

A Historical Review of Illegal Tour Guiding in Turkey

Abstract

The tour guiding profession was much abused in the past while illegal guiding took place, and remains much the same nowadays. With the use of official documents, this paper outlines issues concerning illegal tour guiding from the past to the present. Document analysis as a qualitative research method was applied in this study. Archival research was carried out, and unpublished documents were analysed to contribute to the literature and shed light on the roots of illegal tour guiding. Archival data was combined with travel guidebooks, official reports, and court files. Despite regulations, problems concerning tour guiding continue to exist to the present day. More than ever before, illegal tour guides employed by travel agencies have become a threat to the employment of licenced guides. The number of illegal tour guides proves that current measures remain incapable of prohibiting illegal guiding activities. Touting seems to be the longstanding main motivation for illegal guides. Unethical guiding practices affect the established image of the destination country. From a historical perspective and underlining issues such as touting through unpublished archived documents and official reports, this paper contributes a detailed understanding of the defective points concerning the travel industry.

Keywords: tour guiding, ethics, legislation, touting, illegality

1. Introduction

Tour guiding, one of the main components of services offered by travel agencies, is vital to the image of the destination country (Huang et al., 2010). Tafesse (2013) underlines the fact that besides ethical and well-qualified tour guides, some carry out unethical practices. The literature relating to tourism has outlined how it is not possible to develop international tourism without eradicating such practices (Sae, 2006; Lovelock & Lovelock, 2013; Weiler & Black, 2015; Yu, 2015). The Guild of Professional Tour Guides of Washington, D.C. produced one of the earliest codes of ethics for tour guides, including articles concerning patronising shops that practice kickback payments and knowingly spread misinformation. (Cruz, 1999). Although certification standards and regulations vary substantially from country to country, training, evaluation, and regulation seem to be the most effective methods of coping with the unethical behaviour of tour guides (Ap & Wong, 2001).

On the one hand, illegal guides, as in the case of the Liangshan area in the PRC, have a significant influence on the working environment of legal tour guides. Lacking training and vocational competencies, illegal tour guides prioritise tourist consumption to obtain a commission for profit and damage the image of professional tour guides (Huang, 2020). In Thailand, illegal tour guides exhibit the same improper behaviour towards tourists by forcing them to purchase goods or register for optional tours (Huengwattana, 2018). Some countries perform tight control in order to detect tour guides working in an illegal manner. For instance, the Italian police force handed out at least a thousand fines in 2004 at tourist attractions in Rome by carrying out approximately 200 patrols per week (The New York Times, 2005).

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In Turkey, studies reveal that unethical guiding practices stem largely from illegal guiding activities, which have a negative impact on official guides' employment and fees (Çetin & Kızıllırmak, 2012; Çetin & Yarcın, 2017; Çakmak, 2018; Çakmak, 2019; Eser & Şahin, 2020). Güzel et al. (2014) found that the greatest barrier to effectively practising the tour guides' profession is illegal tour guiding. Yenipınar et al. (2017) and Şahin et al. (2021) stated that the increase in the number of illegal guiding activities results from the growing number of tour reservations, particularly during the summer high season. Travel agencies employ unofficial tour guides to reduce their costs, a situation which poses a major problem in the employment of professional tour guides.

The Tourist Guides Association (TUREB) in Turkey pointed out that the number of illegal tour guides has been increasing in parallel with international tourist arrivals. Illegal tour guides, whose number has risen to one-third of professional tour guides in recent years, pose a threat in terms of heritage interpretation, tourist satisfaction and country image. TUREB declares that tour guides without certification are providing false information about heritage sites and, what is worse, they are denigrating the country and thus alienating those who visit. Thus, tourists refrain from close contact with the shopkeepers, and illegal tour guides can easily take them to the shops they cooperate to earn a commission. However, it is very interesting that this problem has not recently emerged but can, in fact, be traced back to the 9th century. Historical sources reveal how the tour guiding profession was abused, and illegal tour guiding took place in the past, much as it does nowadays.

This study attempts to understand the illegal tour guiding from the Ottomans to the Turkish Republic from a historical perspective. Therefore, it documents and explores the problem until today by presenting unpublished archives and official reports.

