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Shoe Leather Distribution and Shoe Leather Merchants’ Guild in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul

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Abstract

This article examines how shoe leather—the primary material used in the shoe manufacturing industry—was supplied and distributed to shoemakers in eighteenth-century Istanbul, and what roles long-distance merchants and urban wholesalers played in that process. Based primarily on Istanbul court registers, it clarifies the following points: 1) the production areas and supply volume of shoe leather and the methods of supply and distribution; 2) the residential locations of long-distance merchants in Istanbul and their stock and goods; 3) the organization, institutions, and officers of the shoe leather merchants’ guild; and 4) shoe leather merchants’ relationships with long-distance merchants and shoemakers. In addition, the shoe leather shortage in the late eighteenth century and the anti-monopoly order of 1789 are examined.

I Introduction

In early modern Istanbul, wholesale merchants specialized in supplying shoe leather. These shoe leather merchants, who had their stores in the Mercan Market (*sûk, çarşı*) in the city center, purchased a variety of shoe leather brought by long-distance merchants and sold it to shoemakers who had workshops throughout the city.¹

When examining shoe leather merchants and their guild, it is necessary to place them within the context of the distribution, supply, and commerce of shoe leather, focusing not only on their vertical relations with the government examined in previous

¹ Robert Mantran, *Istanbul dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle: Essai d’histoire institutionnelle, économique et sociale*, Paris: Librairie Adrien Maisonneuve, 1962, pp. 468–469; ‘Osmân Nûrî Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediye*, vol. 1, İstanbul: Matba’-a-ı ‘Osmâniyye, H 1338 (AD 1922), pp. 669–670; Miyase Koyuncu, “Osmanlı Devletinde Debbâğlar,” *Turkish Studies*, 4/8 (2009), pp. 1743–1762; Eunjeong Yi, “Rich Artisans and Poor Merchants?: A Critical Look at the Supposed Egalitarianism in Ottoman Guilds,” in Suraiya Faruqi (ed.), *Bread from the Lion’s Mouth: Artisans Struggling for a Livelihood in Ottoman Cities*, New York; London: Berghahn Books, 2015, pp. 209–210; Zeki Tekin, “Tanzimât Dönemine Kadar Osmanlı İstanbul’unda Dericilik,” Ph.D. diss., Marmara Üniversitesi, 1992, pp. 94–105, 107.

studies, but also on their horizontal relations with the market, product, raw material distribution, and other guilds.² This article attempts to clarify the supply of shoe leather to Istanbul in the eighteenth century, the role played by long-distance merchants, the organizational structure of the shoe leather merchants' guild, and the distribution and price of shoe leather in Istanbul. Then, this article examines the role of the shoe leather merchants' guild in the distribution of shoe leather, as well as its relations with the government, long-distance merchants, and shoemakers. These perspectives and discussions are related to various issues such as the diversity of economic activities and the effectiveness and limitations of commercial and industrial regulations (*iẖtisâb*) and official prices (*narh*).³

Earlier studies tended to emphasize the immutability of social structures in the early modern Ottoman Empire. Recent labor and guild studies, however, have explored the historical dynamics and organizational flexibility of guilds as a critique of this view.⁴ In this context, this paper examines the impact of the shoe leather shortage that became prominent in the late eighteenth century and the anti-monopoly order of 1789 on the distribution of shoe leather and the shoe leather merchants' guild.

II Supplying Shoe Leather to Istanbul and the Long-Distance Merchants

A wide variety of leather products were used in the eighteenth-century Istanbul shoe industry. These included high-quality goat and calf leather (*sahtiyân*), cow leather

² On the importance of the guilds' relations with the market, see Suraiya Faroqhi, *Artisans of Empire: Crafts and Craftspeople under the Ottomans*, London/New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009, pp. xv, xxv–xxvii. On the importance of placing guilds within the distribution of raw materials and products, see Mehmet Genç, "Osmanlı Esnafı ve Devletle İlişkileri," in İstanbul Esnaf ve Sanatkârlar Dernekleri Birliği (ed.), *Ahîlik ve Esnaf: Konferanslar ve Seminer: Metinler, Tartışmalar*, İstanbul: Yalyacık Matbaası, 1986, pp. 113–130.

³ As case studies focusing on these issues, see Suraiya Faroqhi, "Immigrant Tradesmen as Guild Members, or, the Adventures of Tunisian Fez-Sellers in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul," in Jane Hathaway (ed.), *The Arab Lands in the Ottoman Era*, Minneapolis: Center for Early Modern History, 2009, pp. 187–207; Nelly Hanna, *Artisan Entrepreneurs in Cairo and Early-Modern Capitalism (1600–1800)*, Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2011, esp. pp. 48–50, 76, 96–98.

⁴ Donald Quataert, "Labor History and the Ottoman Empire c.1700–1922," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 60 (2001), p. 97; Eunjeong Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul: Fluidity and Leverage*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004, pp. 113–165; Suraiya Faroqhi, "Understanding Ottoman Guilds," in Suraiya Faroqhi & Randy Deguilhem (eds.), *Crafts and Craftsmen of the Middle East: Fashioning the Individual in the Muslim Mediterranean*, London/New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005, pp. 14–16; id., *Artisans of Empire*, p. xix; Hanna, *Artisan Entrepreneurs*, pp. 159–160.

(*kösele* or *gâvsâle*), common sheep leather (*meşin*),⁵ and horse, mule, and donkey leather (*sağrı*).⁶ Of these, the most important and particularly highly valued was *sahtiyân* leather made in Kayseri, which was known as the center of the tanning industry in Anatolia at the time.⁷ For example, according to a 1793 price list for shoes, of the 190 types of shoes produced in Istanbul, at least 140 were made primarily from *sahtiyân* leather, and of these, 111 were made mainly from *sahtiyân* leather produced in Kayseri.⁸ The uses of *meşin*, *kösele*, and *sağrı* leather were limited to materials for sandals (*terlik*) and soles, heels, and linings of boots (*çizme*).

Due to a lack of chronological or statistical data on the supply and distribution of shoe leather to Istanbul, it is necessary to analyze some fragmentary cases to clarify the overall situation. First, according to a court record dated 1793 created based on a customs register (*gümrük defteri*), a total of 1,402 packages (*denk*) of shoe leather were delivered to the customs office in Istanbul in the five months of that year, and approximately 87% of this, or 1,222 packages (19,805 bundles, *tura*), were made of *sahtiyân* leather. Of the *sahtiyân* leather, 760 packages (approximately 54% of the total, or 15,200 bundles) were transported from Kayseri (Table 1).⁹ *Sahtiyân* leather

⁵ Sami Akalın et al., *Ayakkabıcılık Terimleri Sözlüğü*, İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 1993, pp. 106, 115, 138; İlhan Ayverdi, *Misalli Büyük Türkçe Sözlük: Asırlar Boyu Târihi Seyri İçinde*, İstanbul: Kubbealtı, 2006, pp. 1767, 2034, 2641. However, it should be noted that researchers have often presented differing views on the characteristics and differences among *sahtiyân*, *kösele*, and *meşin* leather. See the following research, for example. Suraiya Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting, 1520–1650*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 161–162; id., “How to Prosper in Eighteenth-Century Bursa: The Fortune of Hacı İbrahim, Tanner,” in id., *Stories of Ottoman Men and Women: Establishing Status, Establishing Control*, İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2002, p. 129; Edhem Eldem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century*, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1999, p. 107.

⁶ This *sağrı* leather was sometimes called *gerede*. See, for example, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı, Osmanlı Arşivi (henceforth BOA), D.BŞM, no. 6134, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793). On the tanner (*sağrı*) who tanned this leather, see Kenji Fujiki, “İstanbul Mahkemesi Şer’iye Sicil Defterleri’nin Üsküdar Esnaf Tarihi İçin Önemi,” in Coşkun Yılmaz (ed.), *Uluslararası Üsküdar Sempozyumu VI (1–9 Kasım 2008) Bildiriler*, vol. 2, İstanbul: Üsküdar Belediyesi, Kültür ve Sosyal İşler Müdürlüğü, 2009, pp. 433–434.

⁷ Bruce McGowan, “The Age of the Ayans, 1699–1812,” in Halil İnalcık & Donald Quataert (eds.), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 731. On the tanning industry in Kayseri in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Mehmet Metin Hülâgü, “Kayseri’de Sahtiyân Üretimi,” *Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 13 (2002), p. 4.

⁸ BOA, D.BŞM, no. 6134, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793); İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi (İSAM), İstanbul Mahkemesi Şer’iye Sicil Defterleri (henceforth İŞS), no. 201, fol. 44A–1, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793).

⁹ İŞS, no. 201, fols. 49B–2, 50B–1, 56A–2, d. 1207–08 (1793).

was generally sold in bundles of four or five pieces;¹⁰ thus, if this is the case, the total number of *sahtiyân* leather pieces would be between 79,220 and 99,025, of which 60,800 to 76,000 would be from Kayseri. Meanwhile, there were 159 packages (2,385 pieces, *kita 'ât*) of *kösele* leather, and only 21 packages (2,100 *bahâ*) of *meşin* leather.¹¹ As mentioned below, a serious shortage of shoe leather occurred in 1793. For this reason, possibly even more shoe leather was supplied to Istanbul at other times. In any case, these data allow us to quantify the importance of the aforementioned *sahtiyân* leather produced in Kayseri.

Next, the price lists for shoe leather in 1730–31 and 1793,¹² as well as the record of deliveries to the customs office in 1793,¹³ show the distribution of the regions supplying shoe leather to Istanbul (Map 1). In both periods, *sahtiyân* leather was supplied from four regions: Isparta, İznikmid (İzmit), Uşak, and Kayseri. In 1730–31, in addition to these, *sahtiyân* leather was supplied from eight more regions: İskenderiye, Edirne, Erzurum, Konya, Tunus (Tunis), Diyarbakır, Selânik, and Tosya. *Kösele* leather was supplied from Gerede.¹⁴ In 1793, in addition to the four regions mentioned above, *sahtiyân* leather was supplied from eight more regions: Mihaliç (Karacabey), Karamürsel, Simav, İslimiye (Sliven), Tarabulus (Tripoli), Balıkesir, Bandırma, and Mudanya. *Meşin* leather was supplied from İskilip and Vize. Although Edincik and Tokat are not mentioned in these two sources, shoe leather merchants frequently cited these places—along with Kayseri, İznik, and Konya—as major supply regions when giving testimony in court.¹⁵ This regional distribution suggests that the supply came from a variety of areas, including central and eastern Anatolia, the southeastern Balkans, and the North African coast, with a slight concentration in northwestern Anatolia. However, only four common supply regions appear in both the 1730–31 and 1793 periods, and Edincik and Tokat are not in the price lists from either period. This suggests that, while Kayseri may have been an exception, other

¹⁰ BOA, D.BŞM, no. 6134, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793); İŞS, no. 201, fol. 44A–1, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793); Hülagü, “Kayseri’de Sahtiyân Üretimi,” p. 4.

