

Interreligious Relations in 17th century Istanbul in the Light of Immigration and Demographic Change¹

Dedicated to the Memory of Stephane Yerasimos

This article attempts to shed new light on the heightened interreligious tensions in seventeenth-century Istanbul in the context of immigration and changes in the composition of the urban population. It is well known that Christian immigrants flooded Istanbul in the early 17th century, and that there were as many as 62,000 non-Muslim adult men registered in the *cizye* register of Greater Istanbul in the 1690s. After re-examining the sources used by the pioneers of Istanbul's urban history, such as Robert Mantran and Stephane Yerasimos, in addition to some fiscal edicts and court records, I consider them alongside the total population of the city (300,000 to 400,000) estimated by leading Ottomanists. It seems that the non-Muslim population went through a sizeable increase over the 150 years leading into the late 17th century, at which time it probably accounted for a half or even more of the population of the Greater Istanbul area. The whole process would have adversely affected intercommunal relations and provoked tensions and violent incidents at many levels of urban life, as we can glean from the period's historical records. At the same time, however, one should not forget that the complex dynamics of non-Muslim immigrants settling down in Istanbul involved conversions, as well as demands for immigrant wealth and labour from existing social structures such as *mahalles* and janissary regiments, which makes it more difficult to characterize the interreligious relations of the time in a simple way.

Introduction

The history of interreligious relations is a crucial arena in which to examine the characteristics of the Ottoman Empire; so much so, indeed, that for Ottomanists it is a rather touchy and sensitive subject, and has never been an easy subject to study.² The tragic events of the nineteenth and early 20th centuries still silently

¹ An earlier version of this article was published in *The Korean Historical Review (YOKSA HAKBO)* 226 (2015): 467–510.

² See MASTERS 2004: 1–5 for an account of the difficulties in studying interreligious relations in the Ottoman Empire and the reasons why scholars have often shied away from studying them.

haunt us, leaving many of us incapable of considering the interreligious relations of the earlier centuries without being reminded of their terrible end. While the popular literature has dwelt on extreme images of hatred, the scholarly literature has for decades portrayed Ottoman interreligious relations rather more positively. Although myths about a mosaic-like *millet* system made up of religious communities each separate, autonomous and hierarchically organized, have been largely discredited,³ mainstream Ottomanist academia has continued to emphasize the general coexistence of Muslim and non-Muslim communities before the 19th century.⁴ This positive view of course has some truth to it, but continues to overlook some of the more difficult questions, such as how to understand the interreligious troubles of the 17th century.

In the 2000s, however, some scholars began to take a hard look into the more delicate aspects of intercommunal relations. After decades of positive evaluations, a critical look or two was probably in order. According to Eleni Gara, for many Muslims and non-Muslims among the Ottoman subjects, “living together with religious others was a fact of life they would gladly dispense with if they only could” (GARA 2017: 80). With reference to the 17th century in particular, two important books on conversion also opened new avenues of research: one was Marc Baer’s *Honored by the Glory of Islam* (BAER 2008) that focused on the reign of Mehmed IV, which was coloured by hard-line Kadızadeli policies toward non-Muslims and non-Muslim religious institutions; the other, adopting a broader time frame and appealing to the interesting theoretical framework of “confessionalization,”⁵ was Tijana Krstić’s *Contested Conversions to Islam* (KRSTIĆ 2011), which delved deeply into the layered dynamics surrounding the phenomenon of conversion. In a nutshell, these books addressed the details of religious malignance and the violence that took place due to the divisions in religious ideas. They thus registered an important aspect of the reality. Since then, there has been a boom in studies of Ottoman “Sunnitization/confessionalization” that look at the conflicted intercommunal relations of the 17th century from the

³ LEWIS & BRAUDE 1982 includes many articles that revised many of the stereotypes. For a recent example, KENANOĞLU 2017 (first published in 2004) is a detailed empirical study of Ottoman non-Muslim communities based on Ottoman documents, and shows that the Ottoman government definitely controlled Ottoman non-Muslim authorities by controlling appointments and tax collection—a sharp contrast to the image of autonomy.

⁴ For a good introduction to and critique of the historiography of Ottoman interreligious relations, see GARA 2017.

⁵ This concept has gained considerable currency in the Ottoman field, but is not without its critics. Interestingly, Baer seems to be against the use of this concept in Ottoman contexts (see Baer 2012: 391–394). In addition there are some concerns about the concept of “confessionalization” being too closely associated with European early modernity, and thereby tacitly vindicating the Decline Paradigm to which Ottoman history has so long been subjected. See SHAFIR 2016: 7–8.

standpoint of religious principles, state ideology and social discipline, and are indeed excavating hitherto-neglected aspects of religious thought and practice.⁶ While I admire this literature, and have drawn much inspiration from it, it does not seem to provide a complete explanation of what happened between the Ottoman religious communities of the time. In order to complement that literature, therefore, I propose to turn to something more down to earth.

While working on *sicills* and other documents on Istanbul from that period, I became convinced that without considering the magnitude of immigration and population change, and the social processes by which immigrants settled in Istanbul, the broader picture of interreligious relations could not be properly understood. Grasping the dramatic events which characterized interreligious relations of the 17th century requires that we consider more dimensions of the context and more causal factors than religious ideologies alone.

Here I propose to explore the large-scale migration and consequent changes in the makeup of the population in and around the greater Istanbul area, during the period that concerns us. Migration in the 17th century was a major phenomenon, and indeed seems to have been an empire-wide trend, yet it is very inadequately understood. Given the practical constraints on my research, I will be able to focus only on the Istanbul area and even then in a very rough and impressionistic way, and with a focus on Christians as they come up most often in the sources. Nevertheless, this will still be a useful means to reveal certain hidden dynamics within the unusually high tensions between religious communities, and especially so since Istanbul was where imperial policies and social trends were formed, and where discrepancies could easily be perceived between the ideal of its being a Muslim holy city and the reality of its having a sizeable non-Muslim population. Out of the generally peaceable interreligious relations in pre-19th century Ottoman Istanbul, the 17th century is a rather glaring exception, with the upheavals caused by Kadızadeli, the executions of five (!) Greek Orthodox patriarchs,⁷ (semi-)forced conversions,⁸ an increase of neomartyrs,⁹ the eviction of Jews from the central commercial harbour of the Golden Horn,¹⁰ the extraordinary conversion episode

⁶ For prominent examples, see BURAK 2013, KRSTIC 2013, TERZİOĞLU 2012a, 2012b, and 2013. Indeed, according to GARA (2017: 89), a consensus is being built around the concept of confessionalization.

⁷ KERMELI 2017: 751, TELLAN 2011: 59–79.

⁸ BAER 2008: 179–203, Chapter 9, “Hunting for Converts.”

⁹ SARIYANNIS (2005–2006: 250–251) reports that cases of neomartyrs increased spectacularly in the latter halves of both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and are especially concentrated in the 1650s (10 cases), 1670s (6 cases) and 1680s (8 cases). See also KRSTIC 2011: 121–142. Even the chronicle of Naima records a *zimmi* insulting the Prophet Muhammad in public to purposefully bring execution upon himself. See Mustafa Na’îmâ 2007, Vol. 3: 1116.

¹⁰ BAER 2004.

of the Jewish Messiah of Sabbatai Sevi,¹¹ and conflicts in the neighbourhoods that brought up the issue of expelling non-Muslims wholesale. I do not claim that mass migration and population change in Istanbul can explain all of the above, but they can certainly fill in the social context in a way which illuminates the bigger picture.

Istanbul: "An Islamic City?"