2. Methodology

Document analysis, a form of qualitative research, was used in this study. The archival resources concerning the regulations and other efforts to prevent illegal tour guiding were collected from the Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic of Turkey. Based upon archive documents and official reports, court decisions, and travel guidebooks, the study provides an insight into the historical background of illegal tour guiding in Turkey. Official records from the Ottoman Era dating back to the second half of the 19th century serve as an original source of information about the emergence of the problem. Although the unethical practices toward travellers in İstanbul were often noted in travel guidebooks published in the 19th century and clearly defined by researchers as a problem still persisting, the literature currently lacks historical data such as investigations and legal cases from that period. This paper aims to fill this gap by combining recent research with the details of the primary resources.

3. Warnings against unethical guiding acts in 19th century

The heavy traffic of military, diplomatic and commercial relations between Europe and the Ottoman Empire resulted in an increase in visits from Europe in the 19th century (Kayın, 2000). Purposes of these visits made by soldiers, diplomats, tradesmen, and scientists varied according to their area of interest apart from visiting the historical sites of İstanbul (Arslan, 2014). Just as it is today, providing tour guiding services to travellers was a crucial issue for the Ottoman Empire. Tour guiding during the Ottoman era was perceived as more of a translation service. The modern-day equivalent of people translating for diplomats and travellers during their travel are professional tour guides. Bradshaw (1866) suggests that hiring a valet-de-place, cicerone or dragoman was the first thing to do after arriving in İstanbul. While the names of French valet-de-place and Italian cicerone were used to denote these translators, the word 'dragoman', derived from the word 'tercüman' (interpreter) in Turkish, was also often used (Arslan & Polat, 2016).

Travellers needed to be accurately informed about the Ottoman territory and especially the capital city of Istanbul. Otherwise, it was thought that the national image could be adversely impacted. For this exact reason, Ottoman administrators decided on passing legislation for persons to translate for travellers. The need for such a decision was caused by travellers visiting Istanbul being robbed by translators who were in league with local artisans. These translators also portrayed the country in a poor light by misinforming travellers (Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic of Turkey - Department of Ottoman Archives [BOA], İ. DH, 1180/92259, May 24, 1890). Thus, a letter signed by the Grand Vizier Kamil Pasha and sent to the State Council underlines these concerns and highlights the importance of regulation (BOA, ŞD, 2555/33, May 29, 1890). Furthermore, the aforementioned ill-suited behaviour of the translators was discussed as an item on the agenda in the Council of Ministers on October 26, 1890. The decreed decision emphasised the petition on the Regulation Concerning Persons Interpreting for Travellers (BOA, MV, 59/4, October 26 1890). Within approximately two weeks, the “Regulation Concerning Persons Interpreting for Travellers” numbered 190, was passed on November 10, 1890.

Travel books prepared for Turkey during these times included the aforementioned problems. The travel guide printed by John Murray Publishing House in 1871 warns travellers against touting. Just like present-day examples, it is mentioned that tour guides tried hard to receive a commission from the sales that were made. All store owners were obliged to pay commission to the tour guides who worked as “middlemen”. The book mentions how travellers ended up buying products at the highest price when they went shopping with their guides, although these same tour guides even acted like they were trying to lower the prices. The book underlines similar complaints related to guides. It is even mentioned that tour guides took visitors to stores that agreed to offer free of charge coffee and shisha and pressured them to shop from these stores. Another topic addressed there is the leverage that tour guides had on hotel owners who suffered at the hands of these guides. To prevent visitors from staying at the hotels that they did not favour, they tended to spread rumours on various contagious diseases at those hotels (Murray, 1871). The guidebook “*Constantinople*”, published in 1874 by Edmondo De Amicis following his visit to Istanbul, touches upon this topic. De Amicis states that it is possible to find guides that speak all European languages in Istanbul, and all kinds of services are promised as being available. However, the real purpose is to scam tourists (De Amicis, 1896). The guidebook published in 1895 by Demetrius Coufopoulos includes similar warnings. Visitors were recommended to hire a tour guide if they did not speak Turkish or wished to see or shop, but they were warned against people claiming to be tour guides on street corners. These people are described as touts who are in contact with store owners and earn money from touting (Coufopoulos, 1895).

