THE QUESTION OF THE CLOSING OF THE BLACK SEA UNDER THE OTTOMANS

A. THE BLACK SEA REGION

Obviously the question of the Black Sea cannot be studied independently of that of the Straits [1].

Historically, that state which controlled the Straits has consequently always striven to establish control over the Black Sea. And in fact, those states ruling over the mainland on both sides of the Straits, the Byzantines and the Ottomans, did achieve this. Conversely, those states which were dominant on the Black Sea, and those which were a naval power in the Mediterranean, have endeavored to extend their control over the Straits, as did Venice, Genoa, Russia and England. Furthermore, as the Straits constitute a passage way between Asia Minor and the Balkans every bit as much as they do between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, one can posit that the two lands and two seas connected by these Straits make up a kind of «historical region», or «geopolitical unit» as it is sometimes called. Certainly that is how Mehmed the Conqueror viewed his empire when he styled himself «the Sultan of the two lands and the Khakan of the two seas». The course of events, as it had in the Byzantine past, led him to create his empire out of this territory, which area was to remain the core area of the Ottoman Empire for three centuries [2].

Again, specific geographic conditions determined that, from antiquity on, the Southern and Northern coasts of the Black Sea

1. On the question of the Straits in the Middle Ages see G. I. Bratianu, *La Mer Noire des origines à la conquête ottomane,* Munich 1969, Livre IV: *L'enjeu des Détroits,* pp. 253-328; N. Iorga (Jorga), *La politique vénitienne dans les eaux de la Mer Noire,* Bulletin Historique, Academia Romana, Sectiunea istorica 2 (1914) 289-334; Freddy Thiriet, *La Romanie vénitienne au moyen age,* Paris 1959, III. partie: *La conquête ottomane et ses effets au XI siècle,* pp. 353-439.

2. For the role of the geographical factor in the formation of Mehmed II's empire see H. Inalcık, *Mehmed II,* Islam Ansiklopedisi, vol. VII, pp. 506-531.

should form a closely knit economic unit. The Northern Black Sea, with its immediate hinterland in Moldavia, the Crimea, the *Dasht* (the steppe area between Kuban and Akkerman) and Circassia, sparsely inhabited and producing in surplus great quantities of grains, meat, fish and other animal products, on the one hand, and the Southern Black Sea, extending into Asia Minor and the Aegean, with exports of Mediterranean products such as wine, olive oil, fruits, cotton and rice as well as certain manufactured goods, on the other, constituted two integral parts of a regional economy. This regional trade was of basic importance, keeping the whole area economically healthy even at times when the international trade between Central Asia and the Mediterranean countries or the Arab lands and those of the North might slacken. The analysis of the customs registers of the 1480's will, I hope, sufficiently illustrate this point.

It should be stressed that Istanbul played a key role in the formation of this highly developed regional economy; while the city depended heavily for its provisions in wheat, meat and salt on the Northern Black Sea, this area in turn was dependent not only on the stimulus of the Istanbul market to maintain its export production level but also on the import from that great transit center of many of its basic commodities: silk and cotton cloths of Asia Minor, fine woolens of Europe, arms, minerals, paper, spices, drugs, sugar and all kinds of manufactured goods. Istanbul imported by sea from the North its bulky necessities at the lowest prices possible, while the North realized high profits for its foodstuffs in the crowded capital of the Empire. Istanbul's spectacular growth under the Ottomans from a population of 30 to 50 thousand in the 1450's to over 300.000 in the first half of the sixteenth century [1] was made possible, obviously, by an increase in the supply of essential commodities, most of which came from the Northern Black Sea area. The growing demand of the imperial capital for foodstuffs and raw materials brought about an extension of animal husbandry and wheat cultivation in the steppes of the Crimean peninsula and even in the *Dasht* among the Nogays. It is interesting to note that in response to the growing wheat demand from Istanbul, the Crimeans exploited slave labor on a large scale to put the steppe area in the

1. For Istanbul's population see H. Inalcık, *Istanbul,* Encyclopaedia of Islam, second edition, vol. IV, 238-244.

Crimea under cultivation. It is reported that the slave population of Cossack origin in the Crimea thus employed numbered four hundred thousand and that there were six thousand agricultural estates as against one thousand six hundred villages[1]. Slave raids into Russia, Poland and Circassia, were, for the Crimeans, a regular business venture, through which they supplied the Crimea and the slave markets of Istanbul, Bursa and other Anatolian cities. Novoselskij has calculated from Russian archival sources that in the period 1607 - 1645 alone, the Crimeans took 126.840 slaves[2]. In brief, already in the fifteenth century, the Black Sea area was totally integrated into the Ottoman imperial economy, of which Istanbul had been made the center. It was the policy of focusing on Istanbul which entailed the prohibition of the export of certain goods from the Black Sea area on foreign merchant ships. Mehmed the Conqueror, in building up his empire around the city of the Caesars, concerned himself above everything else with its repopulation and with the promotion of its trade and industries[3]: just as he transferred urban populations, artisans and merchants in particular, from conquered cities, among them Amastris (1460), Trebizond (1461) and Caffa (1475), so also from the very beginning he took measures to ensure the provisioning of the city with foodstuffs and raw materials. Logically he was led to control the export of these goods beyond the Straits by the Italians. Whenever a shortage or a famine occurred the export of necessities was prohibited, and then, later on, allowed again only reluctantly. Among the things the export of which would be prohibited were included grains, cotton, leather, beeswax, lard and slaves, as well as other items considered strategic[4]. To enforce the prohibition, inspection of foreign vessels

1. Evliyâ Çelebi, *Seyâhatnâme*, vol. VII (Istanbul 1928) p. 601. Evliyâ's figures are usually grossly exaggerated.

2. On the slave trade in the Ottoman empire see H. Inalcık, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire*, The Mutual Effects of the Islamic and the Judeo-Christian Worlds: The East European Pattern, New York 1978. A. A. Novoselskij, *Struggle of the Muscovite State Against Tatars in the Seventeenth Century*, Moscow 1948, pp. 416 - 436 (in Russian).

3. See H. Inalcık, *Istanbul*, pp. 224 - 238; also H. Inalcık, *The Policy of Mehmed II Toward the Greek Population of Istanbul and the Byzantine Buildings of the City*, Dumbarton Oaks Papers 23 - 24 (1960 - 1970) 231 - 249.

4. Here is an example of such an export prohibition from 1560's (*A collection of documents*, Veliyyüddin Library, Istanbul no. 1970, p. 1b): «The following are the goods the export of which are prohibited: grain, gunpowder, horses, cotton, cotton thread, lead, beeswax, leather, tallow. The following are added later on: raw leather, morocco leather, sheepskin, sulphur and pitch.» For goods prohibited under Mehmed II see *Kānūnnāme-i Sultāni* ... ed. R. Anhegger and H. Inalcık, Ankara 1956, p. 59.

was made mandatory at the castles on the Bosphorus and sometimes at the Dardanelles[1]. As will be discussed later on this did not mean a total prohibition of trade and closing of the Black Sea, although the unusual growth of Istanbul in the second half of the sixteenth century and frequent shortages and famines did compell the government to take increasingly stringent measures against foreign trade on the Black Sea.

It should be emphasized that as a result of the restrictions on navigation Istanbul became the principal market for goods of the Black Sea area. The Ottoman Sultans as the Byzantine Emperors before them consciously pursued the policy of making their capital the main market for foreign traders.

B. THE OTTOMAN EXPANSION AND THE CLOSING OF THE BLACK SEA

It was the declared policy of the Ottomans from the start not to allow any Latin sovereignty to survive in the Balkans or in Anatolia. Appropriating for themselves the heritag of Byzantium, they considered all the territories and fortresses in Latin hands to be under a form of usurpation. Even if they agreed later to a Latin presence in the form of foreign trading communities, the territorial rights of the Latins were never respected[2]. In 1387, Venice failed totally in negotiations with Murad I to get a piece of land at Scutari, facing Pera, on which to set up a commercial center with capitulary guarantees[3]. There is no single case of the Ottomans granting such a territorial concession to any foreign nation.

1. See note 1, p. 83 below.

2. See H. Inalcık, *Imtiyāzāt*, EI², IV, pp. 1180 - 84. The so-called «treaty» of 1453 with the Genoese of Pera was simply an amnesty document (*amān-nâme*) granted by the Sultan within the framework of the Islamic Law which did not recognize any territorial rights.

3. See W. Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant*, I, ed. F. Raynaud, Paris 1936, p. 259 - 60; cf. N. Iorga, *La politique vénitienne dans les eaux de la Mer Noire*, p. 309 - 18; F. Thiriet, *Régestes des déliberations du senat de Venise concernant la Romanie*, I, Paris and The Hague, 1958, p. 165, no. 678.

It should be added that at least down to 1354, and despite the efforts at the union of churches, the Orthodox world felt the same threat of a crusade that the Ottomans were to feel later[1]. Latin economic exploitation, coupled with naval supremacy and political dominance, was the reality for the peoples of the area, making a prolonged struggle inevitable, and bringing into the picture the frontier Turks, first as mercenaries and the most efficient military force to be found and then as allies, under able leaders such as Umur, Orkhan and Süleyman, who cooperated with the anti-Latin Byzantines[2].

