CHILDREN AND SLAVERY IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

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ABSTRACT

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Key Words: Ottoman Slavery, Nineteenth Century, Enslaved Children, Elite Households, Istanbul.

This study is focused on the enslaved children in the Ottoman Empire. More specifically, it zooms in on some elite households in the nineteenth century Ottoman Istanbul. It first briefly examines the acquisition of child slaves through the devshirme method, which was one of the pre-modern Ottoman slavery systems, and questions whether there was a possibility of a continuum between the following centuries. Moving to the nineteenth century, the present thesis intends to follow the tracks of unfree children, mainly of Caucasian and African origin, from when they were captured until they were brought to Istanbul. It contextualizes the conditions of slavery and the slave trade in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. In light of selected memoirs and observations, it discusses the areas in which some child slaves were potentially employed in some elite households of Istanbul. Through examining some selected primary sources written on the subject, the effect of gender is taken into consideration when assessing the demand for enslaved children, their employment areas in the households, and their owners. This study further examines the relationship between child slaves and their Istanbulite owners and argues that there was an interdependent rather than the traditional binary slave-master relationship. It finally argues that this dependency was asymmetrical.

ÖZET

OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞUNDA ÇOCUKLAR VE KÖLELER

BAHAR BAYRAKTAROĞLU

TARİH YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ, EYLÜL 2021

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Yusuf Hakan Erdem

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı Köleliği, On Dokuzuncu Yüzyıl, Çocuk Köleler, Elit Haneler, Istanbul.

Bu çalışma, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndaki çocuk köleleri ele almaktadır. Öncelikle modern dönem öncesi Osmanlı kölelik sistemlerinden biri olan devşirme yöntemi ile çocuk köle edinimini kısaca tartışarak, köle seçimi ve eğitilmesi hakkında diğer yüzyıllar ile arasında muhtemel bir sürekliliğin var olup olmadığını sorgulamaktadır. Ardından, on dokuzuncu yüzyıla geçerek Kafkas ve Afrika kökenli çocukların elit hanelerce satın alınmadan önce hangi süreçlerden geçerek köleleştirildiklerini ve nasıl İstanbul'a getirildiklerini göstermektedir. Bunu yaparken, on dokuzuncu yüzyıl Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun kölelik ve köle ticareti koşullarını göz önünde bulundurmaktadır . Daha sonra, İstanbul'a getirilen çocuk kölelerin neden bazı elitler tarafından tercih edildiğini tartışmaktadır. Varlığı tespit edilen bu çocukların istihdam alanlarını anlatmaktadır. Ayrıca, köle çocuklara olan talep, onların istihdamları, sahipleri ve bu konu üzerinde yazılan seçilmiş birincil kaynaklar değerlendirilirken toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifi kullanılmaktadır. Son olarak, bu tez çocuk köleler ve seçkin sahipleri arasındaki ilişkiyi analiz ederek, geleneksel köle-efendi ilişkisinden ziyade aralarında karşılıklı bir bağımlılık olduğunu, ancak bu karşılıklı bağımlılığın asimetrik olduğunu savunmaktadır.

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1. INTRODUCTION

> "They are sold usually at about twelve or thirteen years of age, but there are cases of sales at the early age of six or seven. This happens, however, only a lady wishes to bring them up as her slaves, either to accustom them to her service or to resell them at a profit when they are older." (Melek Hanım 1872, 158-159)

The wife of Grand Vizier Mehmed Emin Pasha of Cyprus, a nineteenth-century Ottoman elite, notes that six- or seven-year-old child slaves were bought to be raised by some elite women and then sold at higher prices. This reveals that some Ottoman elite women were involved in the upbringing and sale of slaves and earned financial profits from it. Although the existence and significance of the unfree labor of child slaves in the Ottoman Empire was not entirely left out of the literature up to date, it was not investigated extensively. The main reason for this is that the field of Ottoman slavery studies is still growing, but also that Ottoman child studies is a new, relatively less explored research area. This thesis aims to combine Ottoman slavery and child studies to investigate the enslavement of children in the Ottoman context. Accordingly, this study benefited from the existing global child slavery scholarship, which recently started attracting the attention of historians.

By the 2000s, scholars had started to turn their focus to the experience of children in bondage. The main themes amongst the existing studies on child slavery are the trade of slave children and their social, political, and domestic roles. Nevertheless, the growing child slavery literature has been dominated primarily by studies on North America before emancipation, and the transatlantic slave trade. Scholars concentrated on topics such as child soldiering (David M. Rosen 2005), the childhood and childcare of slaves (Damian A. Pargas 2011), slave children given as gifts (Sarah Winter 2017) or playmates (Jonathan Blagbrough and Gary Craig 2017), children's knowledge of and participation in the abolitionist movement (Audra A. Diptee 2017), interactions between enslaved and free children, slave-born children

in North America, and African children the transatlantic trade (Wilma King 1995). Lately, this growing literature has begun to consider various time periods and places beyond the translatlantic slave trade; for example, research has revealed information about conscripted children in the Ottoman Empire (Gülay Yılmaz 2009) and singing slave girls in the Abbasid court (Kristina Richardson 2009).

Scholars quickly encountered some of the problematic aspects of studying children in bondage: the problem of defining a child slave (Anna Mae Duane 2017) and the need to distinguish between child slavery and child labor (Gary Craig 2017).

Even though Ottoman slavery literature is not at an embryonic level as it once was, other forms of child enslavement in the Ottoman Empire had still not yet been comprehensively addressed outside of the *devs<u>h</u>irme* boys until recently. Since the 1980s, modern Ottoman slavery research has been published; thus, it is possible to discuss and build upon generations of research today. The subjects and themes that formed the fundamental axis of Ottoman slavery literature have diversified; shortly and roughly, scholars have investigated the end of slavery and the slave trade as well as its various forms, which mainly are domestic, *kul* and *harem* slavery, slave ownership, slave agency, and the social and economic roles of slaves in various places and eras. Each study has been based on different types of sources: some utilized archival documents, while others made use of travelogues and memoirs. These researched works intend to make the voices and stories of individual slaves heard or to outline slavery as an institution. In almost all the conducted studies, the smallest and most powerless subjects of the institution of Ottoman slavery, namely children, were not fully neglected but only briefly mentioned here and there. They pointed out that some children were victims of kidnapping and capturing, and thus were forced into slavery. Additionally, they revealed that some elite members of the Ottoman Empire were purchasing young boys and girls for years, similar to the longstanding practice within the Imperial Palace. Expanding on this budding research, I intend to dig deeper into the topic of slave children in the late Ottoman Empire.

As an history student, it stroke my attention that there has been no comprehensive work established on child slavery in the Ottoman context yet even though there was a considerable demand for child slaves by some Ottoman elite. Child slaves in the Ottoman Empire have primarily been analyzed within the context of the *devs<u>h</u>irme* (child levy) practice since child slaves were the main subjects of this long-lasting system. There have been numerous studies conducted and debates held on this topic. One of the main discussions is about whether collecting children to be recruited for service in the Imperial Palace or the Janissary Corps (the Sultan's

private troops) is compatible with Ottoman Sharia law since the levied children were selected from Ottoman subjects. Research conducted to date has focused on the ways in which these children were selected and how the process operated. The levied children fall under the category of child slavery, as they began to act as the "Sultan's servants" after their conscription. This is to the point that when the term "child slave" is mentioned in the Ottoman context, the *devs̲hirme* boys rightly comes to mind first.

Up until now, no framework has been established to specifically understand slave children in the Ottoman context outside of those collected through the *devs̲hirme* method. In the Ottoman slavery literature, where different generations can be recognized today, child slaves have been deprived of necessary scholarly attention and still remain an understudied subject even though they were included in various forms of enslavement in many fields in Ottoman society. With this in mind, this dissertation intends to reveal the areas where child slaves were employed, why child slaves were favored over adult slaves, and finally, which social group preferred child slaves in the nineteenth century Istanbul. Thus, this study examines enslaved children of Circassian and African origin working in some Istanbulite elite households.

Considering the limitations and scope of the study, this thesis does not aim to fully discuss all the child slaves in the Empire. The present thesis confines itself solely to some elite households located in the nineteenth-century Istanbul, where enslaved children of Circassian and African origin were put to work. While information on adult slaves in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire was still challenging to find, sources on children were even further limited. The nineteenth century was compulsorily chosen for this study as the available primary sources, mainly foreign travelogues and native memoirs that this thesis mainly relies its arguments on, were penned in this century. Countless visitors were motivated to come to Istanbul from various states and empires for an array of purposes. In other words, the nineteenth century could be regarded as the century of travelogues and memoirs; in this century, not only some foreign observers logged their memories in or observations of Istanbul, but some of the domestic elite kept memoirs as well. Numerous travellers, diplomats, and visitors had been to Istanbul, encountered some of the elites of the city, and were invited to their households in which they were able to observe child slavery. These travelogues and priceless memoirs written by some elites of the Ottoman Empire have been utilized exhaustively to reveal the perspectives on the phenomenon of slave children in the capital city. In light of these primary sources, this thesis aims to present an outline of the existence of enslaved children, their employment, and their status in some of nineteenth-century Ottoman Istanbul's elite households.

In doing so, this study intends to contextualize the conditions of the chosen time period. For example, in the nineteenth century, an anti-slavery movement was instigated under the leadership of Great Britain and pressure was put on many countries and empires to put an end to the slave trade, one of them being the Ottoman Empire. As a result, the Ottoman central administration took some specific measures to curtail the slave trade in several areas:

> "This pattern yielded the prohibition of the slave trade in the Persian Gulf in 1847, the temporary prohibition of the traffic in Circassians and Georgians in 1854-1855, the general prohibition of the African slave trade in 1857, and the Anglo-Egyptian and Anglo-Ottoman conventions for the suppression of the slave trade in 1877 and 1880, respectively." (Toledano 1993, 484)

Additionally, the Ottoman Empire was in the midst of the Crimean War (1853-1856) with the Russian Empire. It is known that the Crimean War drastically increased the volume of the white slave trade through the Black Sea. Some people participating in the slave trade made significant profits from the turbulent environment in the region. In addition, significant migration from the Caucasus region to different parts of the Empire, but especially to the capital, had begun. Among the migrants, there were young girls and boys whose paths somehow led them to Istanbul. This carried on in the decades following the Crimean War. Despite the ban on the African slave trade in 1857, it was still possible to find black child slaves in Istanbul throughout the nineteenth century.

Children who were captured and imported from farther lands and brought to Istanbul were purchased by some Istanbulite elites. They were nurtured and educated in these households. Their presence can be examined from many angles and perspectives. This thesis recognizes that the institution of slavery in the Ottoman Empire had child members as young as age six or seven, and that their labor was utilized for domestic servitude in some elite households of Istanbul. This domestic service was different from what typically comes to mind when forced domestic work is mentioned, namely cleaning or cooking. The domestic servitude that some slave children were forced into consisted of playing games if they were given as birthday presents to free children born to the elites of the city.

On some occasions when slave children were not given as presents, they were nurtured and educated in the household. They were not trained for no reason, but to be married off to fine gentlemen or to be sold at higher prices. In this regard, this thesis proposes that slave children were often a means of investment during the

course of the nineteenth century.

Analyzing the relationship between child slaves and their elite owners, this study suggests that acquiring child slaves provided some Istanbulite elites a degree of prestige, social work, and a network, while being raised by an elite from a young age was also a factor that increased the value of a slave on some occasions.

This dissertation is organized in the following way: Chapter 1 intends to discuss the *devshirme* system as one of the classical Ottoman slavery systems utilized before modernization to provide background information on the topic of Ottoman child slavery before hastily starting with the child slaves of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, it is necessary to understand why the *devshirme* system emerged and was needed before discussing the details of the system itself. Considering that it is necessary to look at the pencik system for this, the first chapter will briefly describe the *pencik* system, another classical Ottoman slavery system. The chapter will cover how it was formed, how it was developed, and why it did not work to the point that a new system was needed, which was the *devshirme* method. The chapter will then discuss the *devshirme* practice's introduction, early implementation, and compatibility with Ottoman Sharia law. In the process, secondary literature often will be summarized, and some Ottoman chronicles will be utilized as primary sources. This section will show that the *devshirme* system would not remain as it was originally created but would be developed over time. The modifications made for its development, especially some characteristics that were taken into account in the selection of children, will be discussed thoroughly. Chapter 1 points out that some characteristics that were sought in choosing the *devshirme* boys might have resembled the features that the nineteenth century elites looked for in slave children. To what extent this could be considered a continuum from the *devshirme* method will be questioned.

The following chapters of the present thesis concentrate on the nineteenth century. Chapter 2 moves on to discuss enslaved children in the nineteenth century and attempts to explain what children went through before entering the elite households of Istanbul. First and foremost, it discusses what the concept of a child meant for the Ottomans and how the Ottomans recognized children before and during the nineteenth century. In this light, it examines the process of how some children fell into slavery and ended up in Istanbul in the nineteenth century. It aims to present the ways children were captured and enslaved, the most likely used slave trade routes, places where child slaves were most possibly sold, and finally, by whom they were sold in the nineteenth century Istanbul.

Chapter 3 examines the child slaves possessed by some Istanbul elites in the nine-

teenth century. Before doing this, it briefly describes the households of the Empire and the emergence of the elite households. Then, it discusses which characteristics were considered when choosing Caucasian and African children to take for various purposes. Here, the chapter deals with the question of the continuum from the *devs̲hirme* method mentioned earlier in the first chapter. Diving deeper, it explains the reasons why these slave children, most of whom were girls, entered the household, what duties awaited them after entering, and what kind of education they went through from a gender perspective. Then the chapter moves on to investigate what happened to the child slaves who were raised and trained. It finally analyzes the relationship between the slave children and their elite owners and suggests that there was an interdependent, asymmetrical relationship between them due to the power the owners obtained of making critical decisions over their slave children.

2. A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Global Slavery Studies: Pioneering Scholarship

The first wave of slavery studies in the Islamic world started in the 1980s following the leading works of Bernard Lewis and Robert Brunschvig (Brunschvig 1960, Lewis 1971). The first wave examined archival sources and outlined essential elements that made up the Ottoman slavery institution such as manumission and enslavement, as well as areas of slave employment (Toledano 2011, 208).

Three decades ago, Bernard Lewis penned his book, *Race and Colour in Islam*, when there was no inclusive scholarship on slavery in the Middle East other than studies constructed based on European sources or translated material (Lewis 1971. Bacharach 1992, 305). Lewis's work concentrates on the twelfth-century Islamic world, briefly touching upon the slave trade and the abolition of the institution. The work has since been revised and was translated to French in 1982, as *Race Et Couleur En Pays d'Islam* (Paris: Payot, 1982). In 1990, Lewis extended his work and published it with the title *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, which reflects the evolution of his thoughts over the last twenty years (Lewis 1990). This time, the revised book presents a brief historical outline of the institution of slavery in the Middle East from ancient to modern times. Lewis claims that "slavery has influenced both race relations and racial perspectives in the Middle East." (Morony 1995, 70). Additionally, he suggests that "there is no evidence for any anti-black prejudice neither in pre-Islamic Arabian society nor in the Qur'an; however, anti-black bias did develop historically among Muslims" (Morony 1995, 70). According to Lewis, most of the slaves shipped into the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire "were Africans because the sources of white slaves were cut off, which meant that black slaves could obtain a higher status than they could before." Lewis put forward that black slaves were treated well by their Muslim owners (Morony 1995, 70). The good, proper treatment of slaves is a significant theme that other Ottoman historians

argued further . Zilfi 2010, 123. Faroqhi 2002, 139-151).

In the decade after Bernard Lewis wrote his pioneering work on the concepts of slavery and race in the Islamic world in 1971, the field of slavery studies began to flourish. In other words, the early 1980s witnessed works written by renowned scholars and the various forms and systems within the institution of slavery had begun to be investigated on a global level.

Firstly, a prestigious academic journal entitled Slavery and Abolition, whose editorial advisory board was composed of leading names in the field such as Joseph Miller, Orlando Patterson, David Brison Davis, and Suzanne Miers, published its first issue in 1980. The first issue of *Slavery and Abolition* includes prominent Ottoman historian Alan Fisher's well-known article entitled "Chattel Slavery in the Ottoman Empire" (Fisher 1980). The author begins by stating that inadequate attention had been paid to slavery systems in the Islamic world, and therefore the history of the Ottoman Empire was left least studied. Fisher cites available sources related to the institution of slavery and its trade and explains slavery-related taxes and state records. As for the provincial law codes concerning taxes on slave sales, Fisher points out that there were several patterns in different cities such as Salonika, Basra, Bolu, Diyarbekir, Mardin, Erzincan, and Damascus, as well as cities in Bosnia and Egypt (Fisher 1980, 80).

Moses I. Finley published four lectures that were taught at the Collège de France entitled *Ancient Slavery & Modern Ideology* in 1980. In his lectures, he tackles four essential themes: the ways in which ancient slave societies came into being, how slavery functioned in the ancient market and politically, how it was perceived socially and morally, and finally, what contemporary scholars have made of it. Finley introduces a dichotomy in his book, dividing societies across time into "slave societies" and "societies with slaves." Finley puts forward five slave societies: ancient Greece, ancient Rome, the colonial Caribbean, Brazil, and the American South. Finley defines a slave society as "an institutionalized system of large-scale employment of slave labor in both the countryside and the cities" (Finley 1980, 67), not solely a society where slavery exists. As a scholar of Ottoman and Islamic societies in early modern and modern times, Toledano finds the distinction Finley makes between "slave societies" and "societies with slaves" valuable and significant in differentiating societies "from the better known, more familiar, Atlantic world societies." However, Toledano doubts the model's applicability to all societies (Toledano 2018, 362).

In 1982, Orlando Patterson published his well-known work *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* in which he compared the internal dynamics of slavery in numerous societies from ancient to modern times. The author ponders questions

related to what slavery was and what it was like. In his groundbreaking study, Patterson (1982, 13) defines slavery as "the permanent, violent domination of natally alienated and generally dishonored persons." Patterson (1982, 13) further argues that the process of enslavement began with kidnapping people. The slaves lost their social identities after their enslavement began; they were given different names and lost their kin relations and social bonds (Patterson 1982, 67), which led to their social death (1982, 13). Numerous scholars concentrating on the field of slavery studies have benefitted from his arguments. It should be noted that this model does not apply to all societies. For instance, Ehud Toledano argues that none of these points apply to enslaved people in the *kul/harem* system of the Ottoman Empire (Toledano 2017, 137).

David Brion Davis penned his influential work entitled *Slavery and Human Progress* in 1984, in which the author examined the notions people held about slavery and emancipation. Juxtaposing "slavery" and "human progress," Davis discusses the perceptions people held on slavery and emancipation on a global scale from ancient times to the twentieth century (Davis 1984). In addition to these pioneering works, countless models were introduced in the field of slavery. Among these, it is noteworthy to mention Dale Tomich and Michael Zeuske's "second slavery" (Lavina & Zeuske 2014) and Jeff Fynn-Paul's "slaving zones" (Fynn-Paul 2009).

2.2 Ottoman Enslavement Literature

Ottoman historiography was also influenced by the blossoming slavery literature of the early 1980s. The initial slavery research was mainly concentrated on the economic aspect of the institution and tackled the following questions: What forms of slavery were there in the Ottoman Empire? For example, was there agricultural or industrial slavery in the Ottoman lands? How similar were these patterns to global slavery studies? Was Ottoman slavery similar to transatlantic slavery? Was there a system of slavery that made the Ottoman Empire unique? What are the primary sources that enable historians to explore Ottoman slavery? They intended to differentiate Ottoman slavery from transatlantic slavery by calling Ottoman slavery "servile" or observed similarities in a broader sense and named it "chattel." In one way or another, this scholarly work on slavery planted the seeds that allowedg for Ottoman slavery literature, as it outlined the fundamental framework on the subject matter. The topics focused on in the literature mentioned are primarily the employment areas of slaves, the diversity in the ethnicities of slaves, the enslavement

sources, and the manumission methods and their significance in Ottoman society.

As shown above, Ottoman slavery literature was inspired by global studies from the 1980s; nevertheless, it did not emerge in the 1980s. It could be said that the works of Bernard Lewis initiated and accelerated modern studies. Even before the 1980s and Bernard Lewis's contributions, there were studies that had dealt with forms of Ottoman slavery. Amongst them, Ömer Lütfi Barkan's pioneering scholarship is worth mentioning.

In 1939, Ömer Lütfi Barkan published his groundbreaking article in *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* (The Journal of Faculty of Economics) in which he unearthed share-cropping slaves (*ortakçı kul*) who were were employed in big farms in the Ottoman lands. According to the registry of 1498, there were share-cropping slaves employed in the crown villages in Istanbul and different regions in Marmara, Western Anatolia, and Rumelia. Barkan demonstrates that the share-croppers were employed in big farms that belonged to the Crown (*hassa*), the *askeris*, private individuals, and *vakıfs* (pious endowment). Discussing the legal status of the share-croppers, Barkan claims that their status completely differed from that of the free peasant subjects in the Empire (1939, 31), as they were the property of their owners. Additionally, principles in Islamic law related to slavery were applied to them, and they were exempted from marriage or changing their workplace, which was different from the legal status of free peasants. In this sense, Barkan suggests that share-cropping slaves resembled serfs in Western Europe (1939, 33). Building on this, Barkan examines laws these share-cropper slaves had to obey based on the registry of 1498 (Barkan 1943). Diving deeper, Barkan further questions whether there was a serfdom in the Ottoman Empire in his other work worth mentioning entitled "Türkiye'de "Servaj" Var Mı İdi?" (Was There Servage In Turkey?) and to what extent European serfs resembled Ottoman share-croppers (Barkan 1956). As a result, Barkan argues that there were slaves settled on the land in the fifteenth-century Ottoman Empire and that independent farming enterprises were established with them. He further argues that the rights and responsibilities of land workers were very similar to those of European serfs, and that this continued until the middle of the sixteenth century and began to disappear after.