As many readers will notice, the heading to this section comes from Halil İnalcik's popular article on Istanbul (İNALCIK 1998), only with a question mark added. In order to understand why we know so little about interreligious relations in Istanbul, and why there are so few sources that can reveal basic facts about them, one needs to recognize the place Istanbul occupied in the minds of the Ottoman Muslim elites, and what they thought it ought to be. While it is unquestionable that the Ottomans displayed tolerance and flexibility when they invited non-Muslims to Istanbul after the conquest, and accommodated Iberian Jewish refugees in the aftermath of the Reconquista, it is also true that their concept of statecraft was firmly rooted in a religious tradition that privileged Muslims and Muslim institutions. Although the Ottomans placed less import on the details of old Islamic principles, conceptually at least it was of the utmost importance that Islam and Muslims be prevalent in the empire, and especially so in its capital city.

For the Ottoman government, bureaucrats, and the general Muslim public, Istanbul was the seat of the dynasty and a definitive Muslim city. Despite its thousand-year history as the Byzantine capital and its commensurate importance to Christians, it was not simply a Muslim city but indeed a holy one,¹² being home to the tomb of Ebu Eyyub el-Ensari, royal mosques, and many Sufi convents and saints' tombs.¹³ For Muslims it was a "promised land", as there was a hadith in which Prophet Muhammad presaged its conquest, praising the conquering Muslim prince and his army (FLEMMING 2003: 69, n. 2). The conquest of Constantinople was seen by contemporary Muslims as an omen of the impending end of the world and Mehmed II as the Mahdi.¹⁴ The idea that Istanbul was conquered by Muslims because God willed it further made Ottoman Muslims believe that it was a city for Muslims, and that the Muslim way of life should be guaranteed there in perpetuity. We know from much of Ottoman literature that it was a dearly

¹¹ ŞİŞMAN 2015 is the most recent and in-depth account of the Sabbatai Sevi incident and its aftermath.

¹² İNALCIK (1998, 251) mentions popular beliefs that Constantinople was conquered through the power of Muslim saints.

¹³ DİA 2001, 23: 243–267 enumerates many mosques, Sufi convents, and *türbes* in Istanbul.

¹⁴ ŞAHİN 2010: 317–354. Such a millenarian interpretation of the event greatly enhanced the authority of the Ottoman sultans.

cherished place for Muslims.¹⁵ This ideal, however, may have occasionally been hard to maintain, since it was as popular a destination for non-Muslim migrants, who also brought in their ways of life, as it was for Muslim migrants.

Naturally this sense of Muslim ownership of the city was widely shared among state documents, officials, and commoners. Probably this was not only true of Istanbul, but rather all major cities were thought of in the same way; nevertheless, the sense of ownership must have been all the greater for Istanbul, because of the force of the idea that the city had to be a paragon of Ottoman order, being the capital city of the empire and seat of the sultanate. When there was a water shortage in Eyüb, for instance, it was not just any water shortage, but was given religious urgency, the situation being described in the following way: “The congregation of Muslims (...) found it difficult to wash themselves before prayers.”¹⁶

As early as Mehmed II’s time, the government made sure that Muslims comprised the majority of the population in Istanbul. We see that Muslims constituted an overwhelming majority over non-Muslims in the population statistics of late-15th century Istanbul, accounting for 8,951 households out of the total of 14,803.¹⁷ After that, until the time of the first modern census in the 1830s, there is virtually no precise record of the size of the Muslim population of Istanbul, although there are impressionistic numbers given by travellers. Nonetheless, it has always been assumed without evidence that Muslims were more numerous than non-Muslims in Istanbul. Government authorities would have naturally wanted to maintain a Muslim majority in Istanbul,¹⁸ and Evliya Çelebi’s travelogue and Hezarfen Hüseyin’s treatise, both coming from the 17th century, created the impression that Muslims formed the unquestionable majority.¹⁹ However, we must beware of the consistent lack of interest in non-Muslim people and institutions shown by Muslim authors.

¹⁵ PALA 2001: 284–289. Istanbul’s impact on Classical Turkish literature was profound. The praise of beautiful scenery and buildings as well as the sense of achievement in its conquest counted among its major themes.

¹⁶ MD 78: 670, #1741.

¹⁷ İNALCIK 1978: 238–239. The numbers given are from Topkapı Sarayı Arşivi D 9524. Greeks accounted for 3,151 households, Jews 1,647, those who came from Kaffa 267, Armenians 267, and so forth.

¹⁸ GÜL 2009: 12. “From the very beginning of the Ottoman administration, one of its most significant policies was the creation and retention of Istanbul’s Islamic character. Various measures were taken to ensure that the Turks always formed the majority population of the city ...”

¹⁹ EVLİYA ÇELEBİ 1995: 124–138, and 219. Evliya often called Istanbul “İslambol,” and mentioned almost no non-Muslim buildings and religious institutions, while enumerating Muslim ones in great detail. He also reports that there were 9,973 Muslim *mahalles*, while there were 354 Greek, 257 Jewish, 17 Frankish, and 27 Armenian ones. (Evliya does have a reputation for exaggerating numbers.) HEZARFEN HÜSEYİN (1998: 52) mentions that there were 253 Muslim *mahalles* and 24 non-Muslim ones.

Even many contemporary Ottomanists tend to think that Muslims always formed the majority of Istanbul's population;²⁰ this perception, however, may prove wrong for certain periods when the city was flooded by non-Muslim immigrants. It would not be surprising if that majority was not maintained in certain periods, given that 17th century upheavals in Anatolia made many non-Muslims leave their places of origin, and that for Balkan Christians Istanbul was one of the major destinations for making money and gaining social status.

17th century Migration and Population Change Re-examined with Sources Used by Mantran and Yerasimos

Although inexact and impressionistic figures have been given by travelers, reliable estimates of Istanbul's population for the 17th century are difficult to find. There seems to be no register of tax-paying Muslims yet uncovered that shows the number of households or the number of adult men. Tax registers for commercial taxes such as shop taxes do not reveal anything about the wider population, and *avariz* registers are not useful either. Furthermore, although the non-Muslim population of Istanbul was registered for the collection of *cizye*, the *tahrir* registers for Mehmed II's *waqf*, which contained most of Istanbul's non-Muslim population, unfortunately seem to have disappeared after the mid-16th century (FAROQHI 2000: 112–113). Despite these adverse conditions, some seminal studies have been conducted in recent decades, and here the existing literature will be reviewed to elucidate what we know and whence we may start.

The pioneer who boldly attempted to outline the changes in the population of Ottoman Istanbul over time, using the scanty materials available, was Robert Mantran, who wrote a comprehensive book on 17th century Istanbul. He assumed that the ratio between the Muslim and non-Muslim population remained at around 58:42 consistently from the 16th century all the way to the nineteenth. He reached this figure after considering the numbers given by European observers from the 16th century onwards, and 19th century census statistics—although the former, being based on inexact impressions, may be rather unreliable. Furthermore, even if the ratio between Muslims and non-Muslims did remain the same across the numbers he examined, the composition of the non-Muslim population differs greatly from account to account (MANTRAN 1962: 44–46). Thus this particular idea of his does not stand firm when considered in the context of such a big city, constantly undergoing socio-economic and political change. He also studied *cizye* registers made in 1690–91 that rather precisely recorded non-Muslim adult men, down to single digits, and classified them into three categories as rich, middle-class and

²⁰ MANTRAN 1962 and İNALCIK 1978 are the best-known examples, and this perception seems to continue today.

