult to collect the amount.

The involvement of Jewish traders, especially in the Mediterranean slave trade, and their unexpected efforts to turn the slave trade into profits further complicated the situation. Any significant slave, especially from western countries, was turning into a rolling and increasing amount, just like the snowball effect, when it fell into the hands of Jewish merchants. Sometimes the price of this may not be just money. For this reason, the new hunters of the slave trade, especially England, began to spread into Africa with a greater appetite. Overcoming distances of hundreds of kilometers, they advanced into Africa and continued their gains by catching and chaining the defenseless negroes they captured and stacking them on their waiting ships. Although these efforts attracted them to the enigmatic forests and deserts of Africa, it was still a preferable occupation because they did not have an Ottoman Empire as strong as in the Mediterranean.

From the point of view of western countries, the risk of enslaving another citizen for each captured slave has been eliminated. The black slaves they had stockpiled in ship hangars were ready to be transported to the new continent. From the point of view of the slave traders, the next thing to think about is the money they get for each black person they carry, and if possible, it means not to hunt while hunting. Which mean, to reach the range without being caught by any Barbary fleet for European slave traders?⁶

The religious division of Europe has manifested itself in every field, not only in the religious field, but also in economic, cultural, military and diplomatic. It has led to new formations in many fields. The Ottoman Empire also played an important role in this disintegration. During the reign of Suleiman the second, Martin Luther, became the centre of Ottoman diplomatic interest.⁷ In the sources, it is said that the siege of Vienna cut the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Protestantism. However, it is clear that this did not happen all of a sudden. The Ottoman State acted according to what it required to be a great state and did not remain indifferent to European policies. We see the most important example of this in the battles between Charles V and France. The Ottoman State declared its support for Protestantism in European policies by being directly on the side of France. The

⁶ Barnet Litvinoff, *Fourteen Ninety Two*, London 1991.pp.138-161.,Alexis de Tocqueville, *Sömürge ve Kölelik Öteki Üzerine Seçme Yazılar*, Ed. Lütfi Sugur, Translators: Burak M. Nuri Gücin, Hasan Turunçkapı, Nuri Fudayl Kıcıroğlu, İstanbul 2016, pp.65-164.

⁷ Norman Davies, *Avrupa Tarihi, Doğu'dan Batıya Buz Çağından Soğuk Savaşa Urallardan Cebel-i Tarık'a Avrupa'nın Panoraması*, Editor of Translation: Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay, Translators: Burcu Çığman, Elif Topçugil, Kudret Emiroğlu, Suat Kaya, İstanbul 2006 p.525.

agreement showed us that signed by Francis in captivity appeared as an example of this in the Ottoman archives.⁸

We can think that the slaves could find more employment opportunities in Ottoman society than the reaya class. The military segment mostly appealed to the field of individual ability, ostentatiousness, courage, knowledge and wealth. When people who were bought into slavery or taken prisoner on the battlefield entered the close living quarters of wealthy and prestigious families, they could be offered opportunities that they might not have encountered in their previous lives. A considerable part of the Ottoman Viziers was administrators who were originally from slaves. This practice was not unique to the Ottoman Empire, but before the Turks came to Anatolia, it was common to use slaves or non-Muslims in the administration or in the service sector.⁹

Concubines in Ottoman Palace

When we compare the Ottoman Empire with the Western Countries, we immediately see the fundamental differences in terms of slavery. First of all, in the Ottoman Empire, the land was considered the property of the state. In other words, all the land belonged to the sultan. Everyone working on the land and the soldiers who were paid with the income obtained from the land taxes was always doing this duty with the permission and approval of the sultan. Therefore, the sultan's approval was required for the general admission of slaves and concubines to the Ottoman Empire. Apart from this, there were no intermediary institutions. However, the aristocracy in the west and the large transcontinental companies that were established afterwards greatly encouraged the employment of slaves. While concubines or slaves were in the position of serving only the palace in the Ottoman Empire, they shouldered the heavy burden of production in the colonies in the west.