Before publishing "Chattel Slavery in the Ottoman Empire" in *Slavery and Abolition*, Alan Fisher had first penned an article entitled "The Sale of Slaves in the Ottoman Empire: Markets and State Taxes on Slave Sales, Some Preliminary Considerations" which was published by *Boğaziçi University Journal* in 1978. While Fisher was doing archival research on the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Crimean Khanate at the Ottoman archives in Istanbul, he encountered numerous archival documents

on Ottoman slavery and got surprised how this subject had not been studied until that day. In Fisher's pioneering article, in which he shares his "preliminary considerations," Braudelian influences can be observed as the author underlines the ubiquitous nature of Ottoman slavery in the Mediterranean (Fisher 1978).

In contemporary times, Halil Inalcık penned an article titled "Servile Labor in the Ottoman Empire" in 1979. In this work, Inalcık provides an overview of the employment of slave labor in different areas such as the military, economy, crafts, and agriculture in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries of the Ottoman Empire. Inalcık demonstrates that domestic slaves were acquired by different social groups such as courtiers and high-ranking and well-to-do non-Muslims. As understood from the title, Inalcık favors using the term "servile" rather than "slavery" to specify slaves in the Empire, on the ground that the enslaved people—especially the elite slaves—were different from the slaves in the Americas (Inalcık 1979).

During the same time period, Halil Sahillioğlu conducted pioneering research on slavery and its economic aspects, focusing on the city of Bursa in the Ottoman Empire. In light of the late fifteenth-century Bursa court registers, which Sahillioğlu investigates in "On Beşinci Yüzyıl Sonunda Bursa'da İş ve Sanayi Hayatı: Kölelikten Patronluğa" (From Slavery to Employer: The Business and Industrial Life in Bursa at the End of the Fifteenth Century), he draws attention to the excessive number of slaves in Bursa, which was a commercial and industrial center at that time, and unveils their role in the economy (Sahillioğlu 1980). Using rich court records, Sahillioğlu notes that "slave" was not a lifelong status and discusses the methods of manumission. His work reveals that numerous slaves were emancipated through the mükatebe contract in Bursa; however, being forced to work in the weaving industry was stipulated in return (Sahillioğlu 1980, 182-184). The research uncovers that some slaves who previously worked in the weaving industry opened their own weaving workshops and benefited from slave labor in doing so (Sahillioğlu 1980, 184). Finally, the author goes on to say that there were women, manumitted or still slaves, who worked in Bursa's weaving industry in the fifteenth century (Sahillioğlu 1980, 187). Shortly after, Sahillioğlu revised and published his above-mentioned article in English as "Slaves in the Social and Economic Life of Bursa in the Late 15th and Early 16th Centuries" (Sahillioğlu 1985, 43–112).

2.2.1 The Demise of Slavery and the Slave Trade

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, slavery and slave trafficking began to be heavily criticized in Europe. Denmark took initiative and made the transatlantic

slave trade forbidden in 1803, far from abolishing global slavery itself. In England, a robust anti-slavery movement arose, which was supported later by the government in London and finalized with the approval of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act of 1807 that officially prohibited the slave trade in the British Empire's lands. France continued to allow slaves to be trafficked within the bounds of its empire until 1815, and Spain and Portugal until 1820. In 1815, the Congress of Vienna declared a joint statement about the slave trade. It stated that the slave trade should be forbidden since it "desolated Africa, degraded Europe, and afflicted humanity" (Drescher 2009, 230).

Nevertheless, slave transport remained in various forms and dimensions throughout the world during the nineteenth century and the twentieth century. To further its cause, the British Empire turned its perception of colonial emancipation into a global abolition movement. The British ministers aspired to constrain the trade "in every part of the world." All foreign authorities were notified that abolition was the plan "of Her Majesty's Government and the British Nation" (Erdem 1996, 70-77. Drescher 2009, 273). Thus, Britain embarked on what Eve M. Troutt-Powell has called "invasive abolitionism" (Troutt-Powell 2003, 136).

Another region where the slave trade continued into the nineteenth century was the Ottoman Empire. The British government desired to prohibit the Ottoman slave trade, as it did in several other areas, or restrict it where it failed to end it. This raises the following questions: What initiatives did the British government take to prevent the Ottoman slave trade? How did the Ottoman government resist the pressure from the British Empire? What was the nineteenth-century Ottoman slave trafficking like? Which slaves were brought from where? How did the slave trade end in the Ottoman Empire?

Addressing these questions, Ehud R. Toledano completed his groundbreaking doctoral research under the supervision of Bernard Lewis in 1979 at Princeton University, which was published later as *The Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression:1840-1890* in 1982. His research examines the ways in which the British attempted to suppress the Ottoman slave trade between 1840 and 1890. Toledano provides a comprehensive picture of the slave trade and its routes and network with the help of meticulously drawn maps, statistics listing the numbers of exported slaves distinguished by gender and ethnicity, measures taken to suppress the slave trade, and finally, the Sublime Porte's reaction. Toledano thoroughly benefitted from diplomatic records, correspondences, and negotiations between the two capital cities: London and Istanbul. He established the fact that an imperial edict was imposed to outlaw the slave trade of Africans in 1857. Still, the traffic was suppressed

after 1880, when the Ottoman Empire became a signatory to The Anglo-Ottoman Convention Of 1880. The scholar dedicates Chapter V to "Circassian Slavery and Slave Trade," which was utilized enormously in this thesis. He addresses the obstacles faced after the influx of Circassians into the Ottoman lands after the Crimean War on the grounds that some Circassians migrated with their own unfree servants from their homeland and utilized their slaves' labor on government-granted lands. Unlike the African slave trade, Toledano (1982, 148) claims that "reforms concerning Circassian slavery and slave trade were entirely the result of Ottoman initiative."

In this subject that continues to be explored, Toledano has been joined by Hakan Erdem. Conducting his comprehensive research on the same topic at Oxford University, Erdem's meticulous dissertation, later printed as *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and Its Demise 1800-1909*, contributed to this growing literature. Organized chronologically, the well-researched work is indeed a political and diplomatic study of the institution of slavery in the Ottoman context; however, what makes it so significant is that it fills a gap in this literature, which was a text that thoroughly discusses Ottoman slavery. Even though Erdem sheds light on the means of legal and illicit enslavement and manumission in the pre-Tanzimat period, the bulk of his research is devoted to the nineteenth century. In regards to the question of abolition and whether the Ottomans abolished slavery officially or there was a debate for or against slavery in the Empire, Erdem underscores that "there was no organized movement for abolition in the Empire, no abolitionist tracts popularizing the subject and bringing home the sufferings of slaves—real or imagined" (Erdem 1996, 19). In his work, he intends to demonstrate the ways in which slavery met its demise without an official decree of abolition. How did that happen? It has been debated whether the British intention was to end slavery gradually or end it right away. In regards to this, Toledano asserts that the British government had aimed to abolish slavery when it first began to put diplomatic pressure on the Ottomans, but that it ultimately had to change its intention to suppress the slave trade later on. On the other hand, utilizing the same archival material, Erdem disputes this assertion by indicating that the British government had never intended to propose that the Ottomans abolish slavery downright (Erdem 1996, 74).

In Tunisia, which can be referred to as one of the regions located in the periphery of the Ottoman Empire, the nineteenth century anti-abolition process took place in a different and unique way. Ismael Montana penned a welcome addition to the growing Ottoman slavery studies in 2013. In his work, he addresses the unique historical event of the abolition of slavery in Tunisia and exposes the British influence on the abolition of slavery in the Tunisian realm. There was no anti-abolitionist movement in the region, but the ruler of Tunisia, Ahmed Bey, had abolished it officially in

1846 when the Ottoman central government abolished the slave market in Istanbul. How did this happen? How did Ahmed Bey justify the abolition of slavery in terms of Islam, which did not prohibit slavery? Where did this idea come from? Addressing these points, the author narrates the story of this exceptional event and illuminates the role of British anti-slavery influence in the official abolition of slavery in Ottoman Tunisia. Montana has shown that the end of slavery is closely linked to the nineteenth century's social, economic, and political events by contextualizing the decision of Ahmed Bey (Montana 2013).

In 2015, Ceyda Karamürsel completed her doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Eve M. Troutt-Powell at the University of Pennsylvania. The author intended to place the end of slavery in the Ottoman Empire in the context of global slavery studies, considering different intersecting concepts and phenomena. In her work, Karamürsel investigates "how such categories as gender, race, ethnicity, class, or age mattered and how their meanings and experience changed over time for the Ottoman state, slaveholders, as well as the slaves themselves" (Karamürsel 2015, 1). Utilizing archival documents from different categories such as "slave petitions, slaveholding elites' correspondences, police interrogations, legal records, and parliament minutes," Karamürsel unveils the intertwined story of emancipation and citizenship in the late Ottoman Empire and the early Turkish Republic. For instance, the author unearthed the life of a Circassian slave girl named Fatma Leman, who fled from her mistress's house and sought refuge in the Ministry of Justice in Istanbul shortly after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. In her reasoning, Karamürsel notes, "If this revolution, under the slogans of 'freedom, equality, and justice,' granted freedom to each and every Ottoman individual, then she too was free like the rest of her compatriots." Neither the Ministry of Justice nor the Ministry of Police knew what to do due to the uncertainties of freedom (Karamürsel 2015, 153).

2.2.2 A Gendered Perspective

The foundational studies that constituted the first wave of the Ottoman enslavement studies concentrated mainly on the political and economic aspects of the institution. Consequently, they did not take into consideration gender as a category for historical analysis until the late twentieth century, when scholars of Ottoman history attempted to fill this gap.

To begin with, Leslie P. Peirce positions harem slavery right in the heart of imperial politics in her book entitled *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* in 1993 (Peirce 1993). In her text, she first lays out a parallel be-

tween establishing the concubinage system and the growing empire's interests. She goes on to argue that the Ottomans abandoned the marriage alliances that they had been making after the conquest of Istanbul in 1453; instead, they embraced the concubinage system. The concubinage system in the Imperial harem was kept alive by bringing in slave girls of different origins. After establishing this parallel, the author investigates the beginnings of royal women's power in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when it was perceived as corruption by contemporary intellectuals. This study is fundamental for this present thesis as it demonstrates the ways in which slave girls from various backgrounds were brought to the Imperial Household and raised. Considering that the elites of Istanbul mimicked the palace customs, the concubinage system presented by Peirce resembles the elites' purchasing of Circassian and African child slaves and teaching them in their own households.

Building upon Peirce's work on the Imperial harem and concubine system in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Betül İpşirli-Argıt completed her comprehensive doctoral research in 2009 entitled "Manumitted Female Slaves of the Ottoman Imperial Harem (*Sarayîs*) in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul." She investigates what followed when the female slaves in the Imperial harem manumitted and left the Imperial Palace (*çırağ*) in the eighteenth century. İpşirli unveils the interactions and patronage relationship between former palace slaves and the Imperial Palace. She claims that this relationship, which was beneficial for both parties, had indeed started in the palace and continued even after their manumission without seeing a reduction in the strength of the relationship. İpşirli's work shows that even after leaving the palace, former slaves looked after the interests of the royal house and contributed to the formation of a neighborhood that was loyal to the palace through their marriages. The research reveals that these households brought the palace culture to the populace and contributed to city life in Istanbul through various architectural projects. This thesis benefitted from İpşirli's contribution to scholarship on Ottoman slavery as it likewise shows the ways in which the relationship between elite owners and child slaves had started in the household, and did not necessarily end after their manumission. As Chapter 3 demonstrates, after manumission, child slaves often kept their relationships with their elite owners and stayed connected to their networks.

Madeline Zilfi joined the constantly growing cluster of scholars focusing on Ottoman enslavement in 2010, introducing a gendered perspective into the Ottoman slavery institution. Her gendered reading of the existing sources brought new insights to the Ottoman enslavement literature: for instance, Zilfi questions what enslavement means for those who endured slavery and enslaved people. Mainly focusing on the eighteenth- and mid-nineteenth-century Istanbul, *Women and Slavery in the Late*

Ottoman Empire: The Design of Difference contextualizes Ottoman enslavement socially, politically, and culturally. The author asserts that slavery was fundamental and inseparable from all aspects of life. Zilfi draws attention to the unpleasant side of enslavement as it was the reality of life. For instance, the author indicates that skin color caused different consequences in the lives of slave people (Zilfi 2010, 136). The author also finds the distinction between the slaves artificial, arguing that a slave is a slave and that there is no distinction between sexual slaves and all the other types. All were used by their owners as they pleased.

Her work additionally challenges the traditional interpretation of slavery in the Ottoman Empire and pushes back against generalizations such as the mildness of the domestic slavery that originated when the Ottoman elite attempted to frame the purchase of young slaves as a way of kindness and charity in response to anti-slavery pressures. For the Ottoman elite, it was a benevolent action to purchase young slave girls who should be given an upbringing and then be married off to nobility. The author's most prominent argument is that slavery gained became gendered throughout the period between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, culminating in the institution becaming feminized by the nineteenth century. There are two main reasons for this. First, a significant number of slaves that were imported and sold in the urban hubs of the Empire were women. Second, the Empire's military organization had changed from a slave-based army to a conscription-based one due to modernization efforts. Additionally, the sources for slaves in Africa were dried up in the nineteenth century. That is why the slave population in Istanbul consisted mainly of female slaves of Caucasian origin. Consequently, most slaves purchased in Istanbul were women employed as domestic servants or young Caucasian-origin slave girls acquired in the nineteenth century. Last but not least, in parallel to these developments, owning a Circassian or a Georgian female slave became a status symbol.

This thesis fits well with the above-mentioned main arguments of Zilfi's significant work. Her study aimed to show once again that child slaves in the nineteenth century were primarily girls due to the feminization of the slavery institution, as well as that the acquisition of girl slaves was a practice belonging to the elite circles, thus making having a child slave a status symbol. In congruence with Zilfi's arguments, this thesis examines the phenomenon of child slave girls being imported from the Caucasus region, purchased and nurtured by some elites, and then married off to other noble people in the nineteenth century.

2.2.3 Slavery in Legal Texts

As mentioned above, the scholars who wrote the foundational Ottoman slavery studies located the existing primary sources related to the phenomenon of slavery and its various forms. The legal texts, primarily the court registries, have been significant in shedding light on Ottoman society and its slaves, primarily the social and economic aspects. "The vast majority of cases in the court records related to female slaves, and to slaves in general, are acts of manumission and sale" (Ze'evi 1995, 161. Özkoray 2019, 262). Nevertheless, it must be stated that the court records usually "fail to satisfy the historian's craving for detail, narrative expansiveness, and voice" (Zilfi 2005, 135) since they provide limited representation of the slaves and owners.

Enormous effort has been put in, and numerous researched works have been done utilizing court records, causing the literature to grow significantly. Considering the studies relying on court records, it can perhaps be noted that the following primary topics and aspects are most often investigated: slave ownership, slave agency, emancipation, fugitive slaves, the role of slaves in social and economic life, the market value of slaves, and the employment areas of slaves.

When examining the court records, it is inevitable to focus on a specific region, leading to the capital city of Istanbul attracting the most attention (Seng 1996, 157. Ben-Naeh 2006. Sobers-Khan 2020. Aykan 2017. Özkoray 2019. Wagner 2020.). There might be several reasons for that, but one of them is that "there are over 10,000 registers for Istanbul and its suburbs... a robust survival rate" (Zilfi 2010, 5).

In addition to the city of Istanbul, there is significant scholarship on other cities that must be mentioned here such as Aydın (Faroqhi 1991), Konya (Sak 1989), Jerusalem (Frenkel 2020), Bursa (Sahillioğlu 1985. Canbakal 2020), Cyprus (Jennings 1987), Crete (Spyropoulos 2015), as well as cities in the Crimean Khanate (Yaşa 2018 and 2019) and Egypt (Baer 1967. Walz and Cuno 2010).

2.2.4 Individual Cases of Ottoman Enslavement

In addition to legal texts such as court records, this thesis intends to make use of existing slave narratives. Here, an important question must be posed: Was there a slave narrative in the Ottoman Empire? Can the voiceless express their stories in their own voices? To what extent do the sources allow historians to tell the stories

of slaves? In the Middle Eastern context, Erdem notes that there is no such genre of source material as there is in the "New World" since "there was no abolitionist public to feed these narratives" (Erdem 2010, 125). Nevertheless, such narratives in the Americas were "published under the careful editing and supervision of white American abolitionists," as Troutt-Powell notes. In terms of Ottoman slavery, what is available is a bunch of valuable documents "in the form of letters, court records, petitions, autobiographical notes, and even graffiti" (Erdem 2010, 125).

Instead of works written by the slaves themselves, there are written analyses of individual cases of Ottoman slaves, which still allow the voices of the voiceless to be heard. In light of these individual cases, some titbits of information about child enslavement and what it was like can be grasped as long as the source provides retrospective details. The following texts inspired this thesis with their arguments, inquiries, and conclusions, all which intended to make the voices of slaves heard.

Analyzing a police report issued in Cairo in 1854, Toledano (1993, 59-74) reveals the story of a Circassian girl named Şemsigül, who was purchased in Istanbul by a slave trader named *Deli* (Mad) Mehmet in 1852. He had sexual intercourse with her on the ship, which led to the unfortunate fate of the slave girl. Deli Mehmet decided to get rid of the pregnancy. The owner tried very hard to cause her a miscarriage: he gave Şemsigül pills to take and then beat her to cause her to lose the child, but nothing worked. In the meantime, Şemsigül gave birth, but the tragic story of Şemsigül does not end here. Within a year, the baby would die, and Şemsigül continued to be sold to others. Her next owner was told that Şemsigül had a child with Deli Mehmet. The incident was then reported to the police to deepen the investigation and prepare the indictment against him. It is not known how representative Şemsigül's story is; however, forced sexual intercourse, forced abortion, and exposure to violence were harsh realities that slave girls were subjected to.

In 2006, Eve M. Troutt-Powell published her work "Will That Subaltern Ever Speak?" in which she was inspired by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's observations of Hindu women who committed rite of sati, the Indian practice of widow suicide. According to Spivak, the most deprived and marginalized in society have no voice to express themselves, represent their interests or concerns, or ask for a more equitable portion of society's goods (Spivak 1988). In this regard, Toledano notes that Troutt-Powell urges historians not to leave their jobs because they have not yet collectively managed to uncover the slave voice (Toledano 2007, 7).

Taking the attention raised on the importance of narrating the individual stories of Ottoman slaves into consideration, Erdem told the story of a black African girl named Feraset, who committed the crime of setting fire to her owner's home in Izmir

in 1867 and consequently was charged with arson. Just like Karamürsel revealed the story of a Circassian slave named Fatma Leman who demanded her manumission, Erdem shows that Feraset took action to decide her fate instead of waiting for her manumission (Erdem 2010, 125-146).

In her other work, Troutt-Powell reveals the stories of individuals who endured several forms of enslavement, as the author believes that recently written narratives "cr[y] out for retelling" (Troutt-Powell 2012, 206). Her work, *Tell This in My Memory: Stories of Enslavement from Egypt, Sudan, and Ottoman Empire* consists of six detail-rich case studies that reveal some of the enslavement stories of individuals in the Middle East during Ottoman and post-Ottoman periods. The author attracts attention to the impact of bondage on slaves' identities, world views, and self-perception. As the author notes, "their own languages are lost, their identities oversimplified" (Troutt-Powell 2012, 38). In light of the memoirs written by slaves or slave owners, the historian presents the ways in which slaves integrated into Ottoman elite and urban households and how slavery was part of their everyday life. The individual case that the present thesis utilized the most is the story of Halide and Huda. They were were two contemporary feminists whose views on domestic life and social order affirmed the reality of slavery when its analyzed comparatively. Halide was given an African child slave as a playmate by her father when she was a child, and Halide and that child slave were raised together; even after the slave was manumitted, they continued residing together. Troutt-Powell (2013, 115-147) presents the ways in which that child slave and other slaves in the household played a role in the individual and political development of Halide Edip Adıvar.

2.3 Global Child Slavery Studies

Child slavery has only recently attracted the attention of academic research. Previously, scholars have focused primarily on adult male slaves, and more recently on women in slavery (Miers, Miller, and Campbell 2009, 1). It can be noted that these global trends were respectively followed by the Ottoman historians as well. As noted above, the gendered perspective was applied to the broad framework on the institution of slavery was established. This raises some questions: Why were scholars late to focus on children's experiences of slavery? Why did what enslaved children endured only begin to be researched now in the twenty-first century? Scholars engaged in child slavery studies had previously believed that children were did not make up the majority of slaves (Miers, Miller, and Campbell 2009, 1). Nevertheless, more

recent studies demonstrate that the proportion and role of children in slavery could no longer be ignored.

The historians Joseph Miller, Suzanne Miers, and Gwan Campbell edited a valuable work on the subject in 2009. The rich collection of articles in *Children in Slavery through the Ages* has made a significant contribution to the current understanding of children in slavery. The book aims to provide comparative examples of child enslavement from the eighth to the twentieth centuries. The editors Miller, Miers, and Campbell devote their introduction to an essential discussion on the definition of slavery and the definition of child. In light of the existing studies, it becomes clear that "slaves were not always chattels or deprived of basic civil rights; they did not always pass their slave status on to their children; and some could rise to positions of considerable wealth and influence" (Miers, Miller, and Campbell 2009, 1).

In regards to the definition of a child, it is as hard to define as the term slave. In today's world, the United Nations defines a child as "anyone under the age of eighteen," but this is not a universal standard. When contemporary times are being considered, several aspects and conditions should be taken into consideration. For example, the age to get married for girls could be as low as twelve, while the age to be conscripted for military service depends on the location. The age one finishes school could be considered an indication of adulthood, but this cannot be considered a viable definition since education is not mandatory in some countries. Of course, it should be noted that numerous children in the world do not have registered birth certificates and that therefore, their ages are unknown (Miers, Miller, and Campbell 2009, 1). The editors of the book underscore that "the difficulty of defining childhood is even greater when discussing the past" (Miers, Miller, and Campbell 2009, 1). Again, it depends on time and space, and one should consider multiple aspects. For instance, the determining factors for a child's age was height and apparent physical maturity when trafficking slaves across the Indian Ocean (Miers, Miller, and Campbell 2009, 1).

