

me, the actual operation of the mint remained under the control of state-appointed employees. These consisted of the *emin* or *nazir*, who was responsible for the supervision of the mint; the *sahib-i 'ayar*, who saw to it that all technical and legal requirements were met, and who acted as the director of operations; and the *ustad* or *usta*, who managed the minting process.³⁷ All appointive positions were entrusted to Armenians, who thus held the operational and managerial control of the mint.

In the earlier period the mint had been controlled by Jewish directors. Available sources provide only fragmentary information on how and why the control passed into the hands of Armenians. In 1752 a Dzeron *Amira* (no family name is given), who was a *sarraf* of the mint, died and a Catholic Armenian, Petraki *Çelebi*, succeeded him.³⁸ Then, in 1758, Mikayel *Çelebi* Diuzian or Diuz (Düz in Turkish) was appointed director of the mint, and Yago Bonfil, the Jewish director was removed from office.³⁹ Apparently Mikayel *Çelebi* supported the vezir who emerges as the winner in the internal rivalry around the palace.⁴⁰

After 1758, the position of Director of the Imperial Mint was held with a short interruption by a member of the Diuzian family until 1880. The ascent of the family is significant. It is reported that a Harutiun Diuzian emigrated from Divrig, a center of goldsmithing, to Istanbul where he worked as

(b) *'amil*: Arabic hist. governor, high administration officer; Ott. hist. intendent of finance, collector of revenues, p. 57

(in *New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary*, Istanbul, 1974).

³⁷ EI², s.v. "Dar al-Darb," by **Halil Inalcik**. For a detailed description of the subdivisions of the mint, see **Pakalin**, *Deyimleri*, 1:394-396; **Uzunçarşili**, *Saray Teşkilatı*, pp. 384-386.

³⁸ **Asadur**, *Polsoy Hayere*, p. 71; Mrmerian adds the name of Rasdoğlu, from the Rasdian family, without further identifying him; see **Mrmerian**, *Masnakan Patmutiun*, p. 66.

³⁹ **Zartarian**, *Hishatakaran*, p. 124; **Torkomian**, *Eremia Tchelepü*, 1:295.

⁴⁰ Armenian sources claim that Bonfil, the Jewish superintendent, had committed fraud and was to be hanged had not Mikayel Diuzian intervened and saved his life. Furthermore, Mikayel granted Bonfil a lifelong monthly salary. Apparently another Jew, named only as Balti, tried to wrestle the position but was unsuccessful. See **Zartarian**, *Hishatakaran*, pp. 124-125; **Menvishian**, *Diuzeants*, pp. 14-16.

On the other hand, in a letter dated 19 November 1762, a member of the Mekhitarist Congregation in Istanbul wrote to his superior in Venice informing him of the fact that over a thousand Jews were banished from the capital "for their treachery" and that Mikayel Düzoğlu was appointed *halçibaşı* ("chief of smelters of ores, or refiners of metals") by the king. See *Archives*, Correspondence, Mekhitarist Convent, Venice.