4. Legislations and illegal guiding in 19th century

The *Regulation Concerning Persons Interpreting for Travellers* passed in 1890; states explicitly that those planning to work as translators for travellers visiting the Ottoman lands against a fee are required to hold a recognised certificate. The aim is to prevent illegal tour guiding and ensure travellers visiting the country are accurately informed. The regulation stipulates that certificate holders must not have prior criminal convictions and be deemed respectable and trustworthy. The person who wishes to be a translator must receive an identification certificate from the headman of his/her community and submit this to the municipality of his/her residential domain. The municipality shall meticulously assess this certificate and send it to the Istanbul Municipality if the information is accurate. Also, the person wishing to become a translator must be fluent in one other foreign language in addition to Turkish. They must be competent enough to be able to describe sightseeing areas in detail. Translator candidates who fulfil this description were able to receive a tour guiding certificate after being approved by the Assembly of Custody. The regulation was enforced by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Arslan & Polat, 2016).

Conditions for receiving a tour guide certificate during the Ottoman era are described above. The regulation also contains articles on disciplinary provisions to be applied in the event that tour guides constitute any actions

that may be discerned as criminal during the enforcement of this profession. For example, if a complaint is received about any of these certificate holders claiming that they harmed a tourist or if this is found to be the case during municipal or police inspections, the certificate of this guide is revoked, and provisions of the penal code are applied according to the type and level of crime (Arslan & Polat, 2016). This regulation was re-accepted on March 11, 1895, with the same text (BOA, HR. İD, 178/43, March 11 1895).

In addition to the *Regulation Concerning Persons Interpreting for Travellers* dated November 10, 1890, and the same text re-approved on March 11, 1895, is “*Regulation on Persons to Interpret for Travellers*” in the Ottoman archives. The latter does not contain a date and differs from the version dated March 11, 1895 (the text dated 1890 is the same). For instance, this document stipulates that translators must have resided in the Ottoman Empire for five years and be at the age of 25 (BOA, DH. EUM. SSM, 52/18). Some suggestions were made concerning this regulation too. According to one opinion, it would be more suitable to use the term “to be an Ottoman citizen” instead of “to reside for five years” in the second article of the regulation. It is also emphasised that some outcasts that pass for translators are trying hard to damage their country's reputation in the eyes of foreigners, and it shall be more suitable for this profession to be carried out by members of the Ottoman community to prevent this situation. Moreover, it was stated that translators to be occupied with the prior and current development and psychological mood of the Ottoman Empire would not be able to make the necessary explanations adequately enough to visitors of the nation by only speaking a few languages but lacking scientific knowledge. The suggestion to prevent this puts forward the idea that the regulation must include a prerequisite for persons who apply for the profession of a translator to be a graduate of 5-year (high school) Ottoman schools or equivalent foreign schools (BOA, DH. EUM. VRK, 28/14). However, it could not be detected whether this draft regulation text was enforced.

The *Regulation Concerning Persons Interpreting for Travellers* dated 1890 with number 190 regulating tour guiding services under certain rules, banned those who did not have certificates from offering tour guiding services to travellers and stated that non-compliance would result in punishment (BOA, BEO, 744-55775, January 28, 1896). However, this regulation did not entirely solve problems for the state. A document dated June 7, 1893, mentions non-Muslim translators who misinformed travellers visiting the Ottoman Empire. It even states that travel books and articles written by foreigners who visited the country speak ill of the Ottomans, and this is caused by misinformation spread by these persons who translated for travellers (BOA, İ. HUS, 12/56, June 7 1893). A letter subsequently sent by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Grand Viziership emphasised the importance of being able to monitor and check persons to translate and guide the visitors who stay in hotels, taverns and public houses. Persons to work as translators and guides first needed to apply to the city police for their identity certificates to be inspected, and it was only suitable to grant them a certificate upon establishing their good conduct. It was also mentioned that hotel, tavern and public house owners should not accept persons who are not license-holders for services of translation and guiding (BOA, DH. MKT, 316/63, December 9, 1894). In the following years, it was underlined that persons aiming to work as translators and guides for foreign travellers who wished to visit the Ottoman Empire should be competent and trustworthy, and these people to be employed may also serve and assist municipal police constables. To this end, Ferdinand de Pardene and his friends submitted a petition to the Grand Viziership to establish a *Translation Administration for Foreign Travellers* (BOA, DH. MKT. 2135/54, November 10, 1898). Translators to assist foreigners during their visits to the Ottoman lands were required to be certificate holders who were competent and trustworthy. This is the reason why the General Police Headquarters inspected those who applied to become translators. Kirilos, son of Kostaki from Asitane who resided in building number 85 on Musalla Street in Şeyh Ferhat Neighborhood of Langa-i Kebir, submitted his petition to the Municipality of Istanbul in order to apply for a certificate to assist foreign travellers. The Mayor Suphi Bey wrote the letter dated June 4, 1910, to the General Police Headquarters for the background check of Kirilos, son of Kostaki, who was notified to be free of charges of misdemeanour and murder by the Second

