AN
ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL HISTORY
OF THE
OTTOMAN EMPIRE

EDITED BY
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WITH
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Volume I: 1300–1600

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Reproduced from H. İnalcık (1973). The Ottoman Empire: the classical age, 1300-1600, London.

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1876 first Ottoman Constitution
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PREFACE

HALİL İNALCIK AND DONALD QUATAERT

These volumes are intended for students and, more generally, the informed reader. They are also addressed to the specialist who should find much new material of interest. The authors are specialists in their fields and of the respective time periods on which they have written. The work was first planned by Halil İnalcık, who then invited the best-known scholars to participate, including Mehmet Genç and Halil Sahillioglu. Generally, the authors of each chronological section survey political events before proceeding to the study of economy and society.

Some subjects of inquiry were not included either because research materials were lacking or because of space considerations. In the latter case, the authors make references to existing literature to guide readers. Thus, to keep the manuscript within manageable limits, Halil İnalcık left the history of urban life and industry before 1600 for another occasion and provided readers with sufficient bibliography on the subject.

This project was begun in 1985 and, inevitably, there were delays in its completion. Some sections were finished in late 1989 while others were prepared in Spring 1992. In some cases, new publications have appeared and are not discussed. For personal reasons, Mehmet Genç and Halil Sahillioglu found it impossible to continue. And so, Bruce McGowan assumed sole responsibility for the eighteenth-century section and we invited Şevket Pamuk to write the monetary history. We are very grateful to Professors Genç and Sahillioglu for allowing us to use their unpublished materials.

We have sought to respect the longevity and complexity of Ottoman history in our spellings of personal and place names and technical terms. Thus, we have used the spellings most appropriate to each particular time period and area. Otherwise, we have sought to use modern Turkish spelling whenever possible. We use the English terms for Arabic, Persian and Persian words that have come into English. In the text, we have sought to minimize the number of technical terms, but we have had to use some to maintain accuracy. Hence, for example, timar is preferred to fief.

Halil İnalcık thanks his colleagues for agreeing to participate in this project. He is especially grateful to Donald Quataert for all his labours in helping to bring the project to fruition. In addition, he thanks C. Max Kortepeter for his generosity in taking considerable time to make stylistic suggestions.

Suraiya Faroqhi thanks Rifa‘at Abou-El-Haj, Ídris Bostan, Linda Darling, Neşe Erim, Cornell Fleischer, Daniel Goffman, Ronald Jennings, Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar, Heath Lowry and Leslie Peirce. She wishes to thank Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert for commenting on the manuscript as well as Engin Akarlı, Halil Berktay, and Nükhet Sirman Eralp. And finally, for their help with historiographical issues, she thanks Rifa‘at Abou-El-Haj, Chris Bayly, Huri İslamoğlu-Inan, Ariel Salzmann, Sanjay Subrahmaniam and Isenbike Togan.

Bruce McGowan wishes to thank, above all, Professor Mehmet Genç of Marmara University, who generously shared his expert advice on several historical concepts employed in Part III. The writer is well aware that the fit between this section and others is far from perfect. His own conception from the start was to provide a brief and interesting review of the literature which would be useful for students. The writer is, above all, grateful to have had access to the Regenstein Library of the University of Chicago, the collections of the Oriental Studies Department of the University of Vienna, and the American Research Institute in Turkey.

Donald Quataert thanks Cem Behar, Alan Duben and Judith Tucker for providing manuscript versions of their research findings. He is especially grateful to Tom Dublin for his careful reading of an early draft. Thanks also to the Ottoman reading group of the Fernand Braudel Center and Faruk Tabak at Binghamton University as well as Rifa‘at Abou-El-Haj for invaluable comments on various portions of the manuscript. Binghamton University has been very generous in providing the staff support, without which this volume could not have been completed. Marion Tillis has been the very model of efficiency in typing substantial versions of each of the four major contributions. Faruk Tabak has been invaluable for his editing and proofreading assistance.

Şevket Pamuk acknowledges the indispensable work of Halil Sahillioglu over the last three decades as well as the extensive discussions in the summer of 1990. He also thanks Cüneyt Ölçer, Mehmet Genç, Zafe
Preface

Toprak, Yavuz Cezar, İsa Akbaş, Mehmet Arat, Linda Darling, Reşat Kasaba, Faruk Tabak, Oktar Türel and Halil İnalcık.

