



## Summary :

Janissaries were “slaves to the sultan”. They mainly came about either from 1/5 of all prisoners, percentage which according to the holy law belonged to the sultan, or were hostages from newly-conquered areas, or were bought in slave markets, or came from the notorious devşirme. The first records on devşirme date back to the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century; it reaches its peak during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, while the last reports on it are recorded in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## Date

14<sup>th</sup> century - 1826

## Geographical Location

Ottoman Empire

## 1. Recruiting and training

Janissaries (yeni çeri, which means “new army”) were “slaves to the sultan” (kapıkulları). This institution, meaning the use of royal slaves in both the army and the administration, is part of an ancient middle-eastern tradition (with roots in ancient Iran, central Asia and the [Seljuks](#)) and, at least in theory, consolidated the sultan’s absolute power, since in that way he had in his immediate disposal a body of devoted and disciplined servants, on whom he had power of life and death. These slaves were usually prisoners of war or hostages from newly-conquered areas. They could also come about from slave markets, or, lastly, from the notorious devşirme. <sup>1</sup>

The first records on devşirme date to the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century; it reaches its peak during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, while the last reports are recorded in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Periodically, special officers from Istanbul ([Constantinople](#)) visited Christian villages in the Balkan Peninsula, mainly Albanian and Serbian ones, but also in Asia Minor, and selected Christian boys between 8 and 20 years old. These children were transported to the capital, where they underwent a preliminary selection process; the brightest and most able boys were named iç oğlanı and remained at the palace, while the rest were sent to rural Turkish families in order for them to learn the language and the religious ways, while a few years later they were trained in military art and discipline (from then on they were called acemî oğlan) and entered the elite musketeers corps, the celebrated Janissaries (yeniçeri), but also other salaried corps, like the armourers (cebeci), the artillerymen and canon makers (topçu), the lanced sipahi cavalry (kapukulu süvarileri, sipahişer; these sipahi should not be confused with the feudatory cavalry corps of the same name).

These corps constituted, in a way, the elite forces of the Ottoman army, especially during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, a period during which they were the only ones using fire arms (the Ottomans’ most important military advantage), in contrast to the lanced sipahi. Although since the 17<sup>th</sup> century other corps (especially mercenaries) had started to use muskets as well, the Janissaries’ corps continued to be of high importance during war, since, essentially, they constituted the main body of the empire’s standing army.

However, the point of devşirme was not only a military one. The children that were selected in order to provide services in the palace, the iç oğlanı, were trained in letters as well as other arts, and were taught how to read and write; after a period of time, ranging between two and seven years of training, they had to go through a second selection process, after which they left the palace bearing different ranks of military or administrative hierarchy. From the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, all of the high-profile officers, the **Grand Vizier** included, were selected almost exclusively from the ranks of the sultan’s slaves. <sup>2</sup>

## 2. Decline of the recruiting system

The opportunities for social mobility for a boy after he had entered the sultan’s slaves corps were so great, that quite soon Muslim families started to pursue the right to enter their child in that specific group. For the same reason, moreover, Bosnian Muslims earned early on the right to be eligible for devşirme, as were Christian children.



The advisory literature of the period often paints the state of the empire in rather gloomy colors and proposes measures for it to reach its earlier glory; most of the writers emphasize on the decline of the Janissaries' corps. It is frequently mentioned that what is to blame is the violation of the rules that used to regulate their formation and hierarchy (prohibition on marriage or involvement with other activities), but what is mainly decried is the great and unnecessary increase of their numbers.<sup>3</sup> The figures given are quite characteristic. According to the great scholar Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi, the total number of soldiers receiving wages from the Ottoman state treasury rocketed from ca. 48,000 during the reign of Süleyman I to 100,000 in the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. During the reign of Murad IV (1623-40), their number was reduced to almost half (59,000), but only to reach 94,000 again in 1670.<sup>4</sup>

In order to understand the reason of this spectacular rise, it suffices to consider the decrease of the new recruits (acem oğlanı) from 7,745 to 4,372 in 1670, while the respective number of Janissaries rose from 12,789 to 53,849.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, the increase is not due to the intensification of the devşirme, which, furthermore, appears to slack at least since the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in contrast to the percentage of the slaves bought or captured in war, but – as it has already been stated above – to the infiltration into the Janissaries' corps of different foreign elements originating neither from devşirme nor from alternate slave sources.