Chairmanship Council of the Municipality (BOA, DH. EUM. THR. 36/13, June 4, 1910). As a result of the inspection, a response was given to the Municipality of Istanbul on June 12, 1910, and Kirilos, son of Kostaki, was notified as having no prior charges and was an honourable person (BOA, DH. EUM. THR. 36/13, June 12 1910). Accordingly, there was nothing to prevent Kirilos, son of Kostaki, from receiving a translator certificate. Furthermore, others, including Manulaki Fitopolu and Alfons Mandalyavim from the Ottoman community, also applied for a certificate. They were also granted certificates after seeing they had no prior misdemeanour or murder convictions, that they had good conduct and spoke other foreign languages in addition to Turkish fluently and were competent in the sightseeing locations in the country (BOA, DH. MTV, 24/7, December 17 1910). The topic of whether or not to grant certificates to those who wished to translate for travellers from foreign communities was a pressing issue for the Ottoman administrators. A letter dated December 24, 1910, sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Ministry of Internal Affairs states that foreign citizens cannot translate within the Ottoman lands and assesses translation as a kind of art and artisanship and asks for the opinion of the Legal Counsel of the Sublime Porte (BOA, DH. MTV, 24/7, December 24, 1910).

It is noticeable that translator applications of those from foreign nationalities were assessed according to the situation. For instance, American Joseph was granted his translator certificate on July 22, 1912 (BOA, HR. İD, 178/53, June 26 1912; BOA, HR. İD, 282/78, July 22 1912).

Besides those who held a translation certificate, some carried out the profession without one. An example of these uncertified translators is Munis Bey, who translated for travellers without a certificate and whose situation was handled by the Inquisition Office of Istanbul. Subsequently, the Inquisition Office requested to be sent the Counsel of State decree that bans uncertified translation for assessment purposes through the Public Prosecution Office of Istanbul Regional Courts. Related courthouse documents were sent to the Head of the Council of State with the signature of the Courthouse Minister (BOA, ŞD. 2663/11, November 30, 1895) (Figure 1).

A striking example of illegal tour guiding is found in a letter sent to the General Directorate of Security on July 21, 1909, signed by Imperial Foundations Minister Halil Bey. According to this letter, translators named Yanko and Nikola applied to escort foreigners who wished to visit the Hagia Sofia Mosque but were not allowed inside by the mosque janitor. When questioned, the janitor said that the General Directorate of Security cautioned them against accepting these people in the mosque. This is why Imperial Foundations Minister Halil Bey asked the General Directorate of Security whether there was a caution for not allowing the translators named Yanko and Nikola into the mosque (BOA, ZB, 336/139, July 21, 1909). The issue was relayed to the Istanbul Police Department immediately. Head Clerk Memduh from the department stated that they did not have any information on the subject, and it would be better to check with the Central Directorate (BOA, ZB, 336/139, July 22 1909). The Central Directorate was able to shed light on the issue. According to this information, Yanko, Nikola and some of their friends posed as translators and forced foreigners around the Hagia Sofia Mosque to go inside. They even disregarded prayer times and threatened the mosque janitors. Therefore, the janitors filed a complaint against Yanko, Nikola and their friends. As a result of the background check made on Yanko and Nikola, it was seen that they did not have documentation for translation and were banned from translating by order of the Istanbul Central Police Directorate dated July 11, 1909. However, these people received a certificate in the following days. Janitors were told to accept them into the Hagia Sofia Mosque apart from prayer times. It was also stated that Yanko and Nikola were not allowed in for this reason only (BOA, ZB, 336/139, July 22, 1909) (Figure 2). It may be discerned that Yanko, Nikola and their friends initially translated and guided without certificates. This was why they were banned from translation but were able to receive a certificate in a short period of time and were allowed in the Hagia Sofia mosque apart from prayer times. The Imperial Foundations Ministry was also informed of the issue (BOA, ZB, 336/139, July 26 1909).