poor,²¹ publishing a valuable article on them (MANTRAN 1987: 11–15). In these registers one finds the number of non-Muslim adult men put at 62,000 for the greater Istanbul area including the walled city, Galata, and Eyüb. (This number in the *defter* was obtained by adding 45,113 Christians, 8,236 Jews, i.e. 53,347 tax-paying non-Muslims,²² and 14,563 tax-exempt men, minus 6,000 shops that are probably counted twice.) Mantran then estimated the total non-Muslim population of greater Istanbul as 310,000, which is 62,000 multiplied by 5, and proceeded to calculate the number of Muslims as 428,000 by applying the aforementioned consistent ratio between Muslims and non-Muslims. By adding the numbers above, he asserted that there were about 700,000 people living in 17th century Istanbul.²³ His idea was not supported by later studies: Zafer Toprak argues that 700,000 were impossible even with 19th century population density, and seems to estimate the 17th century population of Istanbul as between 300,000 and 400,000.²⁴

Stephane Yerasimos, meanwhile, who studied the history of the Greek and Jewish groups of Istanbul, did not believe that there was any fixed ratio between the Muslim and non-Muslim populations. From studying the fluctuations in the non-Muslim and particularly Greek population, it did not make sense to him that such a ratio should have been maintained over the centuries. According to him, Greeks increased constantly in the suburbs while decreasing in the walled city in the early 16th century, but then increased greatly throughout the greater Istanbul area for about 150 years from the mid-16th century to the late 17th century. He once noted in passing in a footnote that the number of Christians increased about twenty times (!) during those 150 years, but later his statement became more roundabout and cautious.²⁵ These arguments were not particularly in the foreground of his articles, and they do not seem to have drawn attention. He did not pursue his ideas about population increase any further, and unexpectedly passed away in his early sixties.

Since Yerasimos' arguments were very stimulating and tantalizing, I looked into the sources he used in order to understand how he came to the estimate mentioned above. I had to search for the numbers he used in *tahrir* registers TT 210 and 240, respectively compiled in 1540 and 1545, because he did not mention where exactly in the registers the numbers he used appeared, and used rounded figures which were not exactly the same as in the registers themselves. Let us first examine his 1995

²¹ For a summary of the *cizye* reform, see SARIYANNIS 2011, 40–43.

²² The total sum should actually be 53,349, but small computational errors like this are rather common in Ottoman tax documents.

²³ The adult male (above 15) population is usually between 1/4 and 1/3 of the total population in pre-nineteenth century Ottoman history. See FAROQHI 2010: 321.

²⁴ TOPRAK 1994: 108–111. For similar estimates by Halil İnalçık and Edhem Eldem, see TÜRE 1999: 52.

²⁵ See YERASIMOS 1995: 108 and YERASIMOS 2005: 393–394.

mention that the Christian population increased twentyfold in a time frame of 150 years. His rationale was that (A) there were about 1,500 Greek households and 800 Armenian ones, making the total number of Christian households 2,300 in the *tahrir* registers of the 1540s; and (B) there were 45,113 Christian male taxpayers in the *cizye* registers of 1690–91 (KK 3530 and 3531). However, there were some flaws in this estimate. I came to realize that the number 2,300 was only for Istanbul intra muros (*nefs-i Istanbul*), while the late-17th century number of 45,113 was for Istanbul, Galata, and Eyüb: which means that Yerasimos did not compare populations of the same spatial scope. The Christian population in the walled city itself of the early 1690s was indicated as 23,873 adult men, but it would be too quick to say that there was an approximately tenfold increase from the number in the 1540s. There must have been more than 2,300 Christian households in the 1540s, because there were for example those from Akkerman who were not placed under the *waqf* of Mehmed II and were not included in the register. In his 2005 article, Yerasimos estimated the Christian households in the walled city at 2,600. In addition, the method of counting taxpayers changed between the *tahrir* registers of the 1540s and *cizye* registers of the 1690s, moving from counting households to counting adult men, and since there may well have been more than one adult male per household, this does not guarantee a precise measurement of the population increase. All told, the increase in the Christian population between the 1540s and 1690s is likely to have been less than tenfold, but still there must have been a sizeable increase. The Jewish population is also considered to have increased (somewhat more than doubling) over the long term from the late 16th century to the late seventeenth, to reach about 10,000 households.²⁶ It seems rather difficult to deny that there was a trend of substantial increase, most probably due to the influx of immigrants.

Migration in Fiscal Edicts and Court Records

At any rate, 150 years is a long time and there are rather few clues with which we might fathom the trends of population change. One by one, let us examine what is found in the *cizye* registers, fiscal edicts, and court records.

First, there are the *cizye* registers of the *waqf* of Mehmed II dating from the early 17th century. The *cizye* registers comprise lists of groups (*cemaatlar*) that paid taxes, namely *ziyade-yi cizye* and *ispence*. I do not know exactly how these registers were compiled, i.e. whether all households under the *waqf* were covered (which

²⁶ BEN-NAEH 2008: 59–72, 84–85. There were waves of Jewish migration in the aftermath of the Celali rebellions, the early seventeenth-century economic downturn in Salonica, and the major earthquake in 1688. Ben-Naeh estimates that there were about 10,000 households and a Jewish population of 30,000–40,000, putting together the 8,236 Jewish adult taxpayers in the above-mentioned *defters* (KK 3530 and 3531), 502 immigrants (*yave*), and an unknown number of tax-exempt who were part of the 14,563 tax-exempt non-Muslims.

is unlikely as there had been many more than 2,000 households in the 1540s, as we saw in the previous section), and whether there were households that paid both taxes and are listed under both items.²⁷ It is, in other words, difficult to determine the sum total of non-Muslim households under the *waqf* from these registers. In any case, based on the numbers given in the *cizye* registers, the Christian population of the *waqf* listed in the *cizye* registers seems not to have increased, and perhaps even occasionally decreased in the first half of the 17th century. This could have been because *cizye* registers were relatively inexact,²⁸ or the newly arrived Christians were mostly not taken into the *waqf* of Mehmed II, or at least not officially. Although there were some people who came from outside (*kendü gelen*),²⁹ they are rarely mentioned in the *cizye* registers of the early century. If it was unable to attract new immigrants or not allowed by the government to take them in, the *waqf* may have suffered a decrease in its population, which was very common in early modern urban communities.

| Defter | ziyade-yi cizye | ispence |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| MAD 1104 (1026h/1617) | 67 <i>cemaat</i> (groups), 985 <i>hane</i> (households) | 84 <i>cemaat</i> , 445 <i>hane</i> |
| MAD 7658 (1039h/1629–1630) | 74 <i>cemaat</i> , 866 <i>hane</i> | No mention |

Table 1. Christian Households under Mehmed II's *Waqf*

In addition to the table above, one should also consider MAD 1857(1068 h./1657-58), which contains *icmal defters* of various *kazas*, where the *icmal defter* of *ziyade-yi cizye* and *ispence* of Mehmed II's *waqf* is included.³⁰ It lists 877 *hane* under 74 *cemaat* (probably for *ziyade-yi cizye* but with no caption), 382 *hane* under 39 *cemaat* for *ispence*, and 288 *hane* under 31 *cemaat* for immigrants.³¹ On the whole, the number of households under the *waqf* does not seem to have increased much, but it is noteworthy that there were many immigrant households included in the late 1650s.

²⁷ For diachronic and synchronic comparisons of the list of households, scholars must be familiar both with *siyakat* script and non-Muslim names and proper nouns. One must determine first what is comparable with what.

²⁸ *Cizye* registers are reputedly much less precise than the *tahrir* registers. KIEL 1990: 70–104, DARLING 1996: 101–105.

²⁹ MAD 1104: 21.