The same was true for concubines. Those, who have enough beauty, fortune and intelligence to enter the palace and the harem of the palace, they could be the wife of the sultan and the mothers of the sultan who ascended the throne. They were called "Valide Sultan"(mother of sultan). These women, with their "unique" income sources, were also among the most charitable people of the empire and established many foundations. In a similar situation, there were black slaves who were taken to the palace as "Hadım Agha" after their masculinity was removed, and were brought to important sanjaks as beys or other important state duties when their services in the palace were over. Of course, the measure here must be related to how loyal he is to the sultan.¹⁰ These former courtiers, who had acquired the court manners, were performing important duties on behalf of the state in the provinces. Merit and loyalty were also an important criterion for the officials who came from the devshirme origin and rose in the palace. To be dismissed when merit was not sufficient, and to be executed when loyalty was not sufficient, could be a destined end for these slaves. In this case, the only source of prestige was the Ottoman Dynasty itself, that is, the sultan himself. *The sultan was the person who was believed not to make mistakes knowingly or willingly in the Ottoman system, who could clean the society from the diseases that could spread into the society, who he perfected in the eyes of the people and whose existence he prayed for.*¹¹

⁸ C.D.A.B.O.A.(Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşiv Başkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivleri),

⁹ H.A.L.Fisher, *A History of Europe From the Earliest Times to 1713*, The Fontana Library 9/6, LONDON and GLASGOW, Vol.1, pp.415-427

¹⁰ Leslie P. Peirce, *Harem-i Hümayun Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Hükümranlık ve Kadınlar*, İstanbul 1998, p.12.

¹¹ Aşıkpaşazade, *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*, pp.1-3, Mehmed Neşri, Aşiretten İmparatorluğa Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1485), İstanbul 2011, pp.41-46. Feridun M.Emecen, *Osmanlı Klasik Çağında Siyaset*, İstanbul 2009, pp.35-51.

In the West, slavery has never found a place in class society. The concept of class society or nobility prevented not only those who were slaves, but also all other segments from being positioned close to them.¹² According to the Westerner, a slave, servant, worker is someone who makes money, can be bought and sold, and is vaguely oppressed, despised, left to die in the basic layers of existing technological development, when he tried to escape and beaten. These people, who are generally excluded because of their skin color, whose existence is denied, and who is often met with a concept of racism, had to struggle for a long time to live together with white people on an equal basis. In this, it is possible that religious understanding can be misinterpreted, as well as the economic struggles of capitalism.¹³ Although the percentage of Western society is debatable, it has achieved this on the shoulders of the people whom it used as slaves with its technological and industrial developments.

In the Ottoman Empire, it was out of the question for ordinary people to exchange slaves. In other words, owning slaves meant having a high level of financial income. These were briefly called "statesmen" and were high-level administrators such as wealthy merchants, governors, sanjakbeys, and palace bureaucrats. It can be thought that there is no data that ordinary people owned slaves in Europe for the same period. Wars and spoils obtained after wars must have made it easier to have slaves. However, there was no question of ordinary people getting a share of the booty. The very wealthy could find slaves and concubines in number and quality. Although the high number of slaves and concubines in the market made it possible to reduce prices from time to time, we still cannot talk about a purchasing power that is as low as ordinary people. As an example, the purchase of three Circassian concubines to Demir Suleyman Pasha, who was the Governor of Damascus in 1814-15, and sending them there was approved by the council.¹⁴

Esirci (Slave Dealer) Craft

In the whole Ottoman country, especially after 1492, merchants of Jewish origin were very skilled in buying and selling all kinds of goods that could make money. The trade of the captives was one of the most important issues for them. Especially the city of Thessaloniki was a very important center of the slave trade, since there was more Jewish settlement here. We can even say that this trade has become as deregulated as it can be. Despite the fact that the people who were among the captives stayed in Muslim homes over time and became Muslims by means of the *Kelime-i Şehade* (*Word of Testimony*), they could not escape being sold again. The edict sent from the palace states that this is prohibited. If there were captives in this situation, they would be released to be paid to the slave owner. Those who continued this captive sale would also be identified and executed.¹⁵

Probably the three Circassian concubines sent to Demir Suleyman Pasha must have been sent as gifts. So it should be considered as a kind of gift. It is presented as a gift just like fur, sword, and horse. It is not known why Circassian concubines were preferred. In general, it can be said that Circassian girls were popular among the Ottoman elite in terms of being blonde and famous for their body beauty. However, we do not have enough information that this was always the case, or that they saw the same demand throughout the empire.

¹² Norman Davies, *Avrupa Tarihi, Doğu'dan Batıya Buz Çağından Soğuk Savaşa Urallardan Cebel-i Tarık'a Avrupa'nın Panoraması*, Editor of Translation: Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay, Translators: Burcu Çığman, Elif Topçugil, Kudret Emiroğlu, Suat Kaya, İstanbul 2006, pp.190-192.

¹³ C.R. Boxer, *The Golden Age of Brazil, Growing Pains of a Colonial Society 1695-1750*, Manchester 1995, pp.1-2, 4-7.

¹⁴ C.D.A.B.O.A., C.DH., Doc. No:2-88, Date:25,03,1230H.