¹¹ The meaning of this *bahâ* is currently unclear.

¹² İŞS, no. 24, fols. 91A–2, 91B–2, d. 1144 (1730–31); no. 201, fol. 44A–1, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793); BOA, D.BŞM, no. 6134, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793).

¹³ İŞS, no. 201, fols. 49B–2, 50B–1, 56A–2, d. 1207–08 (1793).

¹⁴ The fact that *kösele* leather was supplied from Gerede can also be traced from BOA, Cevdet İktisat, no. 441, d. 19 Ca 1216 (Sep. 27, 1801). On this document, see Hülagü, “Kayseri’de Sahtiyân Üretimi,” pp. 5–6.

¹⁵ Ahmet Kal’a (ed.), *İstanbul Esnaf Tarihi*, 2 vols, İstanbul: İstanbul Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1997, vol. 1, pp. 46–48; vol. 2, pp. 184–186, 297–298, 377–378; İŞS, no. 42, fol. 70B–1, d. 9 B 1192 (Aug. 3, 1778); no. 45, fol. 32A–3, d. 23 C 1193 (Jul. 8, 1779); no. 47, fol. 80A–2, d. Ca 1195 (Apr.–May 1781); no. 61, fol. 22A–2, d. 19 Za 1206 (Jul. 9, 1792); no. 61, fol. 96A–3, d. 9 Z 1207 (Jul. 18, 1793).

supply regions likely shifted according to the production and distribution situation at that time.¹⁶



Map: Suppliers of Shoe Leather to Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century

In Istanbul, *sahtiyân*, *kösele*, and *meşin* leathers were produced by tanners (*debbâğ*), who had workshops in the districts of Yedikule, Üsküdar, Eyüp, Kasımpaşa, Tophane, and Hasköy.¹⁷ Sources show that at least *sahtiyân*, *kösele*, and *meşin* leather were supplied from Yedikule and Üsküdar, while *kösele* leather was also supplied from Eyüp and Kasımpaşa.¹⁸ Meanwhile, *sağrı* leather was produced by tanners called *sağrııcı*, who had workshops in Unkapanı, but it does not appear that this leather

¹⁶ According to a copy of an imperial edict dated 1793 in the Konya court register, the government ordered that the shoe leather produced in a total of 34 regions, including Aydın and Akşehir, be transported to Istanbul. See Yücel Özkaya, *XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Kurumları ve Osmanlı Toplum Yaşantısı*, Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1985, p. 349. These 34 regions include 18 that are not mentioned in the sources mentioned above; however, it is currently unclear whether shoe leather was actually supplied from these places. On the supply areas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Faroqi, *Towns and Townsmen*, pp. 163, 166–167. The official price list (*narh defteri*) dated 1640 mentions three regions: Kayseri, Divriği, and Konya. See Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlılarda Narh Müessesesi ve 1640 Tarihli Narh Defteri*, İstanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1983, p. 191. On supply areas in the early nineteenth century, see Tekin, “Osmanlı İstanbul’unda Dericilik,” p. 94.

¹⁷ Zeki Tekin, “İstanbul Debbâğhaneleri,” *OTAM (Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi)*, 8 (1997), pp. 349–364.

¹⁸ İŞS, no. 24, fols. 91A–2, 91B–2, d. 1144 (1730–31); no. 53, fol. 26A–2, d. 13 L 1199 (Aug. 19, 1785); no. 201, fol. 44A–1, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793); BOA, D.BŞM, no. 6134, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793).

was used for shoes. However, a type of *sağrı* leather called *sarıca*, which was tanned in the Crimea, was supplied to the shoemaking industry via these *sağrıcis*.¹⁹

It was Muslim long-distance merchants (*tüccâr* or *bâzergân*) who were engaged in the procurement of locally produced shoe leather, its transport to Istanbul, and the sale to Istanbul's shoe leather merchants.²⁰ As they are often referred to in source documents as "Kayseri merchants (Kayseriye *tüccârı* or Kayseriye *bâzergânı*),"²¹ it is thought that many of them procured their leather in Kayseri. Many details of their procurement and transportation remain unknown, and no evidence has yet been found of any regulations governing the qualifications, methods, or obligations for supplying leather to Istanbul. A court record dated 1779 states that "whether long-distance merchants procure the goods themselves or hire partners (*şerîk*) in Kayseri, they must purchase [the leather] at a fair price (*değer bahâ*) in Kayseri."²² Therefore, it is believed that the methods and scale of their businesses varied from merchant to merchant. In Istanbul, they stayed separately in several commercial buildings (*hân*) close to the Mercan Market (*sûk*), where the shoe leather merchants had their shops. For example, according to a court record dated 1789,²³ the names of the *hân*s where the long-distance merchants dealing in shoe leather stayed at the time, and the number of merchants staying there, were as follows: six persons at the Tahta Hânı,²⁴ one at

¹⁹ İŞS, no. 42, fol. 18A–2, d. 23 L 1191 (Nov. 24, 1777); no. 64, fol. 73B–2, d. N 1210 (Mar.–Apr. 1796).

²⁰ The court registers tend to distinguish between the two by writing the *tâcir* as shoe leather merchants and the *tüccâr* or *bâzergân* as long-distance merchants. E.g., İŞS, no. 29, fol. 79A–1, d. 10 R 1181 (Sep. 5, 1767). However, in rare cases, long-distance merchants are referred to as "*tâcir* who transport shoe leather from Kayseri to Istanbul" or "*sahtiyâncı*." See İŞS, no. 45, fol. 32A–3, d. 23 C 1193 (Jul. 8, 1779); no. 54, fol. 51B–2, d. 21 Za 1200 (Sep. 15, 1786). For the general term for long-distance merchants, see Halil İnalcık, "Capital Formation in the Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Economic History*, 29/1 (1969), p. 99.

²¹ E.g., İŞS, no. 45, fol. 25A–2, d. 2 C 1193 (Jun. 17, 1779); no. 64, fol. 96B–2, d. 1 M 1211 (Jul. 7, 1796).

²² İŞS, no. 45, fol. 32A–3, d. 23 C 1193 (Jul. 8, 1779).

²³ İŞS, no. 58, fol. 42A–3, d. 13 Z 1203 (Sep. 4, 1789). There is a similar description in İŞS, no. 71, fol. 56A–2, d. 23 C 1213 (Dec. 2, 1798).

²⁴ No *hân* with this name has been known to the best of the author's knowledge, but it is probably the building with 70 rooms near Mahmûd Paşa mentioned as the Tahtalı Hân in Evliya Çelebi's *Seyâhatnâme*. See Evliya Çelebi, Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağlı et al. (eds.), *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, vol. 1, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2006, p. 154.

the ‘Alî Paşa Hânı,²⁵ four at the Pîrî Paşa Hânı,²⁶ three at the Mercan Hânı,²⁷ six at the Yolgeçen Hânı,²⁸ and five at the Sepetçiler Hânı.²⁹ According to other documents,³⁰ some also stayed at the Pastırmacı Hânı³¹ and the Vâlîde Hânı.³²

Long-distance merchants dealing in shoe leather did not have a formal organization such as a guild, but by at least 1793, they had a chief in Istanbul known as the *baş bâzergân* or *bâzergânbaşı*.³³ The chief at the time, el-Hâcc Hüseyin Ağa bin Ahmed, petitioned the court to dispose of the stock and goods left behind by the exiled long-distance merchants, as discussed below.³⁴ He also participated in the court deliberations regarding the appointment of the head of the shoemaker’s guild (*dikicibaşı*) and the leather distribution.³⁵ These facts suggest that the duties of this position included managing long-distance merchants dealing in shoe leather and

²⁵ Around the Mercan Market in the eighteenth century, there were at least three buildings known as the ‘Alî Paşa Hânı. The ‘Alî Paşa Hânı mentioned in this source may be one of these. See Ceyhan Güran, *Türk Hanlarının Gelişimi ve İstanbul Hanlar Mimarisi*, Ankara: Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü Yayınları, 1976, pp. 105–109.

²⁶ This *hân* was located in the Hallâçlar district and had 80 rooms. See Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnâmesi*, vol. 1, p. 154.

²⁷ This *hân* is thought to refer to either the Mercan Ağa Hânı or the Mercan Çakur Hânı, both of which were located in the vicinity of the Kapalıçarşı. See Güran, *Türk Hanlarının Gelişimi*, p. 153; Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mi‘mârisinde Fâtih Devri 855–886 (1451–1481)*, 2 vols., İstanbul: İstanbul Fetih Cem’iyeti İstanbul Enstitüsü, 1989, pp. 589–590.

²⁸ Two buildings had the name Yolgeçen Hânı, one to the north and one to the south of the Kapalıçarşı, and it is thought that the Yolgeçen Hânı mentioned in this document refers to one of them. See Güran, *Türk Hanlarının Gelişimi*, pp. 148–149, 155.

²⁹ This building is thought to refer to the Sepetçi Hânı that still exists on the south side of the Kapalıçarşı. See Güran, *Türk Hanlarının Gelişimi*, p. 154.

³⁰ İŞS, no. 61, fol. 96A–3, d. 9 Z 1207 (Jul. 18, 1793); no. 66, fol. 4B–2, d. 28 C 1207 (Feb. 10, 1793); no. 66, fol. 4B–3, d. 23 C 1207 (Feb. 5, 1793).

³¹ This building was located to the north of the Kapalıçarşı. See Güran, *Türk Hanlarının Gelişimi*, p. 154. For another long-distance merchant, who purchased *sahtiyân* leather in Kayseri and stayed at this *hân*, see Ahmet Yaşar, “Mekân ve Yabancı: 18. Yüzyıl İstanbul’unda Bir Han Odasında Tek Başına Ölmek,” *Mediterranean Journal of Humanities*, 9/2 (2019), pp. 543–544, 547.

³² This building, located to the north of the Kapalıçarşı, was built by order of Kösem Sultan, the mother of Sultan Murad IV (r. 1623–40), as a waqf endowment for the Çinili Complex (*küllîye*) in Üsküdar. See Gönül Cantay, “Valide Hanı,” in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 7, Ankara; İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı/Tarih Vakfı, 1994, pp. 362–363.