³⁰ MAD 1857(1068 h./1657-58): 10-14.

³¹ MAD 1857: 13-14. Under the heading of “*Cemaat-ı yuva[yave]-yi Karamaniyan ve kendü gelen der Mahmiyye-yi İstanbul*,” 31 *cemaats* are enumerated.

At any rate, there are rather strong indications that the non-Muslim population in the city was growing due to large-scale immigration from the countryside. Even by the 16th century Istanbul had become a major destination for temporary and permanent migration (FAROQHI 1984: 267–268). It is well known that there were massive migratory waves (called by Mustafa Akdağ the “Great Flights”) of people from Anatolia to the relatively safer walled cities in the aftermath of the Celali rebellions, among whom the majority was supposedly Christians (AKDAĞ 1995 [1963]: 488–501). Christian immigrants seem to have flooded Istanbul in the early 17th century.³² Flight from the general disorder in Anatolia³³ was definitely a factor that increased immigration. As for the Balkans, much less is known in terms of whether there were clear push factors for migration to big cities; although the Balkan countryside in general was assumed to have been devastated in this period (McGowan 1981), this picture seems to be undergoing modification as Kayhan Orbay’s empirical studies of *waqf* documents show that there was no sign of an agricultural crisis (ORBAY 2016: 271–277). In any event, what is clear is that immigrants were coming from both Anatolia and Balkans and even beyond,³⁴ and not all of them were fleeing from disaster. Many of them would have migrated in search of higher income occupations, as will be elaborated later.

Regarding who the migrants were, whence they originated and where they settled, we have more clues for the latter half of the century and only vague clues from government documents dating from earlier periods. This had to do with a policy change toward mid-century. In the early 17th century, the Istanbul authorities accepted only temporary labour migration, but were rather flexible about applying that principle. As far as we can see from the edicts copied in the court records, they seem to have tried to alleviate the difficulties experienced by temporary migrants, and the claims by immigrants that they “were in Istanbul only for a short period,” “would go back home soon,” or had “already paid taxes in their home provinces” were taken at face value.³⁵ However, sometimes the authorities forcibly expelled migrants from Istanbul to their places of origin when there were too many of them. There is an Armenian source about this written by an Armenian clergyman and translated by Hrand Andreasyan, which mentions

³² AKDAĞ (1995 [1963]: 496) says Christian migrants most often moved to Istanbul, and ANDREASYAN (1964: 4) counts 40,000 Armenian households in and around Istanbul in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

³³ ÖZEL 2012: 193. Özel says only 30% of population of Bozok and Harput remained in place, and the Anatolian agricultural population did not recover much throughout the seventeenth century.

³⁴ E.g., DURSTELLER 2006: 80–88. Many Cretan Greeks sought employment in Istanbul before the Cretan War, creating a dilemma for the Venetian *bailo* in Istanbul. See also Krstic 2013 for the Moriscos who came and settled in Galata.

³⁵ IK 1: #718, IK 3: 94b.

two such expulsions of both Muslims and non-Muslims from Istanbul in 1610 and 1635 (ANDREASYAN 1976: 45–53). In such a situation, immigrants would have tried to hide themselves from the officials. Although immigrants must have come to court, they tended not to make their migrant status very clear, probably fearing possible expulsion.

However, around 1640 the situation finally changed from forcibly returning non-Muslim and Muslim immigrants to their places of origin to recognizing them as residents where they were found. Probably this was because the previous policy of expulsion had proved to be ineffective in terms of restoring lost state revenue. According to Linda Darling, the government began negotiating with immigrants about the conditions for their return to their places of origin, and came to recognize the fact that they would not return (DARLING 1996: 94–97). The government in the end decided to have migrants registered for paying *avariz* and *cizye* in their current residences. Once the policy line changed, in the mid-17th century the Istanbul authorities also recognized immigrants as legitimate—albeit unwelcome—residents of Istanbul, and immigrants no longer tried to hide that they were immigrants. While the *sicills* of the Istanbul main court of the 1610s rarely state that someone is an immigrant, after a hiatus of more than forty years in the series of court records, those of the 1660s abound with litigants and petitioners who are identified as immigrants with the set expression that they were originally (*fi'l-asl*) from a given province.

It is interesting to peruse a list of such non-Muslim migrants gleaned from the Istanbul main court's records of the 1660s and 70s (see Table 2). What is provided in Table 2 is a small sample of 22 non-Muslim immigrants living in Istanbul and specified as having originally been residents of a certain place (*fi'l-asl ... de sakin olup ...*) taken from registers no. 9, 10, 12, and 18. In fact there are more Muslim immigrants mentioned in the court records, at a ratio of 4:1 counting cases from the published registers no. 12 and 18, but we cannot assume that there were indeed many more Muslim migrants in Istanbul, as the non-Muslims may not have come to the *kadi* court as often as Muslims did, and even when they came, non-Muslims may have been somewhat more reluctant to say that they were immigrants. Interestingly, while the Balkan places of origin were diverse, the Anatolian ones concentrated in Eğin (today's Kemaliye in Erzincan province), which represented 7 out of 12.³⁶ These immigrants, predictably, were *zimmis* (Orthodox Christians) and Armenians, as well as 2 converts to Islam with the supposed janissary title *beşe*, although we do not know how these conversions related to their migration. In addition, some of them did not give an exact place of residence, which may have meant that they found it difficult to make inroads into an established *mahalle*.

³⁶ The region around Eğin had a tradition of labour migration to Istanbul. Clay 1998: 3–8.

| serial number | defter/folio | place of origin | residence quarter (<i>mahalle</i>) and location | religious affiliation | occupation | title |
|---------------|---------------------|---|---|-----------------------|--|-------|
| 1 | IK 9 47b | Anadolu/Karahisar | Ist. (Istanbul) | e (ermeni-Armenian) | <i>tuccar</i> (merchant) | |
| 2 | IK 9 85b | Rumili/Premedi | Ist. | z (zimmi) | <i>Tavukçu</i> (chicken seller) in Küçük Karaman | |
| 3 | IK 9 107a | Anadolu/Eğın | Ist. Seferikoz mah. | c (convert) | soldier | beşe |
| 4 | IK 9 121b | (“Sabika” instead of “Fi’l-asl”) Anadolu/Kaysariye/Emir Sultan mah. | Parmak Kapu | e | Moneylender? | |
| 5 | IK 9 143a | Rumili | Ist. | z | <i>irgad</i> (day labourer) | |
| 6 | IK 9 181b | Rumili/Badracık | Ist. Near Samatya Kapusu | z | <i>bakkal</i> (grocer) | |
| 7 | IK 9 185b | Anadolu/ Eğın | Ist. Kum Kapu | e | | |
| 8 | IK 9 211a | Anadolu/ Eğın | Near Sarıkürz (?) | e? | <i>habbaz</i> (baker) | |
| 9 | IK 9 220b | Rumili/Opar | near Küçük Karaman | z | | |
| 10 | IK 9 232b | Rumili/Ürgüp | Galata | z | <i>Galata balıkçı</i> (fisherman) | |
| 11 | IK 10 28a | Anadolu/Sivas | Sulumanastır mah. | e | | |
| 12 | IK 10 65a | Rumili/Livadi | Ist. | z | | |
| 13 | IK 12 #37 3b 8 | Rumili/Mora | Galata Sultan Bayezid mah. | z | | |
| 14 | IK 12 #226 20a 4 | Anadolu/ Eğın | Ist. | e | Ist. <i>etmekci</i> (baker) | |
| 15 | IK 12 #293 25b 5 | Anadolu/Kaysariye | Ist. near Davutpaşa cami | e | | |
| 16 | IK 12 #412 37a 1 | Anadolu/ Eğın | Ist. Balat | e | | |
| 17 | IK 12 #476 43a 1 | Anadolu/ Eğın | Ist. Mahalle (name unclear) | e | | |
| 18 | IK 12 #674 60a 5 | Rumili/Yanya | Ist. near Parmakkapı | n (nasrani-Christian) | | |
| 19 | IK 12 # 1084 111a 2 | Rumili/Avlonya | Ist. Abdi Subaşı mah. | z | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|----------------------|------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|-------------|
| 20 | IK 18 #101 24b 2 | Anadolu/Divriği | Ist. Ali Paşa-yı Atik mah. | n | | |
| 21 | IK 18 #133 31b 3 | Rumili/Kalavrete | Ist. | z | Ist. <i>Bakkal</i> (gro- cer) | |
| 22 | IK 18 #478 128a 2 | Anadolu/ Eğin | Ist. Abdullah Ağa mah. near Aksaray | c | soldier | <i>beşe</i> |