In brief, the Ottomans, in their efforts at reviving the centralized empire of the Caesars, consciously and systematically followed an anti-Latin policy, and skilfully exploited the anti-Latin feelings of the Orthodox masses, who saw in the Genoese and the Venetians the source of all their material miseries. The Greek populace in Byzantium, suffering from famine under the Palaeologi, was wont to accuse, and not without justification, the Latin merchants of speculation in grains and of the diversion from Istanbul of the wheat produced on the northern Black Sea coasts, in Thrace and the Marmara basin[3].

The process by which the Ottomans achieved incorporation of the Karesi principality in the 1340's, which gave them possession of the East coast of the Dardanelles and the Southwestern coast of the Marmara Sea opposite Thrace, has not yet achieved satisfactory clarification. It appears that the *ghâzîs* in Karesi-ili, whose livelihood depended on raids to the other side of the Dardanelles, saw that the continued success of their raids was dependent on the support of a strong state like the Ottomans'. By 1348 they had no

1. For the change of policy between Byzantium and the West see Angeliki E. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, Cambridge, Mass. 1972, pp. 308-329; cf. Oscar Halecki, *Un empereur de Byzance à Rome*, reprint London 1972, pp. 9-30.

2. For the details see my forthcoming chapter *The Ottomans and the Crusades*, in *The Crusades*, vol. V, eds K. Setton and H. V. Hazard.

3. The extremely important question of grain trade in the Levant has drawn closer attention since the publication of G. I. Bratianu, *Études byzantines d'histoire économique et sociale*, Paris 1938, pp. 129-81; see A. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, pp. 62-63, 73, 123-24, 182-83, 194, 310-11; A. Laiou-Thomadakes, *Peasant Society in the Late Byzantine Empire*, Princeton 1977; Anthony Bryer, *The Latins in the Euxine*, XV^e Congrès Intern. d'Études Byzantines, Rapports, I. Histoire, Athens 1976, p. 6-9.

choice, since the navies of Umur Ghâzî, and Sarukhan-oghlu were effectively neutralized by the Holy League, and all the *ghâzîs* of Western Anatolia were now turning their eyes toward the Ottomans for leadership in the *ghazâ*.

Immediately after the incorporation of the northern part of the Karesi principality the area was organized for *ghazâ* as an Ottoman frontier *sandjak*, with Biga (Pegai) as its center, under the leadership of Süleyman Pasha. The new *sandjak* had important sea bases at Lapseki (Lampsacus), Aydındjık (near Cyzicus) and Kemer (Keramides), which in Byzantine times had sheltered corsairs preying on the merchant ships travelling between the Bosporus and the Dardanelles. It was from Kemer in 1352 that the main Ottoman forces were to embark for their decisive conquest of the isthmus of the Gallipoli peninsula.

The struggle for the control of the Eastern Aegean and the Straits, which broke out between Genoa on the one hand and Venice, Aragon and Byzantium on the other in 1348 (especially the Genoese reconquest of Scios from the Byzantines and their construction of new fortifications at Pera), was principally responsible for creating the circumstances which made the Ottoman settlement on European soil possible.

The details of the first Ottoman-Genoese cooperation on the Straits, which was to maintain its strategic importance for a century, are worth recapitulating here. The negotiations with the Genoese ambassadors, two Peran citizens, Filippo Delomede and Bonifazio Sauli, sent by the admiral of the Genoese fleet, ended with a formal treaty of alliance between Sultan Orkhan and the Genoese. The Genoese promised to pay tribute, which, in the eyes of the Ottomans, put Pera under Ottoman protection. During the war, in fact, the Ottomans supplied the Genoese with one thousand archers, who were stationed at Pera and on the Genoese ships. These forces defended Pera in the summer of 1351, when the city was besieged by joint Venetian-Byzantine forces. Orkhan, himself, with his army, met Doria on the southern shores of the Bosporus at Chalcedon. Following the crucial battle of the Bosporus (February 1352) between the Genoese armada and the allied fleet of Venice and Aragon, the Genoese cited with praise the aid given them by Orkhan. John VI Cantacuzenus, surrounded in his capital by Ottoman and Genoese forces after the battle, had to submit to a treaty of peace with the Genoese on May 6, 1352. The treaty for-

bade that Greek territories or seamen be used by the Venetians against the Genoese, and recognized new additions to the territorial limits of the Genoese possessions at Pera[1].

The Genoese - Ottoman alliance, which was to last up until the Ottoman occupation of Pera in 1453, was to become of great importance for both sides. For the Ottomans the safe crossing of the Straits was a factor of vital importance in their ability to maintain an empire on two continents. It should be emphasized that it was not a coincidence that the Ottomans developed their foothold on European soil shortly after the battle of the Bosporus in 1352. Already in 1351 the Genoese had occupied Heraklea (Eregli), on the European coast, forty miles to the north of Tzympe, which was to be the first Ottoman bridgehead on European soil. As for the Genoese they secured Ottoman protection for Pera against the Byzantines and the Venetians, as well as commercial privileges in the expanding Ottoman territories. The close ties between Pera and Bursa, the Ottoman capital, were to benefit the prosperity of both cities.

During the course of the struggle for the control of the Straits, the question of Tenedos soon came to the forefront. The Venetians persuaded John V Palaeologus to relinquish the island in return for their support against John VI Cantacuzenus (October 1352). While the Venetians were eventually dissappointed in their efforts to seize Tenedos[2], the Ottomans managed, following an earthquake on March 2, 1354, to occupy Gallipoli and surrounding fortresses. The success not only gave the Ottomans a strong position from which to establish themselves in Thrace, but also from which to control sea traffic between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. This occupation of Gallipoli made Europe conscious of the Ottoman peril for the first time, and its recovery now became one of the main objectives of the crusades.

Gallipoli was captured from the Ottomans in 1366 by a Western crusader, Count Amadeo VI of Savoy. Until its re-conquest was achieved ten years later, the Ottoman presence in the Balkans was

1. On all these points now see my chapter in *The Crusades*, V.

2. F. Thiriet, *Venise et l'occupation de Ténédos au XIVe siècle*, Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'histoire 65 (1953) 219 - 45.

under constant threat[1]. During Murad I's reign Gallipoli was turned into a naval base, but even then it continued to be threatened by the Venetians until full Ottoman control was established over the Dardanelles in 1452. The Venetian fleet first appeared before the Ottoman Gallipoli in 1388[2].

Beyazid I (1389 - 1402), in his determination to secure mastery of the Straits, constructed an inner harbor at Gallipoli to accomodate his fleet, and a castle on the Bosporus, Anadolu - Hisarı. Nevertheless Ottoman naval forces were not strong enough to prevent Marshall Boucicaut from sailing past Gallipoli on his way to bring relief to Constantinople in 1399. At any rate the Venetian Senate passed decisions to seize Gallipoli at various dates: in 1402, during the war of 1423 - 1430, and in 1444. In 1416 the Venetians under Pietro Loredano destroyed the Ottoman fleet in front of Gallipoli, and in 1429 Silvestro Mocenigo launched an attack on the inner harbor in an attempt once again to destroy the Ottoman fleet. To protect its merchant ships in the Dardanelles, Venice was forced, from the 1400's on, to mount arbalestriers on them, and to send warships to the Dardanelles, and sometimes as far as Istanbul. Tenedos was used by the Venetians during this period as base from which to monitor navigation through the Straits[3].

The years 1431 - 1451 are considered the best years of the Venetian trade in Constantinople, with the Venetians obtaining there alum, copper, beeswax, hides and lumber from the Black Sea area. The Ottomans followed a peaceful policy towards Venice during this time except in the period 1444 - 1446[4]. In those years Venice joined the Crusaders' navy in attempting to cut off Ottoman communications on the Straits, and hoped to occupy Gallipoli and Salonica, and even Scutari on the Asiatic side of the Bosporus[5]. In the fall of 1444, when the collapse of the Ottoman power was thought imminent, an event of historic significance took place on the Bosporus: Murad II crossed the Strait under the protection of

1. See I. Beldiceanu - Steinherr, *La conquête d'Adrianople par les Turcs*, Travaux et Mémoires d'histoire et civilisation byzantines I (1965) 439 - 61; cf. my chapter in *The Crusades*, V.

2. H. Inalcık, *Gelibolu*, EI², p. 983 - 84; Iorga, *La politique vénitienne*, p. 14 - 15.

3. *Ibid.*

4. F. Thiriet, *La Romanie vénitienne au moyen age*, Paris 1959, p. 427.

5. Thiriet, *Les régestes*, nos. 2651, 2668.

artillery placed on the spot where later Mehmed II would build his Boghaz-Kesen castle. One of the Byzantine ships trying to hinder the Sultan's passage was sunk by gunfire[1].

After the Ottoman victory at Varna Constantinople was doomed. Mehmed II realized that now he had the weapon not only to demolish the walls of Constantinople but also to cut off the Straits to navigation. Under the protection of his navy he built on the opposite side of Akça-Hisar (Anadolu-Hisarı) a castle «so that» as Kritovoulos put it[2] «he might control as much of the shore as possible for the sake of the stone hurling machines... They were not all in a straight line, but pointed in various directions at the deep water and guarded both approaches... and in this way he united the two continents and placed the crossing under his own control.»