³³ The exact date of the creation of this position is unclear, but to the best of the author’s knowledge, the earliest document that mentions it is İŞS, no. 66, fol. 4B–3, d. 23 C 1207 (Feb. 5, 1793).

³⁴ İŞS, no. 66, fol. 4B–2, d. 28 C 1207 (Feb. 10, 1793); no. 66, fol. 4B–3, d. 23 C 1207 (Feb. 5, 1793).

³⁵ İŞS, no. 61, fol. 58A–4, d. 17 Ş 1207 (Mar. 30, 1793); no. 67, fol. 50A–3, d. 19 Ş 1211 (Feb. 17, 1797). For *dikicibaşı*, see Nalan Turna, “The Shoe Guilds of Istanbul in the Early Nineteenth Century: A Case Study,” in Suraiya Faroqhi (ed.), *Bread from the Lion’s Mouth: Artisans Struggling for a Livelihood in Ottoman Cities*, New York; London: Berghahn Books, 2015, p. 159.

representing them in negotiations with the government and relevant guilds.³⁶ However, in September 1793, when relevant guilds accused the *baş bâzergân* of preventing the proper distribution of shoe leather, the judge ruled to abolish this position³⁷. From then on, as far as can be seen, this position did not appear in sources until the end of the eighteenth century, except in one case in 1797.³⁸ Therefore, it is thought that the position continued for some reason after the ruling, but its role in the shoe leather trade greatly diminished.

It is possible to clarify to some extent the stock and goods they brought with them to *hâns* from the following case. In 1793, Bağçeci-oğlu Ahmed, a long-distance merchant staying in the room (*oda*) of the Pastırmacı Hân, was expelled from Istanbul for bribery related to the election and appointment of the *dikicibaşı*,³⁹ whereas his stock and goods were left in the room. The judge then ordered the *baş bâzergân* to manage the stock and goods as a trustee (*kayyum*) and recorded them in the court register. According to the record, the room where Bağçeci-oğlu Ahmed stayed contained stock worth 983 *kuruş*, consisting of 82 bundles (about 350 pieces) of *sahtiyân* leather from Kayseri. Furthermore, three cushions (*minder*), two old silk pillows (*köhne çatma yastık*), a cotton pillow (*çit yastık*), a red Algerian cloth or rug (*kırmızı Cezâyir ihrâmı*), a small cotton cushion (*sagîr çit minder*), a piece of Selânik felt (*parça Selânik keçesi*), a copper jug (*bakır ibrik*), a long tobacco pipe (*tütûn çubuğu*), a glass water pipe (*şîşe nargile*), a glass bowl (*şîşe kâse*), a new “jasmine long pipe” (*cedîd yâsemîn çubuğu*), a walnut board for counting cash (*ceviz peştahta*), a small mirror (*sagîr ayna*), a copper brazier (*bakır mangal*), a board for counting cash (*akçe tahtası*) were left behind.⁴⁰

Similarly, the stock and goods left behind in the room of the Pastırmacı Hân by the long-distance merchant ‘Attâr-zâde el-Hâcc Ahmed consisted of 60 bundles (275 pieces) of *sahtiyân* leather from Kayseri worth 584 *kuruş*, as well as 70 *kuruş* in cash in a cupboard, 16 pieces of red *sahtiyân* leather dyed from gum-lac (*lûk kıızı sahtiyân*), two new shoes (*cedîd mest*), a mirror (*ayna*), a table cloth (*aş makraması*), a chintz shawl (*basma şal*), a collection of 26 pieces of leather (*mecmû‘a-ı cild*), a sword (*kılıç*),

³⁶ A similar office was the *şehbender* in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Aleppo. For details, see Bruce Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600–1750*, New York: New York University Press, 1988, pp. 57–60.

³⁷ İŞS, no. 62, fol. 5B–3, d. 25 M 1208 (Sep. 2, 1793).

³⁸ İŞS, no. 67, fol. 50A–3, d. 19 Ş 1211 (Feb. 17, 1797). A court record dated 1818 states that es-Seyyid ‘Osmân Ağa bin Hüseyin, a long-distance merchant dealing in shoe leather, was appointed to this position. See İŞS, no. 122, fol. 62A–1, d. 5 Ş 1233 (Jun. 10, 1818).

³⁹ İŞS, no. 61, fol. 26A–3, d. 17 Z 1206 (Aug. 6, 1792).

⁴⁰ İŞS, no. 66, fol. 4B–3, d. 23 C 1207 (Feb. 5, 1793).

and two cotton-wool pillows (*şayak yastık*).⁴¹

III Organization and Officers of the Shoe Leather Merchants' Guild

Although shoe leather merchants were generally referred to vaguely in sources as “merchants (*tâcir*),” they were clearly distinguished from other merchants as those exclusively engaged in the wholesale of shoe leather. They set up their shops together in the Mercan Market located to the north of the Kapalıçarşı. Like many other trades, they organized a guild with a head (*kethüdâ*) and an assistant (*yiğitbaşı*) as officers. Membership was limited to Muslims who had trained as apprentices (*şâkird*) under a shoe leather merchant for a certain period and had acquired specialist knowledge. Accordingly, those who did not meet this requirement could not open their own business, even if they were the lessee of a shop. In 1789, Ayşe bint el-Hâcc ‘Osmân, who owned a shoe leather shop, permitted her husband Hâfız Mehmed Emîn to trade in shoe leather at the shop, but as the latter was not a member of the shoe leather merchants’ guild, the guild allowed him to trade in shoe leather on the condition that he undertake an apprenticeship for three months and join the guild.⁴² The exact number of shoe leather merchants is not known; however, in 1774, they gave testimonies in court stating that they had 123 shops.⁴³ Thus, it is likely that the number was approximately the same. As shoe leather merchants were referred to in some sources as *sahtiyâncı* or *sahtiyân tâciri*,⁴⁴ *meşinci*,⁴⁵ and *köseleci*,⁴⁶ some likely specialized in these specific types of leather.

Shoe leather merchants dealt with tanners and long-distance merchants as well, but they seemed to have had particularly close ties with shoemakers. Some shoe leather merchants changed their careers from shoemakers, whereas others temporarily entrusted the management of their businesses to shoemakers with whom they were related. For example, a shoe leather merchant named el-Hâcc Ahmed bin Mehmed had previously served as the *yiğitbaşı* of the shoemakers’ (*mestçi*) guild.⁴⁷ Zihgircioğlu es-Seyyid el-Hâcc Mustafâ bin ‘Alî, who had previously been the *kethüdâ* of the

⁴¹ İŞS, no. 66, fol. 4B–2, d. 28 C 1207 (Feb. 10, 1793).

⁴² İŞS, no. 45, fol. 32A–3, d. 23 C 1193 (Jul. 8, 1779); no. 58, fol. 52A–2, d. 11 Ra 1204 (Nov. 29, 1789).

⁴³ Kal’a, *İstanbul Esnaf Tarihi*, vol. 2, pp. 158–159; İŞS, no. 37, fol. 95A–1, d. L 1188 (Dec. 1774).

⁴⁴ E.g., İŞS, no. 36, fol. 94B–3, d. 3 C 1188 (Aug. 11, 1774); no. 66, fol. 2B–2, d. 19 Ca 1207 (Jan. 2, 1793). See also Yaşar, “Mekân ve Yabancı,” p. 547; Yi, “Rich Artisans and Poor Merchants?” pp. 209–210.

⁴⁵ İŞS, no. 30, fol. 97A–1, d. Z 1181 (Apr. 1768); no. 40, fol. 86A–4, d. 26 B 1191 (Aug. 30, 1777).

⁴⁶ İŞS, no. 31, fol. 31B–3, d. 22 Ca 1182 (Oct. 4, 1768).

⁴⁷ Kal’a, *İstanbul Esnaf Tarihi*, vol. 2, pp. 141–143.

shoe leather merchants' guild but was expelled from the guild for committing fraud, entrusted the management of his shop to his nephew, the bootmaker (*çizmeci*) es-Seyyid Mehmed 'Alemdâr bin İbrâhîm.⁴⁸ Shoe leather merchants also sometimes conspired with shoemakers to commit fraud. In fact, in 1779, several shoe leather merchants and shoemakers conspired to have the *dikicibaşı* and the *kethüdâ* of the shoe leather merchants' guild dismissed and were subsequently sued in court by over 80 shoe leather merchants and shoemakers.⁴⁹ Despite being two separate professions with their own independent guilds, at least some shoe leather merchants interacted with shoemakers outside the formal guild structure and strengthened their ties.

The management of the members and shops of the shoe leather merchants' guild is largely unclear, but a court record dated 1774 concerning a dispute with the tailors (*terzî*) provides a clue to clarifying it. The tailors' guild set up a *gedik*⁵⁰ in one of the shoe leather merchants' shops and asserted its right to lease the property. The shoe leather merchants' guild emphasized in court that their business and the running of the guild were both proper, stating that "*gediks* should not be set up for the shops run by [shoe leather merchants] as per the traditional regulations (*nizâm-ı kadîmî*)."⁵¹ Importantly, it succeeded in retaining the right to lease the shop.⁵¹ This statement suggests that the shoe leather merchants' guild managed its members and shops without using *gediks*.⁵² The lack of interest in *gedik* among shoe leather merchants may have been related to the fact that their shops were concentrated in a specific market.

In addition to their regular shops, the shoe leather merchants' guild also had a type of "guildhall" called *lonca* in the Mercan Market,⁵³ which was used for discussions among officers and elders (*ihitiyâr*), as well as for purchasing and distributing shoe leather to the members. As mentioned below, this *lonca* was the center of the shoe leather trade in Istanbul, but the property was not allocated to the

⁴⁸ İŞS, no. 66, fol. 4A–2, d. 3 B 1207 (Feb. 14, 1793).

⁴⁹ İŞS, no. 45, fol. 10A–2, d. 23 R 1193 (May 10, 1779).

⁵⁰ The *gedik* was widely used in the guilds of eighteenth-century Istanbul as a form of master's rights or rights to lease shops and workshops. For an overview, see Yi, *Guild Dynamics*, pp. 148–160.

⁵¹ İŞS, no. 37, fol. 95A–1, d. L 1188 (Dec. 1774).

⁵² In 1783, Mehmed Sa'îd bin el-Hâcc Hüseyin, a shoe leather merchant who rented a shop from a woman named Fâtîma Hâtûn ibnet Mustafâ, argued in court that since he had set up the cushions and pillows in the shop as a *gedik*, Fâtîma could not evict him from the shop even after the lease expired. He had mistakenly believed that individuals could set *gediks* as they liked. His misunderstanding of *gedik* may also indicate that the guild in question did not use *gedik*. See İŞS, no. 51, fol. 28A–1, d. 15 M 1198 (Dec. 10, 1783).