Regarding the content of the book, the essays focus on slave children and the trafficking of them in a wide array of regions: the Americas, West Africa, East Africa, North Africa, the Indian Subcontinent, the Ottoman lands, China, and Europe. Many of the essays are noteworthy. For instance, Kenneth Morgan's essay provides insight on the unfortunate fate of enslaved children in British Caribbean society. Pierre Boulle reveals "non-white child slaves and servants in the eighteenth century France" and touches upon "strategies of resistance of African children and youth enslaved in Europe." Similarly, Kristina Richardson's essay focuses on her research on slave girl singers and entertainers employed in the Abbasid courts in Baghdad's

ninth and tenth centuries (Rossi 2010). Finally, Gülay Yılmaz's essay discusses the children recruited using the *devshirme* method to be a part of the Janissary Army or taken to serve in the Imperial Palace.

Recently, another edited book has been published on this subject. *Child Slavery Before and After Emancipation: An Argument for Child-Centered Slavery Studies*, which is composed of essays written by scholars, historians, activists, and philosophers, invites scholars to question concepts that they oftentimes take for granted such as "trafficking" or "slavery" (Duane 2017, 2-3). The author Anna Mae Duane urges historians that "the present has the capacity to affect our perspective on the past" (Duane 2017, 2). She goes on to say that "it is risky to accompany invoking the word slavery in a modern context," therefore it is significant to question, 'When is a child a slave?'" (Duane 2017, 2). Regarding the question of why scholars or writers did not include children in their analyses, Duane (2017, 5) states that children's vulnerabilities would complicate their work more. It is noteworthy that the author draws attention to the fact that the perception of child slaves as properties is problematic. Duane asserts that children are already considered domains of others, primarily of their parents in that children do not speak on behalf of themselves, but rather their parents speak for them. In this sense, slaves are properties, too, but in this case, properties of their owners (Duane 2017, 15).

2.4 Ottoman Child and Childhood Studies

Ottoman historians have recently begun to address several questions that had been left answered in Ottoman childhood studies. What is it like to be a child in the Ottoman Empire? Is the concept of a child a modern concept? Who did the Ottomans consider to be children? Were children like small adults? One of the first comprehensive works in the field of the history of children in the Ottoman context was written by Yahya Araz. His work *16. Yüzyıldan 19. Yüzyıl Başlarına: Osmanlı Toplumunda Çocuk Olmak*, (Being a Child in the Ottoman Society: From The Sixteenth to The Early Nineteenth Century) firstly focuses on the dramatic tales of the lives of some children reflected in the archival records, emphasizing the effect of the time spent with parents on the happiness and peace of children and noting the troubles and miserable lives of children whose mothers or fathers died. Secondly, since school comes to mind when mentioning children, the author discusses the establishment of pre-Tanzimat educational institutions, their continuation, and the sources of their revenue. With regards to the participation of children in school,

it is not clear at what age they started school and how many years they continued there. According to Araz, when children go to school, they disconnect from the world of adults, and they start to build their own world where they spend more time with their peers; nevertheless, there would be a clear difference between boys and girls based on gender. For example, the lucky ones among the boys attend the madrasas, while it is impossible for girls who have completed primary school to receive a higher education. Last but not least, Araz points out that it is possible to think that the decline in employment of slave labor was caused by the attempt to replace it with the labor of adopted children, which increased in the second half of the eighteenth century.

A welcome contribution was made to the growing Ottoman child and childhood studies by Nazan Maksudyan. Analyzing records from the Ottoman, German, French, and Protestant and Catholic missionary archives and memoirs, Maksudyan investigates the situations that girls and boys had to endure to reveal the voices of the orphans and impoverished children of the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. The author examines the encounters of destitute children in shelters, households, vocational schools, and foreign orphanages and contextualizes the emergence and development of these institutions. First, Maksudyan reveals the practice of child abandonment by poverty-stricken mothers in the nineteenth century as a harsh reality of life. Afterwards, the author argues that the political rivalry between the Ottoman central state and ethno-religious communities came about "not [over] orphans but their future" (Maksudyan 2014, 125). Finally, the author points out that the Ottoman central government took initiative to fix these domestic problems; however, the modern regulations and organizations to advance the children's conditions concerning modernization of the Empire failed.

Although adopting daughters and fostering them was a widespread phenomenon in all ethnic groups of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, it did not always go well. Maksudyan provides insight on domestic servant girls' resistance to abuse by their quasi-owners, even though their chance of success was considerably low due to the status inequality between them. Some of the foster daughters (*besleme*) damaged or burnt down their foster families' apartments or they ran away or attempted or committed suicide. In one way or another, they presented their opposition to the abuse. Last but not least, unlike Yahya Araz, Maksudyan stands against the argument made by other scholars that fostering daughters was a practice emerged after the demise of slavery in the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire.

In addition to these contributions to the growing field of Ottoman child and childhood literature, the works of Onur Bekir (Bekir 2005) and Benjamin Fortna (Fortna

2010. 2016.) should be mentioned. Also, very recently, an edited work from Edinburgh University Press by Gülay Yılmaz and Fruma Zach will be added to this growing literature soon. *Children and Childhood in the Ottoman Empire from the 15th to the 20th Century* focuses on a broad geographical area including Ottoman Romania, Bulgaria, Crimea, Greece, Bosnia, Syria, Palestine, and Istanbul from the fifteenth to the early twentieth century. Due to the diversity of the geographical area it focuses on, the text provides insights on Christian, Jewish, and Muslim children that explore the peculiarities and commonalities in family structures in different communities within the Ottoman Empire.

Last but not least, it should be noted that the exploitation of child labor in domestic work did not, unfortunately, end in today's world. As Özbay notes, "[Humans] were indifferent to the exploitation of children in the domestic sphere for a long time. Only after the early 1990s Anti Slavery International became actively interested in the situation of children in domestic work" (Özbay 1999). The author's notable historical and sociological analysis "*Turkish Female Child Labor in Domestic Work: Past and Present*" shows that using child labor in domestic tasks is not new in Turkey or elsewhere. As for the late Ottoman Empire, Özbay's findings have been helpful, demonstrating that there were slaves, waged servants, and *evlatlıks* of Caucasian, African, and unknown origin in Istanbul's Muslim households between 1885 and 1907. There were both female and male non-kin members of the households aged broadly from six to fifty (Özbay 1999, 17-22).

3. CLASSICAL OTTOMAN SLAVERY SYSTEMS BEFORE MODERNIZATION

3.1 Introduction

The captives caught during military action used to belong to whomever caught them during the early years of the Ottoman state (Pakalın 1983, 766). However, this changed in the following decades; accordingly, the Ottomans might have started taking a one-fifth share of the war spoils, meaning that one of the five captives captured during raiding would go to the state treasury as a tax. This in-kind tax was to be called "*pencik*," and the captives would be named "*pencik* boys." The Ottoman state benefited from the "*pencik* boys" whose ages figuratively ranged from seven to seventy in different areas, primarily and possibly by employing them to carry out administrative and military services. Before their employment, some "*pencik* boys" were sent to Anatolia to work in agriculture and to learn the Turkish language and Islamic traditions while living with some Anatolian farmer families. Some "*pencik* boys" were trained in the Acemi Corps to be soldiers in the Janissary Army (the Sultan's private household troops). Additionally, the Ottoman state settled on an official amount of cash that would be considered equivalent to one-fifth of a war captive and stated that the tax could be paid in either captives or money. This monetary tax was also named "*pencik*." Furthermore, there might have been some shortcomings to the *pencik* system. Over time, the system was revised, and several aspects of it were improved. The idea was that the rules of the *pencik* tax collection could be attempted to be established in a more structured and precise way in the course of time. In this regard, to distinguish slave importers who paid their *pencik* taxes from those who did not pay, a title deed was issued to the slave importer. Eventually, the monetary *pencik* tax became an ad valorem tax to be collected on each slave imported into the Empire over the coming decades (Erdem 1996, 19).

Recruitment through the *pencik* system was not the only method the Ottomans

applied to conscript soldiers to the troops or raise loyal statesmen for its military-administrative positions. After the *pencik* system's early implementations, the *devshirme* practice was introduced as a new method. This raises some possible simple questions. Why did the *pencik* system not work? What went wrong with it?

In addition to the *pencik* practice, the *devshirme* method was also implemented, meaning that many children were levied for military service in certain regions of the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, there was a clear distinction between the two practices: the *devshirme* method was applied within the Empire's borders, while the *pencik* practice involved taking in war captives from enemy lands. With the *devshirme* method, the Ottoman state started focusing on children rather than adults this time. Some children of various ages were intended to be levied based on a specific criteria and transferred to Istanbul. There, the levied children were once again examined and converted to Islam. Afterwards, they were required to train through a couple of different steps. Like the "*pencik* boys", some of those recruited through the *devshirme* method were also sent to families in Anatolia to learn the Turkish language and Islamic culture (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 23. Pakalın 447). Some were even selected to be trained in the palaces of high-ranking statesmen (Mustafa Âli 1997, 168). After completing their training, they were employed in military or administrative fields and served the state.

While the *devshirme* practice was in effect, the way it was implemented did not remain the same over the centuries but rather underwent a transformation. There were several principles and rules involved and replaced in the selection, recruitment, and employment of the *devshirme* boys. The practice of sending the levied children to Anatolia was given up in the following centuries (Uzunçarşılı 1988, Vol I, 24). Additionally, many questions might remain unanswered. Why were children preferred over adults? What were the expected characteristics of the *devshirme* children that were educated in the palaces of statesmen? What characteristics were they expected to have to be eligible for state service?

Exploring these questions, this chapter closely examines the upbringing of the *devshirme* children and the special education that was given to some of them in the palaces of high-ranking statesmen. Although the practice of recruiting men to the state to serve in the army or palace with the *devshirme* method was abandoned at the turn of the eighteenth century, some high-ranking statesmen may have gotten accustomed to raising servants for state posts and offices so much that they carried on recruiting children from different sources and raising them in their palaces or households. It is known that some nineteenth-century elites—statesmen, prosperous merchants, and their wives—purchased slave children and raised them with various

motivations and purposes. To what extent could this be considered a continuum when the *devshirme* practice is taken into account?

This dissertation focuses on the slave children brought up and trained by some of the elites in the nineteenth-century Istanbul. It discusses explicitly why some Istanbulite elites acquired slave children. To better comprehend the employment of child slaves in elite households in the nineteenth century, I must first address the *devshirme* practice, which I devote to the first chapter of this dissertation. It was a classical Ottoman slavery system in which children were recruited, trained, and employed in some high-ranking statesmen's palaces before the nineteenth century. To explain the *devshirme* system adequately, I must first begin with arguing the reasons why the *devshirme* was necessary in the first place. In this sense, I will briefly elucidate the *pencik* system, the predecessor of the *devshirme*, and what went wrong with it. After explaining the *pencik* system, I will proceed with the *devshirme*'s compatibility with the Ottoman sharia law. Together with this, I will concentrate on the ways in which the *devshirme* boys were selected and what criteria were taken into consideration in their selection and employment process.

3.2 *Pencik* System

Linguistically, the word *pencik* means one-fifth, which is indeed a distorted version of two Persian words—"penc" meaning "five" and "yek" meaning "one." In the Ottoman context, the concept initially indicates the state's practice of taking one of the five captives caught during a raid from the raiders. In addition, the concept also corresponds to a monetary tax which later became an *ad valorem* tax, and a title deed, depending on the time period.

Some of the early Ottoman chronicles shed light on the introduction of the *pencik* system. Even though they provide different details on the issue, some of them—specifically those written by Âşıkpaşazâde Neşrî and Oruc Beg—came to the same conclusion that the idea of taking one-fifth from the spoils of war in accordance with God's will came into fruition after the conquest of Edirne in 1361 during the reign of Murad I (Âşık Paşazâde 2013, 75. Neşrî 2014, 197. Oruc Beg 2014, 24-25). The Ottoman state implemented the *pencik* in-kind tax to be taken from the war captives; these captives went on to be called the "*pencik* boys".[1] Initially, these

[1]It must be stated that the term "*pencik* boys" should not mislead anyone to think only of actual young boys just because the word "boy" is included in the term. Since the ages of the captives ranged from 7 to 70, so did the recruited *pencik* boys.

pencik boys were employed in Gallipoli where a new military unit, the Acemi Corps (*Acemi Ocağı*), was established consisting of the *pencik* boys (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 9).

Understandably, giving one of the captives to the state as a tax must not have been very appealing for the raiders. It is natural for the people to not have accepted the tax imposed immediately and different methods may have been developed to avoid the tax. As Neşrî notes, upon introducing the *pencik* tax, some of the raiders started hiding some of their captives to avoid paying the tax (Neşrî 2014, 199).[2]

Following the realization that taking one-fifth of the war captives would not always be practical since not everybody would be able to capture five captives at a time, the Ottoman state might have decided to take the monetary equivalence of the in-kind *pencik* (Pakalın 1983, 766).

When the *pencik* system was first established, it was not a full-fledged system, but had its deficiencies. Based on some chronicles, it seems that it was decided to take the same amount, which was twenty-five coins, from all captives regardless of their characteristics (Âşık Paşazâde 2013, 75. Neşrî 2014, 197. Oruc Beg 2014, 24-25). Nevertheless, not every captive was equal or equally valued; it may have been confusing that the same amount of tax was taken regardless if the prisoner was beautiful, healthy, and young versus one who was elderly and frail. In addition to that, it could be unclear who would be responsible for recording the identities of the boys and the payments of the taxes. Further, the state might have had more concerns about implementing this taxation system and may have worried that not all raiders would pay their taxes and that some would attempt to bring slaves illegally. Eventually, the Ottoman state did not stay unresponsive to these problems, and it attempted to improve the system's imperfections by issuing regulations.[3] For instance, the Ottoman state introduced a new position, a *pencik* officer named "*pencik* emini" or "*pencik*ci" who managed the taxes (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 7). These officers were responsible for keeping records of the captives' Christian names, their new names, and their facial descriptions (Pakalın 1983, 767).

The *pencik* tax did not apply to all military conquests, meaning that the state was not eligible to take one-fifth of the spoils depending on the purpose of the military conquest. Which military actions the *pencik* tax applied to was clarified as well. The state also issued a kind of tariff that divided the war captives into different

[2] "Amma bu akçayı ol vakit hums deyü alurlardı. Şimdi humsı esir alunduğu yirde alduktan sonra yine her esirden geçit akçası deyü âlem-beri akça alurlar ve iskelede esir içün akça aldukların bilicek iskeleye esir getirmeyüb her biri bir tarafda gizler oldılar." The emphasis on "âlem-beri" is on the original text. (Neşrî 2014, 199)

[3] There are two *pencik* law codes and a decree that have survived until present times. The first law code dates back to 1493, and the second one was penned in 1510. These law codes were studied by İsmail Uzunçarşılı and Ahmet Akgündüz (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 86-88. Akgündüz 1980, 131).

categories based on their gender, age, and physical appearance (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 90. Akgündüz 1990, 131-132).

The state carried on issuing regulations designed to improve the quality of the boys they recruited. As stated above, the *pencik* boys were initially employed in the Gallipoli Acemi Corps. However, it was later considered a poor choice for the *pencik* boys to work in the Gallipoli Acemi Corps, so instead they were sent to Anatolia and to serve the farmers for a small price. Thus, they would learn the Turkish language and about Islam in Anatolia. The *pencik* boys brought up like this were thought to serve more faithfully. Also, they would not be able to escape easily to Europe compared to if they were in Gallipoli (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 11). According to Uzunçarşılı (1988, 11), the reason why the state paid them a small amount while working in agriculture in Anatolia was that the *pencik* boys should not have caused problems to the farmers and they should have been compatible. After growing up in Anatolia, they worked in various services. Some returned to Gallipoli and worked in the ship service there for a daily payment of one *akçe*. Some were employed in the Acemi Corps while some were assigned directly to the Janissary Corps (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 12).

The state did not only confine itself to the collected *pencik* boys as an in-kind tax but was also interested in the other captives taken by the raiders. As Pakalın notes (1983, 767), the state purchased healthy and perfect boys between the ages of ten and seventeen for three hundred *akçe*. These boys were also called "*pencik* boys" and were able to be employed in the palace service or the Janissary Corps.

As stated above, the state issued an in-kind tax named *pencik* and then introduced its monetary form. The monetary *pencik* later became an ad valorem tax that was collected on all slaves imported to the Empire (Erdem 1996, 19). Upon paying the *pencik* tax, a title deed was provided to the slave owner. In such a way, the slave owner was given legal ownership rights over his slave. For instance, in 1688, three coins *miri* and forty coins were taken as a tax on the prisoners taken during the Üngürüs (Hungarian) campaign, and they were given *pencik* deeds.[4] In another example, a slave importer named Rüstem Ağa from Kars paid the *pencik* tax for his fifteen-year-old Georgian female slave and received his *pencik* deed upon the payment in 1786.[5] The *pencik* deed had a significant function since it served to differentiate the slaves whose taxes were paid for from those that were left unpaid. Slaves without a proper title deed could not be sold or traded. Issuing such a

[4] "Sebeb-i tahrir oldur ki Üngürüs seferinde alınan üseradan üç kuruş miri ve kırk akçe alınıp tezkire verildi." BOA, İE.AS.. 26-2315. (22 Recep 1094) (17 JULY 1683)

[5] "Yalnız bir Gürcü cariyenindir. Merkumun tahminen 15 yaşında bir Gürcü cariyesinden *pencik* resmi alınmıştır." BOA. TS.MA.e 918-71. (30 Recep 1200) (29 MAY 1786)

deed enabled the Ottoman central government to detect when slaves were illegally enslaved or imported (Erdem 1996, 20).[6]

Paying the *pencik* tax at customs may not have operated smoothly all the time; the slave merchants or *pencik* officers could have encountered multiple difficulties and problems. For instance, a slave merchant named Mustafa paid his *pencik* taxes for the twelve black female slaves that he brought from Tunis in 1722 at the Chios Island customs. Upon his payment of the *pencik* tax, he received the *pencik* deed. Later on, he went to Edirne and was asked to pay the *pencik* tax again at customs even though he had paid the tax previously. The merchant Mustafa had to pay again, and the *pencik* deeds were given to him once again. Stating that he was victimized by having to pay the deeds twice despite having valid documentation, Mustafa wrote a petition and sought his right.[7]

On some occasions, slave importers might have been asked to pay the *pencik* tax even though the slave traders had documentation of their *pencik* deeds. For instance, a slave merchant named Ömer had paid the *pencik* and other customs taxes for his female slaves that he brought to Istanbul to sell in 1847. Even though he had the deeds proving that he had paid the necessary taxes, including the *pencik* tax for each slave, the merchant Ömer was asked to pay those taxes again when he arrived in Bursa. He was forced by Cemal's son İbrahim in Bursa and did not have any choice except to pay. Since Ömer knew that Cemal's son İbrahim did not have the right to force him, he complained and demanded his money be paid back.[8]

Finally, the ad valorem *pencik* tax even became included in the tax-farming system (iltizam). In the tax-farming system, the right to collect the *pencik* tax was given to those who had committed to pay a certain amount of cash annually to the state treasury and collect the *pencik* tax on their own. This continued until the prohibition on trading black slaves in 1857. After, the *pencik* tax was removed from the tariff (Toledano 1994, 58). Hence, the debts of tax-farmers (*mültezims*) were pardoned. The Central Treasury announced they would stop taking the *pencik* tax in the customs in Istanbul. An Ottoman "*pencik*ci" was assigned to check whether everyone abided by this new prohibition (Toledano 1994, 58). Toledano suggests that the *pencik* tax might have continued to be taken for a while, though the ban might have

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[6]Finally, in the Ottoman archives, one might encounter multiple terminologies in searching of *pencik* title deeds. Scribes used different terminology in referring to these title deeds: "*pençik kağıdı*," "*pençik varakası*," "*pençik senedi*," "*pençik temessüğü*," "*esir kağıdı*," "*esir senedi*," "*pençik tezkiresi*," or "*pençik makbuzu*." These deeds are not new for Ottomanists, as some historians have already paid attention to these proper titles briefly (Toledano 1994, 58. Erdem 1996, 19. Witzenrath 2016, 209. Kazıcı 1977, 132).

[7]BOA/Cevdet/Adliye/9-587 (25 Receb 1134) (1 MAY 1722) Cited also in Erdem, 1996, 19.

[8]BOA, A.MKT.DV.. 5 – 96. (06 Zilkade 1263) (21 SEPTEMBER 1842)

been better implemented in Istanbul and Izmir. However, the prohibition on the *pencik* tax regarding the imperial decree of 1857 might not have been implemented as anticipated. Toledano (1994, 59) noted based on local and foreign observers' reports that the *pencik* tax almost turned into a bribe or a hush money.

3.3 *Devsh̲irme* System

The Turkish term "*devşirme*," meaning "collection," refers to the periodical forced levy of children amongst some subjects living in some of the Ottoman provinces in Europe and Asia Minor (Ágoston and Masters 2009, 183). In a broader sense, the *devsh̲irme* was "the forcible removal of the children of the Christian subjects from their ethnic, religious, and cultural environment and their transplantation into Turkish-Islamic environment with the aim of employing them in the service of the Palace, the army, and the state, whereby they were to serve the Sultan as slaves or freemen and to form a part of the ruling class of the State" (Ménage 1966, 64).

Unlike their Muslim predecessors, who had developed their own system and benefitted from imported slaves, the Ottomans supplied their slaves from within the Empire's borders (Erdem 1996, 1). However, it must be noted that *devsh̲irme* was not just a practice applied to the Christian subjects of the Empire; instead, it was a system that was also applied to some Muslim subjects of the Empire located in Rumelia—mainly Bosnians and Albanians, even after they converted to Islam. With regard to other non-Muslim subjects of the Empire, Hakan Erdem (1996, 4) suggests that Jews were not exempt from being a part of the *devsh̲irme* even though it was assumed that they were.

Before the *devsh̲irme* method emerged, the state was using the *pencik* method to gather the boys they needed to serve the state (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 13. Pakalın 1983, Vol. I, 444). Why was a brand new system established without a rhyme or reason? A new system could have been necessary for many reasons. Perhaps, the reason was to fix the old system's defects and weaknesses. If so, what was wrong with the *pencik* system? This chapter discusses the reasons why the *devsh̲irme* was necessitated.