At the same time two castles were built on both sides of the Dardanelles and huge guns were placed to cut off the passage of ships coming from the Mediterranean[3]. After the conquest of Constantinople when in 1462 war seemed imminent against Venice, the Conqueror extended and reinforced these two castles to make his capital city invulnerable.

As soon as the Boghaz-Kesen Hisarı was completed (August 31, 1452) on the Bosporus, Mehmed II declared his absolute sovereignty over the Straits, asking all ships to lower their sails at the castles of the Bosporus, pay dues and obtain a permit to proceed on their way. That these were not just empty words became apparent when the ship of the Venetian Antonio Erizzo, carrying a cargo of grains for Constantinople, was sunk by gunshot from the castle (November 25, 1452) upon his refusal to obey[4].

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1. See H. Inalcık, *Fâtih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar*, Ankara 1954, pp. 71-2.

2. *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans. Charles T. Riggs, Princeton 1954, pp. 20-21; also see A. Gabriel, *Chateaux turcs de Bosphore*, Paris 1943; V. Parry, *Boghaz-iči*, EI², I, pp. 1251-52; E. H. Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mimarisinde Fatih Devri* IV (Istanbul 1974) 626-62, 617-24.

3. For the guns placed there see Charles Efoulkes, *The 'Dardanelles' Gun at the Tower*, The Antiquaries Journal X (1930) 217-27.

4. Nicoló Barbaro, *Diary of the Siege of Constantinople*, trans. J. R. Jones, New York 1969, p. 10.

Ottoman customs regulations of the Conqueror's time[1] required that customs dues for the whole cargo of a ship be paid at the rate of 5 per cent or 4 per cent ad valorem by foreigners and Ottoman subjects respectively at one of the ports of Istanbul, Gallipoli or Mudanya. Export of grains, beeswax, sulphur, cotton and silk was prohibited except from Istanbul. Ships sailing without stopping at Istanbul or Mudanya paid no dues there except in the case of non-Muslim foreigners. All ships paid customs dues at Gallipoli if they had not done so at Istanbul or Mudanya. Severe punishments were prescribed against smugglers. All ships were examined and given sailing permits at the castles of the Bosporus and Gallipoli. It was customary for each ship to give presents to local authorities.

By special stipulations put in the capitulations the Porte exempted foreign ships from a second examination at the Dardanelles[2]. Compared with the free trade and passage imposed by the Latins during the Byzantine period, all these restrictions meant, of course, a drastic change in the situation. And in addition to export restrictions and various taxes, there were exactions by the local authorities. Such conditions must have caused further shrinkage in the international Black Sea trade under the Ottomans.

The story of how after 1453 the whole Black Sea area came under Ottoman sovereignty is well known[3]. What we are going to deal with in the following is the Black Sea trade and navigation in the last decades of the fifteenth century in the light of the Ottoman documents.

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1. *Kānūnnāme-i Sultānī ber Mūceb ʿÖrf-i Osmānī*, eds. R. Anhegger and H. Inalcık, Ankara 1954, nos. 33, 34, 35, 36, 43, 53, 55. On various rates of customs dues see H. Inalcık, *Notes on N. Beldiceanu's Translation of the Kānūnnāme*, Der Islam 43 (1967) 152-53.

2. See the Venetian capitulations of 1482, 1513, 1517 and 1521 published by M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, in Belgeler, no. 9-12 (Ankara, *Turkish Historical Society*, 1968-1971), p. 39-54 and the document dated 1530, p. 103-104.

3. The main collection of documents for this period is Amadeo P. Vigna, *Codice diplomatico delle colonie Tauro-Liguri durante la Signoria dell' ufficio di San Giorgio (1453-1475)*, 3 vols. Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria. 1868-1879; W. Heyd, *Ibid.*, II, pp. 360-407; F. Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and his Time*, ed. W. C. Hickman, trans. R. Manheim, Princeton, 1978.

C. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BLACK SEA TRADE BEFORE THE OTTOMANS

G. I. Bratianu[1] put great emphasis on the fact that the Black Sea entered into the orbit of the international trade between East and West, and became one of the commercial centers of the medieval world during that period in the 13th century when the great Mongol Empire established itself in Asia and Eastern Europe. It was also asserted firstly that this trade was based on luxury goods, satisfying the conspicuous consumption needs of a ruling class with immense accumulated wealth, and that it was a basic contribution to the expansion of commercial capitalism centered in Italy. Secondly it was argued[2] that its survival depended on the maintenance of the caravan routes terminating at the principal transit ports of Azov, Caffa, Soldaja and Trebizond on the Black Sea. This new enlargement of the Black Sea trade should not lead us to ignore regional trade, based on the exchange of food stuffs, raw materials and slaves from the North, with the locally produced textiles and other Mediterranean products of the South, the significance of which had not diminished in the least from ancient times[3]. By the time the Ottomans came onto the scene, the Black Sea's significant role in international trade was already a thing of the past[4].

Golden Horde, Tatars and the Black Sea Trade

In discussing the Black Sea trade, emphasis should be placed on the changing conditions of the vast market of the Golden Horde Empire and the Tatar world in Eastern Europe in the 13th through 15th centuries. Saray, its capital on the Volga became, at the height

1. *La Mer Noire*, p. 230.

2. See R. H. Bautier, *Les relations économiques des occidentaux avec les pays d'Orient au moyen age, points de vue et documents*, Sociétés et compagnies de commerce en Orient et dans l'Océan Indien, ed. M. Mollat, Paris 1970, pp. 263-331.

3. R. H. Bautier, *Ibid.* and M. Berindei and Gilles Veinstein, *La Tana-Azak, de la présence italienne à l'emprise ottomane*, Turcica VIII/2 (1976) 110-201.

4. R. Lopez, *Market Expansion: The Case of Genoa*, Journal of Economic History 24 (1964) 451-53, showes a dramatic decline in the trade of Pera in the fifteenth century.

of the Golden Horde Empire, not only a great consumption market for luxury goods[1], but also an emporium of «the great commerce» between Europe and the Orient, the Crimea (Caffa and Azak) and Khwarezm (Urgendj) being the transit centers of this lively transcontinental traffic[2]. Also it is now a commonplace that the North-South international trade between Egypt and the Golden Horde passing through Anatolia became livelier than ever during this period, due in particular to the exchange of the luxury goods of the Middle East for the slaves and furs of the North[3].

One cannot ignore or simply dismiss as myth the observations on the cities and economic conditions of the Golden Horde Empire made by travellers, which archaeological findings corroborate. In this connection one also commonly finds mention of the collapse of central power in the Golden Horde and the outbreak of the long struggle among the various branches of Djodji's descendants. What I should like to emphasize is the resurgence of tribal warfare on the steppes, resulting in the weakening of the population and economic well-being of the core area around Saray. Many tribes migrated, some to the steppes east of Astrakhan and others to the Crimea. The latter area, one of the most economically developed areas of the Golden Horde lands, became a center of attraction for many tribes under princes descending from Tokhtamish, thus

1. *The Travels of Ibn Battuta*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb, vol. II, Cambridge 1962, p. 479, 515-17; B. Spuler, *Die Goldene Horde, 1223-1502*, Leipzig 1943, p. 424-52; A. J. Yakubovskiy and B. D. Grekov, *Le Horde d'Or*, trans. F. Thuret, Paris 1939, chapter VII. For the Crimea in particular see A. L. Jacobson, *The Crimea in the Middle Ages*, Moscow-Lelingrad 1964 (in Russian).

2. Yakubovskiy, *Ibid.*, emphasizes the importance of the trade between Khwarezm and the Crimea. W. Hinz, *Ein orientalisches Handelsunternehmen im 15. Jahrhundert*, Die Welt des Orients IV (1949) 313-40, describes in detail, according to *shamso's-siyāq*, how a certain Khwâdje Shams al-Dîn of Shiraz made a business trip between his native town and Saray via Herat, Urgendj, in 1438-1440. He had a capital of 30,000 *dînâr* or 19,500 *Goldmark*, and trading in luxury goods, he realized a profit of 430 percent.

3. See Mas Latrie, *Des relations politiques et commerciales de l'Asie Mineure avec l'île de Chypre*, Bibl. Ecole des Chartes, 2 series, vol. I-II, p. 302-30, 483-521; Osman Turan, *Türkiye Selçukluları Hakkında Resmî Vesikalar*, Ankara 1958; Osman Turan, *Selçuklular Tarihi ve Türk-Islâm Medeniyeti*, Ankara 1965, p. 246-85.

giving rise to a new political formation in the Northern Black Sea region [1].

Timur's intervention in the internal struggles of the Golden Horde in the last decades of the fourteenth century not only contributed to the fall of Azak (Azov), Saray and Astrakhan as international trade centers, but, perhaps more importantly, by destroying the rising power of Tokhtamish, further accelerated the process of the dissolution and polarization of the tribal confederations in the Eurasian steppes. The Tatars of the Crimea and of the *Dasht* now under the Gireys, a branch of the Tokhtamish family, were now to separate themselves from the rest of the Golden Horde, and become increasingly integrated into the economic and political system of the Black Sea, which was to entail eventually their complete fusion with the Ottoman Empire.

The analysis in this paper of the Caffa customs register of 1486 shows clearly, I think, how the whole area, with its large Turkish-Tatar population, was integrated into the economy of the Black Sea region, an economic system encompassing not only the Southern coasts of the Black Sea, Istanbul and Bursa, but also Asia Minor and the Aegean.