Figure 1
Document on illegal guiding activity (1895, November 30)

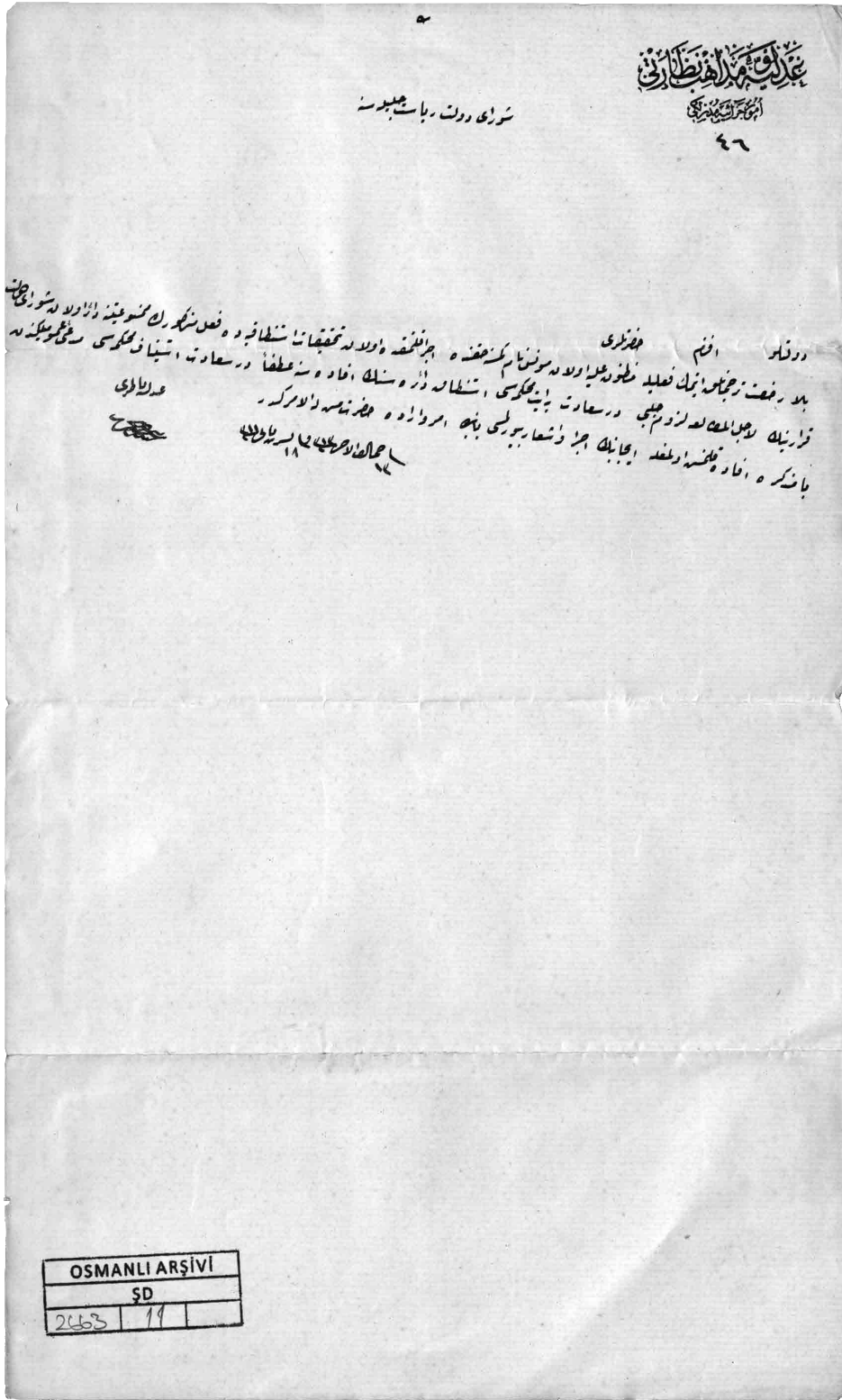
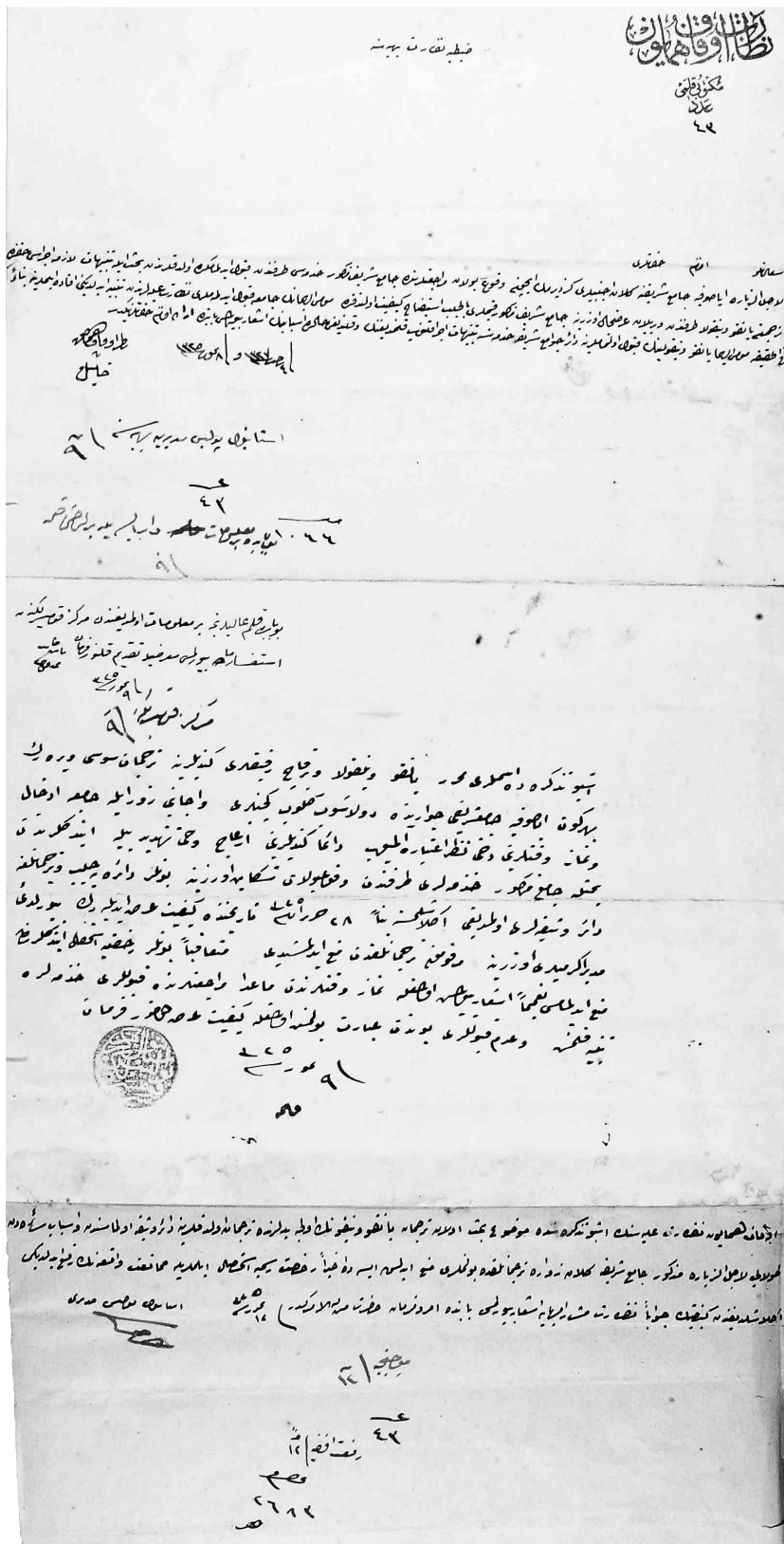