In the texts of the so-called “advisory literature” Gypsies and “city boys” (şehir oğlanları, meaning young Muslims from the lower social strata of Istanbul) are often mentioned to have been illegally registered in the Janissaries' records; these accusations are also accompanied by reports of “Turks” (Muslim peasants from rural Asia Minor, Laz, and other Muslim ethnic groups).<sup>6</sup> According to Koçi Bey, the whole thing started during the 1574 festivities, when some men who had helped restrain the people with oiled sacs, were granted their request to enlist in the Janissaries' corps.<sup>7</sup> In 1610 it is mentioned that the Janissaries are allowed to enroll their first-born sons in the records but not the rest of their offspring.<sup>8</sup> However, in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it is reported that the janissaries' barrack-guards used to enlist grocers and porters, causing the protestation of the newly recruited acemî oğlan.<sup>9</sup>

It had become so easy to enlist as a Janissary that, according to a martyrology, during the same time, an Armenian named Gabriel who grew up in Istanbul, following the example of his older brother, converted to Islam and, like him, joined the Janissaries; he consequently defected from the army, returned to his former religion and was executed in 1622.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, by the end of the century, many appear to be enlisted in the Janissaries' records without being paid, only for remission from tax payments.<sup>11</sup> In 1765 the infamous Phanariot Stavrakoglou appears, despite being a Christian, “to be an ‘altmış beş’ enlisted in the Janissaries' corps/and to have so great a fame acquired”, that the bostancıbaşı is afraid to execute him “in case the yoldaş do come and get him”.<sup>12</sup> By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Athanasios Komninos Ypsilantis may well simply note that “the Janissary title is hereditary; most Turks are enlisted in the corps as soon as they are selected (to serve the Sultan), in order to share their privileges”.<sup>13</sup>

### 3. The Janissaries' part in the capital's everyday life

Something often commented upon by the Ottoman political literature is the fact that many palace slaves occupied themselves with a variety of activities not included in their duties, mainly concerning profitable commercial business;<sup>14</sup> in fact, in some occasions, these ventures were not even legal. The collaboration of Janissaries with non-Muslims in wine smuggling<sup>15</sup> or the illegal Janissary involvement with slave-trade<sup>16</sup>, for example, is mentioned. It has to be noted, however, that this historiographical tradition is part of a specific kind of “literature of decline” and has to be studied cautiously. In reality, financial activities were never incompatible to the status of any “military man” (‘askerî); so, slaves to the sultan – either Janissaries or officials– embarked on both agricultural and commercial activities since (at least) the beginnings of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>17</sup> Besides that, however, some of these enterprises were often not even a secondary way of earning a living, but a primary one, especially regarding the guards in border frontier fortresses, who were being paid less regularly than the standing army and, consequently, were forced to deal (or even smuggle) with the indigenous population until their wages were paid.<sup>18</sup>

In that context of the Janissaries' business ventures, it is interesting to note that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century censuses, lower army officers seem to own mainly cash and secondly mobile assets, a fact which is reversed concerning the higher officers (kethüda, çavuş), who were,



probably, also involved in investments.<sup>19</sup> As to how it was possible to accumulate such a fortune, it is apparent, for example, when one takes into consideration that in 1651 the Janissaries, the actual rulers of the capital at the time, impose higher prices on the material they sell to the state, have their say in the products' prices and invest capital in establishments (eg. bakeries, convenience stores) that operate under certain privileges.<sup>20</sup> Later on, and contrary to the sipahi revolts, that mainly expressed the interests of the Asia Minor rural economy, the Janissaries' revolts often appear to serve the interests of the commercial classes of the capital, usually in coalition with some of the elite groups as well.<sup>21</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the open alliance between the Janissaries and the artisans of Istanbul, most of whom were either enlisted in the corps or had family relations to Janissaries, was a fact.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4. Janissaries and transgression