Islamization and the growing cultural and political ties with the South, which go back to the early thirteenth century, greatly contributed to the consolidation of the Black Sea economic system. Due to the common cultural background and ways of life within Islam, the Crimean Tatars and the *Dasht* Nogays imported innumberable «articles of culture» manufactured in Anatolian towns, including such luxury articles as swords, caftans of costly brocades and mohair, and even fine European woolens for the upper class of the steppe aristocracy.

Apparently, in the second half of the fifteenth century, the caravan route from the Middle Volga basin to Azak and the Crimea had not yet been cut off. The Ottoman customs registers of the period mention goods of Tatar origin, among them *bulgarî*, a kind of fine morocco of the Kazan area, furs, and Tatar bows. In the

1. For the disintegration of the Golden Horde see Yakubovskiy, second book in the enlarged third edition (Moscow, 1950), and Z. V. Togan, *Bugünkü Türkistan*, Cairo 1929-1939, p. 90-120. On Timur's impact see A. P. Novosel'tsev, *On the Historical Evaluation of Tamerlane*, Soviet Studies in History XII/3 (1973-1974) 37-70.

first half of the sixteenth century, the Crimean Gireys, supported by the Ottomans, were able temporarily to extend their rule to the Kazan and Astrakhan areas, and tried to protect the caravan route between the Volga and the Crimea from the Nogays [1]. The Great Nogays seem to have been alienated from the Black Sea trade region from the 1520's on, when Muscovy began to supply their needs in arms, textiles, precious northern furs, minerals and, in times of famine, grains, in exchange for Nogay horses. The caravan routes from Kazan and Astrakhan then became the targets of the Nogays and the Muscovites.

When Ivan IV invaded Kazan and Astrakhan in 1552 and 1556 respectively, the Khans of Khwarezm and Turkestan complained of the cut-off of the trade and pilgrimage route between their lands and the Crimea, and urged the Ottoman Sultan to take action against the Tsar [2].

Regional Trade and International Trade

F. Thiriet [3] concluded that the Venetian Black Sea trade was in decline long before the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. He suggested that because of growing local insecurity Venetians migrated from Azak (La Tana) and other Black Sea ports including Trebizond, to Constantinople, in the first half of the fifteenth century, and that the movement grew in momentum in the period 1431-1451, leading to an expansion of commercial activities in the Byzantine capital in this period [4]. In other words, Constantinople

1. See A. Bennigsen and C. Lemercier-Quelquejay, *La Grande Horde Nogay et le problème des communications entre l'empire Ottoman et l'Asie centrale en 1552-1556*, Turcica VIII/2 (1976) 203-36; A. Bennigsen and G. Veinstein, *Le commerce de l'empire ottoman avec la Grande Horde Nogay, 1475-1552*, paper submitted to the I. Intern. Congress on the Social and Economic History of Turkey, Ankara 1977; Remmâl Khodja, *Vâkisât-i Sahib Giray Khan*, MS, Bibl. Nationale, Paris, suppl. turc no. 61.

2. See H. Inalcik, *The Origins of the Ottoman-Russian Rivalry and the Don-Volga Canal*, Annales de l'Université d'Ankara I (1947) 47-110; W. E. D. Allen, *Problems of Turkish Power in the Sixteenth Century*, London 1963.

3. *La Romanie*, p. 427-28.

4. Thiriet, *Ibid.*, estimated the annual volume of trade in Constantinople in this period at 100-150,000 gold ducats. As a result of the Ottoman conquest and pillage of the city Venetian losses were estimated 200,000 ducats, see S. Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople*, Cambridge 1965, p. 162.

became the center of the Venetian Black Sea trade, rivaling Pera on the other side of the Golden Horn. From our standpoint what is notable is that during this period the bulk of the Venetian trade consisted of grains, honey, fish, hides and slaves imported from La Tana and silk from Trebizond. The establishment of a Venetian factory at Akkerman (Maurocastro) in 1435 and the creation of a Venetian consulate in Caffa in June 1444, seem not to have promoted appreciably, Thiriet observed [1], Venetian trade in the Black Sea.

On Azak we now have M. Berindei and G. Veinstein's study [2], based mainly on Ottoman documents. Agreeing with R. H. Bautier's suggestions for earlier periods, they have argued that the trade of the Italian maritime states at Azak or in the Crimea relied essentially from the beginning not on the «great trade» of spices and silk coming over the Asiatic transcontinental route— the so-called «Mongol Route» — but on regional trade. Even if in the fifteenth century the Italians found spices, pearls, gold and «Russian» furs at Azak, the profits realized, Berindei and Veinstein have argued, were quite modest and they have questionned if Azak was ever a major emporium of «the great commerce» in luxury goods.

While the spice trade was of quite a modest size in Azak, the greater part of Venetian silk imports from the Levant came from the Black Sea ports of Azak and Trebizond, the first being an outlet for Chinese silk, the second for Iranian [3]. Before Bursa

1. *La Romanie*, p. 428. For the appointment of F. Duodo as the first vice-consul at Akkerman in March 1436 see N. Iorga, *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades*, vol. I, Paris 1899, p. 581; cf. N. Beldiceanu, *La conquète des cités marchandes de Kilia et de Cetatea Alba par Bayezid II*, Südost-Forschungen XXIII (1964) 36-115.

2. *La Tana-Azak, de la présence italienne à l'emprise ottomane (fin XIIIe siècle — milieu XVIe siècle)*, Turcica VIII/2 (1976) 110-201.

3. For the export of chinese silks to the Golden Horde via Khwarezm around 1438 see Hinz, *Ibid.*, p. 331, 333, 338; according to Bautier, p. 291-92, Chinese silk had ceased to arrive in the Levant ports already before the middle of the thirteenth century, and then Northern Iran alone supplied the growing import needs of the Italian silk industries. In Tana-Azak was to be found Iranian silk, also, which arrived there via Caspian Sea-Astrakhan, see Bautier, p. 287. We know that Genoese adventurers used this route in the fifteenth century. The Silk bought by the Venetians at Vosporo and Azak in 1399 was apparently from Iran, not from Georgia as suggested by Berindei-Veinstein, *La Tana-Azak*, p. 126.

became the emporium of Iranian silk for the Italian silk industries, Trebizond seems to have been the most important outlet of Iranian silk in the Levant [1], brought by caravan from Tabriz, the great center of raw silk and silk cloths, as well as of spices. Because of its high quality, large production for export, and existence of relatively convenient transport facilities, Iranian silk from the Caucasus and the Caspian provinces appear to have dominated the silk market in the Black Sea area at all times but definitely after 1336 [2]. Prices at Azak seem to be subject to fluctuations: In 1361 a one fourth increase in silk prices is noted in there, but towards the end of the century the price at Azak went down to its previous level [3].

D. THE RISE OF BURSA AND CHANGE OF TRADE ROUTE IN THE REGION

The system of trade routes through Asia Minor which had developed under the Ilkhanids collapsed in the 1340's. As the main thoroughfare of East-West trade, this system had linked Tabriz, the great emporium of Asian trade, with Constantinople-Pera or Caffa via Trebizonde, on the one hand, and with the great Mediterranean port of Ayas via Sivas in Central Anatolia, on the other [4].

It is the collapse of Mongol power first in inner Asia and then in Iran in the first half of the fourteenth century, that must be stressed as having permanent repercussions for the Levant trade in the Black Sea area and Asia Minor. However, for Asia Minor as a whole, the ensuing changes seem not to have been as radical as sometimes assumed, since the valuable silk production of the Caspian provinces of Iran, that area's main object of international trade in medieval times, continued to be brought into Turkey by

1. For the route Tabriz-Trebizond see Bautier, p. 282-86. Venetians obtained the right to settle at Trebizond in 1319, see Berindei-Veinstein, p. 118.

2. For Byzantine times see R. Lopez, *Silk Industry in the Byzantine Empire*, Speculum XX (1945) 1-42; for the periods of competition for Chinese silk Bautier, p. 291.

3. See Thiriet, *Les Régestes*, nos. 375 and 955.

4. Z. V. Togan, *Mogollar Devrinde Anadolu'nun Iktisadî Vaziyeti*, Türk Hukuk ve Iktisat Tarihi Mecmuasi I (1943). 1- ; Bautier, p. 280-86; H. Inalcik, *Bursa and the Commerce of the Levant*, Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient III 2 (1960) 133.

caravan. The difference was that in the course of the second half of the fourteenth century, the Iranian silk caravans began mostly to make their destination the capital of the Ottoman state, Bursa. Following this new route Iran's silk caravans came overland the entire way to Bursa, travelling from Tabriz via Erzerum - Erzincan - Tokat - Amasya - Ankara - Bolu or Eskişehir to Bursa[1]. Trebizond, Caffa and Constantinople suffered from this diversion of the silk trade, but Pera, by sending its agents to Bursa, continued to receive Iranian silk there[2].

The rise of Bursa as an international silk market and important center of silk industries, which has generally been overlooked by economic historians, must be considered as one of the major factors in the decline of the silk trade and industry in the Black Sea area. Caffa silk cloths, mentioned as famous towards the end of the fourteenth century[3], must have been a thing of the past at the end of the 15th century as witnessed in our customs register.