Halil İnalcık provided the chronology up to c. 1700 while Bruce McGowan and Donald Quataert respectively prepared most of the entries for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Halil İnalcık prepared the genealogical table, the lists of weights and measures and the glossary.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA  Auswärtiges Amt
A&P  Parliamentary Papers, Accounts and Papers, GB
AAH  Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae (Budapest)
AAS  Asian and African Studies (Jerusalem)
AE  Archives du Ministère des affaires étrangères, Quai d'Orsay, Paris, Fr.
AHR  American Historical Review
AIESEE  Association Internationale d'Études du Sud-Est Européen, Bulletin
Annales, ESC  Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations
AOr  Acta Orientalia (Budapest)
AO  Archivum Ottomanicum (The Hague)
AS  Annual Series, GB
ASI  Archivio Storico Italiano
Aus  Austria
B  Belleten (Ankara)
BAN  Bilgarska Akademiia na Naukite, Istoria na Bulgaria
BBA  Başbakanlık Arşivi, now Osmanlı Arşivi, İstanbul, Turkey
BCF  Bulletin consulaire français. Recueil des rapports commerciaux adressés au Ministère des affaires étrangères par les agents diplomatiques et consulaires de France à l'étranger
BEO  Bab-ı Ali Evrak Odası, BBA
Bel  Belediye, BBA
BF  Byzantinische Forschungen
List of abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BI</td>
<td>Belgeler (Ankara)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BN</td>
<td>Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris</td>
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<tr>
<td>BN, MS</td>
<td>Bibliothèque National, Paris, MS fonds turc</td>
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<tr>
<td>BS OAŞ</td>
<td>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>Byzantinoslavica</td>
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<tr>
<td>BST</td>
<td>Balkan Studies (Thessaloniki)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BT TD</td>
<td>Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi (İstanbul)</td>
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<td>Bu HI</td>
<td>Berichte über Handel und Industrie. Deutsches Reich (Germany)</td>
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<td>CC</td>
<td>Correspondance commerciale, Fr</td>
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<td>CED</td>
<td>Coğrafiya Enstitüsü Dergisi (İstanbul)</td>
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<td>Cev</td>
<td>Cevdet Tasnifi, BBA</td>
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<td>CIEPO</td>
<td>Comité International d’Études Pré-Ottomanes et Ottomanes (İstanbul)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMRS</td>
<td>Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique (Paris)</td>
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<td>CSP</td>
<td>Calendar of State papers and manuscripts relating to English affairs existing in the archives and collections of Venice and in other libraries of northern Italy: Venice, 38 vols., London 1864–1947.</td>
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<td>Dah</td>
<td>Dahiliye, BBA</td>
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<td>DII</td>
<td>Documenta Islamica Inedita (Berlin)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DO</td>
<td>Dumbarton Oaks (Washington, D.C.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EB</td>
<td>Études Balkaniques (Sofia)</td>
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<td>EF</td>
<td>Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd edition</td>
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<tr>
<td>EcHR</td>
<td>The Economic History Review</td>
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<td>EHR</td>
<td>English Historical Review</td>
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<td>EUQ</td>
<td>East European Quarterly</td>
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<td>FO</td>
<td>Foreign Office, GB</td>
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<td>Fr</td>
<td>France</td>
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<td>GB</td>
<td>Great Britain</td>
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<td>GDAD</td>
<td>Güney Doğu Araştırmalar Dergisi (İstanbul)</td>
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<td>Ger</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>HH</td>
<td>Hatt-i Hümayun, BBA</td>
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<td>HH St A</td>
<td>Haus-Hof und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Politisches Archiv (PA), Austria</td>
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<td>HUS I</td>
<td>Harvard Ukrainian Studies (Cambridge, Mass.)</td>
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<td>IA</td>
<td>İslâm Ansiklopedisi (İstanbul)</td>
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<td>IFM</td>
<td>İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası</td>
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<td>IHR</td>
<td>The International History Review (Canada)</td>
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<td>IJ MES</td>
<td>International Journal of Middle East Studies</td>
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<td>IJTS</td>
<td>International Journal of Turkish Studies (Madison)</td>
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<td>ISN</td>
<td>Istoriya Srpskoga Naroda (Belgrade, 1986)</td>
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<td>JAH</td>
<td>Journal of Asian History</td>
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<td>JAS</td>
<td>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</td>
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<td>JAO S</td>
<td>Journal of the American Oriental Society</td>
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<td>JEEH</td>
<td>The Journal of European Economic History</td>
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<td>JESHO</td>
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<td>RCL</td>
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List of abbreviations

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<td>RH</td>
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<td>&quot;Raiy yet Rüsumu, Essays presented to Halil İnalcık,&quot; Journal of Turkish Studies, X-XI, 1986</td>
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<td>TAD</td>
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<td>ZDMG</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</td>
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<td>ZstA</td>
<td>Zentrales Staatsarchiv, Potsdam, Auswärtiges Amt, Ger., former Democratic Republic</td>
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5 Dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, 1672-1913
GENERAL INTRODUCTION

HALİL İNALCIK AND DONALD QUATAERT

These volumes summarize the field of Ottoman social and economic history and, at the same time, offer new findings and perspectives. They build on a half-century tradition of scholarship and present an area of study still in its infancy. Simultaneously, the various authors offer their own research, pushing beyond synthesis into new inquiries and analyses.

In organizing the six centuries of Ottoman history, the classical period 1300-1600 is taken as a well-defined, distinct period with an autocratic centralist government and a command economy, while in the following “decline” period, underpinnings of this traditional polity entered a process of transformation. The seventeenth century became in fact a period of transition, witnessing thorough-going changes. The Köprülü’s attempt to restore the traditional autocratic centralist system totally failed during the disastrous war period from 1683 to 1699. The eighteenth century saw a radically changed Ottoman Empire with the rise of local powers under provincial notables and “dynasties,” decentralized, so to speak. The central government followed “liberal” policies not only in the administration of the empire but also in landholding and economy in general. Also, there occurred a radical change in the attitude of the Ottomans toward Europe and its civilization. The Ottomans, for the first time, now admitted the Europeans’ superiority and began to imitate and borrow western ways. This led to increasing Ottoman dependence on Western powers for survival. The nineteenth century witnessed gaining momentum in Ottoman dependence on the West, both politically and economically, and in radical westernization reforms.

In our volumes, these four periods – 1300 to 1600 and the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively – have each been prepared by one specialist independently; but the unity of approach is
secured by a common plan presenting the period in its political, economic and social aspects.

The individual chapters are substantially expanded with tables providing detailed statistical data. A genealogical table, general chronology, a list of weights and measures, and a glossary (in transcription) are also included. Bibliographies at the end of each author’s section are designed to provide the basic literature on the period discussed. In the books, the authors hope the reader will be able to follow the metamorphosis of an empire as a whole, as viewed in its basic aspects.

Hopefully, our volumes will be invaluable for a time and, by the force of its own syntheses and new research, be superseded in the not too distant future. Their publication makes clear the accomplishments and shortcomings of a maturing field that is exploring the social and economic structures of an empire whose legacy has been overlooked for much of the twentieth century. This neglect has been part of a more general attitude that has ignored the Ottoman influence on the present, however powerful it may have been. The decades-long neglect seems doubly odd since the work of some eminent earlier historians, such as William Langer’s *The diplomacy of imperialism* (1935) placed the Istanbul-based empire at the very center of European history (in this case political). Recently, the Ottoman past has begun to receive the attention merited by its actual historical role. Take, for example, the commercial success of the flawed *Peace to end all peace* (1989) by David Fromkin, that examines the Middle East regions of the empire during the World War I period. The accelerating interest in the Ottoman experience should be reinforced considerably by the events of the early 1990s, including those in southeastern Europe and the emergence of Turkey as an international power astride Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia. Empires do fall but the residues of their influence linger on.