Evidently, the relations between the Janissaries and the urban social groups were of many kinds. Besides the commercial transactions, mentioned in the above chapter, and the servants (yamak) mentioned by Athanasios Komninos Ypsilantis,<sup>23</sup> the Janissaries also frequented [coffee shops](#) and taverns, where people from all social strata gathered; from the highly cultivated, to the "witty and lustful", to "city boys". Members of the various military corps (Janissaries, irregular soldiers, sipahi of the Porte) made up the usual clientele for the coffee shops,<sup>24</sup> the taverns,<sup>25</sup> but also the bath-houses and brothels<sup>26</sup> of Constantinople. Around 1640 it is characteristically stated that all the taxes and fines gathered by the Janissaries were immediately spent on taverns, as if they were agents of the tavern proprietors.<sup>27</sup>

It is understandable that such kind of behaviour was almost endemic in the corps, no matter the suppressive efforts made from time to time. We read, for example, about Murad III's discontent when, while passing by boat a seaside Christian tavern, he saw a group of drunken Janissaries saluting him and drinking to his health.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, according to the writer and historian Kâtib Çelebi, one of the reasons of the Janissaries' disaffection for Osman II (disaffection that led to his dethronement and execution in 1622) was the fact that the chief of the palace guard, because of a grudge between him and the Ağa of the Janissaries, used to charge into taverns and throw the Janissaries he arrested into the sea.<sup>29</sup>

Regarding the relations between the Janissaries and [fringe](#) or delinquent behaviour, we have to stress the privilege of exterritoriality they enjoyed. As we saw earlier, Janissaries were being tried by their own judges, a privilege that appears to have encouraged them to take on criminal action; it also encouraged common criminals to try to enlist in the corps in order to ensure impunity.<sup>30</sup> In the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a Bosnian writer named Hasan Kâfi, records the many cases of oppression and arbitrariness of the soldiers against the reaya (the tax-paying population), noting that the worst were the sultan's slaves.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, in a advisory text from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century it is stated that all military men should wear their special uniform in order to make it easier to find and arrest them in case they got involved in a brawl.<sup>32</sup> Janissaries and other soldiers are often recorded to be involved in many kinds of crimes; in most of the judicial records of Istanbul is striking the high percentage of cases of injuries or murder committed by members of the army corps and, mainly, by the sultan's slaves.

#### 5. Janissaries' revolts and the elimination of the corps

Since as early as the final decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, revolts by the Janissaries of Constantinople were endemic. Either demanding a raise in pay or the discharge and execution of officers they disliked, they often revolted and, usually, got their way.

With the 1622 revolt, their involvement in politics entered a different level, since their target was no more a vizier or other officer, but the sultan himself (Osman II, in this case), who paid with his own life the rumors that he was intending to abolish their corps. After that and during the whole 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, their corps was considered one of the most powerful players in the Ottoman political game, by allying with different groups within the administrative elite and the palace and, finally, from the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards by serving the interests of the capital's artisans and traders. Sultans like Mehmed IV (1648-1687), Mustafa II (1695-1703), Ahmed III (1703-1730) were dethroned because of revolts staged by Janissaries. The same happened when in 1789 Selim III wanted to found a new regular army corps, the Nizam-i cedid (new order), based on European army standards. By now, being an



obstacle instead of an advantage in the Ottoman state's effort to follow developments in Europe, the Janissaries of the capital were eliminated and slaughtered due to a well organized plan by Mahmud II in 1826. The corps was altogether abolished and the Ottoman Empire entered a new phase.