The switch-over in trade routes, which had apparently taken place already under Beyazid I (1389 - 1402), was an outcome of Ottoman imperial policy, which sought to secure control of the main centers on the route to Tabriz, such as Ankara (1354), Osmancik and Amasya (1392).

Strict state control meant that silk loads could be sent safely along this route without danger of diversion to other areas or of being opened and subjected to dues until they arrived at the Bursa market[4]. The sea route from Trebizond to Istanbul, on the other hand, involved various hazards: in particular ship wrecks and seizure by corsairs were not infrequent occurences. Apparently the higher costs of land transportation were offset by the high value of the loads and the large profit margins. During these centuries the majority of the silk merchants in the caravans were Azeri-Iranians who must have felt themselves more comfortable in the Ottoman capital than in a Christian city. At any rate, since the local silk industry consumed a large part of the imports (five *fardello* a day

1. H. Inalcik, *Bursa*, Belleten XXIV (1960) 45 - 54.
2. *Ibid.*
3. J. Schiltberger, *Travels and Bondage*, ed. J. B. Telfer, London 1879, p. 34. Caffa brocade (Kefe Kemhâsı) is still mentioned in the Ottoman documents of 1475 see *Kānūnnāme*, ed. R. Anhegger and H. Inalcik, p. 49. for the date *Der Islam* 43 (1967) 152 - 54.
4. H. Inalcik, *Bursa*, p. 52.

in 1501) and since Italian and Jewish purchasers, mostly from Pera, were waiting eagerly to buy the rest[1], Bursa became an attractive and busy market for silk, a second Tabriz in many ways, in the fifteenth century. It appears that Pera greatly benefited from the expansion of so close a market in silk, thereby offsetting its declining trade in the Black Sea.

Ottoman documents prove[2] that Istanbul received silk via Trebizond as late as the second half of the fifteenth century. This must, however, have been quite a limited amount. In the customs register of 1486 silk is mentioned as arriving in Caffa not from Trebizond but from Bursa.

E. BLACK SEA TRADE DURING THE OTTOMAN PERIOD

This essay on Ottoman trade and navigation on the Black Sea during the period 1486 - 1505 is based on the following customs registers and regulations :

1) The customs register of Kefe (Caffa) 1486 - 90, from the Başvekâlet Archives, Istanbul, Kâmil Kepeci tasnifi, Kefe - Avlonya Mukataaleri, no. 5280 Mükerrer. It contains only the arrears of the customs dues apparently drawn up upon an order given by the Ottoman Imperial Treasury in 1490. We are preparing the edition of this register.

2) A volume from the Başvekâlet Archives, Istanbul, Maliyeden Müdevver Defterler, no. 6, containing the following fiscal registers :

I. A *rûznâmçe*, day-book, for the produce of the saltworks of Ahyuli for the years 1491 - 93.

II. A *rûznâmçe*, day-book, for the fisheries of Kilia for the year 1504.

III. A register of the customs dues for Akkerman for the years 1505 - 1506.

IV. A register of the customs dues and other dues for Kilia for the years 1486 - 90 and 1504 - 1506.

1. G. R. B. Richards, *Florentine Merchants in the Age of Medici*, Cambridge, Mass. 1932, p. 110.
2. See *Kānūnnāme*, ed. R. Anhegger and H. Inalcik, p. 43.

3) The survey book of the population and revenues of the *sandjak* and city of Kefe for the year 1542, from the Başvekâlet Archives, Istanbul, Tapu Defterleri, no. 214. Regulations on customs dues and tolls are to be found in the introductory part. These have been translated into French by M. Berindei and G. Veinstein (*Réglement de Süleyman Ier concernant le Livâ' de Kefe*, in Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique XVI - 1 (1975) 57 - 104).

Important descriptions of the Black Sea countries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are to be found in Evliyâ Çelebi's travel book (*Evliyâ Çelebi Seyâhatnâmesi* 7 (Istanbul 1928) 486 - 604) and Claude C. Peyssonel's accounts based on personal experience (*Traité sur la Commerce de la Mer Noire*, Paris, 1787, and *Observations Historiques et Géographiques sur les Peuples Barbares qui ont Habité les Bords du Danube et du Pont - Euxin*, Paris 1765).

A list of Shipowners in the register of customs dues arrears, 1486 - 1490

Ship Owner	*Itinerary*
Haracı-oghlu	apparently Trabzon - Sinop - Kefe
Veled-i Salman, Merchant	Istanbul - Inebolu - Kefe
Hasan of Inebolu	Istanbul - Inebolu - Kefe
Mahmûd Atcı	Kerpe - Kefe
Cici-oghlu, Merchant	Istanbul - Inebolu - Sinop - Kefe
Yusuf of Izmir	—
Bali Rayis, Captain	Istanbul - Inebolu - Kefe
Resûl of Samsun	Samsun - Kefe
Mihal	Azak - Kefe
Hoca Seyyidî	Istanbul - Inebolu - Kefe
Kara Tayyib	Samsun - Kefe
Zorzi	Istanbul - Inebolu - Kefe
Çepni Ali Rayis, Captain	apparently Samsun - Sinop - Kefe
Knoto	—
Gündüz Rayis, Captain	Samsun or Sinop - Kefe
Turak Rayis of Izmit. Captain and Merchant	apparently Istanbul - Inebolu - Sinop - Kefe
Lorenc, Italian	Azak - Kefe
Kara-Tulum	Istanbul - Kefe
Yusuf Fakîh	Istanbul - Kefe
Buri Şâtir	Istanbul - Inebolu - Sinop - Kefe

Ship Owner	*Itinerary*
Sinân Beg	Kerpe - Inebolu - Kefe
Nikiroz	Samsun - Kefe
Yani of Inebolu	Istanbul - Inebolu - Kefe
Eyne Hoca	Inebolu - Kefe
Bostan Rayis	—
Karaca-Oghlu	—
Kara-Oghlan	Istanbul - Kefe
Pandazi	apparently Istanbul-Inebolu-Kefe
Hasan of Inebolu	Istanbul - Inebolu - Kefe
Mesîh Paşa	Istanbul - Sinop - Kefe
Salman of Taşköprü, Merchant	Inebolu - Kefe
Mubarek, Merchant	Trabzon - Kefe
Hacı Rayis of Gerze, Captain	Sinop - Kefe and other Crimean ports of Balıklagu and Taman
Àhmed Çelebi, Merchant	Istanbul - Sinop - Kefe
Veled-i Karak	—
Küreleş-oghlu	apparently Istanbul-Inebolu-Kefe
Vasil	Sinop - Kefe
Praskova	—
Ali Rayis of Samsun	Samsun - Kefe
Paskal Rayis, Captain	Inebolu - Kefe
Afendul	Sugdak - Kefe
Istrepan	—
Sava	Ozan - Kefe ; Hurzuf - Kefe
Todoros	Istanbul - Kefe
Manul	Uskuf - Kefe
Kapucu Sinân	Crimean ports - Kefe
Yani Altuncı	—
Yorgi Kileci	Hurzuf - Kefe
Kaliyoros	Crimean ports - Kefe
Sava Manul	Crimean ports - Kefe
Todoros Afendike	Crimean ports - Kefe
Baştiya Drad	Crimean ports - Kefe
Halil	Kopa - Kefe
Kılaguz	—
Gerge, Italian	apparently Galata - Kefe
Todor	Sugdak - Kefe
Emirze	—
Murâd	

Ship owners, as far as we can identify, can be classified as sea-captains, state officials and merchants. Nine Muslim *rayis* are specified in the register as ship owners: Bali, Çepni Ali, Gündüz, Turak, Hacı of Gerze, Ali of Samsun, Resûl of Samsun, Bostan and Dâvûd. Hâmid Rayis, Hayreddin Rayis and Salih Rayis are mentioned only in their capacities as guarantors.

The title *rayis* (from Arabic *ra'īs*) designates a sea captain, private or official. Apparently many sea captains were engaged in trade since they are registered as owing customs dues for wares for which no other owner is shown. In times of war private captains were ordered by the Sultan to join the navy with their ships, or to engage in corsary activities or *ghazā'* against the ships of unfriendly nations. Of course, following the establishment of Ottoman control over the Straits in 1452, the Turkish sea captains of the Black Sea coasts no longer had occasion for such naval activities in this area. On our list Çepni Ali Rayis, obviously of the Çepni Türkmens (Turcoman) of the Eastern Black Sea coast, must have been one of these local captains, now engaged in transportation and trade. Hacı of Gerze, Hasan of Inebolu, Resûl of Samsun, Salman of Taşköprü, and Salman of Sinop must all have been shipowners of the same region. Seamanship would seem to have been a hereditary profession, for obvious reasons (for ex.: Ali Rayis was the son of Resûl of Samsun and Veled-i Salman was evidently the son of Salman of Taşköprü).

Turak Rayis of Izmit and Hâmid Rayis, on the other hand, seem to have been captains in active service in the Ottoman navy at the time. It was Ottoman practice at all times to permit, sometimes even encourage, members of the Ottoman military class to engage in long distance caravan and overseas trade and transport. On our list Mesîh Pasha and Sinân Pasha, both grand-admiral under Bâyezid II appear to have employed their privately owned ships in the profitable Black Sea trade.