¹⁵ C.D.A.B.O.A., İ.E.DH, Doc.No:5-437, Date:19,12,1011H.

An important source of the slave trade for Ottoman Empire was the Circassian regions within the borders of the Ottoman Empire over time. It is possible to say that Circassian slaves and concubines were preferred by the Ottoman administrators and were seen as acceptable in terms of their beauty and elegance. One of them was a Circassian concubine named Saat Kiri. As it is understood from the document, the fact that the concubine sold was described as a slave shows that it was not obtained as smuggling, but was used as a slave family itself. The fact that the manat was used as the amount of sale, may be preferred for the sale of Circassian slaves, perhaps because manat was used in this region. However, in any case, the Dersaadetli (Coming from Istanbul or place of Istanbul) Surur Ağa, who bought the Circassian Saat Kiri, must probably be a wealthy person or a palace official who wants to turn this purchase into profit in Istanbul at a higher price. The fact that he is mentioned as “Agha” makes him think more that he is a palace official. Apart from that, the names mentioned among Şuhud’ül-hal (Court witnesses) also indicate that the exchange of Circassian slaves and concubines may have been for the palace, and that this exchange was also attested by the aghas in groups. Regardless of her address, as understood from the document, the main concern was the possibility of proving that the concubine purchased was not a slave, or being prosecuted in this context. In order not to take on a legal responsibility and to avoid financial losses, the buyer clearly wanted to guarantee that he would get the amount he gave back if the possibility of being freed arises. Her cost was twenty thousand manats (Old Persian Money). The fact that the Circassian concubine was 12 years old strengthens the possibility that the shopping may have been made for the purpose of supplying concubines for the palace.¹⁶

Sea travel has always brought new risks. Seafaring nations not only pursued great profits, but also had to protect their ships against relentless waves, typhoons, and hurricanes. Although the Mediterranean was not as challenging as the oceans, the knowledge of humanity experienced in the Mediterranean later learned to cope with the oceans. The ancient seafaring nations of the Mediterranean, and especially the Ottoman Empire, which tried to be active in the Mediterranean since the 16th century, reflected that trade could not be carried out under normal conditions. The power struggle and hostilities between countries were reflected as pirates, plunder and plunder to the trade representative circulating in these seas. The merchants, who sailed to the sea with the hope of wealth, lost their freedom as if they lost their goods. They could sold in captive markets, in their captivate they had to work harder than ever before in their lives. These waters of the Mediterranean, where power is mixed with the concepts of piracy, commerce and human beings, kept slavery on the agenda throughout all new ages.

The pre-modern centuries started with the habits that can be considered as the continuation of the middle ages in terms of Europe and the Ottoman Empire. From the establishment of the Ottoman Empire until 1453, the most important goal was to capture Istanbul. This goal is also to benefit from the commercial, social, economic, cultural and strategic advantages of Istanbul as well as to be worthy of the praise mentioned in a hadith of Muhammad. The conquest of Istanbul was a turning point for the Ottoman Empire. This fabulous city become Turkish city

¹⁶ C.D.A.B.O.A., (TS.MA.e) TSMA No:15/21, Place No:11-53, Date:H-19-02-1281. “*Bade-i sene oldurki, Şebahi? Kabilesinden ve köle cinsinden olan on iki yaşında bir added Saat Kiri isminde nam köleyi iki yüz seksen bir saferin on dokuzuncu günü iştira ile talip olan dersaadetli Surur Ağa'ya yirmi bin manata bey ve temlik ve teslim iderek bedeli olan meblağ-ı mezkuru tamamen ahz ve kabz eyledim köle-i mezkur hür değildir kendi malımdır eğer hürriyyet davasında veya ahir den dava açılması zuhur ider ise bedelini aldığım mezkur manatları geriye iade edeceğime havi iş bu senedin itası kabilinden sene 81 safer 19.*

An Çerkez Kabile-i Şebahi isekle-i Toğab Sükkân-i Ğacid oğlu Bereket Şuhud'ül-Hal

Hacı Salihzade Hacı Osman Ağa, Hacı Salihzade Ömer Ağa, Koyuncuoğlu Ali Reis Koyuncuoğlu Hüseyin Ağa”

and the largest church, Hagia Sophia, has been converted into a mosque. This was a manifestation of the Islamic tradition of conquest. Azan was read in Arabic from the minarets and Turkish was spoken in the bazaar. However, Mehmed the Second planned to establish a city that he thought of as the centre of the whole world and as the capital of commerce, culture, and education in Istanbul. For this purpose, he brought new places of worship and educational institutions to the city.