⁵³ It was also occasionally called a "trading house (*tâcirhâne*)" or "merchants' market (*tâcirler sūku*)."⁵³ See Kal'a, *İstanbul Esnaf Tarihi*, vol. 1, p. 295; İŞS, no. 61, fol. 75A–3, d. 29 L 1207 (Jun. 9, 1793).

guild by the government or a waqf; rather, it was leased through a personal contract between the owner and the *kethüdâ*.⁵⁴ For this reason, the guild had to pay attention to issues such as the following: In 1800, Molla Mustafâ bin el-Hâcc Mustafâ, who had been leasing out the *lonca*, tried to lease it to a tailor named Agob, who offered the rent of 4 kuruş per month. As a result, the *kethüdâ* of the shoe leather merchants' guild, Es-Seyyid Hüseyin Ağa, and others had to present the aforementioned lessor with a compromise proposal to pay 4 kuruş in rent going forward.⁵⁵

In the shoe leather merchants' guild, at least ten changes of the *kethüdâ* were made for about forty years from September 1763 to March 1803 (Table 2). Like many other guilds, they were elected among guild members, and after being approved by a judge, they were appointed by receiving an imperial charter (*berât*).⁵⁶ However, in some cases, shoemakers and shoe retailers (*haffâf*) participated in the discussion over the election, and officers of the shoemakers' guild joined the petition to the judge. In January 1768, Hâfiz el-Hâcc 'Osmân Efendi (Table 2, no. 2) appointed, "the aforementioned shoe leather merchants and the shoemakers and shoe retailers whose names are written in [the court register] have elected [the *kethüdâ*]." ⁵⁷ In May 1771, eleven shoe leather merchants, including the *yiğitbaşı*, made a petition together with the *dikicibaşı* when Mustafâ Çelebi bin 'Alî (Table 2, no. 4) was appointed.⁵⁸ In some craft guilds in eighteenth-century Istanbul, it had become customary to "purchase" the *kethüdâ* position from the government by relinquishing the right to receive a salary or pension to the state treasury,⁵⁹ but there is no evidence of this practice in the shoe leather merchants' guild.

At least during the aforementioned period, there were no regulations regarding the *kethüdâ*'s term of office in the shoe leather merchants' guild. The *kethüdâ* could continue to hold office unless he resigned of his own accord for failing to perform his duties or guild members requested the judge to dismiss the *kethüdâ* for violating the regulations or neglecting his duties, and the judge approved the request. As a result, the terms of office of the *kethüdâs* varied considerably. The shortest term was that of Hâfiz el-Hâcc 'Osmân Efendi bin el-Hâcc Mehmed (Table 2, no. 2), which lasted for

⁵⁴ İŞS, no. 73 fol. 91B–2, d. 23 B 1215 (Dec. 10, 1800).

⁵⁵ İŞS, no. 73, fol. 91B–2, d. 23 B 1215 (Dec. 10, 1800). The amount of rent prior to this negotiation is not recorded in the source.

⁵⁶ For a general overview of the appointment and dismissal of *kethüdâs*, see Yi, *Guild Dynamics*, pp. 74–77.

⁵⁷ İŞS, no. 30, fol. 14B–2, d. 7 N 1181 (Jan. 27, 1768).

⁵⁸ İŞS, no. 33, fol. 54B–1, d. 7 S 1185 (May 22, 1771).

⁵⁹ Suraiya Faroqhi, "Purchasing Guild- and Craft-Based Offices in the Ottoman Central Lands," *Turcica*, 39 (2007), pp. 123–146.

around eight months (from January 27, 1768, to October 4, 1768). The longest was Zihgîrci-oğlu es-Seyyid el-Hâcc Mustafâ Ağa bin 'Alî (Table 2, no. 8), who was in office for about 7 years and 5 months (from August 11, 1785, to January 2, 1793).

In the aforementioned forty years, in six cases (Table 2, nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9) the *kethüdâ* resigned of their own accord due to difficulties in performing their duties, and in four cases (Table 2, nos. 1, 6, 8, and 10), the *kethüdâ* was dismissed following accusations of misconduct by the *yiğitbaşı* and others. Interestingly, in all the latter cases, the term of office was relatively long. In particular, the aforementioned Mustafâ (Table 2, nos. 8 and 10) was appointed *kethüdâ* twice, despite repeatedly violating the rules and neglecting his duties, and held the position for a total of more than 13 years. He received two reprimands (*tenbîh*) from the judges in 1785 and 1786 for his unjust interference with the *dikicibaşı* and negligence in his duties, shortly after his first appointment as the *kethüdâ*.⁶⁰ He was then dismissed in 1793 for “committing an evil deed against the imperial edict (*hilâf-ı emr-i 'âlî hareket-i redî'e*)” and was also expelled from the guild (*ihrâc*).⁶¹ Nevertheless, Mustafâ was reappointed to the post of the *kethüdâ* in 1794, just eighteen months later, and remained in the post for about five years and eleven months until 1800, when he was dismissed for “a decline in his ability to distinguish between the quality of shoe leather.”⁶²

Although the duties and authority of the *kethüdâs* were generally limited to their respective guilds,⁶³ many *kethüdâs* in the shoe leather merchants' guild were actively involved in matters of related occupations. They frequently appeared in court with the *yiğitbaşı* of the shoemakers' guild regarding the appointment of *dikicibaşı*,⁶⁴ and even interfered in disputes faced by guilds of related occupations. For example, in 1781, when six shoemakers, including the head of the shoemakers' guild (*dikici kethüdâsı*), were detained at the office of the Janissary commander (*yenîçeri ağası*) following a complaint by three other shoemakers, a dispute erupted within the shoemakers' guild over the validity of their arrest. In response, es-Seyyid Mustafâ Çelebi bin es-Seyyid 'Alî (Table 2, no. 6) appeared in court alongside the *dikicibaşı* and others, argued that the statements made by the three aforementioned shoemakers were groundless, and requested the release of the six arrestees.⁶⁵ Additionally, in 1774, Ahmed bin İbrâhîm,

⁶⁰ İŞS, no. 53, fol. 27B–2, d. 13 L 1199 (Aug. 19, 1785); no. 54, fol. 79B–3, d. 25 S 1201 (Dec. 17, 1786).

⁶¹ İŞS, no. 66, fol. 2B–2, d. 19 Ca 1207 (Jan. 2, 1793).

⁶² İŞS, no. 66, fol. 64A–1, d. 19 Za 1208 (Jun. 18, 1794); no. 72, fol. 38A–2, d. 14 Z 1214 (May 9, 1800).

⁶³ Yi, *Guild Dynamics*, pp. 77–78.

⁶⁴ İŞS, no. 37, fol. 40B–3, d. 25 Ca 1189 (Jul. 24, 1775); no. 40, fol. 57B–2, d. 27 Ca 1191 (Jul. 3, 1777); no. 50, fol. 40B–3, d. 17 Ra 1197 (Feb. 20, 1783); no. 51, fol. 40A–2, d. 13 Ra, 1198 (Feb. 5, 1784); no. 59, fol. 70B–1, d. 21 Ra 1206 (Nov. 18, 1791); no. 61, fol. 58A–4, d. 17 Ş 1207 (Mar. 30, 1793).

⁶⁵ İŞS, no. 47, fol. 32A–4, d. 8 M 1195 (Jan. 4, 1781).

a shoe repairer (*eskici*), sued the shoemakers' guild, claiming that his appointment as a military craftsman (*orducu*)⁶⁶ of the guild was unjust. At that time, Mustafa Çelebi bin 'Alî (Table 2, no. 4) testified that Ahmed's claim was valid.⁶⁷

Furthermore, the *kethüdâs* of the shoe leather merchants' guild paid close attention to illegal practices related to the distribution of shoe leather, even if they were not directly related to the shoe leather merchants' guild. As shown in Table 3, at least 25 cases of illegal activities related to the distribution of shoe leather occurred between 1768 and 1800. In 19 of those cases, the *kethüdâs* of the shoe leather merchants' guild appeared in court as plaintiffs or witnesses (Table 3, nos. 3–4, 7–13, and 16–25). The violators were diverse, including shoe leather merchants, long-distance merchants, shoemakers, tanners, and “peddlers (*koltukçu*).”⁶⁸ For example, in 1779, es-Seyyid Eyyûb, a long-distance merchant from Kayseri, and his brother es-Seyyid Mahmûd attempted to resell five bundles of *sahtiyân* leather brought from Kayseri to other regions. Mustafâ (Table 2, no. 6), along with the *dikicibaşı* and the head of the bootmakers (*çizmecibaşı*), seized the leather and brought the case to court.⁶⁹ In 1792, Veliyüddîn, a tanner in the Kasımpaşa district, attempted to transport 136 pieces of leather outside Istanbul, but was discovered by a police officer (*kulluk yeniçerileri*) serving at the Edirne Gate. Upon receiving this report, Mustafâ (Table 2, no. 8) summoned the tanner to court and explained to him that it violated the regulations.⁷⁰

The extensive supervision and interference in the distribution of shoe leather by the *kethüdâs* of the shoe leather merchants' guild were rarely considered unfair by related guilds or judges.⁷¹ This shows that the *kethüdâs* of the shoe leather merchants' guild were responsible not only for the operation of the guild but also for the

⁶⁶ On *orducu*, see Şenol Çelik, “Osmanlı Sefer Organizasyonunda Orducu Esnafı ve İstanbul Orduları,” in Feridun M. Emecen (ed.), *Eskiçağ'dan Modern Çağ'a Ordular: Oluşum, Teşkilât ve İşlev*, İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2008, pp. 355–386.

⁶⁷ İŞS, no. 36, fol. 105B–3, d. 6 B 1188 (Sep. 12, 1774).

⁶⁸ The literal meaning of *koltukçu* is “peddler.” However, sources often contain phrases such as “not to be sold to *koltukçu* or outsiders (*hâricden bir ferd*),” suggesting that this term was a general term for those who were not members of any guild and engaged in illegal trade. E.g., Kal'a, *İstanbul Esnaf Tarihi*, vol. 1, p. 91.

⁶⁹ İŞS, no. 45, fol. 25A–2, d. 2 C 1193 (Jun. 17, 1779).

⁷⁰ İŞS, no. 61, fol. 22A–2, d. 19 Za 1206 (Jul. 9, 1792). In addition, Mustafâ Çelebi (Table 2, no. 4) petitioned the court for the pardon of a long-distance merchant who had been exiled from his hometown of Kayseri in April 1775 for fraud and profiteering (*hile ve ihtikâr*). See İŞS, no. 37, fol. 45A–2, d. 11 C 1189 (Aug. 9, 1775).