The majority of the Muslim ship owners, two thirds of the total, were evidently not professional seamen or officials but rather merchants or businessmen «resident» in the big commercial centers of the Empire. From this group we can cite Hoca Seyyidî, Yusuf Fakîh and Mubarek, Ahmet Çelebi. In Ottoman society, moreover, not only resident merchants but also ordinary citizens possessed of some wealth were engaged in what was called *mudāraba (commenda)*

trade ventures and transport [1]. There is no way to distinguish the persons on our list belonging to this group.

The non-Muslim shipowners, 25 in number, make up 41 percent of the total shipowners on our list. Three of them, Zorzi, Lorenc and Gerge are designated as *efrenc*, which in general means European, but in this case Italian. Baştiya Drad and possibly also Knoto and Karak can be included in this group. Zorzi was active on the Istanbul-Kefe line, and Lorenc between Azak and Kefe. The rest of the non-Muslim shipowners are Greeks and evidently sea captains, although this is specified only in the case of Paskal Rayis, who was active between Samsun and Caffa. The majority of the Greek shipowners (Afandul, Istrepan, Manul son of Praskova, Sava, Yani, Kaliyoros, Sava Manul and Todoros Afendike) were engaged in the regional traffic in fish, fish oil, caviar, salt, and especially wine, between Kefe on the one hand, and the Crimean ports of Sugdak, Hurzuf, Ozan (Özen) and Azak on the other. Other ships belonging to Greeks (Mihal, Pandazi, Vasil, Paskal, Praskova, Sava, Todoros) were active between Kefe and Inebolu, or Kefe, Samsun and Trabzon.

Shipowners

	Muslims		Non-Muslims	
	Sea Captains	Others	Greeks	*Efrenc* (Italians)
	9	32	21	4
Total	41		25	

As to itineraries, they can be re-established even when they are not specified in the registers, according to the origin of the merchant and his goods. The most active lines across the Black Sea were apparently Istanbul-Inebolu-Kefe, Sinop-Kefe and Samsun-

1. See H. Inalcık, *Capital Formation in the Ottoman Empire*, J. E. H., XXIX (1969) 101, 137.

Kefe, while traffic between Trabzon (Trebizond) and Kefe seems less significant in this period.

It appears that merchants from Western Anatolia and Bursa disembarked at Istanbul, which was the main transit center between Kefe and Mediterranean ports. Under the Ottomans as before, ships from Istanbul called, on their way to Kefe, at Inebolu and Sinop, taking on merchants from as far away in the hinterland as Ankara, Sivrihisar, Begşehri, and Konya.

The great volume of trade between the Crimea and the Kastamoni-Sinop-Amasya area kept direct lines between Kefe and the ports of Inebolu, Sinop and Samsun quite active as they had been in pre-Ottoman times. The Samsun-Kefe line seems to have been particularly active as an outlet for the economically well developed area of the hinterland containing the towns of Merzifon, Amasya and Karahisar. Sinop appears to have been a rallying point between Eastern and Western portions of the Black Sea. Ships from Trabzon apparently stopped at Sinop to take aboard merchants from Tosya, Merzifon, and Amasya. Sea communication between the Circassian port of Kopa (Copa) and Kefe seems to have been active as it had been under the Genoese. Kerpe, a small port near the mouth of Sakarya, had a direct sea link with Kefe. Kerpe was an outlet for wood and lumber from the surrounding forest area, and a transit port for the slave traffic between Kefe and Anatolia. Sea traffic between Kefe and the other Crimean ports of Hurzuf, Ozan (Özen), Taman, Sugdak and Uskuf as well as with Azak appears to have been quite busy.

What we can assert is that certain individual captains were particularly active along certain trade routes: Bali Rayis, Cicioghlu, Yusuf Fakîh, Yani, Hasan of Inebolu, Ahmed Çelebi, Küreleş-oghlu, Todoros, Pandazi (and the ship of Mesih Pasha) on the Istanbul-Inebolu-Kefe route; Hacı Rayis between Sinop and Kefe; Eyne Hoca between Inebolu and Kefe; Kara Tayyib, Nikiroz and Ali Rayis between Samsun and Kefe; and Haracci oghlu between Trabzon and Kefe. The ships of Bali Rayis, Hasan, Mesîh Pasha, and Hacı Rayis apparently made more than one journey during the year 892 A. H. (the year starting 28 Jan. 1486), and that of Bali Rayis appears to have been particularly active during this period. At least 13 merchants and their merchandise were carried on Bali Rayis' ship, 10 on that of Pandazi, and 7 on that of Mesîh Pasha that year.

Since the register includes only those merchants in debt to the treasury, it is not possible to get an exact idea of the number of the merchants on board and the size of the ships. However, judging from the number of merchants and the amount of goods in our register, the ships belonging to Sinân Beg, Yani, Pandazi, Bali Rayis and Praskova would appear to have been perticularly large.

Special shipments known as *irsâliye* were made from Kefe to Istanbul under the responsibility of an agent known as the *irsâlât-ı âmili*. The shipments included slaves, flour, wheat and clarified butter, sent by members of the military class, and customs dues had to be paid on them. The *irsâlât-ı âmili* was an agent in charge of forwarding goods belonging to the Sultan and the members of the military class.

As to the merchants the register shows a total of 212 people engaged in some way in trade. Of these, the professional merchants, as far as can be identified, numbered 182; the rest include shipowners, military persons engaged in mercantile activity, and persons such as tax-farmers *(ʿâmil)* or their employees, brokers, and slaves *(ghulâm)* or freed slaves *(ʿatîk)*, acting as traders on behalf of their masters.

Fourteen shipowners acted at the same time as traders, bringing goods on their own account: Veled-i Salman, Yusuf of Izmir, Cici-Oghlu, Bostan Rayis, Karaca-oghlu, Ahmed Çelebi, Rayis Hayreddin, Sava, Yani Altuncı, Yorgi Kileci, Istrepan, Sava Manul, Todoros Afendike and Yorgi.

As for the military persons, these were mostly simple *azebs*, fortress guardians, or their commanders *(agha, kethudâ, dizdâr, ser-oda)*, stationed in the fortresses of the Crimea (Kefe, Taman, Mangup, Sugdak and Azak). Among the military group can also be included a chief-waiter *(çasnîgîr-bashı)* and the chief gate-keeper *(ser-bevvâbîn)* of Mesîh Pasha, both of whom were engaged in trade. Most of them are entered in the register as paying a slave tax on slaves to be sent to Istanbul, obviously for sale. However, some of them were engaged professionally in trade activities, such as the *kethudâ* of the garrison of Azak who exported caviar, and that of Taman who shipped out wheat, and Ali, guard at the fortress of Caffa, and Sinân, commander of the garrison at Sugdak, who imported various kinds of textiles and foodstuffs. Some of this trade was apparently in goods needed by local garrisons.

ΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ ΠΟΝΤΟΥ

In some cases the port of departure of the merchant or ship is specified by the scribe. The following is a list of such ships with the merchandise aboard

Port of Departure	Ship Owner	Merchants Aboard	Merchandise Aboard
Azak	Mihal	Todoros, Anton *Efrenc*	Caviar
Azak	Lorenc *Efrenc*	Owner, Nikola, Murâd of Sinop	Fish, vessels, textiles
Hurzuf	Yorgi	Hoca Dravdik, Hudaverdi, Danişmend	Wine, Hardware, Mats, Raisins
Hurzuf	Yorgi	Owner	Wine
Hurzuf	Sava	Owner	Fish oil
Inebolu	Eyne Hoca	Hacı Safa of Amasya, Ibrahim of Kastamoni, Hacı Ali of Tire, Hoca Ali of Merzifon	Mohair, Cotton goods, Leather
Istanbul	Veled-i Salman	Owner	*Kirbas* (sea below), Rice
Istanbul	Hasan	Murad of Istanbul	Kidney Beans
Istanbul	Bali Rayis	Mustafa of Kastamoni	Mohair
Istanbul	Yani	Mehmed of Istanbul, Seyyidî of Konya, Yakub of Amasya, Hasan of Istanbul	Leather, Silk and Cotton textiles, Spices, Hardware

(continued)

Port of Departure	Ship Owner	Merchants Aboard	Merchandise Aboard
Istanbul	Kara-Oghlan	Seyyidî of Istanbul	Silk and cotton goods, Cotton
Istanbul	Mesîh Pasha	Hamza of Istanbul, Mahmud of Sinop, Hüseyin of Sinop, Hüseyin of Küre	Silk and cotton goods, Cotton, Rice, Copper Hardware
Istanbul	Bali Rayis	Ahmed of Karahisar, Seyyid Ali of Denizli, Hacı Mehmed of Ankara, Hacı Veli of Uşak, Hacı Baba of Karaman, Yusuf of Sinop, Cuki of Istanbul	Cotton goods, Leather, Furs, Shoes, Copper, Rice
Istanbul	Ahmed Çelebi	Owner, Gâyib Tatar, Mehmed of Tire, Mehmed of Kefe, Hacı Ali of Bursa, Arslan and Tuta, Jews	Rice, Leather, Mohair, Nails, Soap, Hardware, Silkens, Iron, European woolen cloth
Kerpe	Mahmûd Atcı	his agent Halil	Wood and lumber
Samsun	Nikiroz	Ahmed of Amasya	Silk, Silken textiles
Sugdak	Afendul	Nikola	Wine
Sugdak	Todor	Owner, Ayas	Wine
Trabzon	Mubârek	Owner	Alum, Hazel-nuts, Hemp, Furs, Pots