The *devsh̲irme* method has been studied from different perspectives previously.[9] Scholars have primarily investigated the system's origins, its introduction, and argued whether the *devsh̲irme* was compatible with Ottoman Sharia law. On one

[9]For some of the studies, see Palmer, 1953, 448-81; Wittek, 1955, 271-278; Ménage, 1956, 181-3; Vryonis 1956, 433-443. Ménage 1966, 64-78; Repp 1967, 137-9; Cahen 1970, 211-218; Ménage 1991, 210-213; Demetriades 1993, 23–31; Öz and Özel, 2000, 555-557; Erdem 1996, 2; Ménage 2007.

hand, *devshirme* was an administrative-military system that the Ottoman utilized for centuries. On the other hand, it was a form of slavery in which children were recruited and forcefully employed in addition to adults.[10]

The *devshirme* system incorporated three main stages: selection, education, and employment. There were some specific criteria that were utilized while selecting the children: the boys' social status, family background, and physical features were considered before their selection. Upon their levy and arrival to Istanbul, some notable people chose *devshirme* boys from a large selection of options in the sixteenth century. They, too, paid attention to some specific criteria in choosing *devshirme* boys for themselves, seeking the highest quality. Considering that the elites and notables of the Ottoman Empire carried on acquiring slaves, including children, the criteria that they paid attention to might not have changed over time, and they might even bear a resemblance to another.

Considering the principle that different periods must be contextualized separately, this chapter intends to question to what extent child slave selection criteria of some nineteenth-century elites resemble *devshirme* boy selection criteria of some notables of the earlier centuries. Could there be a continuum in the typical characteristics of child slaves across centuries?

To begin with, the emergence of the *devshirme* system has been a subject of interest to some historians. Victor Louis Ménage notes that the date of the emergence of the institution of the *devshirme* is uncertain, nothing that there are some references to the *devshirme* practice in which the earliest dates back to the 1390s (Ménage "*devshirme*", EI2, BRILL, 2007). While Speros Vryonis discussing the introduction of the system, he writes that the metropolite of Thessalonica, Isidore Globas recorded the *devshirme* as "seizure of the children by the decree of the amir" (Vryonis 1956, 433-43). An Italian source from 1397 stated that the Turks took boys between the ages of ten and twelve for their army. In light of these references, Gabor Ágoston suggests that the *devshirme* practice has already been established during the late 1390s. (Ágoston and Masters 2009, 183). In this sense, Ménage suggests that *devshirme* was established at the time when Isidore Globas referred to it, but it might have been reintroduced during the time of Murad II, perhaps after it was suspended in the years of confusion and conflict during the Battle of Ankara (Ménage "*devshirme*", EI2, BRILL, 2007).

As noted before, the soldiers were supplied to the Acemi Corps using the *pencik* method at first. So what went wrong with the *pencik* system? Why was a new

[10] *devshirme* boys were examined in a child slavery context previously, see Yılmaz 2015, 901-930.

system required? According to Uzunçarşılı, due to some extreme political events in the fifteenth century (e.g. the Battle of Ankara and the Interregnum Period), the number of soldiers in the Empire decreased. As a result of these disturbances, some lands fell to the Byzantine Empire and the Serbian Kingdom. Therefore, prisoners of war could not be utilized during the reigns of Mehmet I and Murad II as they were used in the past; a new method of recruiting soldiers was developed instead (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 13. Pakalın 1983, 444-445).

A new system might also have been needed to avoid the difficulties and uncertainties generated by the *pencik* system. Taking one-fifth of the total war captives did not mean that only young, beautiful, and healthy men could be chosen. As mentioned earlier, the term "*pencik* boys" contained a vast range of captives, from the age of seven to seventy, as it included all prisoners of war regardless. Uzunçarşılı pointed out that the perfect and healthiest captives between the ages of ten and seventeen were purchased by the state with 300 *akçe* (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 8). They were different from the "*pencik* boys" that were taken in accordance with the one-fifth tradition, as they were able to select the captives more carefully. The state might have recruited them to be employed in the palace service or the Janissary Army. However, this would not be a well-established and full-fledged system and could be economically exhausting in the eyes of the state. In addition to this age matter, the state might not have known which family the captives come from. Moreover, the state could not have been sure what the captives' social status and background were; since they were to serve the state, these aspects might have carried a lot of importance.

Having explained why the *devs<u>h</u>irme* practice was needed, I now move to summarize the debate on the *devs<u>h</u>irme*'s compliance with Ottoman Sharia law. Before, the concepts of the *zimmî* status and the *zimmet* agreement must be defined. The monotheist non-Muslims living in the Ottoman Empire were called *zimmîs*. As it is known, Christians and Jews living in the Ottoman Empire were monotheists, and they were referred to as people of the book (*ehl-i kitab*). However, being considered one of the "people of the book" did not automatically make a monotheist non-Muslim subject of the Empire a *zimmî*. The *zimmîs* were "people of the book" who accepted the authority and superiority of the Islamic state and made a contract with the Islamic state. The *zimmîs* were granted the right to worship and were exempt from slavery in return for their obedience to the Ottoman state and their acceptance of their secondary status. They were obliged to pay a specific tax called the poll tax (*cizye*). Paying this tax indicated that their *zimmî* status was valid, meaning they could not be enslaved (Erdem 1996, 25). Nevertheless, in the case that Ottoman subjects who had *zimmî* status were enslaved either by another Ottoman subject or by a foreign person, in theory the state was obliged to do everything to end their

bondage (Erdem 1996, 23). In fact, *zimmîs* were occasionally illegally enslaved both by other Muslim and non-Muslims groups, primarily but not exclusively corsairs (Erdem 1996, 24).

Several scholars including Patricia Crone, Benjamin Braude, Bernard Lewis, and Metin Kunt studied the *devshirme* practice from different angles and came to similar conclusions. Patricia Crone claims that the *devshirme* system's implementation was clearly a violation of Sharia law (Crone 1980, 80. Erdem 1996, 2). Braude and Lewis state that the *devshirme* practice clearly contradicted the essence of the *zimmet* agreement (Braude and Lewis 1982, 1-34. Erdem 1996, 2) while Kunt asserts that *devshirme* was a violation of the traditional rights which were provided in Muslim societies (Kunt 1982, 55-67. Erdem 1996, 2). Ehud R. Toledano shares a similar opinion with the historians mentioned previously, and states that "the *devshirme* system, through which were the Janissaries recruited, was an aberration" (Toledano 1982, 6).

Erdem agrees on that the practice of *devshirme* violates *zimmi* rights, the rights of non-Muslims living on Muslim lands, but asserts that the practice of *devshirme* did not initially contradict Ottoman Sharia law since non-Muslim subjects of the Empire did not automatically obtain *zimmî* status. While Christians and Jews residing within the Empire's borders were deemed eligible to have a status called *zimmî*, it was not guaranteed to them. The Ottoman Empire agreed that those who held the *zimmî* status were granted the right to worship, own property, and be protected from slavery in return for respecting the Ottoman administration and accepting their secondary status in the society (Erdem 1996, 2). If *zimmî* subjects of the Empire did not abide by the rules of their agreement with the Empire, and collaborated with the Empire's enemies against Islam, their status would change from *zimmî* to *harbi*. Thus, those who used to hold the *zimmî* status but became a *harbi* instead were punished with death penalty or slavery (Erdem 1996, 2).[11]

The date of the initial introduction of *devshirme* is not known. The practice did not contradict with the Ottoman Sharia law at first, but later did so. The ways in which the system operated will now briefly be discussed. Under the Ottoman *devshirme* system, many boys between the ages of eight and twenty were selected from villages

[11] For example, such a case occurred during the Chios Island massacre in the nineteenth century. Greeks were one of the *zimmî* status holders of the Ottoman non-Muslim subjects at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1821, some Greek subjects of the Empire revolted. Upon that, the Ottoman central government approved the capture of rebel non-Muslims as prisoners of war on the grounds that the rebellion was regarded as an action that broke the *zimmî* agreement between the non-Muslim subjects and the Empire, thereby destroying the status of *zimmî*, which the Empire had granted them centuries ago. See, Erdem, Yusuf Hakan. "Do not think of the Greeks as agricultural labourers: Ottoman responses to the Greek war of independence." In: Birtek, Faruk and Dragonas, Thalia, (eds.) Citizenship and The Nation-State in Greece and Turkey. Social and Historical Studies on Greece and Turkey Series. (Routledge, London 2005) pp. 67-84.

in Rumelia and Anatolia and sent to Istanbul (Somel 2003, 57). The rates of the intervals and the rules of the levy were altered depending on the needs of the army and the state. At first, a provincial governor (*beylerbeyi*), a military governor of the province (*sancak beyi*), or Islamic judges (*kadı*) were in charge of selecting and collecting the children living in the Balkan region. Not appointing an official from the periphery might have rendered the possibilities of bribery and illegality such as choosing children with a fake sultanic decree or taking bribes instead of levying a child (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 15). Nevertheless, the government took measures to prevent such issues. For instance, an officer from the Janissary Corps was appointed to take care of the child levy. This officer had both a sultanic decree and a letter written by the Janissary Agha in his hands. In the documents, how many children should be levied, from what regions they should be collected and sent from, and the characteristics of the children were clarified. There were other precautions taken for the other processes of the system. For instance, there was a register prepared in which the records of children were kept; the former names, villages, parents' names, birth dates, physical features, and the name of the *devs̲hirme* officer were all recorded. One copy of that registry was transferred to Istanbul with the children (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 16). On the way to the capital, the levied children were clothed in a red attire (*kızıl aba*) and a hat (*külah*) in order to distinguish them and thus prevent any escapes or kidnapping during the transfer (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 17). After their arrival, the children were permitted to rest for two to three days. Shortly after, they were examined for physical marks and injuries. All of them were then converted to Islam, circumcised, and given Muslim names (Yılmaz 2009, 122).

According to Mustafa 'Âli, they were also shown to a palace scholar who knew physiognomy (*ilm-i kıyâfe*), the act of judging a person's character from their face. The scholar examined the children's faces and chose those who would be the best fit in the palace in regard to their usefulness and potential godliness. He would also decide whom to send to the Acemi Corps to potentially be recruited to the Janissary Army in the future (Mustafa 'Âli 1997, 273).[12] Those that were chosen for palace service were sent to Iskender Celebi, Galatasaray, Edirne, or Ibrahim Pasha's palaces. There, they were taught Turkish, physical military training, and basic Islamic knowledge such as the Qur'an, Muslim jurisprudence, theology, and law (Yılmaz 2009, 123). On the other hand, the boys chosen for the Acemi Corps were sent to families in Asia Minor to learn Turkish, Islamic tradition, and Turkish customs. They would come back to Istanbul after four or five years and be employed

[12] "ilm-i kıyâfeden âgâh, saray-h˘âcesi nâmına bir 'ârif me'ârif-güvâh devşürilüp gelen ve pîş-keş tarîı ile gönderilüp gılmân-ı *pencik* olan oğlânlaruñ sîmâlarına bakardı. Eşkâlinde itimâl-i alâ u diyânet olanları içerü aldırurdı. Sâirîni kapucılığa ve Yeñiçeriliğe çıkan 'acemiyâna ilâk itdürüp nefer mertebesinde kalurdı." (Mustafa Âli 1997, 273)

based upon their skills and needs (Koçi Bey 2007, 39). It should be remembered that the "*pencik* boys" were also sent to Turkish families to learn Turkish language and custom as discussed above. One question remains: why was it necessary to send the *devs̲hirme* boys to the families for a couple of years? What could be the reason behind that? First, it could be easier to educate and train someone who knows the same culture and speaks the same language. Second, their integration into society would be easier and simpler. By the seventeenth century, this practice was abandoned eventually and the *devs̲hirme* boys were not sent to the families. As Uzunçarşılı notes, this might be because of the fact that Rumelia, the region where the *devs̲hirme* boys were levied from, was already Turkified by the seventeenth century (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 24).

Of course, this might be the case; however, the *devs̲hirme* boys were not only levied from Rumelia, but also Anatolia. Thus, it might have been related to learning and speaking Turkish. At this point, the perspective of a sixteenth-century elite bureaucrat Mustafa 'Âli on the ways in which some of the *devs̲hirme* servants spoke Turkish should be taken into consideration. 'Âli's opinion, which is based on an example, might reflect the elite perception of the subject matter in the sixteenth century. In *Mevâ'ıdü'n-Nefâis*, Mustafa 'Âli makes fun of the servants whom he calls 'Kazaks,' and who were settled in the Islamic lands when they were young, and then placed in some notable households where they learned how to read and write. The author draws a parallel between the way they spoke Turkish and the clown of the world or the fool of humanity.[13] From Mustafa 'Âli's opinion, it can be interpreted that even if one learned Turkish at a very early age and carried on learning in the household of a notable elite, the person would still have an accent that became an object of derision in the eyes of some elite. This might be because if Turkish was learned first through families in Anatolia, it could be hard to have an Istanbulite accent. We still do not know what letters that they could not pronouns well if that was the case.

Having explained how the *devs̲hirme* system worked briefly, I will now take a step back and focus on some of the criteria utilized when choosing the *devs̲hirme* boys in the villages. Although there were exceptions, the following criteria might show what kind of children the Ottoman state may have strived to recruit and raise. Overall, the physical appearance, social status, and individual characteristics of the boys were considered in the selection process of the *devs̲hirme* practice, which showed who was eligible to serve the state or was worth training. First, it should be noted that not all households were exposed to the child levy. Theoretically, if there was

[13]Mustafa Âli, Meva'ıdü'n-Nefais (ed.) Mehmet Şeker, Ankara: TTK. "Bir dahı muzık-i alem ve mashara'i beni-adem....." p. 378-379.

only one son living in a household, he would not be taken, but would be left to serve with his father. If there was more than one boy in the house, the most beautiful and healthy boy would be chosen (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 17.). Second, it seems that the children's familial backgrounds played a role as well. The children that came from noble families were favored and attention was paid not to take children of shepherds or orphaned children. They were not preferred, as they were believed to be vulgar and greedy. Instead, the officials chose children of the priests, who were thought to have been better educated (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 17-18). In addition to these, children who were married, circumcised, or seen in Istanbul before were not preferred either (Uzunçarşılı 1988, 18). The list of criteria goes on; however, one should be reminded that these rules might not have always been abided by and that there could be exceptions.

As noted above, upon their arrival to the city, some *devs<u>h</u>irme* boys were chosen by some statesmen. Mustafa 'Âli wrote his suggestions on the ways in which these servants should be selected, trained in the palaces of some statesmen. He begins with why it was needed to recruit servants in the first place and then moves on what characteristics and personality types the servants should have had.

According to Mustafa 'Âli, some statesmen took care of several administrative tasks, and their households were the places where people came and applied for their needs. That is why they needed several servants to help and work under them. As mentioned above, some of them recruited *devs<u>h</u>irme* boys upon their arrival to Istanbul. At this stage, Mustafa 'Âli advised the statesmen to consider some criteria in picking the *devs<u>h</u>irme* boys. First, the author suggested implementing physiognomy (*ilm-i kiyâfe*) to choose the best candidates better. Afterwards, the statesmen should select the one(s) the physiognomist pointed out. When there was no specialist to perform physiognomy, those selecting the boys were advised to check their clothing and eliminate those whose clothes were torn, ripped, or dirty. Second, the person making the selection might have considered serving food for these children to observe the ways in which they have their meals. According to the author, the eligible servants should be the ones who would eat fast and finish earlier without lingering (Mustafa Âli 1997, 96).

Mustafa 'Âli mentions the degenerated servants, explaining why these kinds of servants existed and the consequences of having them. This part of his account is crucial because from what Âli recorded, a hint of what qualities servants should have had can also be grasped. As stated above, after the *devs<u>h</u>irme* boys arrived in Istanbul, the ones selected for the palace service were sent to the palaces of statesmen to be raised and trained. Mustafa 'Âli believes that if the servants were not

raised in one of the palaces of the statesmen, then there were lots of problems with the way the servants started working in the palace service. ‘Âli complains that some of the servants were lazy and avoided working, calculating their working hours. On the contrary, decent and well-trained servants did not tell their masters that they became tired, even if they worked hard and were exhausted. For ‘Âli, a well-trained servant perceives this service as a compliment from his master (Mustafa Ali 1997, 169). The author also thinks that lazy and inattentive servants are useless, and their absence is preferred to their presence because they do more harm than good (Mustafa Ali 1997, 170). For instance, if a servant responsible for shopping became lazy, did not go to the bazaar, and instead made excuses and said that the shops were closed today or that material was not available in the bazaar, ‘Âli believes that this is indecent behavior and that it deserves to be punished. Next, the servants also needed to be intuitive: they should have blamed themselves for the cold behavior of their masters towards themselves. They needed to apologize right away if they made a mistake (Mustafa Ali 1997, 170-171). In addition, the author does not welcome the act of escaping from the service of statesmen and describes it as a despicable act (Mustafa Ali 1997, 171). For him, well-trained servants usually did not run away from their service. Despite this, they may have sometimes attempted to run away after falling into temptation. The servant's apology was advised not to be accepted when the servant was caught and brought back because this action indicated that that servant was inclined to escape and would try again (Mustafa Ali 1997, 171-172). In addition, servants were not to constantly complain about their material needs such as clothing, and should have only reported their needs to their owners when necessary. The servants should not have been hurt by petty matters either. Another point that Mustafa ‘Âli complains about is talking behind the owner's back. ‘Âli criticizes the servants who did this behaviour to their masters very harshly. As he notes, the servant should not vilify his master to others, should not be ungrateful, and should not compare himself with other servants. Even if their situation was very hard, they should not have complained about it to others, the unfaming of the owner is comparable to murder or betrayal (Mustafa Ali 1997, 174-75). The author also writes about his thoughts on frugal and wasteful servants. The servants with good manners paid attention to their clothes, saved their annual stipend, and spent money accordingly. In this way, they were able to have many outfits and still ensured that their owners did not suffer financially (Mustafa Ali 1997, 177).

Mustafa ‘Âli also compares his time with the previous decades in some parts of his account. In this sense, he makes another comparison to explain why there were degenerated servants during his time. He notes that the trained servants did not act

in an orderly and disciplined way as they did in the past, disregarding the palace rules. The servants brought from far lands at very early ages did not have any contact with the outside world previously. The servants started having contact and visits with people outside of the palace during the reign of Suleiman I. The author believes that this negatively impacted their courtesy, propriety, and manners; therefore, he urged that this act must have been prevented (Mustafa ʻÂli 1997, 276).

Overall, the Ottomans implemented the *devs̲hirme* practice for a long time; they recruited children when they thought that they were useful to them in line with their needs and the conditions of the time. The first time the *devs̲hirme* method was implemented is uncertain; the practice took place during the fifteenth century haphazardly, and became implemented more regularly in the sixteenth century. However, conditions altered over time and the Janissaries ceased to be the elite forces of the sultan. This resulted in the decrease of the significance of the *devs̲hirme* practice (Ágoston and Masters 2009, 184). The practice was ended eventually; Baki Tezcan estimates the last practice of the *devs̲hirme* was around 1703, whereas Ménage estimates it to be 1705 (Tezcan 2010, 44-45)

During the era of the *devs̲hirme* method until the turn of the eighteenth century, there had been adjustments and alterations to the practice depending on the conditions of the time. It can be seen that while choosing the *devs̲hirme* boys, some officials might have paid attention to specific characteristics, and it can be assumed that they may have been implemented to some extent, but it is hard to say how well the criteria were implemented. Discussing this would be exceeding the scope of this chapter. Nevertheless, taking a step back and analyzing some criteria are worthy. As stated above, not knowing Turkish and not having seen Istanbul before could have been essential for being a state servant. First of all, someone who had seen and known Istanbul would have been awakened in a sense. The servant would know not only the good sides of the city of Istanbul, but also the naughty sides. He would also be aware of his capabilities and the opportunities that the city presented. Moreover, he would have had connections and acquaintanceships with people living outside of the palace or ruling groups. As observed in Gelibolulu Mustafa ʻÂli's account, this would be a behavior that the notables and the statesmen would not wish to see. Second, if a servant selected was able to speak even a little Turkish, he may have used foul language, publicly explained what he endured, cried, and complained. This would have been unpleasant for the high-ranking statesmen who owned them and could have negatively affected the servant's education. Not speaking the same language and not being able to communicate well would prevent all of this and make the recruited child's education more manageable.

It is known that these characteristics—not knowing Turkish and not having seen Istanbul—were also sought in the children acquired in different ways to be employed in administrative services in the following decades. In the seventeenth century, Evliya Çelebi included a brief anecdote in his enormous travelogue on this subject. While writing on the Tophane region of Istanbul, Evliya Çelebi mentions a group of people who would take their one- or two-year-old children in Istanbul to Caucasia by ships, not to be urban dwellers, but to be servants of the Empire. They were given to milk mothers and brought back to Istanbul when they were between the ages of ten and fifteen years old. Later, they were sold for the sultan's service by whom Evliya calls "Tophane Abazaları" (Abkhazians of Tophane). Interestingly, those who engaged in this work were two of the grand viziers of the seventeenth century: Melek Ahmed Pasha and Siyavuş Pasha, who were servants of the Sultan of Abkhazian origin.[14]

In the following chapter, it will be seen that some high-ranking state officials and elites of Istanbul would carry on to recruit children from different channels for different purposes. Some elites purchased child slaves of Caucasian and African origin who were shipped to Istanbul in the nineteenth century. These slaves had some characteristics that might have resembled the criteria that were sought for selecting some of the *devs<u>h</u>irme* boys. Just like them, some imported slave children who did not speak Turkish were complete strangers to the city of Istanbul. In this vein, the way some slave children were raised and educated in some elite households might bear a resemblance to how the *devs<u>h</u>irme* boys were trained in some states men's palaces when it was practiced. There could be continuum in the selection criteria of slave children over centuries. This connection will be discussed further in the following chapters along with the differences in slaves, and their employment.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed one of the classical Ottoman slavery systems, the *devs<u>h</u>irme* system, in which the state recruited children to raise and train to be employed in its administrative and military positions. It briefly addressed the *pencik* system first

[14] "Hâlâ beher sene bu Tophâne Abazaları evlâdları bir yaşında ve ikisine bâliğ iken şehir oğlanı olmasın kul olup satılup devlet-mend olsun içün her sene evlâdların süd analara verüp niçe beşik kundak, oğlan uşak, gemiler ile Abaza diyârına gönderüp on, on beş yaşında İslâmbol'a getirüp pâdişâh musâhiblerine pîşkeş yâhûd fürûht edüp çerâğ ederler. İşte bizim merhûm Melek Ahmed Paşa ve Siyâvuş Paşa böyle Tophâne Abazası idi. Bunun emsâli niçe bin evlâdları Tophâne'den Abaza'ya gidüp gelmededir. Ve a'yân-ı kibârları azdı." *Evliyâ Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi I. Kitap Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi Bağdat 304 Numaralı Yazmanın Transkripsiyonu – Dizini* ed. by Robert DANKOFF - Seyit Ali KAHRAMAN - Yücel DAĞLI. (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1996), p.456

to understand better why the *devs̲hirme* system was necessitated in the first place. Afterwards, it moved on to describing the system and explained its introduction, implementation, and compatibility with the Ottoman Sharia law. It then proceeded with the *devs̲hirme* boys' selection, education, and recruitment stages. The selection process revealed that the Ottoman state aimed at recruiting better servants for its administrative-military posts: more loyal, easily educated, and high quality servants. After their levy, some children were selected for the palace services, while others were conscripted in the corps. The ones selected for the palace services were taken in by some statesmen and trained at their palace or households. This chapter concentrated on *devs̲hirme* boys and examined what features those statesmen likely look for in selecting the boys. It further discussed the ways in which they should behave and be punished. Finally, this chapter suggested that there could be a continuum in high-ranking statesmen recruiting children and training them since some of the characteristics that were deemed important in picking the children during the *devs̲hirme* method resemble the features that carried on in the following centuries as well.