⁷¹ The following case is an exception. In 1785, Mustafâ (Table 2, no. 8) was reprimanded by a judge for excessive interference in the shoemakers' guild. See İŞS, no. 53, fol. 27B–2, d. 13 L 1199 (Aug. 19, 1785).

distribution of shoe leather in general. The *kethüdâs*' extensive duties and authority stemmed from the presence of multiple related occupations with interests in the shoe leather merchants' guild, the lack of organizations such as guilds among long-distance merchants, and the absence of government officials specializing in the supervision of shoe leather distribution.

IV Distribution and Prices of Shoe Leather in Istanbul

In 1767, shoemakers and long-distance merchants who visited the court testified to the distribution of shoe leather in Istanbul based on past imperial edicts, as follows:

Leather of *sahtiyân*, *meşin*, *kösele*, and *sağrı* brought from the provinces was transported to the *lonca* [of the shoe leather merchants' guild] in the Mercan Market immediately after customs duties (*resm-i gümrük*) were paid. It was sorted into good (*â'lâ*) and bad (*redî*) quality under the supervision of the *çizmecibaşı*, the *dikicibaşı*, the *ketüdâ* of the shoe leather merchants' guild, and others. After that, the appropriate price (*değer bahâ*) was determined and distributed [to the shoe leather merchants].⁷²

Similar testimonies by shoe leather merchants and those in related occupations were recorded in at least 16 court records from 1726 to 1797. Based on these findings, the regulations and procedures for the distribution of shoe leather can be reconstructed as follows: First, when *sahtiyân*, *kösele*, *meşin*, and *sağrı* leather arrived in Istanbul from the provinces, customs duties were paid on them. They were then sent to the *lonca* place of the shoe leather merchants' guild in the Mercan Market under the responsibility of customs officials (*gümrük emîni*). There, under the supervision of officers and elders from the shoe leather merchants', shoemakers', and shoe retailers' guilds, the quality of the aforementioned leather—as well as leather brought from Istanbul's tanneries—was inspected, and the number of pieces to be traded and their prices were negotiated (*müzâyede*). The *kethüdâ* of the shoe leather merchants' guild purchased the shoe leather in bulk according to the results of the negotiations and distributed it to the shoe leather merchants according to their allocations (*hisse*). Shoe-leather merchants sold leather to shoemakers for cash (*nakden*) or credit (*nes'eten*). However, tanners in Üsküdar were allowed to sell their leather freely within the city walls of Istanbul. In addition, shoe leather merchants and shoemakers were only permitted to purchase leather directly from tanners in Istanbul when they had run out

⁷² İŞS, no. 29, fol. 79A–1, d. 10 R 1181 (Sep. 5, 1767).

of stock. Long-distance merchants were prohibited from unfolding leather bundles before they reached the Mercan Market and reselling them to other regions. It was also illegal for *koltukçus* to be involved in these trades or for shoe leather merchants to store or sell leather secretly in their *hân* rooms or residences (*menâzil*). Violators were punished by the Janissary Commander.⁷³

The wholesale trade by shoe leather merchants' guilds, as described above, is considered to have been established at least by the early seventeenth century, according to the following testimony by the guild's *kethüda*. In 1619, the *kethüdâ* testified: "Until now, shoe leather brought from the provinces to the aforementioned [i.e., Istanbul] was sent directly to customs and transported by carriers (*hammâl*) under the responsibility of the *kethüdâ* [of the shoe leather merchants' guild] to the Pîrî Paşa Hânı in the aforementioned city. After that, the shoe leather merchants gathered at the aforementioned *hân*, and the leather was distributed fairly and justly (*hakk ve 'adl üzere*) according to their respective circumstances, under the supervision of the *kethüdâ*, the *yîğitbaşı*, and the elders."⁷⁴ According to this testimony, the trading place at that time was not the *lonca* in the Mercan Market, but the Pîrî Paşa Hânı. Probably at some point, it was transferred to the former.

These regulations indicate that the supply of shoe leather to shoemakers was, in most cases, required to be carried out through the shoe leather merchants' guild. It was responsible for managing the distribution of shoe leather in Istanbul and, at the same time, had the exclusive right to purchase shoe leather from long-distance merchants and tanners and sell it to shoemakers. However, the shoe leather merchants' guild was limited to trading shoe leather and could not engage in the trade of leather for other purposes. In 1763, this guild claimed exclusive rights to the sale of all leather in Istanbul and sued tanners who sold leather to saddlers (*serrâc*); however, the claim was rejected by the judge.⁷⁵ It is also noteworthy that, as indicated by the testimony

⁷³ İŞS, no. 24, fol. 15A–2, d. 18 L 1138 (Jun. 19, 1726); no. 25, fol. 183–3, d. 21 Ca 1180 (Oct. 25, 1766); no. 29, fol. 79A–1, d. 10 R 1181 (Sep. 5, 1767); no. 37, fol. 65A–3, d. Ş 1189 (Sep.–Oct. 1775); no. 37, fol. 95A–1, d. L 1188 (Dec. 1774); no. 38, fol. 72A–3, d. 12 Za 1190 (Dec. 23, 1776); no. 42, fol. 70B–1, d. 9 B 1192 (Aug. 3, 1778); no. 45, fol. 25A–2, d. 2 C 1193 (Jun. 17, 1779); no. 45, fol. 32A–3, d. 23 C 1193 (Jul. 8, 1779); no. 47, fol. 80A–2, d. Ca 1195 (Apr.–May 1781); no. 47, fol. 92B–3, d. 27 B 1195 (Jul. 19, 1781); no. 61, fol. 22A–2, d. 19 Za 1206 (Jul. 9, 1792); no. 61, fol. 91B–4, d. 17 Za 1207 (Jun. 26, 1793); no. 61, fol. 96A–3, d. 9 Z 1207 (Jul. 18, 1793); no. 62, 5B–3, d. 25 M 1208 (Sep. 2, 1793); no. 69, fol. 26A–2, d. 24 R 1212 (Oct. 16, 1797). There are similar records in Kal'a, *İstanbul Esnaf Tarihi*, vol. 1, pp. 27–28, 46–48; vol. 2, pp. 184–186, 297–298, 377–378.

⁷⁴ İŞS, no. 4, fol. 57A–1, d. B 1028 (Jun. 1619); Timur Kuran (ed.), *Mahkeme Kayıtları Işığında 17. Yüzyıl İstanbul'unda Sosyo-Ekonomik Yaşam*, vol. 1, İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2010, pp. 200–202.

⁷⁵ BOA, Cevdet Belediye, no. 5186, d. 15 Ra 1177 (Sep. 23, 1763).

of the shoemakers and long-distance merchants cited above, they generally supported exclusive wholesale distribution by the shoe leather merchants' guild and did not engage in or seek direct transactions between the two groups.⁷⁶ Although sources do not directly indicate the reason for this, the following can be inferred: 1) no government officials specialized in supervising the supply and distribution of shoe leather; 2) the production areas for shoe leather were extensive and diverse; and 3) it was difficult for shoemakers distributed throughout Istanbul to trade directly with long-distance merchants.⁷⁷

Generally, craftsmen and retailers were obliged to sell at official prices (*narh*), and 10% to 20% of the cost price (i.e., the purchase price of goods and raw materials) was recognized as their profit.⁷⁸ However, as mentioned above, the price of shoe leather was determined on a case-by-case basis through negotiations between the relevant persons in the Mercan Market, and the prices set in advance were only "fair prices (*fî'at-ı mu'tedile*)" to be used as a reference during negotiations.⁷⁹ The prices determined in this manner did not necessarily guarantee a 10% profit for shoe leather merchants. According to the shoe leather price list in 1730–31 (Table 4), for 39 of the 49 items for which both the cost price (i.e., purchase price) and selling price were listed, the profit of shoe leather merchants was less than 10% of the cost price.⁸⁰ In the case of high- and medium-grade *sahtiyân* leather from Tunis, the profit was only around 2%. The purchase prices for Alexandrian red *sahtiyân* leather and Edirne yellow *sahtiyân* leather were fixed at 192 akçe and 80 akçe, respectively, regardless of quality. These high-quality leathers yielded significant profits of 18% and 25%, respectively, but low-quality leathers could not recoup purchase costs, even when sold.⁸¹

Long-distance merchants had long agreed with shoe leather merchants to set their profits at 10% of the cost price,⁸² but in reality, they may have often found

⁷⁶ As an exceptional case, in 1746, in an attempt to legalize direct purchases from long-distance merchants, a bootmaker (*çizmecî*) prepared an inappropriate petition (*'arzihâl*) including arbitrary quotations from an imperial edict issued to the judge and the deputy governor (*mütesellim*) of Kayseri. See Kal'a, *İstanbul Esnaf Tarihi*, vol. 1, pp. 46–48.

⁷⁷ For the distribution of shoemakers, see Turna, "The Shoe Guilds of Istanbul," p. 160.

⁷⁸ Kütükoğlu, *1640 Tarihli Narh Defteri*, pp. 15–16.

⁷⁹ A price list for shoe leather dated 1793 clearly states that the prices listed are "fair prices" and that actual selling prices are to be determined through negotiation. See BOA, D.BŞM, no. 6134, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793); İŞS, no. 201, fol. 44A–1, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793).

⁸⁰ İŞS, no. 24, fols. 91A–2, 91B–2, d. 1144 (1730–31).

⁸¹ For the prices of *sahtiyân* leather and *kösele* leather in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Istanbul, see also Tekin, "Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Dericilik," pp. 97–101.

⁸² İŞS, no. 54, fol. 127B–2, d. 7 N 1201 (Jun. 23, 1787).

themselves in an even more difficult situation than shoe leather merchants. In 1769, a long-distance merchant named es-Seyyid Mahmûd purchased *sahtiyân* leather from Kayseri for 6,750 *kuruş* and attempted to sell it in Istanbul but was unable to receive more than 7,100 *kuruş*, resulting in a profit of only about 5% of the cost.⁸³ According to a survey conducted by a deputy judge (nâ'ib) in Kayseri in 1800, when long-distance merchants purchased *sahtiyân* leather in Kayseri for 11–14 *kuruş* (i.e., 440–560 *para*) per bundle, the profit they could make was only 20 *para* (i.e., about 4–5% of the cost).⁸⁴

V Shoe Leather Shortage, Its Impact, and Response

In eighteenth-century Istanbul, food and other supplies were often in short supply, and prices rose sharply. The situation became chronic and severe in the 1780s.⁸⁵ Although specific fluctuations in the supply and price of shoe leather at the time are unclear, sources indicate a serious shortage—particularly of *sahtiyân* leather from Kayseri—beginning in the 1760s.⁸⁶ This shortage is believed to have resulted from a combination of the following factors. The first was “traditional” illegal practices such as hoarding, smuggling, and reselling. Second, there was a shortage of gallnuts (*mazi*). The gallnuts used for tanning leather in Kayseri were mainly produced in Diyarbakır, but by the 1760s at the latest, most had gradually come into the hands of Europeans (*Efrenç tâ'ifesi*) via Izmir and Aleppo. This led to a decline in leather production in Kayseri and the use of sumac leaves (*sumak yaprağı*) as a substitute for gallnuts, which increased the quantity of defective products that turned black.⁸⁷ The third factor

⁸³ İŞS, no. 32, fol. 16A–2, d. 18 M 1183 (May 24, 1769).