Until World War II, studies of Ottoman history dealt almost exclusively with military and political events. This focus generally derived from the emphasis then prevailing in European historiography. More particularly, the Ottomans represented for Europeans primarily a military intrusion, requiring latter-day crusades that haunted the Western memory. After c. 1945, interest shifted to the economic and social aspects of the Ottoman historical experience, in part because of better access to the Ottoman archives. The new focus also derived from the growing emphasis on social and economic history in the West. That is, as before, trends in Ottoman historiography followed those set in other areas of historical research.

Fernand Braudel’s *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l’époque de Philippe II* (1949) can be taken as a watershed, presenting the Ottoman Empire as an integral part of the Mediterranean world, not only in the struggle for hegemony but also in economic relations. In earlier works, notably in Wilhelm Heyd’s classic, *Histoire du commerce du Levant* (1936), the Ottomans’ role in Mediterranean trade is viewed solely from its European (in this case, Italian) partner’s vantage point; thus, developments affecting their position in the Levant are judged negatively without taking into account positive effects that might have accrued to people in the region itself. Little note was given to the fact that the Ottomans did not aim to destroy the Italian trade in the Levant, but rather sought to control and profit from it, which meant eliminating the Latin domination and exploitation that had been established during the period of Byzantine decline. That is, among its other contributions, this work attempts to present events from the Ottoman perspective. It offers the Ottomans as agents capable of independent and internally consistent actions and not, as had been the case for too long, as passive spectators of a European drama.

Also, it can be said, without exaggeration, that the Ottoman superpower in the East substantially contributed to the shaping of modern Europe. For example, when a decisive struggle developed against Venice and its powerful Habsburg allies who then dominated Europe, the Ottomans did not hesitate to extend the same capitulatory commercial privileges to France, England and the Dutch that it earlier had bestowed on the Venetian Republic. This Ottoman re-orientation proved to be a decisive turning point for the initial mercantilist-capitalist expansion of these rising Western nation-states. (It also, obviously, was important for the Ottoman economy.) From then on, every European country aspiring to mercantilist expansion, as a prerequisite for its economic development, sought these economic privileges from the sultan. The West depended, at least at the beginning, on supplies from or through the Ottoman Empire for its newly rising silk and cotton industries. The first successful chartered companies in the West were the Levant companies.

The Ottoman Empire’s economic significance in world trade, so far understated by historians, is dramatized in this study. The various authors, on the one hand, trace trade patterns long forgotten by historians in the West. For example, while the horizontal trade route in the Mediterranean through the Middle East to Venice or Genoa was considered the main trade link with Arabia and India, a vertical south–north international trade route through Damascus – Bursa – Akkerman – Lwow had
also developed through Ottoman territories, beginning c.1400. The so-called oriental goods, including spices, silks and cotton goods, reached Poland, the Baltic countries and Muscovy through this route. Further to the east, Hungary and Slovakia through the Danubian ports and Brașov in Transylvania were another market for the south–north trade. At times, Hungary received more spices through this route than through Venice. On these points, Ottoman customs registers were found to have fully supported the findings of Polish, Hungarian and Romanian historians.

The authors, on the other hand, track the shifting importance of the trade in its global context. In the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire played a determining role in world trade. The empire’s far-flung adventures – on the Volga river, in the Mediterranean, in Azerbaijan and the Caspian Sea, in Yemen, Aden and Diu, in Sumatra and Mombasa – all had economic implications. Ottoman military actions were closely connected with economic – fiscal issues, such as the control of the Tabriz – Bursa silk route, the Akkerman – Lwow route, the Black Sea sources of food and construction materials for Istanbul, and Yemen and Aden for the Indian trade. The battle of Lepanto (1571), and the advent of the English and Dutch in the Mediterranean (1580–90), marked the beginning of the empire’s reduction to a regional state. At the same time, the rise of the Atlantic economy, with America’s huge supplies of cheap silver, cotton and sugar, and above all Europe’s aggressive mercantilism, caused the collapse of the Ottoman monetary system, triggering dramatic changes in the seventeenth century. Subsequently, the relative importance of Ottoman foreign trade to the global economy declined although, after c. 1750, its volume actually rose, especially during the period 1750–1850. International trade rose to greater heights than ever before in Ottoman history. Thus, by 1914, the Ottoman and Western economies were intertwined to an unprecedented degree. But, in terms of economic significance, the Ottomans had slipped from first to second-rate status.

Our examination of foreign trade justifiably stresses the dynamic Ottoman role in the world economy. At the same time, the various authors spend considerable time examining the importance of trade within the Ottoman frontiers, an activity that too often has been overlooked in favor of the foreign trade. To a degree not sufficiently highlighted in the previous literature, this intra-Ottoman trade played a vital role in the economic life of the empire, even during its final years. Overall, tracing the history of these domestic trade patterns over time, an emphasis that derives from our concern to present the story from the Ottoman vantage point, makes apparent their centuries-long continuity. And, as a corollary, we more clearly can see the disruptive impact of the territorial losses of later Ottoman times that diverted, truncated or altogether destroyed well-established domestic trading networks.

Similarly, the authors have placed considerable emphasis on the study of landholding patterns and forms of agricultural exploitation. As a result, a comprehensive picture of the crucial agrarian sector over the entire Ottoman period begins to emerge. We explain and trace the impressive continuity in small landholding patterns while also illustrating how and when large estates did emerge. Generally, we found that over time and space, large estates tended to appear in areas being brought under cultivation rather than on already settled lands. This trend was especially marked in the nineteenth century, when the state settled refugees and reluctant tribes on once nearly vacant lands. In the focus on agriculture, we contribute to a debate that has engaged historians and historical sociologists for the past several decades. The debate centered on the issue of the Ottoman social formation and the utility of the paradigms of Marx and Weber. Some of the research in our volumes suggests limits to the usefulness of these models: the Ottoman village generally was not a self-sufficient social entity independent from the city. A money economy was quite developed in the Ottoman world from an early date, and then expanded considerably in the nineteenth century. Further, smallholdings – not large estates – generated most of the marketed surplus throughout the Ottoman era. Thanks to the meticulously detailed tax and population surveys of the bureaucracy, we now see an Ottoman social formation based on the çift-bane in rural areas, a social system that is fully described for the first time by İnalçık in this volume. Indeed, this is the “peasant family labor farm” discussed by A. V. Chayanov as an independent mode of production.