4. CHILD SLAVERY IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY OTTOMAN EMPIRE

4.1 Introduction

Several slave children were brought from different regions into the borders of the Empire in the nineteenth century. The slaves imported to the Empire were particularly of white Caucasian and of black African origin. Nevertheless, they were not brought alone, but with adults combined, perhaps with their parents or relatives as well. Several methods were implemented to enslave a child: kidnapping, capturing, abandonment, exchange, or even birth. Upon their enslavement, the ones who were able to survive against the harsh conditions of the slave trade could end up in the city of Istanbul. This chapter primarily aims to examine this whole process before the purchases of slave children by some nineteenth-century Istanbulite elites. With this aim in mind, I will discuss the methods of child enslavement, following a brief description of the concept of the "child" in the Ottoman Empire's context. Then, I will proceed to discuss the Ottoman slave trade to reveal the ways some slave children were brought to the city of Istanbul. In what follows, I will discuss the slave market and other possible places in which slave children might have been sold in nineteenth-century Istanbul to understand the whole process before discussing slave children's employment in some elite households.

4.2 The Concept of a Child

In the modern world, childhood is a stage with several periods broken down into years, months, or even days. The Ottoman perception of a child was rightly and understandably different from the modern understanding. However, this does not suggest that childhood was a fixed, universal concept that refers to a period from

birth to adulthood in pre-modern times. On the contrary, there were various differing views for what the period of childhood meant in the pre-modern times.

As far as Ottoman history is concerned, the connotations of child and childhood are still obscure for the researchers of Ottoman history. There is considerably a rich vocabulary to describe the child or childhood in the Ottoman context, and different concepts were used in different periods of kids (Araz 2017, 32-33). More specifically, in Islamic law, childhood is divided into two main periods: from birth to age seven, the "*gayr-ı mümeyyiz*" (undifferentiated) period, and from age seven to adulthood, the age of "*temyiz*" (differentiated) (Araz 2017, 89). Children were often described using these two terms that derive from Arabic: "*saghir/e*" or "*sâbi/ye*". These Arabic words mean small, minor, and young to refer to infants, children, and those who have yet not reached puberty. In the transition to adulthood, there were additional descriptive words such as "*murâhık/a*," "*mumeyyiz/e*," and "*emred*". The "e" at the end of the word indicates the gender distinction between boys and girls (Araz 2017, 88).[1]

In the view of the Ottomans, the transition from childhood to adolescence required meeting specific criteria in sexual, physical, and mental maturity. The boundaries of these criteria were not clear, both in theory and practice. Children's sexual, physical, and mental development each carried a different weight in the transition to adulthood (Araz 2017, 24). Because a ten-year-old girl must have reached the physical maturity to have sexual intercourse, her de facto marriage was deemed to be physically possible. However, the same girl could not decide for herself on legal matters because she was not considered to be adequately competent to do so (Araz 2017, 25). Contrary to the notion that "children were little adults," Araz argues that physicians, jurists, and scholars who wrote about children all frame their writing around a different period of childhood, each with its own characteristics and social equivalents (Araz 2017, 33).

As said earlier, girls had to be nine years old at the earliest to reach the point of physical maturity in which they could have sexual intercourse.[2] During this period, they learned about "femininity" (*âdet-i nisâ*) from their mothers. The children that were considered self-sufficient were seven years old. They could dress alone, so there

[1] Ottoman children were depicted in the western sources, see Marianna Yerasimos, "16.–19. Yüzyılda Batı Kaynaklı Gravürlerde Osmanlı Çocuk Figürleri.," in Toplumsal Tarihte Çocuk: Sempozyum, 23-24 Nisan 1993, ed. Bekir Onur (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt yayınları, 1994).

[2] For child marriages in İstanbul and Anatolia, see Yahya Araz, "17. ve 18. Yüzyılda İstanbul ve Anadolu'da Çocuk Evlilikleri ve Erişkinlik Olgusu Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme," Kadın/Woman: Journal for Women's Studies 13 (2012): 98–121.; for some examples on how children died or harmed accidently, see Yahya Araz, "'Ölmek İçin Çok Erken!' 17. ve 18. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da Kazaların Sebep Olduğu Çocuk Ölümleri ve Yaralanmları Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme," Tarih Dergisi 2012/2, no. 56 (2013): 25–54.

was no need to pay them alimony (Araz 2017, 54). The age of legal competence, in which the right to take inheritance was bestowed upon them, was when the children reached puberty; this period could vary from person to person. Until the children reach puberty, they had a legal representative (*vâsî*) entitled to administer children's property (Araz 2017, 65).

At that time, there were training books that explained how to educate children and how parents should treat them. These books also contained advice tailored to the ages of the children. To illustrate, it was written that boys who were starting to become sexually active were not to be left alone with their elders because they may become targets of homosexual desires (Araz 2017, 95-96).

From the age of four or five, children began to move beyond the boundaries of the house: the waterfront, streets, and fields were among their most preferred destinations (Araz 2017, 82). Of course, the children who went outside would be busy with other things as well; they might have been forced into begging or stealing or had been employed as maids.

As in most of the pre-modern world, the Ottoman children could be vulnerable to disease, malnutrition, and epidemics. Once Lady Montagu asked women of Istanbul how they could take care of ten to twelve children, and in response, she heard that "half of these children will die from the plague anyway" (Araz 2017, 77).

In the modernization process, the Ottomans continued to define the boundaries of childhood in line with the physical and sexual development of the kids. According to the civil code Mecelle, prepared by Ahmet Cevdet Paşa in the second half of the nineteenth century, it was accepted that girls could reach puberty at the age of nine and boys at the age of twelve (Araz 2017, 178). Fifteen years of age is accepted as the upper limit for both girls and boys to begin puberty. These borders were drawn in accordance with Islamic law. In other words, the way the Ottomans perceived children before the Tanzimat period continued its existence until the end of the Empire (Araz 2017, 178).

Having discussed what the concept of a child means in the Ottoman context, this chapter will proceed with the methods of child enslavement to show the ways in which a child could be enslaved in the nineteenth century.

4.3 Methods of Child Enslavement

In the nineteenth century, the lands that provided slaves to the Ottoman markets were outside the Empire's borders. The primary areas where black slaves were sourced from were the Upper Nile, West Sudan, Galla, and the Sidama principalities of Ethiopia, as well as Central African lands such as Vaday, Bagirmi, and Bornu (Toledano 1982, 15). The bulk of white slaves were of Caucasian origin, primarily from Georgia and Circassia. The methods used to acquire slaves varied in the Ottoman realm depending on time and place: capturing, kidnapping, exchange, abandonment, sale of children, and birth were the methods of child enslavement.

4.3.1 Kidnapping

Kidnapping was one of the ways of child enslavement; it was implemented within the borders of the Ottoman Empire, disregarding the official attitude of the Ottoman government. There are significant patterns about how and where kidnappings happened: usually, some ethnic or outcast groups were kidnapped in the frontier zone. These can be cited as an example of the abduction of Yazīdīs, which will be explained in more detail below. Another pattern is that violent atmospheres and settings are suitable environments for kidnapping: periods of war or revolt can be given as examples. The target group for kidnappings was not a large village community that was always on alert but rather single and unprotected individuals (Toledano 1982, 16). In the nineteenth century, a particular group of people came forward in the context of kidnapping: rival Caucasian tribes kidnapped slave girls and boys from one another's tribes and sold them to Ottoman slave merchants. Sometimes, professional slave merchants used marriage as a pretext to acquire Circassian and Georgian girls to later sell them as slaves. Laz people had also generally been accused of kidnapping Georgian women and girls. Their reputation as kidnappers persisted during the Tanzimat Era as well (Erdem 1996, 46). Circassians were also blamed for kidnapping Tatar, Rum, and Bulgarian girls in Bulgaria (Toledano 1982, 17) and non-Muslim Ottoman subjects in the Empire after their forced migration at the beginning of 1860 (Erdem 1996, 46). Kidnapping was not only peculiar to the Caucasus region, but also was widespread in some regions of the African continent, primarily Ethiopia and regions around Lake Chad where there was a lack of slaves (Toledano 1982, 17).

Another ethnic group that was responsible for abducting people was Kurds from various tribes that inhabited Southeastern Anatolia and Northern Iraq. Kurds en-

slaved Yazīdīs, Nestorians, and Ya'qūbî women and children on some occasions. For instance, during the Kurdish uprising led by Bedirhan Bey in 1847, Nestorians, Ya'qūbî, and Yazīdī women and children were taken prisoner and sold as slaves in the Diyarbakır-Mosul region. Some were released at the request of the British and the regulations implemented by the Sublime Porte (*Bāb-ı Ālī*) (Toledano 1982, 16).

In 1844, the government released some Tayyarî Christians whom the Kurdish leader had enslaved during the last phases of the Bedirhan Rebellion (1836-1847) in response to the protests of the British. In another uprising in the region in 1855, Yezdan Şir enslaved Yazīdīs and Nestorians in the Gerzan and Siirt regions of the Empire and sent them to the Mosul region to be sold. These were some examples of illegal enslavement of both children and adults living in the borders of the Empire. It must be noted that during the nineteenth century, some foreign embassies, primarily British and French, closely followed the events in the region; they intervened and demanded illegally enslaved subjects' manumission (Erdem 1996, 46).

The kidnapping method could be used to enslave children most of the time in most places, especially in rural and frontier areas. Undoubtedly, children were the most vulnerable and unprotected, which made them easy to carry and kidnap, especially in a violent and insecure atmosphere created by any upheaval and rebellion. To illustrate, a child was sold as a slave to Iranian Hacı Abdulvehhab by a slave dealer named Osman in 1855. However, Osman died, and it was understood that the child was initially free. Thereupon, it was decided to take the money paid by Hacı Abdulvehhab from the probate inventory of the slave-dealer Osman.[3]

Enslaving children through kidnapping could be very profitable at first sight, as children can be considered easy to hide and trade. Additionally, it might have been easier for them to learn a new language and to adapt themselves to new conditions. There was probably a difference between the slave boys and girls due to the gender roles at the time. Their employment areas would differ; for example, slave girls could be raised as concubines and utilized as domestic servants, while slave boys could be trained for outdoor tasks. It should be noted that slave girls could be abused sexually, and similarly, slave boys could possibly be used to satisfy the sexual desire or carry out fantasies. On the other hand, dealing with slave children could be difficult since they often did not survive the harsh shipping conditions and could fall sick more quickly than adult slaves.

The Ottoman government did not always remain silent against the illegal methods

[3]"Hacı Abdülvehhab'ın Esirci Osman nam şahıstan alıp, Tebriz'den getirmiş olduğu 1 nefer gulamın hür olduğu iddia olunması mebni... mezkur Osman'ın vefatı cihetle terekesinden istifa kılınmak üzere... fevt olmuş olmasıyla bu hale göre mezkur 21 bin guruşun mezkur Hacı Osman'ın merkum Abdulvehhab'a verilmek üzere bu tarafa gönderilmesi babında.." BOA, A.}MKT.MVL. 74- 59 (H-07-12-1271)

of enslavement or illicit use of slaves. In the Tanzimat Era, there were new laws and rules issued that showed a difference in the punishments. For instance, kidnapping was a subject matter addressed in the penalty law code of 1858. According to this penalty code, child abductors would be sentenced to one year in prison. The content of this code was expanded in the following years (Toledano 1982, 17). However, this state protection did not cover Yazīdīs who were kidnapped and enslaved (Erdem 1996, 46).

4.3.2 Capturing

Taking people captive during the war and enslaving them was one of the most widely used methods of acquiring and enslaving slaves in the "classic" period of the Ottoman Empire, which corresponded to the expansionist years of the Empire from 1300-1600. Capture was a widespread practice that took place inside and outside of the borders of the Ottoman Empire. However, the Ottomans stopped taking people captive during the war and enslaving them after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1828-29 (Erdem 1996, 44). The Ottoman central government even disapproved of the enslavement of the war prisoners captured during the Crimean War of 1853-1856.

Nonetheless, wars created opportunities to capture and enslave people of all ages. Some individuals or small groups wanted to take advantage of the wartime turmoil and the disorder and confusion of wartime. This method of enslavement through capturing people during the war should actually be categorized under kidnapping, not captivity, since the Ottoman central government perceived enslavement by individuals as illicit (Erdem 1996, 45). In addition, some slaves were caught outside of the Empire as a result of other small-scale conflicts or battles. For instance, inter-tribal conflicts were taking place in some regions of Africa, and several free people, possibly including children, were captured at the end of these wars to be sold to slave dealers (Toledano 1982, 17). These slaves were transported to Ottoman slave markets through the slave trade.

4.3.3 Tribute, Exchange, and Tax Paying

Children could be acquired through indirect methods: they could be exchanged for valuable or needed products or given as tax or tribute. In general, tribute played a particular role in the slave acquisition of the Ottoman Empire even though enslavement through tribute was not implemented since the Empire was not a state

that paid tribute. However, it was customary to accept slaves from states dependent on the Empire or friendly with it. To illustrate, the Crimean Khanate often sent female slaves as gifts before Russia annexed the Crimea in 1783. In another example, Tunisia had paid tribute by sending slaves to Istanbul until 1842 (Erdem 1996, 48). In many African societies, especially during times of famine, children and adults were exchanged for grains; those who could not pay their debts or committed a serious crime like murder were sold as slaves. In addition, many African principalities and kingdoms had sold their subjects into slavery: the rulers of Ethiopia, Galla, and Sidama regularly sold their subjects, covering some of the expenses of imported goods consumed by the elite in their principalities (Toledano 1982, 18). Amongst them were sometimes children; they were sometimes bought in place of tax or sold in times of famine.

4.3.4 Abandonment and Sale of Children

Another method of child slave acquisition was through the sale or abandonment of children. Parents, family members, or slave owners sold children into slavery, sometimes voluntarily or by force. There may be different motivations and reasons for children to be abandoned or sold; poverty, famine, or war could be the first reasons that come to mind. The abandonment and sale of children as a method of enslavement occurred in different parts of the Empire during different time periods. For instance, some Ottoman subjects had to abandon or sell their children on some occasions. For instance, some Christian and Muslim children inhabiting Mosul were sold by their families due to extreme poverty (Erdem 1996, 197). During the migration of Circassians by the 1860s, with the approval of the slave owner and the slave parents of the child, some Circassian child slaves were sold, and somehow, they arrived in Istanbul, considering the great opportunities that were believed to be awaiting them. Most of the time, some slave girls were willing to endure this painful separation, as they imagined they were probably going to the elite or Imperial harems in Istanbul (Toledano 1982, 17).

In regards to Circassians, it can be noted that the sale of children was common amongst Circassian people (Toledano 1982, 17). Even though they migrated to the Ottoman Empire, understandably, some carried on their local customs in the Empire's borders. To illustrate, an official report was addressed to the Armenian Patriarchate in 1856. According to the document, it seems that a Circassian named Ishak had been using an Armenian boy as a Circassian child slave. An Armenian bishop saved a child's life by paying 5 thousand *kuruş*. The report requires Ishak to

pay the bishop's money back.[4]

At this stage, it is necessary to briefly discuss the structure of Circassian society to better understand why some Circassians brought their own customs to the Empire and continued enslaving children within its borders. There were two main social classes in Circassian society: slaves and freemen. Additionally, there was the concept of "hereditary slavery" in their society. Freemen were the slave owners, and they sold the children of their slaves. Theoretically, only children from the slave class could be bought or sold. However, there were occasions when this was not followed; for example, several Circassians from the free class had to sell their children during their migration due to the severe conditions created by the process. Not only were poverty, migration, and "hereditary slavery" reasons for child abandonment and sale (Erdem 1996, 50), but also "searching for better-living conditions" could be added to the list. Finally, the demand for slaves coming from the Ottomans should not be disregarded as well.

Some parents or family members did not always sell children; instead, some children were sometimes willing to be sold into slavery themselves. At this point, regarding the nineteenth-century pressure on the slave trade, Erdem (1996, 49) argues that this willingness of children hardens the intervention in the white slave trade. Also, if the slave children sold were free initially, they could demand their freedom in the future, just as seven free children who were sold to the Egyptian governor in 1853 later demanded their freedom (Toledano 1982, 19).

4.3.5 Enslaved at Birth

Another source of slavery is being born of a slave. In Islamic law, the slave is essentially subject to the status of the mother. Thus, an offspring born to a free father and a slave mother is a slave, and the property of this slave belongs to the mother's master. The exception is that the offspring is born to the master and his concubine; this offspring becomes free. Likewise, a child born to a slave father and a free mother becomes free (Aydın, TDV, "Köle"). This means that an offspring whose parents were slaves could inherit their slavery status in Islamic law. Children born of a free man and a slave woman were also considered slaves. In other words, it was technically possible to produce slaves in Islam, but Circassians stand out in this regard because they had a caste of slaves born into "hereditary slavery" (Erdem 1996, 52).

[4]BOA, HR.MKT.161- 41 (H-30-01-1273)

Nonetheless, keeping the children of slaves as slaves was not reserved only for Circassians; in some provinces of the Empire where slave purchasing power was limited, some slave owners benefitted from the Ottoman Sharia law that allows "hereditary slavery" (Erdem 1996, 53). For instance, in nineteenth-century Trebizond, the British consul Palgrave observed that children of slave parents or children born to a free father and a slave mother in Anatolia were considered slaves and sold on demand. This practice was not applied only in the Anatolian part of the Empire. In another example, Herbert, the Consul-General of Bagdad, reported that it was a frequently repeated practice in Arab provinces and that the children of Arab fathers and African slave mothers were sold (Erdem 1996, 53).

When all methods of enslavement are considered, it can be noted that enslavement by birth was not the most effective form of enslavement in the Ottoman Empire, as slaves were manumitted regularly (Erdem 1996, 52). This was in striking contrast to transatlantic slavery, in which it was easier and more common to obtain a slave population through the birth of new slaves (Lewis 2017, 13). This difference between Ottoman slavery and transatlantic slavery also attracted the attention of foreign observers in the nineteenth century. For example, Elliot records in a report he sent to the British Foreign Ministry that slaves were granted their freedom after serving up to seven years; plus, the number of children born into slavery was relatively low (Erdem 1996, 54).

4.4 Arrival of Slave Children to Istanbul

4.4.1 Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Slave Trade

Upon enslavement through one of the methods discussed above—kidnapping, birth, sale of children, and tribute-tax payment—women, men, adults, children, and people that were old, young, black, white, and overall from many identities and origins were brought to different parts of the Empire through the slave trade. This section will discuss the ways in which enslaved children were traded to Istanbul during the nineteenth century. First and foremost, it should be noted that not all slaves who were enslaved and put on each ship could reach the desired address, and "only the strongest among the slaves survived the hardships of the road to reach the relative comfort of city life in the Ottoman Empire" (Toledano 1998, 4). Slaves brought to the Ottoman Empire were brought from four main trade routes: the North African route, the Red Sea route, the Persian Gulf-Iraq route, and the Circassian-Georgian

route. The North African slave trade sources were some of the regions surrounding Lake Chad, the main ones being Vaday, Bornu, and Bagirmi. The black slaves were first brought to Benghazi, Tripoli, and Alexandria by caravan from the coastal cities of North Africa. Later, the slaves would stop at coastal towns on Mediterranean and Aegean islands such as Malta, Crete, Cyprus, and Rhodes and from there were taken to cities, primarily Istanbul, Izmir, and Thessaloniki (Toledano 1982, 21). The black slaves that were brought along the Red Sea slave trade were mainly Nubians and Abyssinians and were mainly sourced from the regions of Kordofan and Darfur in Sudan and the Sidama, Galla, and Gurage principalities in Ethiopia. From here, they were first taken to the port cities on the African side of the Red Sea by land, and then they were distributed to various regions. Finally, they were mainly sent to the Arabian Peninsula by crossing the Red Sea and cities such as Damascus, Mecca, and Medina (Toledano 1982, 21). The African regions that were the sources of the Persian Gulf-Iraq slave trade were mainly Zanzibar and Ethiopia. Many slaves came to Zanzibar from the regions surrounding Nyasa Lake in the South. Both sea and land were used for this trade route. A ship sailing from the coast of Zanzibar would enter the Red Sea and the Gulf of Basra. Overland trade was also carried out from the Basra region towards the inner parts of Iraq and the eastern Anatolian regions (Toledano 1982, 27).

As stated earlier, some white slaves were imported from the Circassian and Georgian regions of the Caucasus. Georgian and Circassian slaves were transported by sailing ships. They were brought to small ports on the Eastern Black Sea coast and from Trabzon, Samsun, and Sinop to Istanbul, Izmir, Thessaloniki, and Egypt (Toledano 1982, 28).