⁸⁴ İŞS, no. 73, fol. 67A–3, d. 9 S 1215 (Jul. 2, 1800); no. 73, fol. 67B–1, d. 9 S 1215 (Jul. 2, 1800).

⁸⁵ Betül Başaran, *Selim III, Social Control and Policing in Istanbul at the End of the Eighteenth Century: Between Crisis and Order*, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014, pp. 66–70, 91–93; Rhoads Murphey, “Provisioning Istanbul: The State and Subsistence in the Early Modern Middle East,” *Food and Foodways*, 2 (1988), pp. 219–220.

⁸⁶ Salih Aynural, “Selim III Döneminde İstanbul’da İktisadi Hayat (1789–1807),” Ph.D. diss., İstanbul University, 1989, p. 156; Hülagü, “Kayseri’de Sahtiyân Üretimi,” pp. 5–7; Yücel Özkaya, “XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Esnaf Sorunları,” in *IX. Türk Tarih Kongresi: Ankara, 21–25 Eylül 1981: Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler*, vol. 2, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988, pp. 1045–1046; id. *XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Kurumları*, pp. 349–350; Tekin, “Osmanlı İstanbul’unda Dericilik,” pp. 95–96.

⁸⁷ İŞS, no. 25, fol. 183–3, d. 21 Ca 1180 (Oct. 25, 1766); no. 58, fol. 42A–3, d. 13 Z 1203 (Sep. 4, 1789); no. 73, fol. 99A–2, d. 25 Ş 1215 (Jan. 11, 1801); no. 75, fol. 49B–1, d. 15 S 1216 (Jun. 27, 1801); BOA, Cevdet İktisat, no. 345, d. 3 Ş 1207 (Mar. 16, 1793); no. 1910, d. 17 Z 1211 (Jun. 13, 1797). See also Özkaya, “Esnaf Sorunları,” pp. 1045–1046; Tekin, “Osmanlı İstanbul’unda Dericilik,” pp. 95–96; Hülagü, “Kayseri’de Sahtiyân Üretimi,” p. 7. On the export of gallnuts from Izmir and Aleppo to

was the intensification of disputes over the share of *sahtiyân* leather between long-distance merchants and shoemakers in İskilip from the 1790s onward.⁸⁸ Judges in Istanbul—either in response to complaints from those involved, at the behest of the government, or on their own initiative—frequently summoned the parties to court to discuss appropriate measures. Around 1778, discussions began on deregulating the distribution of shoe leather, as described below.

First, the deregulation of shoe leather sales by long-distance merchants was considered. In 1767–68, a dispute arose between shoe leather merchants and long-distance merchants when the former purchased shoe leather from the latter at unreasonably low prices, resulting in the punishment of four shoe leather merchants, including Mustafâ Ağa, the *kethüdâ* (Table 2, no. 1). After that, when shoe leather was estimated to be cheap in negotiations at the Mercan market, long-distance merchants did not sell it to shoe leather merchants but instead began reselling it to various places within and outside the empire. In 1778, the guilds of shoe leather merchants and shoemakers, taking the issue seriously, proposed that the judge allow long-distance merchants to sell shoe leather freely in Istanbul—but only the leather left unsold at the Mercan Market. The judge ruled in their favor.⁸⁹

To prevent the outflow of shoe leather, the tanners' guild was granted the right to sell it. In 1792, when some tanners attempted to take shoe leather out of Istanbul, the guilds of shoe leather merchants and shoemakers requested that the judge allow tanners to open shops to sell leather directly to them. As a result, es-Seyyid el-Hâcc Mehmed Emîn Ağa, the *ketüdâ* of the Yedikule tanners' guild, Süleymân Ağa, the *yiğitbaşı*, and el-Hâcc Ahmed, the *usta* (master craftsman), were each granted permission to rent one shop in the Mercan Market for this purpose.⁹⁰

Marseille in the eighteenth century, see Robert Paris, Gaston Rambert (ed.), *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, vol. 5, Paris: Plon, 1957, pp. 523–524.

⁸⁸ İŞS, no. 63, fol. 48A–2, d. 15 L 1209 (May 5, 1795); no. 67, fol. 50A–3, 19 Ş 1211 (Feb. 17, 1797); no. 71, fol. 50A–2, d. 2 C 1213 (Nov. 11, 1798); no. 71, fol. 56A–2, d. 23 C 1213 (Dec. 2, 1798); no. 71, fol. 60B–2, d. 15 B 1213 (Dec. 23, 1798); no. 73, fol. 38A–3, d. 9 B 1214 (Dec. 7, 1799); no. 75, fol. 49B–1, d. 15 S 1216 (Jun. 27, 1801); BOA, Cevdet İktisat, no. 144, d. 13 Za 1211 (May 10, 1797); Tekin, “Osmanlı İstanbul’unda Dericilik,” p. 98. This dispute can be traced back to at least 1733. See Ahmed Refik, *Hicrî On İkinci Asırda İstanbul Hayatı (1100–1200)*, İstanbul: İstanbul Matbaacılık, 1930, pp. 125–127, no. 154.

⁸⁹ İŞS, no. 29, fol. 79A–1, d. 10 R 1181 (Sep. 5, 1767); no. 30, fol. 14B–2, d. 7 N 1181 (Jan. 27, 1768); no. 42, fol. 70B–1, d. 9 B 1192 (Aug. 3, 1778). Some court records from 1781 to 1793 show that this ruling was actually applied. See İŞS, no. 47, fol. 80A–2, d. Ca 1195 (Apr.–May 1781); no. 47, fol. 92B–3, d. 27 B 1195 (Jul. 19, 1781); no. 61, fol. 22A–2, d. 19 Za 1206 (Jul. 9, 1792); no. 61, fol. 96A–3, d. 9 Z 1207 (Jul. 18, 1793).

⁹⁰ İŞS, no. 61, fol. 22A–2, d. 19 Za 1206 (Jul. 9, 1792); no. 61, fol. 75A–3, d. 29 L 1207 (Jun. 9, 1793); no. 201, fol. 51B–2, d. 21 Z 1207 (Jul. 30, 1793).

Some shoemakers were allowed to purchase shoe leather directly from tanners in the provinces. In 1781, when eight non-Muslim shoemakers requested permission from a judge to procure shoe leather themselves in Kayseri, the judge, the *kethüdâ* of the shoe leather merchants' guild, and the *dikicibaşı* recognized the benefits for the shoe leather distribution and accepted their request on the condition that they would not lose or damage the shoe leather they purchased.⁹¹

Thus, long-distance merchants, shoemakers, and tanners were granted permission to trade shoe leather under certain conditions. It is noteworthy that although these deregulations could have reduced their role and market share, the shoe leather merchants' guild voluntarily proposed, requested, and expressed support for them. The dedication of shoe leather merchants may indicate a serious shortage of shoe leather.

However, in 1789, the government abolished the monopoly rights granted to guilds as a measure to control prices, allowing the free trade of various goods, including shoe leather.⁹² The shoe leather merchants' guild openly opposed this anti-monopoly order and prevented long-distance merchants and shoemakers from directly trading shoe leather. For example, in 1793, the shoe leather merchants' guild interfered with transactions between long-distance merchants and shoemakers in Vâlide Hânı, which led to a lawsuit.⁹³ In 1797, shoe leather merchant es-Seyyid Ahmed and four other Muslims claimed exclusive rights to trade shoe leather and sued a long-distance merchant named es-Seyyid Mehmed Memiş, who had been selling shoe leather to shoemakers.⁹⁴ The attitude of the shoe leather merchants was understandable, given that they played a central role in leather distribution and bore the risk of shortages—only to have their exclusive rights revoked by a unilateral government decision.

Judges' responses to this issue were inconsistent, and some even ruled against

⁹¹ İŞS, no. 49, fol. 47A–3, d. 14 Ş 1195 (Aug. 5, 1781).

⁹² Kenji Fujiki, "The Prohibition on Trading Monopolies in Istanbul During Selim III's Regime: The Case of Vegetable Trade," *Al-Madaniyya: Keio Bulletin of Middle Eastern and Asian Urban History*, 2 (2023), pp. 17–19. It is clear from a court record dated 1789 that shoe leather was included in the list of items subject to anti-monopoly orders. See İŞS, no. 58, fol. 42A–3, d. 13 Z 1203 (Sep. 4, 1789). This record shows that the judge in Istanbul summoned the shoe leather merchants' guild, the shoemakers' guild, and long-distance merchants to court and made them promise to invalidate the shoe leather merchants' guild's monopoly on buying and selling (*inhisâr-ı bey' ve şirâ*). In addition, an imperial edict was issued to the judges of Bigadiç, Rodos, and Kuşadası in 1793, ordering them to notify relevant local persons that past imperial edicts guaranteeing the monopoly rights of the shoe leather merchants' guild were invalid. See BOA, Cevdet İktisat, no. 418, d. N–L 1207 (Apr.–Jun. 1793).

⁹³ İŞS, no. 61, fol. 96A–3, d. 9 Z 1207 (Jul. 18, 1793).

⁹⁴ İŞS, no. 67, fol. 76A–3, d. 27 Z 1211 (Jun. 23, 1797).

the anti-monopoly order. In the case mentioned above, in 1797, shoe leather merchants were reprimanded for violating Islamic law and the anti-monopoly order.⁹⁵ In contrast, in 1793, the judge supported the contents of previous imperial edicts presented by the shoe leather merchants' guild and persuaded long-distance merchants to sell shoe leather to them.⁹⁶ Furthermore, in a court case in 1797 concerning the legality of a transaction, the judge handed down a similar ruling. Two Jewish wool merchants (*çuhacı*), Mûsâ and Îsâk, purchased *sahtiyân* leather from long-distance merchants and resold it to Mişon, a Jewish shoemaker (*mest dikici*), which led to a dispute over the legality of the transaction. The judge ruled that shoe leather should be handed over to the shoe leather merchants' guild, citing the fact that shoe leather had been traded in the Mercan Market until then.⁹⁷ It is unclear whether the judge's sympathy for the shoe leather merchants influenced these rulings. In any case, the judge's ambiguous response contributed to a situation in which traditional provisions recognizing the guild's exclusive rights coexisted with an anti-monopoly order that effectively invalidated them.