In volume II, our treatment of manufacturing activities during the period c. 1600–1914 (we ignore the earlier period for reasons stated in the preface), extends and sometimes breaks with existing accounts in several important respects. First, the contributions by the various authors collectively offer a comprehensive account that points to remarkable continuities in the loci of manufacturing. In many cases, industrial centers flourishing c. 1600 were still active in 1914. Second, in common with the commercial and agricultural sectors, Ottoman manufacturing is seen to have possessed its own internal dynamics, creatively adapting to shifts in domestic and international conditions. Thus, sometimes new production
centers but more often new production methods and/or new products appeared to retain markets or capture new opportunities. And, as in the case of trade and agriculture, the declining political fortunes of the state and the concomitant territorial losses are seen to have played a vital role in the story of Ottoman manufacturing.

In these volumes, much attention is placed on the relations of the empire with the West which intensified after the sixteenth century. The Ottoman state was the first Asian empire to experience the impact of the phenomenal rise and expansion of Europe in the economic and military fields. While the mercantilist West was keenly interested in the preservation and exploitation of this market so vital for its economy, the Habsburg and Russian empires, taking advantage of new advanced war technology, started an aggressive policy for the conquest and dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, already in the first decades of the eighteenth century, the so-called Eastern Question appeared in European politics, putting on the agenda the issue of the very existence of the empire. In the new period, European hegemony changed the Ottoman Empire's position from dominance to mounting dependency. In an attempt to find a way out of the crisis, the Ottomans sought to alter first their military, and then their administrative organizations. So, there appeared for the Ottomans what we may call the Western Question, in the sense of a traditional Muslim society trying to determine to what extent it should follow European ways.

These military and administrative changes accompanied and accelerated increasing imports from the West, not only in weaponry but also in the artifacts of everyday life. In the eighteenth century, the substantial reduction in transport and manufacturing costs in Europe led to an unprecedented trade expansion with the Ottoman territories. During the nineteenth century, additional innovations in transportation technologies further changed the face of the land and densities of populations.

A most interesting development in the post-classical period was Ottoman "liberalism" in culture and economic issues. Capitulatory privileges were extended to all European nations. As the authors show, a liberal policy was also manifest in land possession rights, in vakfs and tax-farming; these entailed administrative decentralization and brought about the rise of the provincial notables and loss of the central bureaucracy's control in the provinces. In the final Ottoman century, liberalism resumed with the 1826 destruction of the Janissary protectors of guild privilege and the 1838 Anglo-Turkish Convention. Government efforts to direct the economy, after nearly wrecking it in the late eighteenth century, steadily diminished thereafter. In the nineteenth century, however, the state still attempted to intervene and protect. Administrative centralization, marked by a vast expansion in the numbers and responsibilities of bureaucrats, accompanied military changes that resulted in a state apparatus vastly larger and more powerful than that of the previous era. Wars and territorial losses, however, continued to shatter trade networks and forge new ones, profoundly affecting agricultural as well as manufacturing activities in their wake.

In brief, we have attempted to present an interpretation of the Ottoman social and economic reality in its global context from, whenever possible, new perspectives, based on original archival materials and the most recent studies derived from these same sources.
THE OTTOMAN STATE: ECONOMY AND SOCIETY, 1300–1600

HALİL İNALCIK, UNIVERSITY OF BİLKENT
EMPIRE AND POPULATION

FORMATION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The Ottoman state came into existence around 1300 as a small frontier principality which devoted itself to the gaza, Holy War, on the frontiers of the Seljukid Sultanate in Asia Minor and of the Byzantine Empire. Its initial gazi frontier character influenced the state's historical existence for six centuries: its dynamic conquest policy, its basic military structure, and the predominance of the military class within an empire that successfully accommodated disparate religious, cultural, and ethnic elements. The society to which these elements gave rise followed in the tradition of earlier Islamic empires, but some of its most unique features were created by the Ottomans themselves.

The Ottoman crossing of the Dardanelles and settlement on European soil proved of crucial importance for the transformation of the Ottoman state from a rather insignificant frontier principality into an empire encompassing the Balkans and Asia Minor. Süleyman Pasha, son of the second Ottoman sultan, Orhan (1324–62), was responsible for the first Ottoman settlement in Europe. He first established himself on the Gallipoli peninsula in 1352 as the ally of John Cantacuzenus, pretender to the Byzantine throne. Two years later Süleyman seized the fortified city of Gallipoli and made it a strong base from which he initiated his conquests in Thrace. He soon attracted Turkish immigrants from Anatolia, landless peasants, nomads, and all kinds of uprooted people seeking a new life on the other side of the Straits. Thus the so-called Pasha sancak, which would embrace the entire Balkan peninsula, came into being.

After a precarious period following Süleyman’s sudden death in 1357, the conquest of Thrace was resumed with renewed vigor under the command of his brother, Murad, and in 1361 the important city of Adrianople
fell to Ottoman forces. The rapid conquest of Thrace caused consternation in Byzantium and in Europe because the European approaches to Constantinople had fallen so rapidly into Ottoman hands. During the period 1362–89, Murad I subdued the greater part of the Balkans north to the Danube and made Ottoman vassals of most of the local dynasts, thus creating an empire composed of vassal states. In 1389, in the battle of Kossovo-Polje, the attempt of the assembled Balkan dynasties to throw off Ottoman domination failed. Losing his father on the battlefield, Sultan Bayezid I (1389–1402) vigorously took up the reins of government and consolidated his holdings in Anatolia. In 1393, he returned to the Balkans to establish centralized control over the Slavic principalities and to expand further to the north. Bayezid’s rivalry with Hungary in the lower Danubian territories and with Venice in the Morea, Albania, and the Aegean resulted in an Hungarian–Venetian alliance against the Ottomans. When Bayezid began his siege of Constantinople, Hungary and Venice succeeded in mobilizing the Crusaders to stop him. But Bayezid surprised and defeated the Crusaders at Nicopolis in 1396. Thus he firmly established Ottoman rule in the Balkans and also gained enormous prestige for himself throughout the Islamic world. Egypt and Syria now believed themselves to be free from Crusader attack. Furthermore, the Ottoman sultan did not hesitate to eliminate the Turkish dynasties of Anatolia in an attempt to incorporate into his empire all lands west of the Euphrates in Asia Minor. As Bayezid strove to expand his territory and to build a strongly centralized state on the model of the classical Islamic states, he unavoidably became embroiled with the native military class in Anatolia who looked to Timur in the east for salvation and protection.