Table 2. Examples of immigrants in the court records of the 1660s

Indeed, non-Muslims who had left their places of origin (*yave*) seem to have become a rather major issue of the time. Although the starting date remains unclear, already in the beginning of the 17th century the tax of *yave cizye/yave haracı*³⁷ was imposed on the migrant non-Muslim population,³⁸ which indicates the government's intention to also collect taxes from non-Muslim migrants who had left their home villages, even before officially abandoning the policy of returning migrants to their home provinces. Some non-Muslims who were exempt from all other taxes due to their service for certain government branches complained that they had been illegally subjected to the *yave cizye* by overeager officials;³⁹ and *yaves* were the first of the listed elements that were to be managed and controlled by superintendents of government-owned forests (*korular*).⁴⁰ A 1651 edict stated that there were multitudes of immigrants in Istanbul, Galata, Tophane, and on the shores of the Bosphorus, adding that the *zimmis* (i.e., Greek Orthodox), Armenians and Jews should all be registered and taxed.⁴¹

Furthermore, there is a series of edicts (all dated to the 1660s) that clearly demonstrate the scope of migration at mid-century. They are found in a Maliye Ahkam register (MAD 9847), and first mention scattered (*perakende*) Armenians, Anatolian Greeks, and *reaya* of Medina,⁴² before going on to mention various other Christian groups such as Albanians, Bulgarians, Serbs, Lazs, Trebizondians,

³⁷ Originally meaning stray cattle, *yave* here means migrant peasants who had left their places of origin.

³⁸ This tax was already in place in the early seventeenth century. See DARLING 1996: 112 n. 87 (1604-5), IK 1: 1a, #4 (1613).

³⁹ MD 85: #482 (1040/1631).

⁴⁰ MD 85: #295 (1040/1630).

⁴¹ KK 72, p. 414 (1061/1651).

⁴² It is unclear what is meant by the *reaya* of Medina (*Medina-yi Münevvere reayası*), but they seem to be Christian peasants as they were supposed to pay the same amount of *maktu* ' as scattered Armenians and Anatolian Greeks. GÜLER (2012: 182) briefly mentions Armenians of certain *waqf* villages in Mihaliç and Arabgir, 1/3 of whose tax payment was designated for transfer to Medina (according to MAD 5999), and perhaps these are the ones referred to by *Medine-yi Münevvere reayası*.

Moldavians, Vlachs,⁴³ and so on, who had left their homes and settled in various towns and provinces.⁴⁴ These actually concern the collection of not only the *cizye* tax but also *avariz* and *maktu'* from many groups that were difficult to pin down but fell under the same tax-farming contract, including some Kurdish groups and Gypsies, but most of the taxes were those imposed on Christian migrants. For many groups of migrants it is repeatedly mentioned in the edicts that they had left their home "to make money" (*kâr u kesb için*). It is interesting to see the gamut of migration, involving people coming from various places such as Kaysariye, Van, Bitlis, Arabgir, Kefe, Polish and Hungarian provinces, Wallachia, Moldavia, Kurdistan and Aleppo. Places where the *yave kefere* settled down, or *yave*-related taxes were collected, are also scattered and are listed in a very disorderly manner. Such places included Herzegovina, Vidin, Kırkkilise, Rodosçuk, Izmir, Aydın, Saruhan, Karesi, Gümülcine, Yenice, etc. In particular, those who had left their *çift* land in the Balkans "to make money"⁴⁵ were mentioned as having come to Bursa, Istanbul, Üsküdar, Haslar, Edirne, Silivri, Kocaeli, and İzmid, etc., namely many of the major cities in the central Ottoman lands, and in particular the greater Istanbul area. From 1072 to 1075 (1661–65) the total amount of money involved in the *mukataa* of the mostly *yave*-related taxes listed in the documents was more than 130 *yük*, which is not a negligible amount within a total government income of about 5,812 *yük*.⁴⁶

The edicts indicate that migration was an empire-wide phenomenon in this period, and that the authorities took the impact of taxpaying peasants leaving their homes rather seriously: according to them, villages of imperial *has* lands were ruined and agricultural production fell.⁴⁷ Those edicts, moreover, warned

⁴³ The term Vlach (Eflak) has two connotations. Firstly, it denotes inhabitants of Wallachia (today's Romania). Secondly, in the context of Western Balkans, according to KURSAR 2013, Ottoman Vlachs (Eflaklar) were defined as an administrative/fiscal category, i.e. nomadic groups often in government service, and cannot be easily described in ethnic terms. After their privileges were cancelled in the sixteenth century, some of them successfully transformed themselves into merchants. In this case, however, it seems more likely that the mentioned Vlachs were the Wallachians.

⁴⁴ Here one may be reminded of FAROQHI 1984: 287, where it is noted that spontaneous migration in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was quite impressive, and that large cities were main foci of attraction.

⁴⁵ Although the general impression is that most of the migrants from the Balkans were in pursuit of means to make money, some may have been fleeing over-exaction by officials. MD 91: #42 (1056/1646) mentions that the peasants under İnebaht (Lepanto) sancak were mostly scattered (*perakende ve perişan*) because officials took too much from them by force.

⁴⁶ It is unclear how much of the total amount of *yave cizye* collected in the empire was included in this *mukataa*. ÇELİK (2006: 126) mentions *ziyade-yi cizye* of the same period as somewhat more than 170 *yük*, comprising nearly 3% of the government's yearly income. This would make the *yave cizye* of the time slightly over 2%. TABAKOĞLU (2011) gives about 5812 *yük* as the total government income of 1072/1661–62.

⁴⁷ MAD 9847: 7.

high-ranking officials and *waqf* administrators not to conceal such Christian migrants from taxation,⁴⁸ hinting at what was going on unofficially, namely that certain grandees and *waqfs* were taking in immigrants for their own purposes while shielding them from taxation. The tone of these edicts was very different from those of the early 17th century, which allowed *waqf* villages of Ebu Eyyub in the Balkans and Anatolia to accommodate migrants and intended to protect them from overtaxation.⁴⁹

*The Weight of Non-Muslims in the Composition of Istanbul's
Population and Its Consequences*

At this point we need to pause to consider what the vast waves of non-Muslims would have meant to Istanbul's daily life. Going back to the *cizye* register of 1691, we get the immense number of 62,000 for non-Muslim adult males for Greater Istanbul, a rather precise number which indeed includes the tax-exempt. If we estimate the number of the entire non-Muslim population at around 186,000 (62,000 x 3; this is also pure speculation because one can never know what percentage of them were bachelors, and in the late 17th century there were supposedly many bachelors found in Balkan cities),⁵⁰ this would easily approach or even exceed a half of the more realistic estimates of the total population of 17th century Greater Istanbul, somewhere between 300,000 and 400,000. People in the 17th century would not have known the exact figures, but must have immediately and directly sensed the increased non-Muslims presence; what is more important indeed is not the exact number of non-Muslims but how it was perceived. It is likely that to some people it felt overwhelming, frightening, and dangerous.