Figure 2
 Document on illegal guiding activity (1909, July 22)



5. Illegal tour guiding during the period of the Turkish Republic

The *Regulations Regarding the Translators of the Travellers*, which was brought out in 1890 and re-accepted on March 11, 1895, remained in effect until the release of the *Decree on Interpreting and Guiding Foreign Travellers* dated November 8, 1925. This decree, issued by the Ministry of Interior, was approved and accepted by the Council of Ministers headed by Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha on November 8, 1925 (Turkish Presidency State Archives of the Republic of Turkey - Department of Republic Archives [BCA], 30-18-1-1/16-70-5, 8.11.1925). According to instructions in this decree, people who will act as an interpreter and guides for foreigners who will visit the Republic of Turkey are obliged to obtain a document from the municipalities. Anyone without a document cannot translate and guide. Those who wish to obtain documents should apply to the city clerks in Ankara and Istanbul and the municipalities in other provinces with a petition. It is also necessary for the police and municipalities to verify that the guide candidate has not committed any crime, that he is a person of honour, and that there is no harm in his acceptance to the profession of translation and guiding. The person who does not seem to mind being a guide will take the test to determine whether he has the information required to perform the guiding service, and if he is deemed successful, he will be given a document. Those who will provide guiding must have an excellent knowledge of Turkish and also a foreign language and must know the history and positions of the country very well. Documents will only be valid within the boundaries of the municipality where they are issued. The authorities of guides and translators are city clerks and Municipalities; they will be divided and distributed by these administrations. City clerks and Municipalities will determine the wages of guides and translators, and guiding fees will be posted in the passenger halls (Code, 1928). *The Decree on Interpreting and Guiding for Foreign Travellers* of 1925, in which some of the items above were emphasised, is the first regulation regarding translation and guiding services of the Republic period. This regulation was abolished by the decision of the Council of Ministers dated October 25, 1971 (BCA, 30-18-1-2 / 27-77-19, 25.10.1971).

On September 3, 1971, the Translator Guide Courses and Translator Guide Regulation was issued (Official Gazette of the Republic of Turkey, 1971). With this regulation, while the training framework of tourist guiding courses was clarified, it was decided that travel agencies could not carry out tours without a guide and that guiding without a document would be punished. In this regulation, acts that violate national dignity and which are contrary to the interests of the country, attitudes that reduce the tourist importance of Turkey, faulty attitudes in respect for tourists, and misleading and abusive behaviour for tourists in shopping were each found sufficient for temporary or permanent cancellation of the document. In this way, efforts were made to prevent illegal tourist guiding activities that would harm the country's image, such as illegal guiding and touting activities. In addition, the aim was for tourist guides to begin their professional life in a more qualified manner. This regulation, issued in 1971, was renewed to meet the needs of the period by undergoing many changes over time (Çolakoğlu, 2009). *Professional Tourist Guiding Regulation* (Board of Inspectors, 2020) was enacted on July 2, 1986; thus, the 1971 regulation was abolished. The Professional Tourist Guiding Regulation has similar qualifications to the 1971 regulation regarding illegal guiding and working principles of tourist guides. This regulation also emphasised that the authority to open tourist guiding courses resides within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

On June 22 2012, *the Tourist Guiding Professional Law numbered 6326* was published in the legal gazette with the decision of the Council of Ministers (Official Gazette of the Republic of Turkey, 2012). With the help of the Tourist Guiding Law, the tourist guiding profession, which counted among the tradesmen professions, ceased to be an activity under the ministry's supervision and became a profession for the self-employed. A pre-tour contract became obligatory between guides and agencies, and the unions and chambers gained the status of a public institution and had the right to audit illegal guides. Contrary to previous regulations, the ministry becomes a supervisor rather than an executive on the tourist guiding profession with the occupational law.

One of the most important gains of the law is that professional organisations of tourist guiding organisations have the right to carry out inspections with the support of law enforcement agencies. The fact that these inspections are carried out with permission obtained from the governorships of the province and the police or gendarmerie support on intercity routes has been a partial deterrent for the tout who illegally carried out tourist guiding. As Pelit and Kabakulak (2019) stated, the strict ban on illegal tour guiding increases professional tour guides' confidence in job retention and fair wages. Tour guides whose rights are protected by the laws may provide better quality service, resulting in higher customer satisfaction.

According to 2020 data, there are 11,202 tourist guides in Turkey, 4,753 registered with the Istanbul Guides Chamber (IRO) (Tureb, 2020). The IRO has an authority framework that includes the provinces of Istanbul, Edirne, Kırklareli, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Yalova, Düzce and Bolu, and continues its inspections for illegal guides within the boundaries of these provinces (IRO, 2020a). Within the current jurisdiction, especially the Istanbul province is of great importance in terms of its touristic supply. According to Turkish museum statistics in 2018, it may be seen that Istanbul has the first four of the ten most visited museums in Turkey, with Hagia Sophia Mosque being in second place (General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums, 2020). Therefore, illegal guiding activities carried out in the area within the mandate of the IRO constitute an important threat.