1. Uzunçarşılı, İ.H., *Osmanlı Devleti teşkilâtından: Kapukulu Ocakları*<sup>2</sup>, vol. II (Ankara 1988), pp. 6-30 and 66-9; Gibb, H.A.R. – Bowen, H., *Η ισλαμική κοινωνία και η Δύση I: Η διοικητική ιεραρχία της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας* (Athens 2005), p. 77 ff.
2. Shaw, S., *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey I: Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1280-1808* (Cambridge 1976), pp. 122-24; Uzunçarşılı, İ.H., *Osmanlı Devleti teşkilâtından: Kapukulu Ocakları*<sup>2</sup>, vol. II (Ankara 1988), pp. 6-30 and 66-69; İnalcık, H., *Η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία. Η κλασική περίοδος 1300-1600* (Athens 1995), pp. 137-149 and 152-54; Ibid, p. 145, useful table indicating all the possible ways a court slave could follow in order to reach the highest ranks (compare to the table in Uzunçarşılı, İ.H., *Osmanlı Devleti teşkilâtından: Kapukulu Ocakları*<sup>2</sup>, vol. II (Ankara 1988), p. 138; Murphey, R., *Ottoman Warfare, 1500-1700* (London 1999), pp. 43-49; Gibb, H.A.R. – Bowen, H., *Η ισλαμική κοινωνία και η Δύση I: Η διοικητική ιεραρχία της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας* (Athens 2005), pp. 106 ff. and 389-422.
3. “Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-müslimîn ve menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn”, in Yücel, Y., *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilâtına dair Kaynaklar: Kitâb-i müstetâb – Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-müslimîn ve menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn – Hırzû'l-mülûk* (Ankara 1988), pp. 5-9 etc. For a legitimate and documented display of this view concerning the decline of the corps by a Turkish historian of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, see Uzunçarşılı, İ.H., *Osmanlı Devleti teşkilâtından: Kapukulu Ocakları*<sup>2</sup>, vol. II (Ankara 1988), pp. 477-505. For the married janissaries see early cases in Lowry, H.W., *Η φύση του πρώιμου οθωμανικού κράτους* (Athens 2004), pp. 238 and 252.
4. Özcan, A., *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi (1099-1116 / 1688-1704)* (Ankara 2000), pp. 183-85. Also compare the tables in Murphey, R., *Ottoman Warfare 1500-1700* (London 1999), p. 45.
5. Detailed table in İnalcık, H., *Η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία. Η κλασική περίοδος 1300-1600* (Athens 1995), p. 146; Also compare Uzunçarşılı, İ.H., *Osmanlı Devleti teşkilâtından: Kapukulu Ocakları*<sup>2</sup>, vol. II (Ankara 1988), pp. 79-81 and 611-20.
6. See eg Selânikî Mustafâ Efendi, *Târih-i Selânikî*, vol. I, İpşirli, M. (ed.) (Ankara 1999), pp. 220, 368, 471 ff.; Koçi Bey, *Koçi Beğ risâlesi* (Konstantiniye 1885), pp. 57-64; Murphey, R. (ed.-transl.), *Kanûn-nâme-i sultânî li 'Azîz Efendi: Aziz Efendi's Book of Sultanic Laws and Regulations. An Agenda for Reform by a Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Statesman* (Harvard 1985), p. 6 ff.; Mustafâ Na'imâ, *Tarih-i Na'imâ*, vol. I (İstanbul 1864-65), pp. 422, 442-3 ff. According to Selânikî, Ibid., p. 18, even since the last campaigns of Süleyman the Magnificent, criminals had infiltrated the army; Also see in Selânikî, pp. 230-31. Also see. Gibb, H.A.R. – Bowen, H., *Η ισλαμική κοινωνία και η Δύση I: Η διοικητική ιεραρχία της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας* (Athens 2005), p. 350 ff.
7. Koçi Bey, *Koçi Beğ risâlesi* (Konstantiniye 1885), pp. 57-6. During approximately the same time, the neo-martyr Ioannis the Apprentice (Ioannis o Kalfas, d. 1575), bearing the rank of *leptourgos* in the palace, exercises his influence in order to secure the status of *iç oğlam* for the son of an Ağa; see Νικόδημος Αγιορείτης, *Νέον Μαρτυρολόγιον, ήτοι μαρτυρία των νεοφανών μαρτύρων των μετά την άλωση της Κωνσταντινουπόλεως κατά διαφόρους καιρούς και τόπους μαρτυρησάντων...*, Πάσχος, Π.Β. (ed.) (Athens 1961), p. 61.
8. Sandys, G., *A Relation of a Journey begun An. Dom. 1610. Foure Bookes containing a description of the Turkish Empire, of Aegypt, of the Holy Land, of the Remote parts of Italy, and Ilands adioyning* (London 1615), p. 49. However, men who are neither sons nor grandsons of Christians are by then accepted in the corps, observes the same traveller.
9. Naima Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Naima*, vol. III (İstanbul 1968), p. 418.
10. Riondel, H., *Une page tragique de l'histoire religieuse du Levant: Le bienheureux Gomidas de Constantinople (1656-1707), prêtre arménien et martyr, d'après des documents inédits* (Paris 1929), pp. 5-7.
11. Ricaut estimates their number up to more than 10,000 men, Ricaut, P., *The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire: Containing the Maxims of the Turkish Polity, the most Material Points of the Mahometan Religion, their Sects and Heresies, their Convents and Religious Votaries; Their Military Discipline with an Exact computation of their forces both by sea and land. Illustrated with divers pieces of sculpture representing the variety of habits amongst the Turks* (London 1686), p. 359; also see Mantran, R., *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle. Essai d'histoire institutionnelle, économique et sociale* (Paris 1962), p. 390.
12. Legrand, E., *Recueil de poèmes historiques en grec vulgaire, relatifs à la Turquie et aux principautés danubiennes* (Paris 1877), p. 218. “Altmiş