Such perceptions may well have resulted in large and small clashes at disparate levels, and many of the events enumerated at the beginning of this paper may make more sense against the backdrop of the fear and discontent caused by the influx of non-Muslims. Indeed, certain particular incidents point to a fear of the burgeoning non-Muslim population. For example, the execution in 1638 of the Greek Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris, whose downfall was engineered by his rivals in the Orthodox church, was finally determined by the supplication of Grand Vizier Bayram Pasha, who said that it would be more opportune to the sultan's interest to have him executed before the pending eastern campaign, during which there would be very few soldiers in Istanbul. The patriarch was painted as a popular and potentially danger-

⁴⁸ MAD 9847: 8, 34, 63, 76.

⁴⁹ MD 82: #261 (1027/1618).

⁵⁰ For example, Vidin in the seventeenth century was becoming an important centre of international trade and had nearly 20 *hans* accommodating *gurbetçis* and *bekars* seeking employment. See GRADEVA 2001: 172.

ous figure who might lead a rebellion by Greeks who were “so numerous.”⁵¹ The 1657 execution of Parthenios III, mentioned in Naima’s chronicle, was prompted by the suspicion that he had secretly colluded with a Christian country to provoke a rebellion in the middle of the Cretan War, and the finding of janissary outfits during a search of the patriarchate triggered a great sensation, as Christian bandits posing as janissaries had been afflicting Istanbul at that time (Mustafa Na‘îmâ 2007, 4: 1730). (Christian bandits are mentioned occasionally in 17th century Istanbul.)⁵² The accusation would seem implausible absent the perception that Greeks had sufficient population to engage in rebellion. After all, the repeated execution of Greek patriarchs in the 17th century may indicate that the Ottoman government judged that containment of the Greek community in the capital city was necessary.

In this context we may also perceive a new meaning in the fact that Vani Efendi wanted to expel all Christians⁵³ from the walled city of Istanbul within 40 days, saying that there had been too much granted to Christians, such as selling wine within the walled city, and that the great fire of 1660 was God’s punishment.⁵⁴ Although it is difficult to know how seriously the Kadızadeli movement, led by hardline men of religion such as Vani Efendi, influenced Muslims in their daily life, it is true that Muslim residents of certain *mahalles* did appeal to court to have all of their Christian/non-Muslim neighbors expelled. Marc Baer speculated that such incidents took place under Kadızadeli influence.⁵⁵

In sum, it is more than plausible that the increased proportion of non-Muslims in the population of Istanbul incited fear among the Muslim community and affected non-Muslim life there. Given the complex dynamics of interreligious relations, however, this may not yet be the whole story.

⁵¹ Thomas Smith, *An Account of the Greek Church* (London: Miles Flesher and Richard Davis, 1653) p. 289. I learned about the executed patriarchs and relevant source materials from Elif Bayraktar Tellan’s Ph.D. thesis, “The Patriarch and the Sultan: The Struggle for Authority and the Quest for Order in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire,” Bilkent University, 2011, pp. 59–79.

⁵² MUSTAFA NA‘ÎMÂ 2007, 3: 1434, IK 1: 98b, IK 10: 68a.

⁵³ It is interesting to consider why Vani Efendi did not try the same thing with the Jews. ŞİŞMAN 2015: 90–91 describes Vani Efendi’s interest in Judaism and his peculiar ideas about Turks and Jews being related.

⁵⁴ Paul Rycaut, *The History of the Turkish Empire from the Year 1623 to the Year 1677* (London, 1680), Book II, p. 105. “...it was farther intended that Greeks and Armenians, and all other Christians, who had dwellings or possessions within the walls of the city, should within forty days sell those habitations and depart, which otherwise should be confiscated to the Grand Signior....”

⁵⁵ BAER 2008: 102–104. The caption of a section in his book that deals with residential disputes in *mahalles* is “Commoners follow the Rulers’ Example.” He argues that “in the 1660s a new wave of Kadızadeli-inspired piety rolled over the city, compelling Muslims to shape their lives in accordance with Islamic ethics”

Settling Down in and Adjusting to Istanbul

Although I set out to provide a demographic context to the visible interreligious tensions of the 17th century, it may be a mistake to think of the intercommunal relations of the time only in terms of tensions—although I do not underestimate these. The full story seems to be much more complicated, especially if we think of the various venues in which non-Muslim migrants may have been found settling down in Istanbul, through connections facilitated by their religious communities, marginal labour networks found in bachelors' dorms (*bekar odaları*),⁵⁶ conversion and enrollment in janissary regiments, and being admitted into established *mahalles* and/or guilds. None of these are extensively studied, and there are many underexplored sources. Therefore, one should not make hasty generalizations before there is a sufficient accumulation of data. I will carefully refrain from making grand generalizations, and confine myself solely to observing some noteworthy cases of conflicts and accommodations, and contemplating the contexts in which they transpired.

If one wants to fathom the entire complexity of social interactions resulting from the influx of non-Muslim immigrants, one should not stop at noting the overall increase of the non-Muslim population. What would be potentially even more important is whether the non-Muslim migrants succeeded in settling down in Istanbul, and what the networks into which they could integrate were. It will be helpful here to contemplate some of these routes, in particular by referring to the court records—admittedly limited in number—where profiles of individual non-Muslim migrants are given.

The first natural source of support for immigrants must have been their coreligionists and religious institutions in the city. Such a natural affinity, together with blood and regional ties, would provide newcomers with opportunities to find jobs and housing in Istanbul.⁵⁷ It is no surprise that they often settled in areas of concentration for non-Muslims on the Marmara coast (such as Samatya and Kum Kapı) and along the Golden Horn. The pattern of securing employment (see Table 2) also reflects their religious connections: for example Armenians worked as bakers and Greeks as grocers or fishermen, trades in which they were respectively heavily represented. It must have been primarily their coreligionists that connected immigrants to the wider society of Istanbul. However, the increased contact with

⁵⁶ EVLİYA ÇELEBİ (1995, 133–134) mentions there were *bekar odaları* and *hans* with hundreds of rooms that housed thousands of youths who may have had military potential. Sultan Süleyman supposedly threatened unruly janissaries that he would mobilize some such youths to stand against them.

⁵⁷ FAROQHI (1998: 174–177), discussing migration into eighteenth-century Eyüb, has shown a similar pattern.

coreligionists sometimes led to disputes in the community, as in the cases of tax disputes where some Armenian groups from Anatolia refused interference by those who had settled in Istanbul earlier, and refused to be taxed by the church hierarchy of Istanbul.⁵⁸

Beyond the immediate circle of their own congregation, coreligionists, and the church, the immigrants had to find their place in the larger framework of the city. The major types of structures they could hope to get into were guilds, *mahalles*, and the then semi-civilianized janissary regiments. These are also the major items of identification in the court records, in addition to their religious affiliations. When a *sicill* entry describes an immigrant who came to court, in addition to his hometown and religious identity, it usually gives his trade or residence quarter (if not the name of a place near where he lived). When the person who came to court was a janissary, his regiment affiliation was often recorded, especially from the 1660s onward.