Now Timur, claiming himself heir to the Mongol Empire in Iran, claimed lordship in all of Anatolia, including the Ottoman state. When Bayezid challenged Timur, he suffered a crushing defeat at the battle of Ankara in 1402, and his empire collapsed. As a result, the Anatolian dynasties reestablished themselves and the vassal states in the Balkans (Byzantium, Wallachia, Serbia and Albania) regained their freedom from the Ottomans.

Civil strife among contending Ottoman princes between 1403 and 1413 slowed greatly the Ottoman recovery in spite of Timur’s death in 1405. Nevertheless, stability quickly returned during the reigns of Mehmed I (1413–21) and Murad II (1421–51), because they could build upon the prior solid institutions of the Ottoman state. Those forces – the Janissary army, the timar-holding sipabis, the ulema and the bureaucrats – had a vested interest in the revival of the centralized state and, under able leadership, made fundamental contributions to the remarkable recovery of the centralized Ottoman state. The critical juncture arrived when the Ottomans repelled Hungarian Crusader attacks in the Balkans at the battles of Zlatića in 1443, Varna in 1444, and Kossovo in 1448. Clearly the Ottoman forces once again showed their capacity to conquer new territories and this time they planned to conquer the Byzantine capital itself. One should also note that after Timur’s blow to the first Ottoman empire under Bayezid I, the center of gravity of the state shifted to the Balkans. From the Balkans, the Ottomans reestablished their domination in western and northern Anatolia prior to the accession of Mehmed II, the Conqueror of Istanbul (1451–81).

Organization of the conquests, the frontier versus the center

During this period of expansion, the administrative set-up largely conformed to the military organization, clearly aiming for a centralized system. Sancaks, or sub-provinces, were placed under military governors known as sancak-begis. These sancaks became a part of the province of Rumeli (an equivalent of Romania of the Byzantine era), which was in turn governed by a beglerbegi, a military commander in charge of all provincial forces, including special frontier units.

The frontier forces, led by wç-begis (wç = frontier) were the most active part of the Ottoman army. These wç-begis played a major part in the internal and external affairs of the empire during the period 1360–1453. These forces were organized under hereditary family leaders, with one wç-begi on the right wing in the direction of the Lower Danube and Wallachia, one on the left wing in the direction of Macedonia, and one in the center in the direction of Sofia and Belgrade. As the conquests proceeded, the frontier lines in these wç-begis’ districts advanced further, from the Balkan range to the Danube, from Thrace to Macedonia and then to Albania and Bosnia, and from Philippopolis to Sofia and Niš.

During the interregnum after the defeat of 1402, effective power in the state passed into the hands of the frontier begis. However, starting with Murad II’s (1421–51) assigning of his own men, mostly from among the palace servitors, to frontier commands, centralist policies increasingly became important until they came to predominate under Mehmed II (1451–81). Before the completion of this process, the
rivalry grew acute between the frontier forces under hereditary ğç-begis and the cavalrymen holding timars in the hinterland. In fact, this rivalry helps to explain many of the tensions and upheavals during the period, including the Sheyh Bedreddin rebellion of 1416 which, until now, has not been interpreted against this background. Pretenders to the Ottoman throne also took refuge in the frontier zones, which were always centers of dissension against the central government.

Yet it was the frontier begis who played a crucial role in pushing the Ottoman borders forward during this same period. Under the pressure, many of the Balkan princes and lords readily accepted Ottoman lordship to spare themselves from the continual raiding of the frontiersmen. Once the lands had become tribute-paying territories, their non-Muslim inhabitants assumed the status of ahl al-zimma, i.e., protected subjects of the Muslim state in accordance with Islamic Law.

The transformation from tributary status to total annexation and assimilation into the Ottoman system, that is, being registered as a sancak, varied in time with the particular circumstances of each territory. In general, however, the period of transition consisted of first tightening the bonds of vassalage by eliminating local dynasties and refractory elements, and then replacing all remnants of the pre-Ottoman administrative apparatus with the timar system, the basic building block of Ottoman provincial administration.

This policy of gradual absorption of occupied territories persisted, as a rule, well into the sixteenth century. The annexation of Hungary is a case in point. Only after an autonomous Hungary was proving unviable, in the face of the Habsburg threat, was the Danube basin turned into an Ottoman province under a beglerbegi. Only special conditions enabled certain territories, such as Wallachia and Moldavia, to persist as autonomous entities long past the sixteenth century.

The heritage of the early Ottoman frontiers can also be observed in the peculiar ethnic composition of the Balkans under Ottoman rule. The successive frontier zones in Thrace, eastern Bulgaria, Macedonia and Thessaly in the fourteenth century became zones where Turkish immigration and culture came to predominate, with such frontier centers as Plovdiv, Sofia, Babadag, Silistre, Vidin, Skopje, Seres, Tricula and Argyrocastri. In these areas the dense settlement of Turkish peasants in the villages followed the same pattern as that of Turkish expansion in western Anatolia, with pioneering dervish hospices (zaviyes) and the sedentarization of semi-nomadic Yörük groups.