In regards to the ethnicities of these imported slaves, it should be noted that the Ottomans classified all Africans as "*zenci*" (black) or "Arab", but that they considered there to be a difference between Africans and Abyssinians. Abyssinian slaves were neither white nor black slaves, and were darker than whites but lighter than blacks, so they were characterized as somewhere in between.[5] With regard to the white slaves and their ethnicities, it was understood from their more detailed classification that the Ottoman central government had more information about the white slaves, as they knew the tribal names to which the white ethnic groups belonged and the differences between them. On the other hand, some Western observers were more precise about African slaves but could not demonstrate the same elaborateness for the Caucasus region due to the language barrier. So how did the Ottomans accomplish this? With the help of Circassian interpreters, the Ottoman central gov-

[5]See Jennings, "Black Slaves and Free Black in Ottoman Cyprus, 1590-1640," p. 288 for the difference among the terms "*zenci*," or "*zengi*," "*siyah*," "*arab*," or "*habeşi*"

ernment overcame this problem and understood the region and the slaves coming from the region (Erdem 1996, 58).

Having portrayed the ways in which African and Caucasus origin slaves were shipped to the capital city of Istanbul in the nineteenth century, this chapter now will proceed with the places where child slaves could possibly meet with some elite purchasers upon their arrival to the city.

4.4.2 Slave Bazaars and the Purchasing of Slave Children

So far, this chapter has presented the ways in which child slaves could possibly be enslaved. Above, it discussed the trade routes through which the slave children were probably brought to Istanbul. Upon their arrival, they were sold in different venues, including slave markets. In what follows, I will discuss the slave market in Istanbul, which was one of the places where child slaves were sold to their owners. In this regard, I will also explain other alternative places where slave children were possibly sold and discuss who were probably selling them.

Until a monolithic building was built during the reign of Ahmed I, Süleiman Pasha Mansion, the Old and New Bedestens functioned as slave markets. These places are near the Grand Bazaar, resulting in the sale of slaves in a central place. A market for the sale of slaves was located in the exact location in Tavukpazarı, northwest of the Nuruosmaniye Gate to the Covered Bazar. To be built in the place where all other valuable commercial commodities were being sold, slaves were also sold in the center of Istanbul, making them into a commodity easy to access. The slaves brought to Istanbul were unloaded at the Bahçekapı Square Pier and shipped to the slave market by ships (Toledano 1982, 52). Slave commerce was conducted in the Tophane district of Istanbul, which used to be a region where the port was located and numerous slave merchants resided. Tophane was the central region for "the larger and more lasting slave-selling enterprises that still stood in the 1860s" (Zilfi 2010, 216.). Istanbul had "the largest and busiest slave market in the Empire" until it was shut down in 1846. At this point, one could wrongly interpret that slaves were not sold and that the slave dealings were discontinued upon the slave market's abolition in 1846; however, it should be noted that after its abolition, the slave business "reverted to the back alley" and implemented private sales at slavers' or buyers' households (Toledano 1982, 53.). In this sense, a nineteenth century contemporary historian named Julia Garnett records that:

"Since the abolition of the public slave market, this traffic is carried on

> to a great extent by ladies of high rank, some of whom are themselves emancipated slaves... On the arrival of a fresh batch of girls, a broker is dispatched to the houses of the lady dealers who, if they have any vacancies, either drive to the establishment of the professional dealer or have the slaves brought to them for inspection. Children of from six to ten are most sought after by these amateurs who pay for them some 80 in seventeen years of age ten times that amount." (Garnett 1891, 403-404)

The slave dealings were carried out even in coffee houses near the shut-down slave market (Karamürsel 2015, 134). Since the slave business moved to other indoor spaces such as homes, slavers and slave businesses were not restricted solely to Tophane (Karamürsel 2015, 135).

A nineteenth century Ottoman elite, Melek Hanım, recorded that to acquire a slave, one would go to the Tophane neighborhood to visit the slave merchants there. The prices of the slaves varied depending on their abilities, appearance, and physical features. The slaves in the slave market were usually between the ages of twelve and thirteen; however, there were slaves between the ages of six and seven as well (Melek Hanım 1872, 157-158).

Who was trafficking in the slaves? Was it a profession only operated by professionals? Needless to say, the slave dealings were not exercised only by professionals; this profession was also fulfilled chiefly by non-professionals, which is the essential difference between the slave business in the Antebellum South and the Ottoman realm (Karamürsel 2015, 136). In addition to professional traders, several other ordinary people purchased and sold slaves in the nineteenth century. As Karamürsel reveals, upon moving to Istanbul, a Georgian man used his networks to acquire Georgian children to sell in Istanbul or Cairo (Karamürsel 2015, 137).

4.4.3 Conclusion

Before moving on to the employment of some slave children in some of the elite households of nineteenth-century Istanbul, this chapter first intended to outline the condition of slave children in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. Following a brief discussion on the concept of a child in the Ottoman context, the chapter went over various enslavement methods to better understand how children were enslaved. In this sense, it explained that some children were kidnapped, captured, or exchanged in return for a tax or tribute and consequently fell into slavery. Some children were sold into slavery by their parents or relatives in certain regions, while others were enslaved at birth. The imported slave children in the nineteenth century

were mostly of African and Caucasian origin. Upon their enslavement, they were sent to the city of Istanbul through varying slave trade routes that utilized both sea and land. Finally, this chapter explained that some slave children were placed in the slave markets in Istanbul to be sold until their abolition in 1846 and stated that after that, the slave trade was carried on through different illicit channels.

5. CHILD SLAVES IN ELITE HOUSEHOLDS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ISTANBUL

"One of my companions, he had only one wife but filled his mansion with several white and Arab concubines and a bunch of little Circassian girls..."

Ahmet Midhat Efendi [1]

5.1 Introduction

Regardless of whichever method had been applied to enslave children, some child slaves of Caucasian and African origin were sent to Istanbul in the nineteenth century. Before their arrival to the capital city, they had to go through a long, possibly treacherous journey, passing through the harbors or the polls of the Empire, sometimes against their will, sometimes by their intention. They were not always alone in that journey; at times, their mothers or siblings might have accompanied them. They were likely examined attentively, chosen, and purchased by different social groups of Istanbul.

In the nineteenth century, some of the well-to-do Ottoman subjects—some of whom held high-ranking state posts or were successful in their businesses—bought these imported slave children for various reasons. As they purchased them, they paid attention to specific criteria regarding the origin, ethnicity, gender, and physical appearance of the child slaves. Additionally, not knowing Turkish and not knowing the city were possibly and understandably one of the criteria in the selection process of the slave children. When they were taken into a home, the slave children were

[1] "Ahbabımdan yalnız bir zevcesi olan, fakat konağını müteaddit beyaz ve arap cariyelerle ve bir takım küçücük Çerkez kızcağızlarıyla doldurmuş." Ahmed Mithad Efendi, Esaret. (Ankara: Akçağ, 2014), p.14. Ahmed Mithad Efendi (1844-1912) was an Ottoman writer and journalist in the Tanzimat Era. In his long story named "Esaret", two Circassian servants in a household fell in love and were married with the approval of their master. In their first night, the two servants learned that they were paternal siblings who were kidnapped from a Circassian village and enslaved when they were children.

nurtured depending on how they were intended to be used in the future. They were taught Turkish, music, embroidery, good manners, along with the etiquette of the households of their well-to-do owners. In the households, the slave children were employed as playmates upon being given as presents to the free children of the household owners.

After examining how children were enslaved and how Caucasian and African children were imported to Istanbul in Chapter 4, I now analyze the reason why some Istanbulite elite favored children as opposed to adults. I also discuss what characteristics they paid attention to in buying slave children. There were child slaves in some elite households of Istanbul in the nineteenth century, but how was their unfree labor utilized in the household setting? What role did the intersection of their identities, such as sex, origin, and age, play in their employment? Finally, I inquire about the relationship between enslaved children and their well-to-do Istanbulite owners. I argue whether this relationship could be interdependent asymmetrically. With this aim in mind, this chapter first briefly discusses the Imperial Household to point out how and why some high-ranking state officials started separating from the Imperial Household and establishing their own households. In what follows, this chapter will discuss the characteristics of the slave children, the motivations and plans of the elite slave buyers, and the ways in which these slave children were educated and employed in some elite households. In doing so, it will mainly rely on well-known contemporary European travelogues and memoirs of Ottoman subjects.

5.2 Households of the Ottoman Empire

5.2.1 The Imperial Household

In the pre-modern period, the dynastic rulers were located right in the hearts of the imperial structures of the empires (Duindam 2011, 1). This was a characteristic pattern in which the Ottoman Empire was not an exception. From a top-down perspective, the Sultan was the head of the Imperial Household, and ruling class members were recognized as the servants of this household (Findley 1980, 7). Overall, the Sultan's household was the basic organizational unit of Ottoman society (Göçek 1996, 22). These servants (*kuls*) of the sultan held specific prestigious titles and posts such as that of pasha or vizier, and belonged to the ruling class (*askerîye*) of the Imperial Household (*Bâb-ı Hümayûn*). The literal definition of the Ottoman term *askerî* means soldiers, and the Imperial Household is indicated by the Imperial

Gate rather than a regular gate (*bâb*).

The ruling class was profoundly privileged, prestigious, respected, and excused from paying taxes in return for their service (Göçek 1996, 21-22). This ruling class (*askerîye*) was grouped into three subclasses: those engaged in military-administrative service (*seyfiyye*), religious service (*ilmiye*), and scribal service (*kalemiye*). Relying on one another, all groups made up the Sultan's extensive Imperial Household. The members of this household fulfilled four primary services for the Empire: administration, defense, tax collection, and justice. At this point, it must be noted that in this patrimonial structure of the Empire, those of the *ulema* ranks like *kadı* (judge), were exempted from being the "*kul*" of the Sultan (Erdem 1996, 7).

Besides the ruling class, *reâyâ*, meaning the flock, was the group of the Empire that paid taxes. "The ruled had no access to the Sultan's authority or any of the privileges associated with it," (Göçek 1996, 22) yet they were still expected to pay their fair share of tax to uphold the Empire.

There were specific sources and methods that were utilized to supply members to the Ottoman Imperial Household (*Bâb-ı Hümayûn*): first the *pencik* and *devshirme* methods, and later the purchasing of slaves from slave markets at leisure (Göçek 1996, 23-24) by the Imperial Household members or servants. The slaves who were sent as presents to the Sultan should also not be left out of the discussion. As seventeenth century Armenian historian Eremya Çelebi Kömürcüyan records below, it seems some people within the Ottoman upper-class also sent slave girls to the Sultan as gifts.[2]

> "The captives are lined up in the Slave Market like herds of animals, and those who come there choose the ones they like and pay the price. Fresh and stately girls, who are still virgins, are detained if the chief customs officers like them. The cruel Tatars destroy them after capturing them and keep only the very nice ones to sell at high prices. After they are bought at the customs, they are taken to the Turkish bath, washed, perfumed, and dressed in beautiful clothes. The girls' price was seven hundred *kuruş*, but we also saw that they were taken under five hundred. In Turkish history, it is written that there are captive girls who have been sold up to a thousand flori. These girls, Georgian, Circassian, and Russian, are presented to the Sultan as concubines by the aghas, pashas, khans, and sultans."[3] (Kömürcüyan 1988, 56-57)

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[2] In this present thesis, I utilize the following edition: Eremya Çelebi Kömürcüyan. İstanbul Tarihi – XVII. Asırda İstanbul. tran. by Hrand D. Anreasyan, ed. by Kevork Pamukcuyan. (İstanbul: Eren, 1988).

[3] "Esirler, Esirpazan hanı'nda hayvan sürüleri gibi sıraya dizilirler ve oraya gelenler beğendiklerini seçip

It should be noted that not all servants of the Sultan were slaves. There were freeborn Muslim officials as well. "The term *kul* (slave) came to be applied also to those officials who were not of slave origin, but were freeborn Muslims" (Erdem 1996, 6).

Regardless of the way the servants were acquired, all members of the Imperial Palace went through a series of special education and training events. As Halil Inalcık notes, they were trained at the Palace after the recruitment. An educational series specialized to the Palace was created, consisting of physical training and literary and religious education. Then, these recruited boys were assigned to particular posts or services based on their abilities (Inalcık 1973, 79). "The training at the Palace was highly selective and those pages who were deemed of limited capability were graduated in the early stages and usually employed as privates or petty officers in the household cavalry regiments. The rest of the boys, by far the larger group, would be 'sold' to Anatolian Turkish farmers to enable them to learn the language and customs of the Turks" (Erdem 1996, 8). The aim was to recreate the social identity of these people, introducing them to their new roles in society (Göçek 1996, 24). As they moved to the provinces as military and administrative officials, these members formed households of their own after living in the Sultan's household (Göçek 1996, 22). Hence, they became fully integrated into the Ottoman Imperial Household.

"The members of the ruling class were servants of the Sultan. The sultans may even have tended to execute *askeris* in order to confiscate their estates as soon as possible" (Erdem 1996, 7). However, how should this servant status be perceived? Were they slaves? If not, how can their status be understood? These questions were debated exhaustively by Ottomanists. Metin Kunt believes the term *kuls* refers to the servants of the dynastic family, while well-known historian Suraiya Faroqhi favors referring to the servants of the Sultan as servitors (Kunt 1983. Faroqhi 1994, 564. Toledano, 2016, 137). Ehud Toledano, Madeline Zilfi, and Leslie Peirce share the same view, and they claim that they should be regarded as enslaved people (Toledano 2016, 137. Peirce 2003, 315. Zilfi 2010, 15, 101–102). The aspect we should emphasize is not the fact that they could have specific abilities or high ranks, but the fact that they were highly dependent on the Sultan's will and that Ottoman Sharia law did not protect them. Zilfi accepts that these servants of the Sultan were not humiliated by the act of being sold in an auction, but they were still subject to being "the property of the Sultan" (Zilfi 2018, 124). Hakan Erdem suggests that

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bedelini verir alırlar. Henüz bakire kalmış taze ve endamlı kızlar, başgümrükçüler tarafından beğenilirlerse alıkonulurlar. Zira insafsız Tatarlar, onları esir ettikten sonra berbad ederler ve yalnız çok güzel olanları, yüksek fiyatlarla satmak üzere muhafaza ederler. Bunlar, gümrükte satın alındıktan sonra hamama götürülüp, yıkatılır, kendilerine kokular sürülür ve güzel esvaplar giydirilir. Kızların fiyatı yedi yüz kuruştur, fakat beş yüz altına alınanı da gördük. Türk tarihlerinde ise, bin flori'ye kadar satılmış olan esir kızlar olduğu yazılıdır. Gürcü, Çerkes ve bir çoğu da Rus olan bu kızlar, ağalar, paşalar, hanlar ve sultanlar tarafından odalılk olarak padişaha hediye edilir." (Kömürcüyan 1988, 56-57) Translation belongs to me.

the complexity of the juridical status of ruling-class members (*askeris*) increased in accordance with the rise of the slaves' ranks in the hierarchy (Erdem 1996, 7-8). The complexity of their *kul* status was due to the political culture of slavery among Ottoman administrative officials (*askeris*) (Erdem 1996, 10).

5.2.2 Elite Households

The classic method of acquiring servants for the Iimperial Sservices did not remain as the predominant solution forever. As discussed in the first chapter, the *pencik* practice transformed over time, and the child levy method (*devs̲hirme*) did not continue until the end of the Empire. According to Victor Louis Ménage, the last surviving *devs̲hirme* record dates back to 1705 (Ménage "*devs̲hirme*" IE2, II, 212). This had inevitable consequences which led to irreversible changes in the Empire. These changes and transformations started appearing by the second half of the seventeenth century and persisted until the fall of the Empire.

When the ruling class (*askerî*) realized that they could not rely on imperial methods and sources, they began to assemble their own men from their network to administrative positions (Göçek 1996, 33). Rifaat Abou El-Hajj observed that plenty of men in administrative positions in the Empire had been raised in the households of Ottoman viziers and pashas appointed to high offices in the second half of the seventeenth century, or related to them (Abou-El-Haj 1974, 439).

According to Jane Hathaway, Ottoman elite households consisted of one's relatives and individuals protected under that particular household's patronage (Hathaway 2002, 17). All of the men living in the households were not all from the same source. For example, some household members were ex-slaves bought at the slave market, while others were relatives of existing household members. Some others were displaced peasants or artisans who attempted to attach themselves to these households presumably to receive patronage (Göçek 1996, 23). Nevertheless, it should be noted that slavery played a crucial role as it was a fundamental "means of expanding one's household and networks in Ottoman society" (Erdem 1996, 112). For instance, Charles Wilkins examines elites who utilized slaves to build their households in seventeenth-century Ottoman Aleppo. His study shows the ways in which "slaves were integrated into selected military-administrative, merchant, and *ulema* (interpreters of religious knowledge) circles and families" (Wilkins 2013, 345-391). Regardless of the method of recruitment, being attached to a household provided shelter, profession, and social status for the person within it. Moreover, a household membership gave "a sense of belonging and identity" in social and political senses

(Toledano 2007, 29).

By the seventeenth century, some offices of the ruling class were physically separated from the Imperial Palace. The members started moving their residences out of the Palace. As İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı notes, it was Grand Vizier Derviş Mehmed Pasha who first brought his office to his residence in 1654 (Uzunçarşılı 2009, 249), blending the home and workplace This practice was subsequently followed by many. For instance, an Ottoman *defterdar*, or head of a financial department, started his business in his residence in 1676. By the eighteenth century, the Imperial Council (*divân-ı hümayûn*) was running the Ottoman administration in grand viziers' households. This shift meant that governmental administration was being held outside of the Palace and inside of the living spaces of many of the administrators (Göçek 1996, 51).

The ruling class members' houses were also state offices; therefore, men from their network gathered in the elite households and were trained there. The candidates were instructed on how to engage in bureaucratic correspondences and develop administrative or military skills. These newly recruited members of the households became the new candidates for opening administrative offices and posts (Göçek 1996, 32). These posts and positions could be anywhere in the provinces. Once they were assigned to a certain post, they became deputies of whoever's household they belonged to. The provincial notables consisted of these people, who went on to establish their own households and form rivalries with one another, competing for status (Göçek 1996, 52). According to Hakan Erdem, the best example of this rivalry might be observed between Mustafa Reşid Pasha and Grand Vizier Husrev Pasha. The Grand Vizier, a former slave of Abkhazian origin, famed for educating and training slave boys among the Ottomans, would assign former slaves to high administrative posts and exercise power through them. Among several servants attached to his household, İbrahim Ethem Pasha, a slave of Chios origin who belonged to Husrev, became the Grand Vizier of Abdülhamid II. The Tanzimat pashas did not have this same system of having slaves trained by private individuals to hold official service positions (Erdem 1996, 64-65). Not only was there consistent rivalry amongst the households (Hathaway 2002, 19), but also they created alliances with other households (Hathaway 2002, 17). One of the ways of creating alliances was through marriage. Inter-household marriage was an essential element of forming alliances between households to preserve common interests and goals, and to inherit income-generating economic assets (Toledano 2007, 27).

The decline of the child levy (*devs̲hirme*) tradition is not enough to entirely explain the changes and transformations of the rise of the elite and the elite household. In

the seventeenth century, a crucial development enabled the upper-class—primarily pashas and viziers—to accumulate financial power and prestige. According to Metin Kunt, one development was the introduction of the tax-farming system (*iltizām*). The tīmār system became outdated, and was gradually replaced with the tax-farming system (Kunt 1983, 95). Meaning "care or attention," the word *tīmār* referred to "non-hereditary prebends to sustain a cavalry army and a military-administrative hierarchy in the core provinces of the Ottoman Empire" (Inalcık 2000, 501). According to Mehmet Genç, *iltizām* meant "a private person collecting any state tax revenue in return for a certain annual fee" (Genç 2000, 154). Over time, the Imperial Household started relying on this tax-farming income. The more the Imperial Household leaned on the revenues of the tax-farming system, the more intense the rivalry amongst members of the Ottoman ruling class over the provincial tax revenues (Göçek 1996, 22). Mehmet Genç notes that a remarkable phenomenon emerged in 1695: a lifetime tax-farming system (*malikâne*) that assisted the Ottoman ruling class (*askerî*) to boost their power through provincial tax sources. (Genç 2003, 516-518)

Not only did these methods of collecting tax revenues help the ruling class members accumulate their wealth and power, but also their connections with the Imperial Household aided them. For example, if the sultan's servant was married into the sultan's household, he benefited from his wife's links to gain close friends and supporters from the Imperial Palace (Göçek 1996, 26).

5.3 Child Slaves in the Elite Households of Istanbul

To discuss the ways in which child slaves were employed in some of the nineteenth-century Istanbulite elite households and why they were chosen over adult slaves, this chapter has discussed the emergence of the imperial and the elite households at first to better understand the owners of the enslaved children and the setting in which they were raised and educated. This part will discuss the characteristics of the slave children and the potential reasons for purchasing them. Following an examination on the employment of slave children in elite households, this chapter will proceed with the relationship between elite owners and the child slaves. This chapter will conclude by discussing the gender aspect of the child slavery phenomenon.

As my survey of the pre-existing literature on this topic shows, child slaves in the Ottoman context are not being investigated for the first time. The previous scholarship was established by utilizing different archival materials and sources to reveal some of

the enslavement stories, which sometimes reveals children's or young adult's experiences in bondage in different regions of the Empire. Toledano told the deplorable story of a Circassian slave girl Şemsigül; Troutt-Powell unveiled the stories of two African slave girls named Yekta and Yasemin; Erdem wrote the story of a young African slave named Feraset; and recently, Karamürsel has told the story of another young Circassian slave girl named Fatma Leman.

This chapter attempts to analyze some of the contemporary domestic memoirs and foreign travelogues on this topic to draw attention to enslaved children's presence and their enslavement experience in some Ottoman elite households in Istanbul. Almost all sources utilized in this research were previously studied in the context of Ottoman slavery. In this discussion, I bring them up again, attempting to analyze within the child slavery context.