The Ottoman Empire did not have a structure that rejected slavery. The city of Istanbul, which he captured, was an important market for the slave trade. Thanks to the emperor's living here, the palace naturally became a centre of attraction. Now, in the new situation, the same things would be in question for the Ottoman palace. Although Topkapı Palace was built in accordance with Turkish traditions, the Harem and Enderun continued to attract the slave trade.

The Ottoman Empire represented all of the Islamic States throughout the pre-modern and modern centuries. In this respect, it was in a position of sole power against the Western States. Since the Ottoman State had the authority to protect all Islamic countries and to speak on their behalf, all kinds of problems on behalf of Muslims were in his field of interest. In such an event, there was a bandit attack on ships located in a region called King's Garden, near a village called Chayma. Although the woman and two boys on these ships were abducted for rape, the Danube Captain remained indifferent to this issue. In fact, the captain did not send the ships requested from time to time in order to prevent such incidents, although he asked for money in return. There were complaints about this. In the edict sent to the Semendire Sanjak Begs, Budin and Peshte Kadis, an inspection of this situation was requested.¹⁷

Many goods were coming and going by sea from Pera and Constantinople, which were extremely important trade centers. Pera, where the Genoese settlement is located, is in terms of fabric, spices, jewelry and slaves. The goods coming from the main Turkish markets in Anatolia, such as Bursa, an important centre, were sent to the west. It had the distinction of being the trade port to which it was shipped. Trade was flowing in the other direction as well: from Pera moving merchants exchanged their western fabrics for eastern silks in Bursa and other Turkish markets. They bought jewelry, spices, and slaves.¹⁸

The rise of the state, which started with the Fatih era, was followed closely by the pirate states in the Mediterranean. They often spent their time in ambush, waiting for suitable prey to emerge. With the death of Fatih, this hunt came to his feet. The younger son of Fatih, Cem Sultan, was defeated in the struggle for the throne against his older brother, Bayezid, and had to take shelter in the Knights of Rhodes. His captive life, which started on the island of Rhodes, caused him to wander around European cities for about thirteen years as a fugitive and became a prince who lived in sorrow and regret until the end of his life. For the Ottomans, it meant the suspension of the expeditions to Europe and the payment of a very large ransom for Cem Sultan not to be released first and then poisoned.

What is the correct numbers of slaves in the Ottoman cities? Unfortunately we do not have total knowledge of them. Because, we have not specific defter or registers on them. We can estimate only some court records. An example of them was Bursa. Between years of 1500-1520 from 471 records %46.2 female, and %53.8 male, rural %0,0, urban %100, untitled %87.4, titled%12.6. Between; 1700-1720 records 279, female%36.4, male %63.6, rural %10.8, urban %89.2, untitled%44.6, titled%55.4. We can say that as the Ottoman court

¹⁷ C. B. D.A.B. O.A., Mühimme Defteri, No:6, Doc. No:1148.

¹⁸ İdris Bostan, Salih Özbaran, *Türk Denizcilik Tarihi 1, Başlangıçtan XVII. Yüzyılın Sonuna Kadar*, Vol I, p.64.

record of Bursa observations in records reduced %40.8, also reduced %9.8 female percentages. Rural desire for slaves increased %10.8. We can say that according to Bursa example in two hundred years indeed of owning slave reduced %40.8. We can assume that in this long term may be explain that wealth diminishing of Ottoman population, or reducing interest of Ottoman population to slave people in time.¹⁹

A foreign observer of the situation of devshirme in Ottoman society, in January 1574 he witnessed 8,000 young people gather at once. These boys were wearing yellow pointed cones. These clothes were given to them by the state every year. Initially, these children received a daily salary of two akçes (silver coin used in Ottoman Empire) from the state, and this amount was constantly increasing. Some of the youth were learning handicrafts; some were used in the care and supervision of animals, and some were given to polite families to serve. He also stated that: *"These youths were worse than the Turks because they were all useless. They were a bandit team, they did all kinds of cruelty to Christians and Jews, and they broke into their homes and acted like looters in war. If when they were given an order, they could kill and beat even a person they did not know badly. If any of the Janissaries died or if he was killed, the person who replaced him would have been likewise trained and had the same character"*.²⁰

Chios Island was the main port of slave trade, which the Venetians called the "right eye of Genoa" and held by the Genoese. The Island, is from the Black Sea, as well as from the west, south, Mamluk lands, North Africa and It was a main destination or an intermediate port for merchant ships coming from the Anatolian coasts. The main elements of trade were slaves, cereals and alums. Alums were used as a color fixer dyeing cloth. Which is of fundamental importance for the fabric industry, was sent from Anatolia to Chios. Also from France, Italy and even processed cloth or goods such as soap, wine, and oil from Ireland and England were brought to Chios to be sold in the Turkish regions. Chios is in the Balkan trade network passing through Thessaloniki and Enez. It also had an important place. Merchants from the European lands of the Ottoman Empire came to Anatolia.