The following table breaks down the professional merchants by religion and origin:

Total no. of merchants	Muslims		Non-Muslims				
	Ott. subjects	Foreigners	Orth. Greek	Armenian	Jew	*Efrenc* (Italian)	Others
182	130	5 (Hacı Ali the Persian, Hoca Cemal from Shemâkî, Mehmed of Maghreb, Murâd and Tevekkül of Georgia)	23	2 (Isfador, Toros)	8	11	Baba-Çesare Papo Petrac

The striking fact about this table is the overwhelming majority of the Ottoman-subject Muslim Turks, about two thirds of the total number. Ottoman-subject non-Muslims make up about 18 per cent of the total. Among these must be included some *efrenc* of Galata. Since the *efrenc* from Scios and Moldavia came from tribute-paying lands, one can justifiably wonder whether there were really any foreign traders (i.e. directly from the *Dār al-Harb,* Abode of War) in the Black Sea at this time. The customs registers of Kilia and Akkerman do not provide any more of a clear cut answer to this question.

a. Muslims

Though few in number, foreign Muslim merchants were to be found in Caffa. Caucasians were in a majority in this group. Only one Iranian is recorded, though we know that Iranian merchants, mostly from Azerbeidjan, and travelling with the silk caravans, were to be found in great numbers in Bursa and Istanbul during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Another Muslim foreigner, Mehmed of Maghreb, traded in goods originating in the Ottoman lands.

Those Muslim merchants from Ottoman territories whose birthplace or origin were specified in our register (such as *Istanbulî* or *Amâsî* or *Can Amasya*) can be classified according to their origins as follows:

Birthplace or Origin	Number of Merchants
Sinop	9
Istanbul	8
Konya and Karaman	6
Bursa	5
Trabzon	4
Ankara	4
Merzifon	4
Amasya	4
Kastamoni	4
Kefe	4
Küre	3
Bolu	3
Kayseri	3
Zile	3
Niğde	2
Gördos (Gördes)	2
Tire	2
Taşköprü	2
Bayburd	1
Begşehri	1
Sivrihisar	1
Gümüş	1
Canik	1
Karahisar	1
Tokat	1
Tonuzlu (Denizli)	1
Uşak	1
Bor	1
Milan	1
Tosya	1
Samsun	1

The above list covers about half the merchants, showig their place of origin, which was apparently in most cases also the center of their commercial activities. In some cases they seem to have chosen to settle in such important commercial centers as Istanbul, Sinop, Amasya, Inebolu and Kastamoni. According to this list, 42 per cent of the Muslim merchants originated from the town and cities of the Anatolian Black Sea coast. Those from Istanbul and from Bursa, Ankara and Kayseri, commercial and industrial centers in the south, on the other hand, also made up quite a high percentage (29 per cent). Bursa and Istanbul were the transit centers for goods brought by the merchants of Western Anatolia, the Aegean area and Europe. Some merchants from Western Anatolia as far as Denizli (20 per cent) and from Central Anatolia (10 per cent), appear, however, to have travelled as far as Kefe. This picture of the Turkish merchants trading in Caffa presumably reflects the general pattern in this period. The native Muslim Caffans, interestingly enough, occupy a very modest place in the overseas trade of the city, numbering only four. The Muslim Tatar merchants, on the other hand, acting mostly on behalf of the Crimean Khan or the military, appear to have been among the wealthiest of the merchants.

b. Greeks

The Greek merchants, who make up the second largest group in our register, were mostly from the South Crimean ports, Hurzuf, Ozan, Uskuf, Sugdak, from Azak (Todoros, Nikola), or from the Southern Black Sea coast ports, Trabzon (Konstandin, Dimitri, Manul), Samsun (Kiryakoz), Kerpe (Karli), and Bartın (Aleksi). Those from the Crimean ports were mostly captains engaged in the wine trade and those from Azak in the fish and caviar trade. The Greek merchants from Trabzon imported into Caffa wine, *arak* and hazel-nuts, while other Greek captains or merchants also brought local products: Kiryakoz of Samsun ropes, Karli from Kerpe coarse textiles of flax, Aleksi from Bartın wheat, millet and rice. Luka, who imported silk and silk cloth, and Vasil, who imported rice and large amounts of alum, must also have been from the Southern Black Sea coast, while Yorgi, who imported soap, was probably from Galata.

c. Jews and Armenians

The Jews make up two groups: those who exported horse or cow hides from the Crimea (Yusuf, Avram, Tamarin, Ilyado and Ilyadon; perhaps these last two are the same?), and those who imported costly silk or European woolen cloth (Arslan Yahudi, Hoca Bikeş, Tuta, and Netil), obviously via Istanbul. Those of the latter group appear to be rich merchants. Arslan Yahudi, or Khodja Arslan, was a former tax-farmer *(ʿâmil)*, and his title, Khodja, denotes the status of a large scale merchant usually with a place of business in the *bezzâzistân* (bedesten).

Of the two Armenians in our register, Isfador of Kefe was a wealthy merchant engaged in the trade in silk cloths, while Toros imported large amount of henna. Apparently, after the conquest of Caffa, Ottoman-Turkish merchants replaced partly the Jews and especially the Armenians in the important and growing commerce in imported fine textiles. (Khodja Dravdik was probably also an Armenian.)

d. *Efrenc*, Italians

The Franks, or *Efrenc*, which for the Black Sea area means the Italians, were active as captains and ship-owners, as well as merchants, in the period after 1475 when the Ottomans established complete control over the Black Sea. In the register we count four merchant ships belonging to the Italians (Zorzi, Lorenc, Baştiya Drad, Gerge) and eleven Italian merchants. The Italian merchants were involved either in regional trade, such as bringing to Caffa caviar and fish from Azak (Anton, Lorenc, Cakomi), or in importing costly European clothes (Cakomo son of Filip, Markete and Bortema Balestrin) or soap (Zani Belickseri), or in exporting regional products such as fox skins (Zani) or leather (Zorzi) or beeswax (Karagöz Efrenc). This last mentioned, bearing a Turkish name, was a guard at the fortress of Caffa, who was probably taken into Ottoman service as a mercenary after the conquest. Yet another Italian merchant, Zorzi, traded in goods typical of the South-Eastern Black Sea coasts such as hemp of Fasha, *arak* and vinegar.

Among the non-Muslims is to be found a certain Aksina or Eksina, a merchant from Kara-Bogdan (Moldavia), who engaged in the silk trade. Petraç, who brought logs and lemon juice in containers to Caffa, might also have been from the Balkans. Ön-Yarun, who came from Taman withe a cargo of hemp and caviar, must have been a Circassian. The nationalities of Papo, son of Aylo, and Baba (or Papa) Çesara, who brought lumber from Hurzuf, we have been unable to identify.

Merchant Cargoes Classified According to Value (in akcha)

below 2,000	2,000 - 5,000	5,000 - 10,000	above 10,000
20%	23%	21%	36%

Thus those merchants with merchandise which valued above 5,000 *akcha* (111 gold ducats) constituted about half the total number. Those with merchandise valued below 2,000 (44 gold ducats) were only one fifth. This shows that the merchants engaged in the Caffa trade were mostly business men of some importance. The highest figures belong to the following merchants (see p. 105 - 106):

It becomes clear that a great majority of the big merchants were engaged in textile importing, especially in bringing in *kirbas* (a kind of coarse textile made of cotton, flax, or hemp) for common use. Luxury textiles, such as silk cloths, fine woolen cloths, of European origin, and mohair *(sof)* from Asia Minor, are of next most importance. On the other hand, the export of sheep skins, hides and especially Crimean salt, was also a big business. The wealthiest merchants appear to be those doing business with or for the Crimean ruling class (Şaban, Cat Cat Hacı Ahmed, Hacı Tanrıvermiş). These merchants imported for the ruling class luxury textiles (silk, fine woolens or cottons) and for the army arms and other materials—swords, iron and tents. Thus Şaban imported iron and exported, apparently, sheep skins for the Crimean Khan; Emir Hasan was guarantor for the dues to be paid on cereals imported from Bartın by Aleksi and on *kirbas* and caftans imported by Ali of Zile. Cat Cat Hacı Ahmed, a noteworthy figure in our register, exported salt, which was a monopoly of the Crimean Khanate.

The local wine trade, mostly in the hands of Greek captains, also appears to have been an important business.