In an imperial edict addressed to the judge of Istanbul in 1798, the government questioned "whether sending *sahtiyân* leather from Kayseri to the commercial buildings (*tâcirhâne*) [of the shoe leather merchants' guild] violated the Sultan's order (*hatt-ı hümayûn*) prohibiting exclusive sales." It then ordered him to consult with relevant artisans and merchants to determine "a method that would be truly beneficial and useful to the people (*mahz-ı nef' ve hayr olacak sûret*)." In response, the judge summoned them and reaffirmed the validity of the anti-monopoly order, which allowed anyone to purchase shoe leather freely from long-distance merchants.⁹⁸ This was considered an important turning point, comparable to the promulgation of the anti-monopoly order in 1789. This is because no sources indicate any obstruction by shoe leather merchants or disputes over their exclusive rights thereafter. In addition, sources show that the focus of judges and relevant workers shifted from "how to distribute shoe leather in Istanbul" to "how to supply as much shoe leather as possible from production areas to Istanbul." In particular, when the soaring price of *sahtiyân* leather from Kayseri became the pressing issue, the following matters were discussed or implemented in court: interrogation of tanners in Kayseri, dispatching a supervisor (*mübâşir*) to Kayseri, and measures for issues such as the shortage of gallnuts in Kayseri and interference by shoemakers in İskilip.⁹⁹ Therefore, it can be argued that

⁹⁵ İŞS, no. 67, fol. 76A–3, d. 27 Z 1211 (Jun. 23, 1797).

⁹⁶ İŞS, no. 61, fol. 96A–3, d. 9 Z 1207 (Jun. 18, 1793).

⁹⁷ İŞS, no. 69, fol. 26A–2, d. 24 R 1212 (Oct. 16, 1797).

⁹⁸ İŞS, no. 71, fol. 56A–2, d. 23 C 1213 (Dec. 2, 1798).

⁹⁹ See sources cited in footnotes 87 and 88.

after the anti-monopoly order was reaffirmed in 1798, judges and relevant workers in Istanbul fully accepted the liberalization of the shoe leather trade and began seeking new policies and regulations.

Thus, the shoe leather merchants' guild completely lost its exclusive right to sell shoe leather after 1798. However, at least until the early nineteenth century, the guild continued to exist, and its members continued to trade shoe leather in the Mercan Market.¹⁰⁰ This may seem somewhat peculiar, given that they were wholesale dealers based on the exclusive trade of shoe leather. Nevertheless, the following example suggests one of the factors that allowed them to continue trading. In 1796, long-distance merchants criticized shoemakers for demanding the same prices as before without understanding the recent shortage of shoe leather and presented a new price proposal to the court. The shoemakers' guild strongly opposed this price proposal, pointing out that long-distance merchants had been forcing prices much higher than the prescribed fair prices.¹⁰¹ This case shows that both long-distance merchants and shoemakers were dissatisfied with direct transactions, particularly in terms of the price. If direct transactions between them did not always proceed smoothly after the implementation of the anti-monopoly order, there likely was some room for shoe leather merchants to continue their traditional wholesale business.

VI Concluding Remarks

This paper clarifies the distribution of shoe leather in eighteenth-century Istanbul and examines the role of the shoe leather merchants' guild in that distribution, as well as its relationships with the government and related artisans and merchants.

Long-distance merchants who supplied shoe leather to Istanbul did not have organizations such as guilds, and their management methods and scales varied. In this respect, they shared characteristics with traditional images of long-distance merchants. However, most were not wealthy, diversified traders, but rather small- and medium-sized merchants who specialized in the shoe leather trade and had to be content with modest profits. Further analysis of sources such as court records from production areas may reveal details of their specific management and assets, as well as the background behind their sales to Istanbul.

What is noteworthy about the distribution of shoe leather in Istanbul is that

¹⁰⁰ E.g., BOA, Cevdet Belediye, no. 1723, d. 3 Z 1217 (Mar. 27, 1803).

¹⁰¹ İŞS, no. 64, fol. 96B–2, d. 1 M 1211 (Jul. 7, 1796). This “prescribed fair price” seems to refer to the official prices recorded in BOA, D. BŞM, no. 6134, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793); İŞS, no. 204, fol. 44A–1, d. 1 B 1207 (Feb. 12, 1793).

specialized wholesalers acted as intermediaries between long-distance merchants and shoemakers, and wholesale prices were not officially set but determined through negotiations between relevant traders and makers. Another important feature was that the *kethiidâ* of the shoe leather merchants' guild oversaw the overall distribution of shoe leather, while no government officials were specifically assigned to supervise this activity. Furthermore, at least in the cases examined in this paper, aside from temporary conflicts and disputes, urban craftsmen and retailers did not view long-distance merchants with hostility, as noted in previous studies.

It is worth noting that the promulgation of an anti-monopoly order in 1789 and the reaffirmation of its provisions in 1798 marked a critical turning point in the distribution of shoe leather in Istanbul. From the late eighteenth century onward, as the shortage of shoe leather became more acute, relevant traders and makers frequently went to court to coordinate their interests. The shoe leather merchants' guild, in particular, dealt with this problem by conceding some of its exclusive rights. However, with the implementation of the anti-monopoly order, they lost their exclusive rights completely, and their importance declined significantly. However, it should not be overlooked that the wholesale business of shoe leather merchants continued to exist at least until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Table 1: Amount of Shoe Leather Imported into Istanbul Customs in H 1207–1208 (AD 1793)

<i>Year/Month</i> <i>(Islamic Year)</i>	<i>Sahtiyân Leather from Kayseri</i>		<i>Other Sahtiân Leather</i>		<i>Kösele Leather</i>		<i>Meşin Leather</i>		<i>Total Amount</i>
	<i>Package</i>	<i>Bundle</i>	<i>Package</i>	<i>Bundle</i>	<i>Package</i>	<i>Piece</i>	<i>Package</i>	<i>Bahâ</i>	<i>Package</i>
1207 / 08	214	4,280	56	545	13	195	1	100	284
1207 / 10	154	3,080	145	1,450	14	210	—	—	313
1207 / 11	148	2,960	50	500	13	195	—	—	211
1207 / 12	55	1,100	56	560	65	975	15	1,500	191
1208 / 04	189	3,780	155	1,550	54	810	5	500	403
<i>Total Amount</i>	760	15,200	462	4,605	159	2,385	21	2,100	1,402

Note : One package (*denk*) of *sahtiyân* leather from Kayseri is equivalent to 20 bundles (*tura*), while one package of *sahtiyân* leather from other regions is equivalent to 7 to 10 bundles. One package of *kösele* leather contains 15 pieces (*kıta ‘aî*), and one package of *meşin* leather is equivalent to 100 *bahâ*.

Source : İŞS, no. 201, fols. 49B–2, 50B–1, 56A–2, d. 1207–08 (1793).

Table 2: *Kethüdâs* of the Shoe Leather Merchants' Guild (1763–1803)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Period of Employment (Year/Month)</i>	<i>Source (İŞS)</i>
1	Mustafâ Ağa	Before 1763/09– 1768/01	no. 30, fol. 14B–2
2	Hâfız el-Hâcc ‘Osmân Efendi bin el-Hâcc Mehmed	1768/01–1768/10	no. 30, fol. 14B–2; no. 31, fol. 31B–3
3	el-Hâcc Mehmed Ağa bin ‘Abdülvehhâb	1768/10–1771/05	no. 31, fol. 31B–3; no. 33, fol. 54B–1
4	Mustafâ Çelebi bin ‘Alî	1771/05– 1776/11–12	no. 33, fol. 54B–1; no. 39, fol. 78A–2
5	el-Hâcc Mehmed bin Mustafâ	1776/11–12 –1777/11	no. 39, fol. 78A–2; no. 41, fol. 25A–1
6	es-Seyyid Mustafâ Çelebi bin es-Seyyid ‘Alî	1777/11–1784/05	no. 41, fol. 25A–1; no. 52, fol. 45B–1
7	el-Hâcc ‘Osmân Efendi bin el-Hâcc Mehmed	1784/05–1785/08	no. 52, fols. 45B– 1, 98B–1
8	Zîhgîrci-oğlu es-Seyyid el-Hâcc Mustafâ Ağa bin ‘Alî	1785/08–1793/01	no. 52, fol. 98B–1; no. 66, fol. 2B–2
9	Mehmed Efendi bin el-Hâcc Hüseyin	1793/01–1794/06	no. 66, fols. 2B–2, 64A–1
10	Zîhgîrci-oğlu es-Seyyid el-Hâcc Mustafâ Ağa bin ‘Alî	1794/06–1800/05	no. 66, fol. 64A–1; no. 72, fol. 38A–2
11	es-Seyyid Hüseyin Ağa	1800/05– After 1803/03	no. 72, fol. 38A–2

Table 3: Lawsuits Concerning Illegal Practices in the Distribution of Shoe Leather (1768–1800)

No.	Date	Contents of the Lawsuit	Judgment/Defendant's Response	Source (İŞS)
1.	7 N 1181 (Jan 27, 1768)	<i>Kethüdâ</i> of the shoe leather merchants' guild and three others harassed long-distance merchants and illegally sold shoe leather	Exile to Lesbos (pardoned in April) and dismissal of <i>kethüdâ</i>	30: 14B–2, 97A–1
2.	1 S 1187 (Apr. 24, 1773)	A <i>mest</i> shoemaker unfairly procured and sold <i>mest</i> shoes and <i>sahtiyân</i> leather from Kayseri	Agreed to comply with the purchasing regulations for shoes and shoe leather	36: 38A–2
3.	3 Ca 1189 (Jul. 2, 1775)	Two shoemakers slandered elders (<i>ihitiyâr</i>) at the meeting place (<i>lonca odası</i>) and sold <i>sahtiyân</i> leather at an unfairly high price	Exile to Lemnos Island (pardoned in August)	37: 33B–1, 52A–2
4.	20 B 1189 (Sep. 16, 1775)	A shoe leather merchant sold <i>meşin</i> leather at 10 <i>para</i> instead of the standard 8 <i>para</i>	Expulsion from the guild (inventory sold to other masters)	37: 57B–2
5.	Ş 1189 (Sep.–Oct. 1775)	A peddler (<i>koltukçu</i>) purchased defective shoe leather and sold it to shoemakers at the price of good quality products	Promised not to engage in the sale or purchase of shoe leather	37: 65A–3
6.	20 B 1190 (Sep. 4, 1776)	Two long-distance merchants hoarded shoe leather and sold it at high prices, instructing partners in Kayseri to send less shoe leather	Exile to Lemnos Island	38: 47A–2
7.	26 B 1191 (Aug. 30, 1777)	A shoe leather merchant (<i>meşinci</i>) hoarded <i>meşin</i> leather, sold it secretly to shoemakers at high prices, and slandered those who warned against it	Expulsion from the guild	40: 86A–4
8.	9 B 1192 (Aug. 3, 1778)	A long-distance merchant attempted to transport 11 bundles (<i>denk</i>) of Kayseri-produced <i>sahtiyân</i> leather from Tahta Hânı to the countryside	Promised to comply with the rules	42: 70B–1
9.	2 C 1193 (Jun. 17, 1779)	A long-distance merchant and his brother attempted to transport five packages of shoe leather from Kayseri to the countryside	Promised not to engage in the sale or purchase of shoe leather	45: 25A–2