The exchange of captives always brought with it an important diplomacy. It was necessary to act in a very gentle way, since human health was also in question. For this reason, the ambassadors called "Bailo" had an important place.²¹ Especially Venetian, Genoese and Florence Bailos were very effective. In such an event, Florence Bailo Elparanço came to the Ottoman palace and vouched for the release of 150 Muslims, who were held captive by the infidel pirate named Don Sançoya, and brought them to Istanbul. These captives were rescued in three groups. Ottoman Palace requested him to meet the demand for 500 thousand akçe. El Parancho had paid 50,433 florins for this payment and the rest in cloth.²²

They were staying in Chios before moving on to Anatolia. Chios Catalans, Venetians, Florentines, French, Turks and naturally it was frequented by the Genoese. Traders from Africa sell goods such as Egyptian cloth and buy Turkish export goods such as slaves and cotton, or they can choose the most important product of the island, Egypt. And they were buying Sakız Adası(Chios Island) sold in Syrian markets and Bursa. According to historian Jacques Heers, because the Genoese were more flexible than the Knights of Rhodes, traders

¹⁹ Hülya Canbakal, Alpay Filiztekin, "Slavery and Decline of Slave-Ownership in Ottoman Bursa 1460–1880", *In memory of Donald Quataert*, ILWCH, 97, Spring 202, p.61.

²⁰ Stephan Gerlach, *Türkiye Günlüğü 1-(1573-1578)*, Translation: Turkis Noyan, 2007 p.100.

²¹ Metin Ziya Köse, *1600-1630 Osmanlı Devleti ve Venedik Akdeniz'de Rekabet ve Ticaret*, İstanbul 2011, p.187.

²² C.B.D.A.B.O.A., *Mühimme Defters No:6, Doc:274*.

from Africa found them more they preferred Chios where they felt comfortable. Along with Chios, the island of Cyprus was also an important island in terms of cotton and slave trade. The level of exchange of any kind between the Genoese in Pera and the Ottoman court was high. The Turks were trading in the Aegean islands: they exported grain to Lesbos, Chios and Lemnos, and traded horses, slaves, grain and other foodstuffs with the Knights of Rhodes. And they exported timber, grain and horses from Anatolia to the Venetians in Crete. There is no doubt that Turkish merchants travelled on Latin ships. In the XIV.th century, not all merchant ships were Latin ships.²³

Conclusion

In terms of origin, it cannot be said that Islam or Christianity basically accepted slavery. However, too much of an active practice of slavery in society meant that religious rules needed time to be abolished. The Roman Empire and German States in the west, the Umayyad and Abbasid states in the east, and the Ottoman Empire could not get out of the slave society life too much. The strong terrestrial background and organizational power of the Ottoman Empire also affected the maritime field. However, they have always been dependent on the peoples of West Africa, especially on the Mediterranean slave trade. For the Ottomans, the seas were always a little further away. The European maritime states were very ambitious to transfer the resources of the continents they had newly colonized by slavery to their own countries. The Ottoman Empire never had such a thought and opportunity. The most important reason for this is that the Ottoman Empire never thought of slavery as cheap labor. On the contrary, non-Muslims and slaves became an important part of their system of government. Another important factor is that the basic structure of the Ottoman State did not foresee a class society structure. Western states, on the other hand, have found it more appropriate to place the slaves in the lowest stratum with the tradition left over from the Roman Empire, with the influence of the aristocracy.

Slavery was not an issue that emerged in the Ottoman Empire. On the contrary, it has been a phenomenon that human history has evolved over time, perhaps as a result of the struggle between the powerful and the powerless since the earliest times of humanity. By applying the perspective of slavery that took shape in the Islamic civilization in the lands that the Ottomans conquered, he tried to bring quite humane solutions compared to his period. However, it should not be forgotten that their interlocutors are the countries they are at war with. The fact that slavery is related to the concept of war in the narrow sense and in the broad sense may in any case have forced human nature. However, from the Ottoman point of view, since this concept has not turned into colonialism, it requires that it be kept more exclusive than its counterparts.

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²³ FLEET, Kate, Erken Osmanlı Döneminde Türk-Ceneviz Ticareti, Translation: Özkan Akpınar, İstanbul 2019, pp.37-59.

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