In the nineteenth century, Ottoman Istanbul had been visited by numerous female and male travelers, authors, ambassadors, intellectuals, and visitors from diverse cultures and backgrounds for different purposes. Most wrote about their views, remarks, and memories of their encounters and ventures. They all are invaluable to be used to have insight into numerous subject matters, including slavery. In this thesis, I do not dismiss some of the records of the pre-nineteenth century such as Lady Montagu's letters.

Thankfully, some Ottoman individuals, both male and female, recorded their autobiographies and memoirs. Rich in context, their accounts can be utilized for various subjects, including exploring the presence of slave children in Ottoman society as well as in some of the elite households. The degree of how much they witnessed varies; a few of the writers grew up in a household filled with adults or children, or some of them even owned child slaves as their playmates during their childhood. A couple of writers married former child slaves, while some only could observe their existence in other venues. With regard to domestic observations, I benefit from the memoirs of Hagop Muntzuri and Aşçıdede Halil İbrahim, Melek Hanım and Leylâ Hanım's accounts, and finally the records of Halide Edip Adıvar and Emine Fuat Tugay.

5.3.1 Characteristics of Slave Children

As will be discussed and analyzed in more detail below, most of the child slaves mentioned in nineteenth-century memoirs and travelogues were slave girls. This does not suggest that there were no slave boys. Rather, this might have been

related to the association of slavery with women. As Madeline Zilfi rightly argued, the role of women in domestic servitude gave the domestic slavery a distinguishing characteristic in the nineteenth century (Zilfi 2004, 1).

Another remarkable aspect is the fact that these slave children were brought from far away places such as the Caucasus and Africa. They, therefore, did not know the city, speak the Turkish language, or have any relatives or acquaintances to build a network. The age of these slave girls started at six or seven at the youngest and was between ten and twelve at the oldest.

Leylâ Hanım, a nineteenth-century female elite, noted that there were three categories of female slaves based on the type of service they conducted: domestic servants, concubines, and child slaves. To be utilized for domestic service, they had to be relatively tall, well-built, and of moderate beauty. The ugly or badly proportioned girls among them were called *molada*, and their price was moderately and comparatively lower. To be in the concubinage category, they had to be beautiful, graceful, well-proportioned, and between fifteen and twenty years old. Some child slaves consisted of those who were bought for the purpose of profit and chosen when they were minors between the ages of eight and twelve years old. They had been selected attentively; those who were pretty, well-proportioned, and held promise to improve even more with age were chosen for this category. They were kept apart from the common domestic servants, thinking that they could damage their attractive bodies or hands by engaging in that work (Leylâ Hanım 1994, 60-62).

The sources mention mostly slave girls rather than slave boys. However, there were slave boys as well. Leylâ Hanım also records some information about male slaves, especially the African eunuchs who constituted one of the most elite groups of Ottoman slaves in the mid-to-late nineteenth century (Troutt-Powell 2012, 131). She explains that most of the male children were kidnapped and enslaved from inner Africa. "Male children, usually Abysinnian, were captured in the depths of Africa by men without heart or pity, who then emasculated them between the ages of eight and twelve years, sold them secretly to Arab slave traders who, in turn, sold them secretly to others with considerable profit. They were then taken secretly to Istanbul" (Leylâ Hanım 1994, 92. Troutt-Powell 2012, 92). Once they arrived in Istanbul, they were tutored in basic hygiene principles, as well as taught how to read, write, and pray (Troutt-Powell 2012, 131).

A few points should be briefly mentioned from her memoirs in regards to her perspective on African slaves in general, which indeed reflects the prejudices of some of the elite circles within nineteenth-century Ottoman society. First, Leylâ Hanım distinguishes black slaves from Sudan and Abyssinian origin: Sudanese were com-

pletely black, and "those from Abyssinia were more of a chocolate color." Second, she takes note of the way Circassian slaves perceived African slaves and vice versa. "The Circassians were frightened when they saw the Negresses; the Negresses sadly viewed the first white people they had ever seen with great suspicion and considered them enemies" (Leylâ Hanım 1994, 70). Third, she underlines the language barrier: "The question of language was for them yet another cause of difficulty because they could never find anyone who could understand their dialect. Besides, they had no hope of becoming the wives or concubines of some great figure. They were thus fatally condemned to the most difficult of household work" (Leylâ Hanım 1994, 71).

To sum up, there was a clear distinction between slaves; their employment differed based on their gender, origin, and age. The child slavery was one form of slavery. The child slaves who were imported to the nineteenth century Istanbul and purchased by some elites of the city were mainly of Caucasus and African origin. They were enslaved through many enslavement methods, but the most featured ways amongst them could be the kidnapping. When they arrived in Istanbul, they knew neither the city nor the language. They were carefully selected by some well-to-do buyers. Last but not least, there was a racial biases and discrimination amongst the slaves.

5.3.2 Education of Slave Children

As stated above, child slaves acquired through the methods of child slave enslavement explained in Chapter 4 of this thesis were brought to Istanbul somehow and did not know Turkish and the city of Istanbul. More importantly, since they were purchased by some Istanbulite elites and started to live in mansions, they might have been deprived of the household rules, elite etiquette, good manners, and much more in the eyes of their owners. Thus, some questions arise: What was taught to children in some elite households? What was the purpose and motivation in teaching them?

Unlike slaves levied through the *devshirme* method, the slave children purchased by some Istanbulite elite in the nineteenth century were not sent to some families living in Anatolia to learn about native language and local culture anymore. Differently, the slave children in the elite households were tutored by their owners or someone in the household. They were taught Turkish, reading, writing, music, playing instruments and singing, embroidery, sewing, swimming, and good manners (Leylâ Hanım 1994, 60-62.). As noted before, they were not allowed to do anything which might negatively affect their hands and figures (Tugay 1963, 309-310.). It should also be noted that not every child slave might have gone through the same standard

education since this is closely linked to which elite households they were employed in. It could be also probable to speculate that there might have been a gender-based difference in the way they were educated.

For example, Leylâ Hanım, who was the daughter of Hekim Ismail Pasha, owned African and Circassian young slave girls. However, there were two Sudanese slave girls in particular whose names were Yekta and Yasemin that Leylâ wrote extensively about. Their story begins with them both being for sale together in the market and Leylâ's father purchasing them both at the same time. Yekta was taught how to read and write, as well as how to do housework, sewing, and embroidery, and was even instructed in swimming. Based on Leylâ's account, "Yekta enjoyed swimming through the Bosphorus every night" (Leylâ Hanım, 1994, 85-89. Troutt-Powell 2012, 130).

In another example, Halide Edip, who was one of the most prominent female Turkish literature writers and a distinguished social activist for women's rights, indeed grew up in households where slaves helped to raise her (Troutt-Powell 2012, 5). Her slave girl named Reshe was originally from Yemen before she was kidnapped and brought to Istanbul. She was taught Turkish by Halide, but until she became able to speak, Reshe was able to calm down by "singing songs from her homeland until she was no longer able to recall her native tongue" (Zilfi 2010, 151). Reshe learned Turkish and proclaimed to others that she was traumatized in the way she was kidnapped when she was playing nearby a group of slave merchants, explaining that she was forced to walk for days in the Abyssinian forests. When Reshe became able to speak Turkish, she continued to explain herself retrospectively, explaining the reason why on the first night in her new home, she was so scared. As Halide notes, Reshe had been told that "white" people in Istanbul would eat her (Adıvar 1923,168). Speaking the same language might also be unexpected for the elite owners to observe the ways in which how they were being perceived by some "black" people living far from the capital city.

It is unlikely that this phenomenon did not bring to mind the practice of *devs<u>h</u>irme*, to which the first chapter is devoted. This similarity does not guarantee that the two different phenomena were closely tied to one another or a continuum from one to the other. This might only allow historians to consider that the practice of acquiring and raising child slaves was indeed a long-lasting practice that was well-established in society but could have been embodied in different forms over centuries. In this case, it might also suggest that the thesis that the elites may have imitated the Imperial Household should be reconsidered.

5.3.3 Purposes of Purchasing Children

In the nineteenth century, some of the elites of the city of Istanbul bought child slaves and raised them as described above. It can be said that they did this out of nowhere and that they had various motivations and goals. As Leylâ Hanım mentioned, as can be understood from the training given, children were not trained to be employed in the domestic sphere doing housework such as cooking or cleaning. The child slave could not have been taught music and reading and writing for these domestic purposes. On the contrary, they may have been prevented from doing these activities because they could have been physically harmed. Then why were these children bought and trained? What were the aims of the elites of Istanbul? This question, which is the starting point of this thesis, has more than one answer. Now in this part, I will try to answer in the light of examples from the primary sources.

5.3.3.1 Marrying Slave Children Off with Fine Gentlemen

First, we observe that some slave girls in elite households were married after being brought up when it was time for marriage. Some slave girls were married to the sons of the owners of the mansions in which they were raised. Charles White, a British traveler who was in Istanbul in the first half of the nineteenth century, records that high-rank ladies bought and raised Circassian girls between the ages of eight to ten to be good and well-educated wives for their sons (White 1847, Vol II, 321). Some slave girls were married to not the household members but also other individuals living in the Empire. For instance, Mustafa Efendi, *charge d'affairs* of Egypt, was planning to marry one of his Georgian slave girls who "had already been in his house two years; and he hoped someday to give her a marriage portion and to see her comfortably established, as she was a good girl, and he was much attached to her" (Pardoe 1837, Vol. I, 114).

Marriage may not always be an existing motivation for purchasing and raising a slave child but may instead be an applied "solution" to send the raised female slaves out of the household. Melek Hanım, who was the wife of Mehmed Emin Pasha of Cyprus (1813-1871), did precisely that. In all sincerity, Melek details a memory of a Circassian slave girl she purchased when she was eight or nine years old. As she notes, Melek Hanım nurtured and tutored her to become a governess for Melek Hanım's young daughter, Aisha, after the Circassian slave turned fourteen years old. Eventually, she admits that she got jealous of the young Circassian girl's presence in the household. Melek Hanım was afraid that her husband, Mehmed Emin Pasha,

may want to marry her since it was permitted at the time to marry four women in Islamic law. When her husband was assigned to a post far away from the capital, Melek Hanım decided to take advantage of her husband's absence and marry that Circassian slave with a widowed soldier to send her away from the household (Melek Hanım 1872, 102-103).

Some of the elites who raised child slaves married some of them off. However, why were child slaves bought and raised in elite households preferred for marriage? Did the elites gain anything in marrying the female slaves that they trained and raised for years? It can be said that these unions might have brought some prestige and respect to the elite owners because it could be significant in whose household and by whom the wedded slave was raised. For example, when the Circassian female slave was married off as Melek Hanım planned, the groom of the slave girl came to Melek Hanım's house to visit her right after the marriage day and kiss her hands in order to express his gratitude towards her, saying "I am the husband of the young lady who was brought up in your house" (Melek Hanım 1872, 111).

To what extent could the grooms have gained respect or prestige from the marriages similarly to how the elite owners did? Now, contemporary accounts whose authors were married to people who grew up in the mansions or palaces of some of the elites should be mentioned. First, the marriage of Aşçıdede Halil Ibrahim will be discussed, followed by the marriage of Hagop Muntzuri's friend. Aşçıdede Halil İbrahim held many administration posts and was appointed to several different regions of the Empire. One day, as he notes, his mother started looking for a girl to marry him since he stayed single for a period of time that was considered long in her eyes.

> "Even though my mother is getting old, she and her friends started looking around for a (decent) person for me to marry. There was a Circassian concubine, whom Emine Hanım, the wife of a merchant named Mehmed Ali Aga, brought up from childhood, in a household opposite the deceased *Şeyhülislam*'s (the chief religious official in the Ottoman Empire) household in Suleymaniye, below the current *Şeyhülislam*'s household. Emine Hanım's mother was also Circassian, and she was a friend of ours." (Aşçıdede Ibrahim 1960,28)[4]

As the passage indicates, it seemed essential for Aşçıdede Ibrahim to provide the

[4]"Validem artık eteği elinde olduğu halde ahbapları ile beraber şurada-burada kız aramaya başladılar. Mukadderât-ı İlâhî Süleymaniye'de Şeyhülislam kapusunun alt tarafındaki eski merhum Şeyhülislam'ın konağının karşısında bir hanede Tüccerân-ı Mûteberândan Mehmed Ali Ağa namında bir zatın haremi Emine Hanım'ın çocukluktan tebriye ettiği bir Çerkes cariyesi varmış. Emine Hanım'ın validesi büyük hanım da Çerkes olup bizimkilerin ahbabıymış." (Aşçıdede Halil İbrahim: Hatıralar, 1960, 28). English translation belongs to me.

location and details of the household in which his Circassian wife was brought up. That household belonged to a merchant family located in Süleymaniye, and they were neighbors with the former chief religious official in the Ottoman Empire (*Şeyhülislam*). Emine Hanım, the lady of the highest rank in the household, raised a Circassian slave girl here, whose mother was also of Circassian origin. This part of his memoir gives valuable insight into the social circles of the author. Within the chapter, Halil Ibrahim informs his audience that his family was connected to Emine Hanım's mother in friendship. Emine Hanım perhaps invested in several other Circassian girls like the one that Aşçıdede Ibrahim got married to. Upon their marriage, Emine Hanım could have gained more status and esteem in society. Aşçıdede perhaps thought of stressing this detail since his wife was not an ordinary Circassian female slave, but the one nurtured in Emine Hanım's house.

Just like Aşçıdede, Hagop Mıntzuri (1886-1978)'s old friend had married a Circassian girl who was brought up in the palace of Ibrahim Efendi. Mıntzuri was only ten years old when he first stepped in Istanbul in the 1890s, where he remained for three quarters of a century. Unlike his counterparts, he refrains from writing much about what took place within the mansions of Istanbul. Instead, he provides insight into the districts, people, and scenery of Istanbul.[5] One day, he met a childhood friend named Selahattin, and he included in his own memoir what was discussed at the end of that encounter. It was indeed worth mentioning. As the author writes, Hagop and Selahattin, who have not seen each other for a long time—around 43 years—had a small talk on what had changed since they last saw each other, realizing that they both got married and had children. Hagop asked his friend where his wife was from, to which Selahattin replied with a laugh that his wife was Circassian and from Dagestan. Selahattin continues, "My mother married me. She was from the palace of İbrahim Efendi of the (imperial) dynasty" (Mıntzuri 2008, 76).[6]

It is known that this event took place in 1940 since the author himself states that when he calculated how many years it had been since the last time these two friends saw each other.[7] On top of that, it can further be interpreted that the Circassian wife of Selahattin might have been one of the slaves raised and educated in İbrahim Efendi's household before he married her.

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[5] In this present thesis, I benefit from the following edition: Hagop Mıntzuri, İstanbul Anıları, 1897-1940, trans. by Silva Kuyumcuyan, ed. by Necdet Sakaoğlu. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2008)

[6] "Müsaadenle şimdi İhsaniye'ye eşimin teyzesine gideceğim. - Eşin nereli? .. Çerkez. Dağıstanlı. (Gülerek) Saraylıdır, annem evlendirdi, o buldu. Hanedan'dan İbrahim Efendi'nin sarayından" (Mıntzuri 2008, 76).

[7] "1897'den 1940'a hesapça kırk üç yıl olmuş" (Mıntzuri 2008,76).

5.3.3.2 A Tool of Investment

As noted above, slave children were possessed for many purposes by some elites of nineteenth-century Istanbul. They were likely carefully selected amongst many other child slaves at the age of seven or eight and raised in households with special training. So much attention possibly was paid to them that they were not given any classical domestic tasks that could cause physical harm. Some children were acquired and raised for arranged marriages, while some others were to be sold at higher amounts in the future. Through the slave dealings, some elite slave owners might have made financial profits. In this part of the present thesis, I will discuss the reasons why some elite owners sold their slaves with the intention of making profits, as well as who the slave children's potential buyers were.

Selling the slave children when they grow up could have possibly appeared when the owner (1) did not require the child slave's servitude anymore, (2) got jealous and suspicious of child slave's existence around their husbands, (3) simply desired to emancipate the slave by her own will, (4) decided to expand her network and strengthen her social status, or lastly, (5) simply desired to make financial profits.

A contemporary observer, Lucy Garnett provides us with significant insight into one of the reasons for high-ranking ladies' interest in selling the slave girls. In the following quotation, Garnett writes about a nineteenth-century Istanbulite female elite, the wife of Minister Fuad Pasha named Behiyeh Hanım, and her desire to invest in child slaves. As Garnett notes:

> "The desire to possess an income independently of her husband had in the first instance induced this lady to engage in this profession, and her investments had turned out so well that in a few years, her house was transformed into a vast training school of saleable maidens. Having at one time a very large stock on hand Behieh Hanum became a little anxious as to the possibility of finding a ready market for them all and finally decided to have recourse to sorcery." (Garnett 1891, 407)

If Garnett's account is to be accepted, the exaggerated tone of the text should be disregarded. This way, it suggests several significant insights. First, it points out that some elite households were training their child slaves. They might have presented an education service, and therefore can be qualified as a training place. Second, it answers the questions mentioned above: why did some Ottoman elite women desire to make profits? As Garnett notes, they might have wished to have an income independently of that of their husbands.

To whom were they sold at higher prices, and why? Leylâ Hanım speaks of the prospective buyers, for whom these slave girls were prepared. These girls were sold to slave merchants who came to the palace and "always looked for good material." It seems that there had been offers, perhaps even through a process of bargaining, since the slave dealers "harassed the lady with all sorts of offers." It can be understood that the lady of the palace did not accept all of the slave dealers' offers, since Leylâ Hanım notes that "many times she made objections to the proposals" (Leylâ Hanım 1994, 61). The prospective buyers of these well-educated and high-quality slave girls were "always Egyptian princes, Tunisian Beys, rich moguls from India, wealthy merchants from Baghdad or Yemen, and fine gentlemen from all the corners of the world" (Leylâ Hanım 1994, 61). Just like that of Leylâ Hanım, Emine Tugay Hanım's account also gives insights on the customer profile of these raised slave girls.

> "On reaching marriageable age, these slaves were sold at high prices to the Egyptian princess, the Bey of Tunis, or millionaires in Muslim countries. The price of these girls varied from several hundred to a thousand gold pounds" (Tugay 1963, 309-310).

It could be said that some female elites' desire to sell their slave children after nurturing and educating them was indeed not restricted to the capital city. Still, its impact extended throughout the Empire's lands, perhaps connecting the periphery to the center. It even sometimes exceeded the Iimperial territories. Here, it appears that the slave merchant played a role in forging connections between sellers and buyers, connecting households to households and empires to empires. They could have acted as mediators, which allowed them to make profits from this business in return.

5.4 Employment of Slave Children in Elite Households: Playmate-Gifts

Some well-to-do Istanbulite members of the Ottoman society obtained imported slave children; they chose children instead of adults in the nineteenth century, and the reasons for purchasing and employing the slaves in the households differed. As noted earlier, some girls were given as "playmate-gifts for children of the prosperous or daughter-attendants for the lady of the household" (Zilfi 2004, 7). Some were purchased to be good and well-educated wives for high-rank ladies' sons (White 1847, Vol II, 321), while some slave girls were acquired to be sold with high profits in the future (Erdem 1996, 123).

Gifting child slaves to other children as playmates was not a practice implemented only in the Ottoman Empire. Some child slaves were given to other children as presents in some parts of America before emancipation. Unlike the Ottoman memoirs on this subject, which help us draw a framework only at a certain level, retrospective records of the adult slaves who experienced this when they were slave children in America before emancipation has helped build a few stories. As a result, a few theses, books, and articles have been produced on the subject.

Analyzing child slaves in the Ottoman context makes it possible to consider the existence of child slaves in the household from many perspectives and contexts. However, this study deals with child slaves in the context of domestic slavery. The responsibilities and duties given to child slaves should undoubtedly have been different from their adult counterparts. Beyond arguing or attempting to prove that child slaves perform domestic services in the classical sense, such as cleaning or cooking, this section will examine the tasks and employment examples they could fulfill as children. In some elite households of nineteenth-century Istanbul, it can be observed that child slaves were given as gifts to other children and in turn became their playmates. In what follows, the study first problematizes the phenomenon and then discusses the employment of some child slaves as playmate-gifts in the households.

When a well-to-do father, out of his "generosity," gave a slave to his or her child to be a playmate, sometimes as a birthday gift and other times for no reason, it could be considered a complicated situation from many angles. From a legal perspective, it meant that a father gave the property to his or her free child with no legal rights since slaves were considered property. Second, children have been perceived as the domain of others, particularly their parents, "because many children are often treated de facto if not de jure, as the property of their parents, [thus] distinguishing between the slave child and the free child can be a very difficult process" (Anna Dua 2017, 9). As a result, upon being delivered as a birthday present to another child, the slave child's "subordination and vulnerability are reinforced by becoming the 'property' of a person who was not capable legally of ownership independent from her parents' legal guardianship" (Sarah Winter 2017,54).

The free child's first contact with the "slave friend" probably happened at the very first moment when his father presented his "generous" gift to his child. It might not have been noticed at first, but the free child would eventually realize that his playmate-gift was different from the other slaves in the household, as this one belonged to him or her. They would not be like siblings, but not fully like a master and a slave either. The relationship would be different from the binary adult slave-master relationship, something specific to children. The child slave would have to

go if his master said come, and if the child master said let's play, he or she would have to play. Playing games may not seem like a very "heavy" and "serious" task at first glance. However, it is questionable how much the slave children enjoyed the games. Did the slave children have the right to win games, or be happy and rejoice in the games they played with their child masters?

> "In Bangladesh, an eight-year-old girl summed up the inequity governing her relationship with her employer's children: "When I play with the master's children, I must always let them win" (Blagbrough Craig 2017,159).

Does playing or being playmates constitute child slaves as a part of domestic slavery? If a child is enslaved in a household and a task is assigned to him which requires unfree labor, it could be considered a form of domestic slavery, especially if there is no environment to allow the child slave to express he or she does not want to play.