As for the guilds, it is rather difficult to make a generalization except that they generally did not welcome the intrusion of immigrants and wanted to fend them off. At the same time, however, there are cases of immigrants who did successfully find places in guilds. In the earlier part of the century the boundaries were more undefined, and when somebody intruded into their trade the guild would typically react by saying that the intruders should share the tax burden as well (YI 2004: 146–147). As more guilds adopted *gedik* in the mid-century it would have become more difficult to enter a guild as an immigrant, but if one had a relative or knew someone from the same province in the guild it would be a different story. It is rather difficult to know about general interreligious relations in the guilds and marketplace. However unfavorable the general situation was becoming, it was not impossible for immigrants to carve a niche in the marketplace.⁵⁹ Interestingly, in 1644 there was a group of cauldron-makers from Trabzon of whose 18 prominent members 11 were “ibn Abdullahs.”⁶⁰ An intriguing but unanswerable question is how important their conversion was to their putting down roots in the Istanbul marketplace.

Mahalles came under more government surveillance and apparently became more rigid over the course of the century. Although since the latter half of the 16th century there had been government efforts to have *mahalles* better guarded

⁵⁸ IK 5: 99b, IK 6: 24a. Jewish and Greek communities in this period were not peaceful, either. Greeks were afflicted by factional struggles especially in the face of Catholic proselytization. (For the example of the reformist Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris and his enemies, see KERMELI 2017) Jewish groups were often in conflict over the community to which certain individuals belonged (IK 1: #108, 726, 727). It is presently unclear whether such conflicts were affected by influx of immigrants.

⁵⁹ YI 2004: 125–132. Establishing a new guild does not seem to have been very difficult in the mid-seventeenth century.

⁶⁰ İstanbul Bab Mahkemesi 122: 25b–26a. 1053/1644. YI 2004: 61.

and their security guaranteed, with *mahalles* urged to build gates and keep them closed at night and *mahalle* residents were required to be bound by mutual surety (*kefalet*),⁶¹ *mahalles* in the 1610s still looked rather open to outsiders, given that in cases where they had residents expelled it was assumed that relocating to a nearby Istanbul *mahalle* would be easy, and in an exceptionally revealing case a rather well-known prostitute succeeded in moving from *mahalle* to *mahalle* while evading the authorities.⁶² However, at mid-century the government's demand for *mahalle* self-defense became more concrete and detailed, including hiring night guards (*bekçis*),⁶³ and having anyone who failed to secure a guarantor expelled from the city.⁶⁴ The authorities also attempted to control *mahalle* imams and make them responsible for the *mahalle*'s security.⁶⁵ Probably owing to such measures, it became more difficult to infiltrate into a *mahalle* at mid-century, as evidenced by the fact that immigrants often cited not a *mahalle* but rather a wider area as residential information (see Table 2).

The *mahalles* have often been assumed to have formed around a religious institution and thus be religiously homogeneous, but in fact that was not always the case, especially in Istanbul. Moreover, it is widely supposed that most had a Muslim majority population, but in many coastal *mahalles* the opposite would have been the case. A 16th century edict defines "non-Muslim *mahalles*" (*kefere mahallat*) as *mahalles* that are in areas where Muslims do not or seldom exist.⁶⁶ This would mean in reverse that *mahalles* where there was any small presence of Muslims and a mosque would by default be considered a Muslim *mahalle* even if the Muslims in question were in a minority. With this in mind, decisions to expel all Christians/non-Muslims from a *mahalle* that were sanctioned by the government should be examined case by case, since effecting such as expulsion would have been nearly impossible in some cases.

For example, Kâtib Kasım *mahalle* in Langa/Kum Kapı was inhabited by many non-Muslims, some of whom were so uninhibited that drunken Christian men did not refrain from approaching Muslim women even in the mid-16th century (AHMED REFİK 1988 (1917): 141–142). In 1637 the Muslim residents of this *mahalle*, arguing with some exaggeration that there used to be 300 Muslim households but the number had dwindled to a mere 33, succeeded in getting the authorities' support for their wish to expel all non-Muslim (*kefere*) residents, who,

⁶¹ AHMED REFİK, 1988 (1917):139–140, 144–145.

⁶² IK 3: 34b, MAY 1618.

⁶³ IK 11: 94b.

⁶⁴ IK 11: 93a.

⁶⁵ IK 9: 146b, IK 11: 94b. The authorities seem to have been interested only in Muslim *mahalles*.

⁶⁶ AHMED REFİK 1988 (1917): 142: "müslümanlardan hali ve تنها yerlerde vaki olan kefere mahallat ..."

they said, were driving up the rents and causing a decrease in Muslim households (AHMED REFİK 1988 (1931): 53–54). Given the location and previous record, I tend to doubt that it was ever a Muslim-majority *mahalle*. Within about 10 years from that event there was an entire Armenian congregation residing in the same *mahalle*, providing the government with scores of oarsmen annually.⁶⁷ In this case, the Muslim residents' effort to expel non-Muslims may have been rather unrealistic from the outset, even if they did get some state support, and probably was just a part of a war of nerves with their more numerous and presumably richer Christian neighbors.⁶⁸ In this rather disadvantageous situation the Muslim residents may have been encouraged by the Kadızadeli movement to instrumentalize their Muslim identity, but there is no clear evidence of this. Hacce Kadın Mahallesi and Hacı Hüseyin Mahallesi, which are mentioned in Marc Baer's book as similar expulsion cases, may actually have found it difficult to keep non-Muslims out, given their locations near the Marmara coast, and also considering that one of them, Hacı Hüseyin Mahallesi, saw a Greek resident selling a house to another Greek about a year after the expulsion order.⁶⁹

The richer the non-Muslim newcomers were, the more happily leaders of a "Muslim" *mahalle* would accommodate them, since they would contribute to the communal tax burdens whether officially or unofficially.⁷⁰ Even when there were general expulsions of immigrants in 1610 and 1635, rich Armenians found ways to remain in Istanbul by bribing the authorities and providing services. Although currently I cannot provide any evidence from the court records with which to describe their settlement in Istanbul, some Phanariots may be a good example of rich Christians who were accommodated rather easily. In spite of the fact that Phanariots are supposed to have been present in Istanbul since the fall of Constantinople, the most powerful two families among them, the Mavrokordatos and Soutsos, came to Istanbul only in the 17th century.⁷¹

⁶⁷ IK 11: 55b. There is a petition from the Armenians of Kâtib Kasım saying that they were the congregation of an Armenian church in the said *mahalle* and had become very poor because of the big fire in 1660, and were therefore unable to provide the oarsmen levy (100 oarsmen together with Şeyh Ferhad *mahalle*'s Armenians) that had been arranged since the time of Koca Mehmed Paşa's grand viziership (1648–49). It is noteworthy that these two *mahalles* were very close to the Armenian Patriarchate that had moved to Kum Kapı in 1641.

⁶⁸ IK 10: 68a–b (Hacce Kadın Mahallesi) implies that houses were sold to non-Muslims at higher prices ("ziyade baha ile menzillerin keferi taifesine bey").

⁶⁹ For Hacce Kadın Mahallesi see IK 10: 68a–b, and for Hacı Hüseyin Mahallesi see İK 10: 110b and İK 12: 111a (the expulsion order was given in the summer of 1662, and the sale of a house by a Greek to another Greek happened in late 1663).

⁷⁰ FAROQHI 1984: 270–271, and DEMİRCİ 2003: 447 suggest that there may have been an element of communal responsibility by the *mahalle* in the collection of *avariz*.

⁷¹ PALLIS 1964b: 102–124. LEAL 2003 adds that other families such as Ypsilani, Ghika, and Mavroyeni also came to Istanbul in the seventeenth century.