Professional merchants specialized mainly in textiles, foodstuffs and slaves. Since it was considered good in medieval trade practice to invest in various types of wares, we sometimes find textile merchants trading also in spices, henna, dyes, sugar, hashish, soap, swords, combs, leather and hardware. Likewise we find that the slave merchant Hacı Veys was engaged at the same time in the textile trade. Provincial merchants specialized mostly in the export of local products. Merchants from Bursa and Amasya impored into Caffa mostly silk stuffs, those from Ankara mohair and rice, those from the Kastamoni area copper and rice, those from

Cargoes Valued Above 19,000 Akcha

Merchant's name	Total value of merchandise taxed	Principal Goods	
Şaban	55,000	silk cloths, sheep skins and iron	for Mengli Giray Khan
Yusuf of Bursa	22,800	*kirbas*, carpets, and coverlets	
Mustafa of Istanbul	19,500	*kirbas*	
Seyyid Ali of Denizli	29,600	*kirbas*	
Kutlu Beg	19,200	hemp textiles, hides	
Ahmed, slave of Bursavî	32,950	*kirbas*	
Ömer of Uşak	18,900	*kirbas* (its vulue 13,000)	
Hacı Tanrivermiş of Merzifon	43,000	*kirbas* (its value 36,000)	
Cat Cat Hacı Ahmed		189 *sapo* of salt	one *sapo*=410.56 kgr.
Veled-i Salman of Sinop	20,000	all *kirbas*	
Ishak of Kayseri	30,000	all *kirbas*	

(continued)

Merchant's name	Total value of merchandise taxed	Goods
Sadullah of Nigde	20,150	*kirbas* (its value 18,600)
Haci Hamza	22,000	all *kirbas*
Sinân, son of Sarrâf of Sinop	60,900	*kirbas* (40,000) mohair and silken cloth
Ahmed of Istanbul	30,800	*kirbas* (11,000) felt (7000), fox skin (6000)
Musa	19,000	indigo and *halva*
Gaybî	20,000	coarse wollens (He left for Copa in Circassia)
Yahya of Konya	20,000	indigo and fine woolen cloth
Hoca Nimyan	19,100	silk cloth and silk
Istrepan	about 20,000	wine
Agent of Mengli Giray Khan	—	225 *sapo* of salt paid 2500 *akcha* customs dues

western Anatolia carpets and cotton goods, and those from North-East Anatolia alum, hemp, hazel-nuts and wine, while those from Istanbul carried wares of varius origins, including European cloth, readymade clothes, hardware and tin. Merchants of the Crimean riviera traded in wine; those of Azak in fish, caviar and slaves. Cotton and leather goods were brought in by the textile dealers from all over Asia Minor, some dealers specializing exclusively in leather goods. The Italians, and some Jewish and Muslim merchants from Istanbul, specialized in imported woolen cloths.

Since our register gives data only on those merchants who owed arrears to the customs no estimate can be made of the total number of merchants or volume of freight at the port of Caffa for the period in question.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The Ottomans attempted to establish their control on the Dardanelles from the moment they settled on both sides of the Strait in 1352. The capture and fortification of Gallipoli (1354), with the construction of a naval arsenal and base there, was the first step in this direction. The Ottomans became particularly threatening on the Straits between 1393 and 1430. But since they did not have a navy powerful enough to control the sea, the Straits remained free until with the guns placed at the castles they built on the Bosporus and the Dardanelles in the period 1452-1455 they were able to cut off passage.

2. The Ottoman motives in controlling navigation on the Straits and Black Sea were: (a) to establish a complete safeguard on the passage between Anatolia and Rumelia and to protect their capital against a surprise attack, (b) to secure the provisioning of Istanbul, (c) to put an end, in favor of the indigenous populations, to the economic and political dominance of the Italian maritime states, which exploited and diverted the wealth of the region as alien colonial powers.

3. The Ottoman state was concerned with maintaining the commercial and fiscal benefits of the Black Sea international trade so long as the above objectives were not impaired. However, in the area of the international trade too, native or tribute-paying nations were given preferential treatment.

4. To protect and expand the economic resources of the countries surrounding the Black Sea the Ottoman Empire established its control over them by steps first as suzerain state in the period 1453 - 1475, and then through direct rule over the main transit centers such as Amastris (1460), Trebizond and Sinope (1461) on the southern coasts of the Sea, Caffa, Sugdak, Balıklava, Gözleve, Kersh and Azak (1475) in the Crimea, Copa and Anapa (1479) in Circassia, and Akkerman and Kilia (1484) in Moldavia. The Black Sea became an Ottoman lake when Southern Bessarabia or *Budjak* was annexed to the Ottoman Empire in 1538[1]. Thus, the Black Sea countries were integrated into a regional economy much more completely by the Ottoman Empire than they had been by the Italian maritime states. This development in turn entailed a more stringent and jealous control of the area by the Ottoman government. While the Black Sea's place in international trade shrunk in the new period, the growing demand of an expanding empire and the giant city of Istanbul for foodstuffs and raw materials as well as for slaves resulted in the economic expansion and specialization of the individual Black Sea countries. The extension of estate agriculture and animal husbandry in the Crimea, the *Dasht*, Moldavia and Dobrudja, and the increase in slave raids by the Crimeans should be recalled. From the end of the sixteenth century Western industrialized economies, especially the English, French and Dutch, tried to get access to the Black Sea's abundant and low-priced foodstuffs and raw material resources. But apparently the pressure and rising prices in the Ottoman market made the Ottoman gorvernment more than ever reluctant to open the Black Sea to international trade.

5. The closing of the Black Sea to international trade was a gradual process. Restrictions were imposed only when new conditions demanded it. Prohibition of the export of an individual commodity by a particular nation was initiated at a particular time, and maintained or extended according to conditions. As a strict state policy «the closing of the Black Sea to any foreign vessel» must be considered as something of a later date. While Maurice Aymard[2], on the evidence of an Ottoman document, suggested

1. H. Inalcik, *Budjak*, EI², I, p. 1280 - 87.

2. Maurice Aymard, *Venise, Raguse et le commerce du blé*, Paris 1960, p. 16.

1551 as the final date for the wheat exports from the Black Sea, English merchants still had permission to trade at Caffa and Azak in their capitulations of 1675[1]. Venice had capitulary guarantees to trade with Caffa and Trebizond until 1540, when the special reference to these Black Sea ports in the capitulations was omitted[2]. However, the Ottoman regulations dated 1542 contained stipulations about grain export by European ships from Caffa, and in 1549 the Sultan warned the Cadi of Istanbul not to interfere with the Venetian merchants who were buying caviar, fish and other provisions in the Black Sea[3]. The Venetian wine trade with the northern countries via the Black Sea continued until about 1592[4], although Joseph Nasi tried to make a monopoly of it under a special charter from Sultan Selim II (1566 - 1574). A fiscal record made in 1560[5] reads: «Most of the fish caught at the fisheries of Kilia had been sold to the Christian foreigners who brought wine from Europe *(Frengistan)* in their ships. This wine was not sold here at Kilia, but after the customs dues were taken, it was exported to Poland and Muscovy where it was exchanged with native products. These in turn were subject to customs dues here at Kilia in transit, and thus the Otttoman treasury obtained substantial revenue from it. Since the wine ships have ceased to come to this port the fish cannot be sold, and consequently the Sultan's treasury is to loose annually three hundred thousand *akcha* (5000 gold ducats)». However, the Venetian documentation tells us that by 1592 Venetians imported into Poland alone seven or eight galleon loads of wine from Crete via the Black Sea[6].

1. G. Noradounghian, *Recueil d'actes internationaux de l'empire ottoman*, Istanbul I, 1878, p. 167 - 68.

2. See H. Inalcik, *Imtiyāzāt*, EI², IV, p. 1183.

3. C. Villain - Gandossi, *Contribution à l'étude des relations diplomatiques et commerciales entre Venise et la Porte ottomane au XVIe siècle*, Südost-Forschungen XXVI (1967) 40.

4. H. Inalcik, *Capital Formation in the Ottoman Empire*, p. 122 - 23.

5. The *Başvekâlet* Archives, Istanbul, Maliye'den Müdevver Defter no. 255.

6. E. Alberi, *Relazione degli ambasciatori Veneti al senato*, series 3, vol. II, p. 412 cited by T. Stoianovich, *The Conquering Balkan Merchant*, Journal of Economic History XX (1960).

products. For example, it was not possible after the introduction of modern printing in the Ottoman empire in the 18th century to produce for the general public the exquisite leather bindings which had earlier been the norm. This further relates to an important topic, i.e., the preservation of the techniques and tools of those traditional arts collectively called the folk arts, or handicrafts. One of the most critical and urgent tasks facing Turkey at the present time is the collection of these cultural artifacts and the techniques employed in a major Museum of the Handicrafts. It is in such a museum that the creativity of Ottoman-Turkish civilization could best be represented. Instead of imitating European designs and products, our modern industries could seek there the source of inspiration for new techniques and styles, and thereby enhance the competitiveness of their products. In this way, many original techniques with high market potential could be saved from extinction.

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3. **Z. Gökalp**, *op. cit., Chapter 4: "Culture and Civilization", 89-109.*

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5. **N. Berkes**, *"The Development of Secularism in Turkey"*, Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964, 23-82, gives a comprehensive summary of the Ottoman cultural borrowings from the West.

6. **F. Giese**, *"Die altosmanischen anonymen Chroniken"*, Vol. 1 Breslau, 1922, 29-31, reference to beard is found in some of the unpublished versions of this source.

7. **See Geertz**, *op.cit., Index: Symbol systems.*

8. **Z. Gökalp**, *op.cit., Index: Values; E.M. Albert, "Value Systems", International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences.*

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12. *See* **D. Ayalon**, *"Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom, A Challenge to a Mediaeval Society", London: Vallentine. Mitchell, 1956, 46-133.*

13. *"Atatürk'ten Düşünceler", ed. E.Z. Karal, Ankara: İş Bankası Yayınları 1969, 49-51.*

14. *See* **L.T. Fawaz**, *"Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth- Century Beirut", Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983.*

15. *See his work mentioned in Note 2 above.*