Introduction: Empire and population

The conditions of Ottoman expansion in Europe

As indicated, the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans was carried out by stages in the half century 1352–1402. The conquest was facilitated by a number of factors. The Balkan peninsula at this time comprised a patchwork of small states divided among feudal lords or dynasts. The Ottomans exploited the rivalries among these local leaders in order to extend their own control, first as their allies and later as their protectors. Both Hungary in the north and Venice to the south and west also tried to take advantage of this political fragmentation, but since their rule would entail the domination of Catholicism, which regarded Orthodox Christians as schismatics, it was generally resisted by the Balkan population. As the protectors of the Orthodox Church, who accorded its clergy a place in their own state organization, the Ottomans emerged as a Balkan power from the earliest conquests, in spite of the Hungarian and Venetian efforts. Indeed, one can cite many instances of cooperation of local Orthodox priests with the Ottoman state.

In each Balkan state, the local aristocracy and palace generally followed a pro-Western policy. In return for military aid from the West, these privileged elements promised to recognize the supremacy of the Roman Catholic rite. This policy greatly alienated the populace from their feudal lords, and there was always a pro-Ottoman faction among the elite.

It was, however, the social conditions prevailing in the Balkans in the fourteenth century which made the Ottoman expansion possible. With the decline of central Byzantine authority, according to recent scholarship, the holders of large military and monastic estates in the provinces, who had increased their privileges and tax exemptions at the expense of Constantinople or various local regimes, became autonomous in their own regions. To support their tiny feudal states, they tightened their control over the land and peasantry and imposed heavy taxes and labor burdens upon them.

By reversing this tendency toward feudalization of the Balkans, the Ottomans established a strong centralized regime, similar to certain states of Western Europe in the fifteenth century. During this centralization process, the Ottomans restored to state proprietorship, or control, the bulk of the lands found in the hands of local lords or families and monasteries. In many cases, it is true, they reassigned part of these lands to their previous owners, but these local lords were now made Ottoman timar-holders under strict state control. To be sure, the Ottoman sultans brought about this change largely because they had created a strong
in the early period often incorporated into their own system pre-Ottoman military groups called proniar, voynik (voynik), martolos, etc. For Muslim reyya, it was possible to be enrolled in the military by a special decree of the sultan if, as volunteers on the frontiers, they accomplished some outstanding act of courage.

Nonetheless, the general principle was adhered to that each individual should remain in his own status group so that equilibrium in the state and society could be maintained. It seems that the Ottoman system found its logic in the fact that the state had been established through the efforts of a small professional military group, a kind of warband gathered around its military leader, Osman Ghazi. The dynasty preserved this central position as a keystone of the entire socio-political structure.

As a productive but dependent class, the reyya, Christian or Muslim, was obliged to submit to askeri leadership and to pay taxes. The ruler, in accordance with ancient tradition, was described as the shepherd protecting his flock, the reyya, and leading them in the righteous path. This concept in practice found expression in the many protective measures by which the sultan tried to show his concern for the condition of the reyya. As will be noted below, the whole political apparatus was based on this principle; and the Ottoman sultans endeavored to indicate to the masses that the sultan was their ultimate protector against all manner of local abuses and injustices.

**The foundation of the Ottoman Empire under Sultan Mehmed II (1451–81)**

To Mehmed II fell the responsibility of completing the centralist and absolutist Ottoman system in Anatolia and the Balkans (see Map 1). By taking Constantinople, Mehmed the Conqueror felt that he was the most powerful sovereign in the Islamic world, and he thus challenged the Islamic empires in Iran and Egypt. He also acquired in his own person, immense, unprecedented authority which he used to create the prototype of Ottoman padishah, an absolute monarch in the tradition of ancient Persian kings or Turkish khans.

Claiming that the conquest of the imperial capital entitled him to restore the furthest boundaries of the Eastern Roman Empire, Mehmed II embarked upon a series of expeditions that, in a quarter of a century, resulted in the annexation of Serbia (1459), the Morea (1459), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1463–64), Euboea (1470), and northern Albania (1478–79) in the Balkans; and the territories of the Candarids in Kastamonu-Sinop
central military force, the Janissary corps, the first standing army in Europe. Under the direct command of the sultan, this corps increased from 1,000 in the 1360s to 5,000 under Bayezid I (1389–1402).

The reassertion of state control over agricultural lands brought with it substantial changes in the circumstances of the Balkan peasantry. Under the new regime, many corvées and other feudal obligations were simply abolished. Taxation and exemptions, the status of groups and individuals, and land titles were all regulated by laws issued by the central government in the name of the sultan. Their administration and execution was entrusted to the district kadi’s and beg. Under Bayezid I this centralized administration came into full force for the first time. A significant feature of Bayezid’s policies was his reliance on the kuls, the palace servants trained to be loyal and efficient instruments of the imperial administration.

Taxation and reaya

Under the Ottoman regime the population was divided into two main groups. The askeri, the military or administrative class, performed some public function as the delegates of the sultan and was thereby officially exempted from all taxation. The second group, the reaya, the merchants, artisans and peasants (literally “the flock”), pursued productive activities and therefore paid taxes.

The Ottoman system imposed more simplified and initially lighter taxes on the reaya than the former Byzantine-Balkan system.

The state also exempted from the extraordinary (warrtime) levies, the avarrz, certain groups of reaya who rendered some special service, such as guarding mountain passes and fortresses or contributing special supplies to the palace or army. These groups, known as mua'af ve müsıllem to signify their exempted status, made up a kind of intermediary class between the askeris and the reaya.

All these groups – the askeris, the reaya and the mua’af ve müsıllem – were recorded in special registers on the basis of surveys made at regular intervals throughout the empire. However, a certain degree of mobility existed among these groups, making the Ottoman system much less strict than the rigid compartmentalization of a caste system. Indeed, there were recognized ways for reaya, both Christian and Muslim, to become military. The devshirm, the levy of Christian children, furnished one such opportunity for Christians to join the military class. Also, to ease the effects of their conquest, the Ottomans in the early period often incorporated into their own system pre-Ottoman military groups called proniar, voynuk (voynik), martolos, etc. For Muslim reaya, it was possible to be enrolled in the military by a special decree of the sultan if, as volunteers on the frontiers, they accomplished some outstanding act of courage.