In addition, non-Muslim immigrants could be affiliated with janissary regiments, once they had gone through conversion. Janissary regiments of the period had become self-recruiting half-civilianized urban military groups, engaged in economic activities among which money-lending stood out. The janissaries' self-recruiting after the collapse of the *devşirme* (child levy) is usually considered to be mostly from the Muslim population, including their own sons and relatives, but it seems that janissary regiments did not preclude any urban elements, seemingly because they wanted to expand their turf and keep their presence stable in Istanbul by taking in more people.⁷² Court records rarely provide the full details of the migration and conversion of non-Muslim immigrants and their affiliation with janissary regiments.⁷³ One more often finds inheritance cases where a janissary with the patronymic of ibn Abdullah had non-Muslim siblings and relatives, which indicates that he was a convert. (In such cases, sometimes they were estranged from their Christian family members, but sometimes on reasonably good terms.) Once regional and blood ties with a janissary regiment were established by one's relatives who had already been admitted, it was not impossible for a first-generation immigrant or convert to be promoted to the rank of *odabaşı* (head of the barracks) or probably even beyond.⁷⁴

If we consider loose unofficial affiliations as well, marginal non-Muslim youths did associate themselves with janissaries. One might think of the Christian and Jewish riff-raff who followed the janissary mobs that assaulted the residence of Siyavuş Paşa in 1688.⁷⁵ Moreover, just as single non-Muslim men could live in bachelors' dorms (*bekar odaları*) and *hans*, they could live in janissary barracks. Scores of Albanian Christian youths had been living (!) in the janissaries' New Barracks (Yeni Odalar) when they were sent away to Hotin fortress as bricklayers in 1715.⁷⁶ While the more well-to-do would have liked to integrate into guilds and/or *mahalles*, marginal youths among Christian groups may have sought affiliation with the janissary barracks.

All of the above observations leave us with a very incomplete and ambivalent picture of interreligious relations. Population changes clearly exacerbated tensions, but this was not the whole story. There were reasons why non-Muslim immigrants were tacitly welcomed, at least by some urban institutions—such as

⁷² WILKINS & YI, forthcoming.

⁷³ İK 9: 132b is the single exception that I found where the janissary's place of origin, convert (*muhtedi*) status, and janissary affiliation were all indicated.

⁷⁴ İK 9: 77a, İK 18, #310.

⁷⁵ SARI MEHMED PAŞA 1995: 76 and Bursalı İsmail Hakkı *Temamü'l-Feyz*, Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi 244, 135b–136a.

⁷⁶ FAROQHI 2014: 166–169, citing MAD 1619: 3. It seems the Albanian youths were found in an inspection of *hans* and were sent away, as the other residential locations of those who were driven out of Istanbul, as given in the *defter*, are *hans*.

mahalles that had to bear communal responsibility for paying *avariz* and other taxes, janissary regiments that wanted to maintain and expand their forces, and any employer who wanted cheap unskilled labourers. What is clear, however, is the complex nature of interreligious relations, especially given the existence of many converts from Christianity, and that blood ties often survived the conversion of some family members. Within the scope of my observation, despite all of the tensions, threats and executions, non-Muslims continued to tenaciously negotiate their place in the existing system, and Muslims perhaps could not pursue their ostensive purity and supremacy to an unrealistic extent if that resulted in having to deal with too many non-Muslims.

Conclusion

The 17th century religious tensions would seem very odd and groundless if they were evaluated on the basis of the surface appearance of the events they caused, without reference to the context. Suddenly, it would appear, religious principles and ideologies had become so important that people were ready to fight against both their coreligionists of differing opinions and other religious groups that seemed threatening.

While acknowledging that religious doctrines were an important factor in all this, we also need to position the entire situation within a more factual and tangible context, of which migration and demographic change are aspects. Many of the odd events of the time are more easily understood when seen against the backdrop of the increase in the non-Muslim population in the capital city of the empire. This definitely elicited some panicky reactions from Muslim elites and commoners; however, one also needs to remember that Istanbul's urban communities did accept non-Muslim immigrants, even to the point that the latter ballooned to count 62,000 non-Muslim adult men in the greater Istanbul area. We need to take into account what is *not* said in the sources, i.e. that there were communities and individuals who benefited from accommodating these newcomers. I hope the full complexity of the intercommunal relations of this period will be revealed by further detailed research on Istanbul's daily life, so little of which is known beyond the surface. On whatever level, however, interreligious relations were affected by real-life expediencies no less than by ideological considerations.

Bibliography

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------|--|
| DİA | Editorial Board for <i>TDVİA</i> |
| <i>TDVİA</i> | <i>Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi</i> |

Published and Unpublished Primary Sources

Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA)

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| TT (Tapu Tahrir) | 210 (947/1540) |
| | 240 (952/1545) |
| KK (Kâmil Kepeci) | 72 (1061/1651) |
| | 3530 (1102/1690–91) |
| | 3531 (1102/1690–91) |
| MAD (Maliyeden Müdevver) | 1104 (1026/1617) |
| | 7658 (1039/1629–30) |
| | 1857 (1068/1657–58) |

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| MD (Mühimme Defteri) | 78 (1018/1609–10) |
| | 82 (1026–27/1617–18) |
| | 85 (1040–41/1630–31) |
| | 91 (1056/1646–47) |

Sicills of Istanbul Main Court

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| İK (İstanbul Kadılığı) | 1 (1021–22/1612–14) |
| | 3 (1027/1618) |
| | 4 (1028/1618–19) |
| | 5 (1028–29/1618–20) |
| | 6 (1028–29/1618–20) |
| | 7 (1069–70/1658) |
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Međureligijski odnosi u Istanbulu u svjetlu doseljavanja i demografskih promjena tijekom 17. stoljeća

Ovaj članak pokušaj je da se baci novo svjetlo na pojačane međureligijske napetosti u Istanbulu tijekom 17. stoljeća u okolnostima doseljavanja i promjena u sastavu gradskog stanovništva. Poznato je da su kršćanski doseljenici preplavili Istanbul početkom 17. stoljeća i da je 1690-ih godina u registar obveznika džizije na širem području Istanbula bilo upisano čak 62.000 nemuslimanskih muškaraca. Nakon što smo preispitali izvore kojima su se služili začetnici istraživanja urbane povijesti Istanbula, kao što su Robert Mantran i Stephane Yerasimos, kao i određene porezne ukaze i sudske spise, njihov broj razmatramo u odnosu na ukupno stanovništvo grada (300.000 do 400.000) prema procjenama vodećih osmanista. Čini se da je u razdoblju od 150 godina do završetka 17. stoljeća došlo do znatnog porasta nemuslimanskog stanovništva, koje je tada vjerojatno činilo polovicu ukupnoga stanovništva šireg područja Istanbula, a možda čak i više do toga. Cijeli taj proces štetno je utjecao na odnose među zajednicama te je na mnogim razinama gradskoga života izazvao napetosti i nemile nasilne događaje, što se dade naslutiti i iz onovremenih povijesnih zapisa. No istodobno ne smijemo smetnuti s uma da je složena dinamika naseljavanja nemuslimanskih pridošlica u Istanbulu uključivala i preobraćenja, kao i potraživanja postojećih društvenih struktura, poput mahala i janjičarskih odreda, prema doseljeničkoj imovini i ljudstvu, što otežava jednostavan opis onovremenih međureligijskih odnosa.

Keywords: Istanbul, seventeenth century, migration, non-Muslims, interreligious relations, Ottoman Empire

Ključne riječi: Istanbul, 17. stoljeće, migracija, nemuslimani, međureligijski odnosi, Osmansko Carstvo

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