Table 3 Lawsuits Concerning Illegal Practices in the Distribution of Shoe Leather (*Cont.*)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Content of the Lawsuit</i>	<i>Judgement/Defendant's Response</i>	<i>Source (İŞS)</i>
10.	23 C 1193 (Jul. 8, 1779)	Four non-Muslim shoemakers illegally purchased shoe leather from Kayseri, stored it in commercial buildings (<i>hân</i>), and secretly sold it	Promised not to engage in the sale or purchase of shoe leather	45: 32A–3
11.	Ca 1195 (Apr.–May 1781)	Six tanners secretly purchased shoe leather from long-distance merchants and resold it in rural areas, and traded defective shoe leather under the pretext of repairs at commercial buildings.	Reprimanded by the judge	47: 80A–2
12.	27 B 1195 (Jul. 19, 1781)	A tanner illegally sold shoe leather at Pertev Paşa Hânı	Punishment by the Janissary commander	47: 92B–3
13.	14 R 1198 (Mar. 7, 1784)	A shoemaker (<i>yemenîci</i>) purchased 400 pieces of red <i>sahtiyân</i> leather from a long-distance merchant and sold them to shoemakers at an illegally high price.	Admitted the facts and promised not to sell illegally	51: 42B–2
14.	13 L 1199 (Aug. 19, 1785)	<i>Kethüdâ</i> of the shoe leather merchants' guild unfairly interfered with the regulations and meetings of the shoemakers' guild, causing confusion within the guild and a shortage of shoes.	Promised not to interfere with the guild in question	53: 27B–2
15.	25 S 1201 (Dec. 17, 1786)	<i>Kethüdâ</i> of the shoe leather merchants' guild failed to supervise the trade of shoe leather	Promised to perform duties appropriately	54: 79B–3
16.	25 C 1206 (Feb. 19, 1792)	A shoe leather merchant stored shoe leather at Sepetçiler Hânı and sold it at unfairly high prices	Expulsion from the guild (rejoined immediately afterward)	59: 89B–3, 93B–3
17.	19 Za 1206 (Jul. 9, 1792)	A tanner brought 116 pieces of kösele leather and 20 pieces of sağrı leather from his tannery into the city and then attempted to transport them out of the city using a cart (<i>'araba</i>).	Reprimanded by a judge	61: 22A–2

Table 3 Lawsuits Concerning Illegal Practices in the Distribution of Shoe Leather (*Cont.*)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Content of the Lawsuit</i>	<i>Judgement/Defendant's Response</i>	<i>Source (İŞS)</i>
18.	17 Z 1206 (Aug. 6, 1792)	A long-distance merchant and a shoemaker offered bribes (<i>rüşvet</i>) to several masters in an attempt to reinstate es-Seyyid 'Osmân Ağa, who had been dismissed from <i>dikicibaşı</i> due to misconduct.	Promised not to engage in illegal activities	61: 26A–3
19.	17 Za 1207 (Jun. 26, 1793)	A shoe leather merchant stored high-quality shoe leather and sold it only to specific non-Muslim shoemakers	Expulsion from the guild	61: 91B–4
20.	27 C 1210 (Jan. 8, 1796)	A long-distance merchant stored Kayseri-produced shoe leather and sold it at high prices	Promised not to engage in illegal activities	64: 61B–2
21.	24 Ş 1211 (Feb. 22, 1797)	A shoe leather merchant hoarded and illegally sold shoe leather	Expulsion from the guild	67: 51A–2
22.	2 M 1212 (Jun. 27, 1797)	A long-distance merchant unfairly manipulated the supply of shoe leather to Istanbul with partners in Kayseri	Exile to Seddülbahr Fortress (pardoned in July)	67: 78A–3; 69: 5B–2
23.	24 R 1212 (Oct. 16, 1797)	Two woolen cloth merchants (<i>çuhacı</i>) and a shoemaker illegally sold shoe leather to shoemakers	Promised not to engage in illegal activities	69: 26A–2
24.	2 C 1213 (Nov. 11, 1798)	A long-distance merchant sold low-quality shoe leather at high prices	Exile to Boğazkesen Fortress	71: 49B–3
25.	9 S 1215 (Sep. 2, 1800)	Five tanners in Kayseri illegally sold shoe leather at high prices	Exile to Çankırı Fortress	73: 67A–3

Table 4: Purchase Price and Selling Price of Shoe Leather by Shoe Leather Merchants (1730–31) (per piece, *akçe*)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Color/Use etc.</i>	<i>Supply Area</i>	<i>Quality</i>	<i>Purchase Price</i>	<i>Selling Price</i>	<i>Profit (%)</i>
1	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Boots (<i>çizme</i>)	Kayseri	—	198	—	—
2	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Shoes (<i>pâbûç</i>)	Kayseri	High	210	—	—
3	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Shoes (<i>mest</i>)	Kayseri	High	219	—	—
				Medium	209	—	—
				Low	180	—	—
4	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>bakkâm</i>)	Yedikule	High	130	136	4.6
				Medium	90	96	6.7
				Low	80	86	7.5
5	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Yellow (<i>sarı</i>)	Edirne	Mixed	80	86	7.5
6	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Yellow (<i>sarı</i>)	Konya	High	110	116	5.5
				Medium	100	106	6.0
				Low	90	96	6.7
7	<i>Meşin</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	Yedikule	—	—	26	4.0
		Yellow (<i>sarı</i>)		—	—	24	4.3
		White (<i>beyaz</i>)		—	—	16	5.6
8	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Black (<i>siyâh</i>)	—	Mixed	80	86	7.5
9	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>) Shoes (<i>yemenî</i>)	Erzurum	Mixed	156	162	3.8
10	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>) Boots (<i>çizme</i>)	Erzurum	High	192	210	4.7
				Medium	180	189	5.0
				Low	144	153	6.3
11	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	Diyarbakır	High	168	177	5.4
				Medium	162	171	5.6
				Low	144	153	6.3
12	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	Tosya	High	158	164	3.8
				Medium	144	152	5.6
				Low	132	140	6.1
13	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Black (<i>siyâh</i>) “ <i>Âsmânî</i> ”	Konya	High	132	142	5.2
				Medium	120	127	5.8
				Low	105	112	6.7

Table 4: Purchase Price and Selling Price of Shoe Leather (*Cont.*)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Color/Use etc.</i>	<i>Supply Area</i>	<i>Quality</i>	<i>Purchase Price</i>	<i>Selling Price</i>	<i>Profit (%)</i>
14	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Black (<i>siyâh</i>) Shoes (<i>mest</i>) “ <i>Âsmânî</i> ”	Konya	Mixed	120	126	5.0
15	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	İzmit	Mixed	54	60	11.1
16	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	—	Mixed	60	66	10.0
17	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Lining of Boots (<i>baldırlı edik</i>) Yellow (<i>sarı</i>)	Tunis	Mixed	150	156	4.0
18	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	White (<i>beyaz</i>) Kid leather (<i>oğlak</i>)	Alexandria ^a	High Medium Low	47 42 36	— — —	— — —
19	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	Eyüp	High Medium Low	270 210 150	276 216 158	2.2 2.9 5.3
20	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	Kasimpaşa	High Medium Low	192 192 192	226 206 156	17.7 7.3 18.8
21	<i>Kösele</i>	—	Yedikule	Mixed	280	—	—
22	<i>Kösele</i>	—	Gerede	High Medium Low	330 300 270	— — —	— — —
23	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Silver black (<i>gümüşî siyâh</i>) Shoes for cooks (<i>aşçı</i>)	—	High Medium Low	— — —	180 165 140	— — —
24	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Silver black (<i>gümüşî siyâh</i>) “ <i>Yâbânî</i> ”	—	High Medium Low	— — —	120 105 90	— — —
25	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	Uşak	High Medium Low	130 116 90	146 121 96	12.3 4.3 6.7

Table 4: Purchase Price and Selling Price of Shoe Leather (*Cont.*)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Color/Use etc.</i>	<i>Supply Area</i>	<i>Quality</i>	<i>Purchase Price</i>	<i>Selling Price</i>	<i>Profit (%)</i>
26	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	—	Isparta	Mixed	90	96	6.7
27	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	—	—	High	42	—	—
				Medium	33	—	—
				Low	30	—	—
28	<i>Kösele</i>	“Foot” (<i>ayak</i>)	—	Mixed	—	20	—
29	<i>Kösele</i>	Cut by shoe leather merchants for specific uses	—	High	—	2.5–15	—
30	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Yellow (<i>sarı</i>)	Edirne	High	80	100	25.0
				Medium	80	86	7.5
				Low	80	66	-17.5
31	<i>Meşin</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	Yedikule	High	28	—	—
				Medium	27	—	—
				Low	25	—	—
32	<i>Meşin</i>	Yellow (<i>sarı</i>)	—	High	27	—	—
				Medium	25	—	—
				Low	23	—	—
33	<i>Meşin</i>	White (<i>beyaz</i>)	—	High			
				Medium	18	—	—
				Low			
34	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	Red (<i>kırmızı</i>)	—	High	130	—	—
				Medium	90	—	—
				Low	80	—	—
35	<i>Sahtiyân</i>	“Varieties”	—	High	100	106	6.0
		(<i>ecnâs</i>)		Medium	90	96	6.7
		Yellow (<i>sarı</i>)		Low	80	86	7.5

* *Profit (%)* represents the percentage of profit relative to the purchase price.