beş” means “sixty five”; one could suppose that the text refers to the 65<sup>th</sup> company (orta), but that this specific orta is known to have been abolished during the reign of Murad IV’, one and half century before. Gibb, H.A.R. – Bowen, H., *Η ισλαμική κοινωνία και η Δύση I: Η διοικητική ιεραρχία της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας* (Athens 2005), p. 114 note 170.

13. Κομνηνός-Υψηλάντης, Α., *Εκκλησιαστικών και πολιτικών των εις δώδεκα βιβλίων Η', Θ' και Ι', ήτοι Τα μετά την Άλωσιν (1453-1789)*, αρχμ. Γερμανός Αφθονίδης (ed.) (Constantinople 1870), p. 763.
14. Mantran, R., *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle. Essai d'histoire institutionnelle, économique et sociale* (Paris 1962), pp. 389-93. As early as 1584 it is prohibited for Janissaries and members of the other military corps to occupy themselves with commercial affairs (in which they did not respect the issued tariffs), and, especially, in the lucrative meat trade; Uzunçarşılı, İ.H., *Osmanlı Devleti teşkilâtından: Kapukulu Ocakları*<sup>2</sup>, vol. II (Ankara 1988), pp. 695-96; Refik, A., *On altıncı asırda İstanbul hayatı (1553-1591)*<sup>2</sup> (İstanbul 1988), pp. 98, 130-31 (VIII/38, IX/50). In 1596, there appears to be a shortage of goods in the capital, since many proprietors, being sipahi, Janissaries, or military men in general, were away on campaign without leaving an associate behind to tend to their business; Selânikî Mustafâ Efendi, *Târih-i Selânikî*, vol. II, İpşirli, M. (ed.) (Ankara 1999), pp. 615-16, 732, 784, 812.
15. “Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-müslimîn ve menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn”, in Yücel, Y., *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilâtına dair Kaynaklar: Kitâb-i müstetâb – Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-müslimîn ve menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn – Hırzû'l-mülûk* (Ankara 1988), p. 74.
16. Refik, A., *Hicrî on birinci asırda İstanbul hayatı (1000-1100)*<sup>2</sup> (İstanbul 1988), pp. 25-26 (No. 52).
17. Kafadar, C., “On the Purity and Corruption of the Janissaries”, *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 15:2 (1991), pp. 273-280.
18. Stein, M.L., “Ottoman Garrison Life: Kanije in the Mid-Seventeenth Century”, *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 17:1 (1993), pp. 130-134.
19. Öztürk, S., *Askeri kassama ait onyedinci asır İstanbul tereke defterleri (sosyo-ekonomik tahlil)* (İstanbul 1995), p. 148.
20. Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, vol II (İstanbul 1869-70), p. 373; Naima Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Naimai*, vol. V (İstanbul 1969), pp. 96, 137, 139, 151.
21. For a list of the Janissaries’ revolts in Ottoman history see Uzunçarşılı, İ.H., *Osmanlı Devleti teşkilâtından: Kapukulu Ocakları*<sup>2</sup>, vol. II (Ankara 1988), pp. 506-21.
22. Also see Quataert, D., *Η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία. Οι τελευταίοι αιώνες, 1700-1922* (Athens 2006), pp. 79-81; Quataert, D., “Janissaries, Artisans and the Question of Ottoman Decline, 1730-1826”, in Quataert, D. (ed.), *Workers, Peasants and Economic Change in the Ottoman Empire, 1730-1914* (İstanbul 1993), pp. 197-203; Olson, R., “The Esnaf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730: A Realignment in Ottoman Politics”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 17 (1974), pp. 329-44.
23. Κομνηνός-Υψηλάντης, Α., *Εκκλησιαστικών και πολιτικών των εις δώδεκα βιβλίων Η', Θ' και Ι', ήτοι Τα μετά την Άλωσιν (1453-1789)*, αρχμ. Γερμανός Αφθονίδης (ed.) (Constantinople 1870), p. 763 («έχουσι και γιαμάκια οι γιαννίτζαροι, οι οποίοι ούτε εις τους οδάδες κάθηνται, ούτε λουφέν έχουσιν, ούτε ταΐνια, μόνον εις καιρόν πολέμου πηγαίνουν εις τον πόλεμον»).
24. Saraçgil, A., “Generi voluttuari e ragion di stato: politiche repressive del consumo di vino, caffè e tabacco nell' Impero Ottomano nei secc. XVI e XVII”, *Turcica* 28 (1996), pp. 163-193 and especially p. 168.
25. Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi. Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 304 Yazmasının Transkripsiyonu-Dizini. I. Kitap: İstanbul*, Gökyay, O.Ş. (ed.) (İstanbul 1996), pp. 54/37b and 55/38b.
26. Bardakçı, M., *Osmanlı'da seks. Sarayda gece dersleri* (İstanbul 1993), pp. 88, 90, 100, 102.
27. “Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-müslimîn ve menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn”, in Yücel, Y., *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilâtına dair Kaynaklar: Kitâb-i müstetâb – Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-müslimîn ve menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn – Hırzû'l-mülûk* (Ankara 1988), pp. 100-1. Also see the anecdote recorded by Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, vol. I (İstanbul 1869), pp. 326-7, in which Janissaries and sipahi frequent a tavern and where one Janissary characteristically claims that he is not interested in getting promoted in rank and asks only for money.
28. Uzunçarşılı, İ.H., *Osmanlı Devleti teşkilâtından: Kapukulu Ocakları*<sup>2</sup>, vol. II (Ankara 1988), p. 482.