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Bursa, Edirne (Adrianople), and Istanbul, as populous and thriving commercial centers had profound effects on the new economic structure of the Middle East and the Balkans. Even after the rise of Istanbul, Bursa continued to be the main emporium for Iranian silk bound for Italy, and a local silk industry developed there supplying brocades and other silk fabrics to the Ottoman palace and to other markets in the Middle East and Europe.

As a result of the violent reaction against the Conqueror's financial policies, the government of his successor, Bayezid II (1481–1512), assumed a most reconciliatory stance. For example, it restored to their former possessing, whether pious foundations or private landowners, most of the lands confiscated and distributed as timar by Mehmed II. The generally peaceful and benevolent reign of Bayezid II witnessed significant internal development. It was particularly under Bayezid that Istanbul was firmly established as an economically viable city. The great expansion of the central treasury enabled the state to reinforce the army and navy, increase the number of Janissaries equipped with handguns, and to construct, with the supervision of Genoese engineers, warships of a size never before seen on the Mediterranean.

Ottoman sea power and imperialism

Following in the tradition of the sea gazi or corsairs of western Anatolia, dating back to the early fourteenth century, the Ottoman navy under Bayezid I had already challenged the Venetians from its fortified staging point on Gallipoli. Later, under Mehmed II, the navy played a crucial part in establishing Ottoman domination over the Aegean and Black Seas; and contributed to the war effort against the Mamluks (1485–91) by attacking Syrian coasts. Most remarkable of all, the Ottomans effectively challenged the Venetians on the open sea in the Venetian War (1499–1503).

The contemporary historian, Ibn Kemal, emphasized that the Ottomans had surpassed in power all preceding Muslim sultanates because, among other things, they had turned their state into a formidable sea power in the Mediterranean. In fact, during this first era of Ottoman naval ascendancy, the Turkish sea gazi appeared in the western Mediterranean to aid the Muslims of Spain who had appealed to Bayezid II for help. The Mamluks, too, requested Ottoman supplies and experts to rebuild their navy at Suez after their defeat at the hands of the Portuguese in 1509.
The rise of Ottoman sea power in the Mediterranean had far-reaching consequences not only in the extension of Ottoman rule to the Arab lands from Syria and Egypt to Morocco, but also in their expulsion of the Portuguese from the Red Sea. Thus, contrary to popular belief, the ground work for the spectacular rise to world power under Selim I (1512-20) and Süleyman (1520-66) was laid in the reign of Bayezid II.

**The caliphate**

Until Sultan Mehmed II a kind of solidarity had generally been maintained between the Ottomans and Mamluks in the face of the crusading West and the threat from the Timurids in the east. Rivalry first manifested itself over the questions of suzerainty for the Turcoman principalities in the border zone, the Karamanids, the Zilkadirids and, later, the Ramazanids.

Prior to the Ottoman challenge, the Mamluks had been considered the leading Sunni Muslim power because they had defeated the Mongols, had become the protectors of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina and also maintained the descendants of the Abbasid caliphate in Cairo. Careful in their propaganda to distinguish the Arabs from their "Mamluk oppressors," the Ottomans, under their energetic Sultan Selim I (1512-20), decided to end Mamluk rule in the Arab lands.

The Ottomans quickly established their rule in Syria and Egypt following Selim's victories over the Mamluks at Marj Dabik on August 24, 1516, and Ridaniyya on January 22, 1517. The sharif of Mecca, at that moment under the threat of a Portuguese invasion, hastened to recognize Selim's authority over the Hejaz.

A legend, apparently fabricated in the eighteenth century, tells us that Al-Mutawakkil, a descendent of the Abbasids, handed over his rights as caliph to Selim I in an official ceremony. In fact, Selim was quite content at that time to take only the title of protector (or servant) of Mecca and Medina. Although Süleyman I later on styled himself "caliph of all the Muslims in the world," he meant by this to emphasize his role as protector of the Muslim world. Thus, the new Ottoman concept of the caliphate was actually an extension of the original Ottoman concept of leadership in the Holy War (gaza). In line with his policy of world leadership, Süleyman tried to demonstrate his role as protector of Muslims all over the world. In 1538 he dispatched a fleet to oust the Portuguese from Diu in India. Upon the appeals of the sultan of Atjeh in Sumatra, he sent technical aid, and he planned an expedition to expel the Muscovites from the Lower Volga in order to open trade and pilgrimage routes for the Muslims of Central Asia.

After the seventeenth century, however, the Ottoman sultans no longer had the capability to project their power for the sake of Muslims. Instead, they increasingly emphasized their legal rights as caliphs by making reference to the definitions of the caliphate which had been formulated by religious authorities of the tenth century. This emphasis on legality would lead, in the nineteenth century, to a Pan-Islamist movement under Abdüllahmid II (1876-1909).

The traditional idea of gaza, combat against the infidel, was recast by the Ottomans in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to support Ottoman expansion in the east at the expense of their Muslim neighbors. When the Ottomans decided to take action against their Muslim rivals – the dynasts of Anatolia, then the Akkoyunlus, and finally the Safavids in Iran – they accused them of obstructing the Ottomans in the latter's performance of their essential duty, the Holy War against Western Christendom. The Ottomans found additional justification against the Shiite Safavids when the Ottoman ulema readily gave approval for war against "the heretics."

**Ottomans and the West**

The strong autocratic military state of the Ottomans provided the means by which the Islamic world first resisted and then passed to the offensive against the West. The struggle began on a large scale when the Ottomans, taking advantage of the divisiveness arising from the appearance of Protestantism and national monarchies in Europe, launched a series of sustained attacks against the Habsburgs in Central Europe and the Mediterranean. This resulted in the occupation of Hungary (1526-41), the first siege of Vienna in 1529, and the naval victory at Preveza in 1538. During the period 1528-78, the Ottomans pursued an active diplomacy in Europe, everywhere supporting forces opposed to the Papacy and the Habsburgs, such as the Calvinists in France, Hungary and the Netherlands, the Moriscos in Spain and the rising national monarchies in France and England. In addition to concerted military expeditions, the Ottomans expressed their support by granting commercial privileges to friendly nations (France in 1569, England in 1580, and the Netherlands in 1612). In the long run, these commercial rights gave a powerful boost to those Western economies supported by the Ottomans.
Another pillar of Ottoman diplomacy at this time was to avoid a two-front war. In particular, the empire wanted to avoid a war with Iran when engaged in Europe. This goal was thwarted in 1603 when Shah Abbas (1588–1629) declared war and took back all of the Ottoman conquests in Azerbaijan while the Ottomans were engaged in a long and ruinous war with the Habsburgs (1593–1606). The treaty of Žishter-Tóror with the Habsburgs in 1666 is justly regarded as a reversal in the tide of Ottoman fortunes and the beginning of decline. The Ottoman failure meant that a traditional Asiatic culture, even when it had borrowed war technology from the West, was doomed before the rise of modern Europe. It is to be noted that the Ottoman decline was as much the outcome of Western Europe’s modern economic system as of superior European military technology. The Ottoman economy and monetary system collapsed in the 1600s mainly because of the aggressive mercantilistic economies of the Western nations that replaced the Venetians in the Levant.