Illegal guiding activities are one of the issues that emerged with the onset of tourism dynamism. They continue today and still maintain their importance for tourist guiding professional associations and tourist guides (Çakmak, 2018). Especially after the Tourist Guiding Vocational Law was enacted in 2012, the inspection authority of professional associations and unions has led to an increase in inspections in this area. This situation is clearly seen in Çakmak's (2019) study, in which he examined the Istanbul Chamber of Tour Guides audit reports. The study reported that 151 minutes were kept in 2013, and this number increased every year, reaching 483 in 2017. It is stated that in this study, in which the content analysis of 783 minutes in total was made, that between 2016 and 2017, minutes relating to 722 illegal tourist guides were kept under the authority of the IRO and the total number of tourists in the groups of these tourist guides was 10949. During 2019 inspections conducted by the IRO (2020b), a total of 214 minutes were kept regarding illegal guiding activities.

Today, besides employing unlicensed tourist guides in tour operators and travel agencies, there are also lawsuits against persons who have been brought to the jurisdiction and who introduce themselves as professional tourist guides even though they are not guides. These are recorded as damaging acts to both tourist guides and tourists. In 2014, a tourist guide was battered by touts who approached foreign groups in the courtyard of the Sultan Ahmet Mosque and offered them to tour and guide them without waiting in line to enter the mosque, and a judicial process was initiated concerning this at the Istanbul 74th Criminal Court of First Instance (Tursun, 2014). A similar incident was included in the verdict of the 6th Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court of Appeals dated 06.11.2019 and numbered 2017/499 E. 2019/5289 K. In the incident subject to this case, it was stated that the defendant, who did not have a tourist guide working certificate, made an offer to come to the tourists visiting Sultan Ahmet Square and visit the Hagia Sophia and Topkapı Palace without waiting in line. In the incident, the tourists accepted this offer and carried out the trip with the illegal guide by paying the museum entrance fees of the accused and themselves. However, this person later threatened tourists and extorted a \$ 900 guide fee.

This struggle with touts is not only within the scope of professional organisations but also actively carried out by state law enforcement agencies. In a report on the subject in 2019, it is stated that in 2018 and 2019, the Istanbul Police Department imposed a fine of 1 million 300 thousand Turkish Liras on approximately 9 thousand touts (Sabah, 2019).

6. Conclusion

The 19th century recorded a significant increase in the number of visits made from Europe to the Ottoman territory, especially Istanbul, which required a great deal of need for people to provide tour guiding for travellers by also assisting them with translation. This resulted in a large number of people offering guiding. However, some of these people damaged the reputation of the country with ill behaviour due to the lack of any legal regulation or inspection. Accordingly, Ottoman administrators initially exerted efforts to establish inspection processes by awarding legal status to the professions of translation and tour guiding through legislation passed in 1890. Despite this legislation, similar problems concerning tour guiding have continued to exist even in our present day.

The tourist guidance profession has been an ongoing field since the 19th century, with a number of problems inherent in terms of professional competence and working license. Tour guiding as a profession published its own laws in Turkey in 2012, but this has not been sufficient to end illegal guiding activities that have been encountered since the Ottoman Empire. In 19th-century travel guidebooks, warnings made to travellers about people who would translate and guide in Istanbul are particularly striking. It is understood that non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire who could speak foreign languages carried out illegal guiding activities and gained financial benefits by allying with the tradesmen. The fact that illegal guiding activities harm the country's image was seen as an issue that should be addressed urgently by the Ottoman authorities. For this reason, the Ottoman administrators decided to introduce regulations concerning persons who would translate for travellers.

Illegal guiding activities are recorded as a practice that has harmed tourists, tourist guides and the country's interests from the past to the present. It is determined that people who are not recognised by the relevant authorities and do not possess qualifications often harm and defraud tourists. Tourist guides may lose employment or suffer material and physical damage by being attacked by others due to the illegal practice of their profession. In addition, the behaviour of people engaged in illegal guiding activities that damage the country's image remains noticeable. The fact that this behaviour takes place in the spotlight of the national and international media makes it essential to evaluate the issue in a macro dimension. The negativities caused by illegal guiding activities can only be eliminated by preventive means. Future research should be carried out to understand more deeply the current state of illegal tour guiding and its impact on the travel industry in Turkey.

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