29. Kâtib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, vol. II (İstanbul 1869-70), pp. 9 & 20, Naima Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Naima*, vol. II (İstanbul 1968), pp. 209, 213.
30. Heyd, U., *Studies in Old Ottoman Criminal Law*, Ménage, V.L. (ed.) (Oxford 1973), pp. 221-22. Also see Ricaut, P., *The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire: Containing the Maxims of the Turkish Polity, the most Material Points of the Mahometan Religion, their Sects and Heresies, their Convents and Religious Votaries; Their Military Discipline with an Exact computation of their forces both by sea and land. Illustrated with divers pieces of sculpture representing the variety of habits amongst the Turks* (London 1686), p. 325. There were, of course, cases that janissaries who had broken the law were either punished or at least discharged.
31. İpşirli, M., "Hasan Kâfi el-Akhisarî ve devlet düzenine ait eseri Usûlü'l-hikem fî nizâmi'l-âlem", *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10-11 (1979-1980), pp. 239-278 and especially 275.
32. "Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-muslimîn ve menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn", in Yücel, Y., *Osmanlı Devlet Teşkilâtına dair Kaynaklar: Kitâb-i müstetâb – Kitâbu mesâlihi'l-muslimîn ve menâfi'i'l-mü'minîn – Hırzû'l-mülûk* (Ankara 1988), pp. 97, 98.

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## Glossary :

	<b>ağa</b>
A title given to military officials of high rank in the Ottoman Empire. From the 17th - and particularly the 18th- century the title bore also powerful Muslims who did not have any immediate military capacity.	
	<b>bostancıbaşı</b>
The head of the palace guard, an office with police responsibilities.	
	<b>grand vizier</b>
Highest government official in the Ottoman Empire, second only to the Sultan. Before the 19th century he led the Ottoman army to war, when the Sultan could not go. He had vast administrative, legislative and judiciary responsibilities. During the reforms of the 19th century the office became even more important, as the grand vizier became in fact the head of the Ottoman government, very similar to the prime minister.	
	<b>yoldaş</b>
"Comrade", "partner", a term of address used among the Janissaries.	

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