What happened in a nineteenth-century Ottoman elite household when Halide Edip was given a slave girl on her birthday by her father is worth mentioning. Born in Istanbul, Halide Edip Adıvar was one of the most prominent female Turkish literature writers and a distinguished social activist for women's rights. One day, Halide Edip was given a female slave as a birthday present from her father (Adıvar 1923, 166). That slave girl was somewhere between eight and ten years old and from Yemen. Her name was Reshe. As Halide notes, Reshe seemed scared on the first night she arrived. Halide, Reshe, and her sister slept the whole night in the same room (Adıvar 1923, 166). Finally, her sister got scared of Reshe and asked Adıvar, "What if Reshe was a cannibal and ate me?" Halide checked Reshe's teeth and told her that they looked the same as theirs. Next, her sister Nilüfer asked Halide to check if she had a tail, but as Halide notes, she did not (Adıvar 1923, 167). The issue of teaching Turkish should be noted. It is not difficult to guess that the slaves would describe what happened to them or probably express their sadness about it upon learning Turkish. How ready were the Istanbulite elite child slave owners who hoped their slaves would speak the way they wanted, perhaps with an Istanbul accent, to listen to what the child slaves went through? Did they expect this would happen?

Furthermore, it is predictable that there must have been some house rules that had to be followed. How were these taught to a small slave boy or girl who had just arrived and probably did not even know Turkish if there was no means of communication? What punishments were given to child slaves, who likely sometimes did not follow the rules or perhaps forgot? Unfortunately, neither Halide Edip's account nor other contemporary sources provide insights on this subject.

Both children, free and slaves, who were nurtured together in the same households, could have "remained close as they matured. Usually these close bonds persisted only between white children and slaves who became their personal servants. A trusted playmate from childhood often became a trusted servant as an adult in the household." This is exactly what happened between Halide Edip and her playmate Reshe when they grew up. When Reshe learned Turkish and explained everything she went through, such as how she was kidnapped when she was playing, enslaved by slave hunters, and shipped to Istanbul, subsequently, Halide promised Reshe they could dress alike and that she would have a beautiful room. In addition, Halide wrote her a "liberating paper," hoping that this would mean that Reshe would no longer technically belong to her (Adıvar 1923, 169). Even though Reshe was granted a manumission paper, she remained in the same household. "When Halide married, Reshe moved with her to her new home. They grew into women together, and Halide kept her promise about the clothes" (Troutt-Powell 2012, 143).

5.5 Relationship Between Slave Children and Elite Owners

The degree of dependency in the domestic servitude that one slave might experience also reveals differences in regard to where, when, and in whose household a slave was employed. This also affected the intensity of the enslavement experience of domestic slaves. Investigating the relationship between the African and Circassian child slaves and their Istanbulite elite owners, I propose an asymmetric dependency instead of a conventional and binary dependency model in which the children slaves highly depended on their elite masters.[8] In light of the sources discussed above, it appears high-ranking elites of Istanbul highly profited from the African and Circassian children's enslavement. Those elite ladies who possessed Circassian children slaves were primarily the wives of high-rank state officials or greatly respected and wealthy merchants, but male elites played a significant role as well.

Some child slaves were owned at around seven or eight years old by some of Istanbul's elite and raised in their households. They were provided shelter, clothing, food, healthcare, and education, along with a sense of belonging and identity. In this regard, being brought up in an elite household could distinguish those Circas-

[8]I found inspiration to use the concept "asymmetrical dependency" from the studies, conferences, and publications of Bonn Slavery and Dependency Studies at University of Bonn. I intended to adapt the concept and the perspective to my research to assess the relationship between some İstanbulite elites and their enslaved children. I had previously presented a paper in an e-symposium organized by BCDSS in March 2021, where I attempted to analyze Circassian young slaves from "asymmetrical dependency" perspective for the first time.

sian female slaves from other Circassian female slaves in the market or society and provided an (in)visible status for those slaves, since the household the slave belonged to possibly mattered in shaping their lives.

At first sight, it seems that only the child slaves were profoundly dependent on their owners. However, some of their elite owners were similarly significantly dependent on them. By possessing Circassian and African child slaves at young ages, it could be said that they had initially acquired a social occupation for themselves: some high-ranking ladies now had considerably significant roles. They perhaps believed that they saved the lives of those little girls, raising them, teaching them housework, and marrying them off. As the little slave girls, who they raised from childhood, went out of the household by marriage, some elite ladies of Istanbul also saw their courtesy, decency, and virtue leave the household. Thus, their elite status and prestige in society could be increased. Not only that, but some slave owners also sold those child slaves after raising them as some female elites used to purchase child slaves at lower prices to sell them in the future at higher prices. Therefore, they would make high profits. In this sense, it would not be wrong to propose that some female elite of nineteenth-century Istanbul were investing in Circassian child slaves brought from the Caucasus.

The relationship between Circassian and African child slaves and their female elite masters could be interdependent. If so, the reciprocal dependency between them would not be symmetrical since some owners had the right to control and make decisions on behalf of their slaves. For example, if owners were to decide to sell or marry them off or what and how to teach them. Also, they might have shown motherliness and masterhood, but this depended on their will, again.

Needless to say, everything did not go well all the time. Some slaves who were acquired to be raised for different purposes with different motivations could sometimes attempt to escape and end the relationship with their owners. Since there were newspapers and a culture of making missing persons reports in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, some runaway child slave reports were able to be detected. For example, *Cerîde-i Havâdis* (Journal of News) was one of the first newspapers published, and it released several missing persons announcements, including several written about slaves. On April 1, 1843, while walking around Rumelia, a runaway 'Arab' (Afrikan/black) slave aged thirteen or fourteen was identified and caught. He was being asked about his owner, but he could not reveal who the owner was, either his name or his profession. In response, he was handed over to *Tophane-i Amire* (The Ottoman Royal Cannon Foundry), where he stayed for more than fifteen days, but still the owner was not found. Therefore, if any 'Arab' slave that got lost

matched the released description, they could visit the Tomruk Room in *Tophane-i Amire* and try to identify the slave.[9]

In another report of a missing person in *Cerîde-i Havâdis*, an 'Arab' (Afrikan/black) slave, estimated to be around ten or eleven years old, escaped from Istanbul on December 16, 1843. While he wandered around the Rumeli Lighthouse, the officers caught him and immediately took him to *Tophane-i Amire*. The owner had not been revealed yet, as the child slave did not know the name and profession of the owner. Those slave owners who had such a loss should refer to the Tomruk Room in *Tophane-i Amire*.[10]

At this point, it should be noted that these child slaves' escape attempts are known not because they were successful, but because they failed. In light of these two missing reports, it can be noted that the caught slaves were not held by the local *kadı* as it was done during the classical age; rather, they were being held in *Tophane-i Amire* (The Ottoman Royal Cannon Foundry) during the Tanzimat Era.

Some relationships continued even after the emancipation of the slaves. As it was discussed above, the relationship between Halide Edip and her playmate-gift slave girl named Reshe carried on even after Reshe was granted "liberating papers."

5.6 Gender Aspect: Slave Girls, Female Owners, and Women Writers

In the Ottoman context, slaves were to be found in several aspects of life at any given point in time (Toledano 2002, 57). In general, slave labor was practiced in different areas and settings: domestic or outdoor tasks, respected or unrespected works, duties they were qualified for or unqualified for (Zilfi 2018, 18). However, what form of dependency and slavery one might have encountered in the Ottoman realm was highly dependent on time, space, and context. For instance, the most prominent "share of the demand for slaves in the Tanzimat period was generated by the urban classes, and the bulk of slaves were employed as domestic servants"

[9] "*13-14 yaşlarında bir Arap Köle Rumeli taraflarında gezerken, fark edilerek yakalanıp sahibi sorulmuş, ancak sahibinin kim olduğunu, adını ve şöhretini söyleyememiştir. Tophane-i Amire'ye teslime edilerek 15 günden fazla kalmış ancak sahibi çıkmamıştır. Bu eşgale uygun Arap köle kaybeden varsa Tophane-i Amire'de Tomruk Odası'na uğrayarak bilgi sahibi olabilirler.*" Ahmet Oğuz. (1994). Ceride-i Havadis Gazetesi'nde çıkan haber yazılar ve değerlendirmesi. MA Thesis. p.95. This reference in the MA thesis of Ahmet Oğuz was not found in the cited volume and number of *Ceride-i Havadis* newspaper.

[10] "*Tahminen 10-11 yaşlarında bir Arap köle İstanbul taraflarınan kaçarak Rumeli Feneri tarafında gezerken, memurlar yakalayarak Tophane-i Amire'ye getirmişlerdir. Sahibinin isim ve şöhretini bilmediğinden sahibi henüz ortaya çıkmamıştır. Bu tür kaybı olanların Tophane-I Amire'de Tomruk Odasına başvurmaları gerekmektedir.*" Ahmet Oğuz. (1994). *Ceride-i Havadis Gazetesi'nde çıkan haber yazılar ve değerlendirmesi.* MA Thesis. p.95 This reference in the MA thesis of Ahmet Oğuz was not found in the cited volume and number of *Ceride-i Havadis* newspaper.

(Erdem 1996, 62). In the nineteenth century, most of these domestic servants were female slaves predominantly of African, Circassian, and Georgian origin (Toledano 2016, 148). From a gendered perspective, the role of women in domestic servitude gave the domestic slavery a distinguishing characteristic in the nineteenth century (Zilfi 2004, 1).

When one looks at the available primary sources, the bulk of the travelogues or memoirs shed light on the Ottoman domestic servitude in the imperial or elite households, were penned by Ottoman, Ottoman-Turkish, and European women writers. Concerning the usage of these sources as primary sources, one should filter them from a critical eye and prove their findings and observations by comparing them to one another, and even with archival sources if possible, since their narrations might reflect their perspectives, preconceptions, and general subjective understanding of what they saw.

During the mid-to-late nineteenth and early twentieth century a remarkable number of European female travelers wrote of their adventures and encounters in the Ottoman Empire. Why did harem and Imperial Households attract such extraordinary attention? As Reina Lewis notes,

> "There is no denying it–as a topic, the harem sold books from the eighteenth century on, whether you wrote about living in one, visiting one, or escaping from one, any book that had anything to do with the harem sold. Publishers knew it, booksellers knew it, readers knew it, and authors knew it. And women the world over who had lived within the harem's segregating system knew it too" (Lewis 2004, 12).

How and when did this trend emerge? Why were female writers interested in the lives of those living in the harem to this extent? It can be said that "travel outside Europe was a male experience" before the eighteenth century (Melman 1992, 10). Lady Montagu's *Embassy Letters*, written in the first half of the eighteenth century, is the first example of secular work. Montagu's letters played a crucial role in making harem literature a tremendous and attractive area for women to venture into intellectually. This new phenomenon, "curiosity about the Mediterranean Orient, arose about the time of Napoleon's conquest of Egypt in 1798" (Melman 1992, 10). By the second half of the nineteenth century, the harem theme was found predominantly in the work of women who wanted to produce written work exploring differences across cultures (Lewis 2004, 13).

Nevertheless, not everyone was able to see the Imperial harem; as the fascination around the harem grew, it became more challenging for passing travelers to earn

admittance to the harems every year (Lewis 2004, 14). Consequently, a particular literature on the harem in the elite households emerged. That is why foreign women began "to visit and report on Muslim households from less elevated social strata, providing a view of harems of the middle classes rather than only the imperial elite" (Lewis 2004, 14-15).

Regarding the conditions and the developments of the nineteenth century, there could be other reasons and motivations behind the passion for the Mediterranean. First of all, maritime and land transport improvements had raised women's mobility, and women could more easily travel by train. With these developments, travel to the Mediterranean became more accessible and more affordable after the 1830s (Melman 1992, 11). More importantly, European imperialism made several world regions "safe and secure" for women travelers. "This meant that more women were visiting the Middle East, still most often with male relatives but sometimes now alone" (Lewis 2004, 14). Finally, the Orientalist literature production discussed above made the East more "attractive and appealing" to visit in regards to women, folklore, clothing, the harem, and social life. In the context and methodology of Ottoman history, these texts are highly significant since they are the fundamental source of information on harem life and domestic slavery in Ottoman households, which were extremely difficult to obtain.

In the Ottoman context, most of these sources were written by female writers who visited Istanbul and stayed for a specific time period for varying purposes. It should be underscored that even though there are alone travelers, some of these European women visited Istanbul with their husbands or any family members who were appointed to specific diplomatic posts in Istanbul, such as ambassador. This aspect also explains how these writers were able to observe some elite households' harems, so they could write about slave children as many times European visitors or high position holders were invited to Ottoman statemen's households. For example, French historians Jean-Henri Abdolonyme Ubicini and Theophile Gautier, who were probably in Istanbul more or less at the same time as Julia Pardoe, also might have contacted and dined with some Ottoman state officials in the same way that Pardoe did. Nevertheless, they do not provide any insight about the child slaves in the households they visited unlike Julia Pardoe. Instead, they both provided similar details that caught their attention, such as the structure, decoration, and visitors of the household, the physical appearance of the people, and the taste of the food.

Still, Ubicini in particular paid attention to the forms and practices of slavery since he provides significant information about the legal aspects of the practice of slavery, such as the methods of manumission, the slave market, the different forms of slavery,

and details about Circassian, Georgian, and Abyssinian slaves in general (Ubicini 1856, 147-152). The reason he did not observe the slaves but rather wrote about the institution of slavery is perhaps because he was not in the harem part of the mansion, which was separated for only women, but in the *selamlık* section of the house, where the part of a house was reserved for only men. If that is the case, then this is highly related to why most of the available primary sources on domestic and child slavery in the households are produced by women writers. In regards to the child slavery in the late Ottoman Istanbul, the majority of the slaves were girls because the slavery obtained a distinguishing characteristic in the nineteenth century. The owners who nurtured and tutored them for specific employment were mostly female elite owners of the slave girls. The authors who recorded the phenomenon of the high-ranking female elites of Istanbul raising slave girls were foreign women. The women were the ones to write about women.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with Caucasian and African child slaves in some elite households in Istanbul in the nineteenth century. In that time period, Circassian and Georgian children from the Caucasus region and mostly Sudanese and Abyssinian children from Africa were enslaved, and some of them were brought to Istanbul. By analyzing local and foreign travel books and memoirs, this chapter attempted to touch upon the employment areas in which child slaves could possibly be used in some elite households in Istanbul, their differences compared to adult slaves, and the reasons why the elites could prefer children. This chapter showed that some elites of Istanbul in the nineteenth century were purchasing Circassian and African child slaves and upbringing them in their households. After upbringing them, some owners were later selling them with higher profits for varying intentions, including investment purposes. Others were marrying them off with fine gentlemen inside and outside of the Empire's territories. As a result, they perhaps were able to increase their elite status, prestige, and network. African slave girls were given as playmates by some elites to their children as birthday presents. Also, it is argued that some elite owners and child slaves had a mutually dependent relationship, that not only the children were dependent on their masters, but also some of the elites were dependent on child slaves to maintain their prestige and status. Last but not least, this chapter discussed the gender aspect of this phenomenon and the fact that foreign female authors were writing about the purchasing and upbringing of slave girls by female elites of Istanbul. It argued that female travellers were able to enter harem parts

of the elite households, which is why they could observe and write about the slave girls of the late Ottoman Istanbul.

6. CONCLUSION

Relying on some selected nineteenth-century travelogues and memoirs, not to mention the pertaining secondary literature, this thesis examined the enslaved children in some elite households of nineteenth-century Ottoman Istanbul. The existence of child slaves in the elite households was not unearthed in this study for the first time; they were already known. However, many aspects of their presence and employment had not been investigated thoroughly before. This study intended to explore some unrevealed aspects of the institution of child slavery in the late Ottoman Empire. With this aim in mind, it primarily argued why some Istanbulite elites demanded slave children instead of adults and the ways in which they used them in their households. This inquiry consequently revealed some aspects regarding slave children in some of the elite households of the Empire, such as the desired characteristics in selecting the child slaves, the motivations of the elite slave buyers, and the ways child slaves were employed in nineteenth-century Istanbul. It further aimed to examine the relationship between the owners and their unfree children. It suggested that not only the child slaves were dependent on their elite owners, contrary to what might have been assumed at first sight, but also the owners were dependent on their presence. Therefore, it was instead a mutually interdependent relationship. However, this interdependent relationship between the two was not equal since the elites that owned child slaves had the authority to make critical decisions over their slave children. This thesis suggests that this relationship was most likely an asymmetrical dependency. After analyzing that, this study finally discussed the link between slave girls, female owners, and women writers through a gender perspective.

In order to contemplate the child slavery phenomenon in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Istanbul thoroughly, this study first intended to address some of the classical Ottoman slavery systems to discuss other forms of child enslavement had been used in the Ottoman Empire before the nineteenth century. Before delving into the enslaved children in the late Ottoman Istanbul, the thesis briefly discussed the *devshirme* system in which some children living inside the borders of the Empire

had been levied for administrative-military purposes. Nevertheless, the *devshirme* was not the first formula that the Ottomans had developed to recruit soldiers and train loyal administrative officials. It was the *pencik* system that the Ottomans used before, taking one-fifth of the war captives from its soldiers.

Using some fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Ottoman historical chronicles, the first chapter discussed when the *pencik* system was first introduced, by whom it was introduced, and the possible reasons behind this idea. In addition to that, the ways in which the selected captives who were then named "*pencik* boys", were trained and assigned afterward were also mentioned. The Ottoman state did not only collect one of the five captives as taxes for itself. Soon after, the cash equivalent of the captive's value was introduced as an alternative tax option. This tax was also named the *pencik* tax. Over time, this monetary *pencik* tax had been changed to a general slave tax collected on all imported slaves. Thus, it would be determined who paid the tax and did not pay the tax. A document called *pencik* was given for the detection of who illegally brought slaves to the Ottoman lands. In short, the term *pencik* and its meaning alters depending on the context.

With regards to the classical *pencik* system that called for the collection of one-fifth war captives, the chapter demonstrated some possible problems that might have been encountered while applying the *pencik* system and what might have been done to eliminate those problems. Perhaps one of the most critical problems encountered was that not all of the one in five captives collected were as the Imperial Household wanted. The Imperial Household might not have been able to educate all of the captives with various identities, from the ages of seven to seventy years old, and may not have been able to upbring loyal statesmen amongst them as it desired.

Nevertheless, some problems may have been solved, but some structural problems could not be sorted out like the one mentioned above. That is why the Ottoman Imperial Household might have decided to introduce the *devshirme* system. In this sense, this thesis briefly discussed the *devshirme* system. It attempted to reveal which new features were brought up in this new formula, unlike the *pencik*. Certain rules and procedures had been established and revised about the selection, education, and employment process of the boys. In regards to the first one, this time only mostly children of a specific age would be levied to increase the likelihood that they would be educated and trained more easily. In addition, although it is not known how much it could have been applied in practice, certain attention was probably paid to the fact that the children of the *devshirme* were brought up from good families, did not speak Turkish, and did not know the city of Istanbul. This thesis argued that these characteristics might be significant as they could resemble those sought

by the nineteenth-century Istanbul elite in their choice of child slaves.

Having explained the classical Ottoman slavery systems to discuss one of the long-standing form of child enslavement, the present thesis moved on to the nineteenth century. To give a full picture of what the child slaves went through before they were brought to Istanbul and sold in the nineteenth century entered some elite households, it first addressed the ways in which some children were pulled into slavery, were exported to Istanbul's slave markets, and met their owners. Thus, the study discussed the enslavement methods of children, nineteenth-century slave trade routes, and their conditions. It appeared that the slave girls and boys found in nineteenth-century Istanbul were primarily of Caucasian and African origin. At this point, this study presented that child slaves were purchased for different purposes, and that as a result, their employment areas also differed, as well as their futures. Despite the ban on the African slave trade in 1857, the black slave children continued to be imported into the capital city. The white slave trade's volume was affected by the Crimean War with Russia in 1853-1856 in that there was a considerable increase in the export of Circassian children to Istanbul, something which carried on into the following decades.

After the arrival of the children, some child slaves could be sold openly in the slave market in Istanbul until its abolition in 1846. In accordance with the pre-existing literature, this thesis showed that the sale of slave children was not restricted to the market but carried on in several alternative venues. In nineteenth-century Istanbul, the social group that mainly possessed child slaves was some of the elite subjects of the city. Most of those who played an active role in the "investment" of child slaves were female subjects. Having child slaves, raising them, and educating them could have provided them with prestige, a social occupation and purpose, and a reliable person to keep in their networks in the future. This study proposed to refer to the fondness of some of Istanbul's elites for child slaves, their future plans for them, and all other aspects of this process as an "investment." As this thesis presented, some elites could soon sell the slaves they acquired at a young age for higher prices in the future after giving them a good education, ensuring they spoke excellent Turkish or another language too, as well as building up their talents through training them to play an instrument, cook, or do embroidery work. In this way, this dissertation showed that some elite women were able to make financial profits from selling or marrying off their slaves after raising child slaves from a young age.

This thesis examined the ways in which enslaved children were employed in some of the elite households of nineteenth-century Ottoman Istanbul. From a gendered perspective, it can be seen that slave owners had different investment plans for girl

and boy slaves. According to the primary sources based on domestic and foreign observations, which primarily were nineteenth-century memoirs and travelogues, this thesis showed that some women with status residing in Istanbul did not only raise and sell slaves at high prices but also married those female slaves off to individuals from their own networks. In this sense, this dissertation showed that this practice of arranging marriages indeed provided prestige and privilege to the slave owner, as well as adding value to the slave.

This study additionally dealt with the relationship between some Istanbulite elites and their slave children of Caucasian and African origin. At first sight, it appeared that child slaves were highly dependent on their elite owners; however, this thesis proposed an asymmetrical dependency between them, in which some elite owners, too, were reliant on their child slaves rather than a traditional binary master-slave relationship. In this interdependent relationship, some elite owners had a critical degree of authority over the enslaved children, which enabled them to make critical decisions in the children's lives. Due to the uneven distribution of authority, the proposed relationship is not symmetrical.

While studying the children of Caucasian and African origin in the households of some elite families in late Ottoman Istanbul, this preliminary research benefited from the Ottoman archives in Istanbul, the travelogues written by the visitors to the Empire at that time, and the memoirs penned by Ottoman individuals. This thesis did not give a voice to the voiceless; not a single picture of a slave has been unearthed, as no memoir written by a slave or a former slave has been discovered yet. In the future, there could be archival documents in different archives other than those in Istanbul, perhaps in another language, or a memoir that may be discovered to hear the individual voices of slave children and to better understand what they endured from their own point of view.

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