The time of troubles at the end of the sixteenth century – the decline

As factors paving the way for the crisis of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries we can cite the influence of increase in population, Europe’s new military technology and the monetary and financial crisis.

Violence had already erupted in Anatolia in the middle of the sixteenth century, notably during the episodes involving the princes Mustafa and Bayezid. Thousands of unemployed Anatolian peasants flocked to the rival princes as mercenaries in hopes of earning military class status under the banner of their victorious prince. Timariot-sipahis who had lost their timars or whose timars had become devalued constituted one of the chief elements of the unrest. In addition, thousands of young peasants, eager to share in the prerogatives of the religious class, filled the religious colleges in towns in Anatolia, but devoted much of their energies to pillaging and despoiling these towns and the countryside. The Balkans had helped to siphon off a good part of the Anatolian population when the frontier zones afforded young men intent on embracing a military career ample opportunity to demonstrate their valor as gönüllüs (volunteers). However, in the second half of the sixteenth century, Ottoman expansion in Europe came to a standstill and the organization of akıncıs, frontier raiders, collapsed.

In Anatolia, meanwhile, population pressure on the arid Anatolian plateau continued. This pressure has been studied on the basis of Ottoman population surveys, but its precise scale can never be calculated.

After 1578, the wars with Iran stimulated large numbers of young men of reyāy origin to enroll in the armies. In a sense the wars with Iran and Austria at the end of the sixteenth century were in part a consequence of the growth in population, since it set in motion a variety of social, political and financial pressures within the empire.

In the vast conquered regions of the Caucasus, thousands of reyāy from Anatolia functioned as timariots or as guardians of fortresses. But, and it is this that Ottoman observers of the decline decried so bitterly, this very mobility irrevocably compromised the guiding principle of the Ottoman system, that of the separation of the reyāy from the military.

With respect to other causes of decline, Ottoman writers of the period stress the reduced autonomy of the imperial divan and its bureaus, particularly in the wake of the battle waged against the Grand Vizier Sokollu by power groups newly arrived in Istanbul upon Selim II’s accession (1566). The traditional independence of the administration, in better times the guarantor of state interests, was restricted by the palace courtiers and other irresponsible people. Thus began the corruption and disintegration of the laws and statutes of the empire, one of the most far-reaching consequences of which was the large-scale transfer of miri (state lands) from state control into mülek (private proprietorship lands) and vakf (pious foundation) status. Also at this time the religious class, ulama, tended to interfere more and more in the administration and in the laws promulgated by the crown. Questions relating to sultanic laws and administrative regulations became increasingly subject to the fetva, the official opinion of the Sheyhülislam, head of ulama, in accordance with religious authority. This clerical influence reinforced Sunnite conservatism and severely curtailed the government’s freedom of action in response to changing conditions.

The Ottoman writers of that period, then, attribute the decline primarily to the corruption of institutions that had achieved their apogee under the rule of Süleyman the Lawgiver. Unquestionably there is a good bit of truth in all this and modern historians for the most part are in agreement with it. But the Ottoman writers failed to discern all of the contributing causes and to appreciate the true significance of the changes that were occurring in their own time.

Earlier we touched on the problem of over-population while underlining the difficulty of determining with any clarity its consequences. We now turn to a consideration of the military and financial systems, which bear directly on the issue.

The wars with Iran which began in 1578 and lasted intermittently until 1639 should be regarded as one of the principal causes of the decline of
the Ottoman Empire. The invasion and occupation of Azerbaijan and Shirvan in the years 1578–90 were highly destructive, not only for the Turkish military structure but also for the Ottoman finances. The occupation troops stationed in these lands constantly had to be repropriated from Anatolia. Then, in 1603, the Iranian counter-offensive threw the Ottoman soldiery stationed there completely back into Anatolia.

During the wars against Austria from 1593 to 1606, the need to send into battle infantry troops equipped with firearms resulted in a significant increase in the number of Janissaries (7,886 in 1527 and 37,627 in 1610) and, in Anatolia, in the enrollment of large numbers of sekbans mercenaries (mostly of peasant origin) – all with firearms. During interludes of peace when their services were not required, these mercenaries, lacking salaries and employment, roamed the countryside exacting tribute from the Anatolian population. Sipabis, dispossessed of their timars, or no longer able to make a living off them, were among those who joined the armed groups. Known as Celali, these packs of bandits so terrorized the countryside that they were a chief cause of rural depopulation and of the ruin of Anatolian agriculture. As a result, the state was paralyzed just when the Iranians mounted their counter-offensive between 1603 and 1610. At the same time Macedonia and northern Bulgaria experienced similar disorders in which Christian bands took an important part.

The same scenario repeated itself more than once during the wars of the seventeenth century, but particularly between 1683 and 1699. The Ottomans were unable to do without the service of the sekbans and the other variously named armed mercenaries in wartime. To pay them, and the inflated number of Janissaries as well, the central treasury had to search for new sources of revenue. The fact that the Ottomans had been obliged since Lepanto in 1571 to maintain a powerful fleet in the Mediterranean as a counterweight to the allied fleet only added to the financial strain.

After 1590 the treasury suffered huge deficits. In the same period the increase in the avarz (emergency levies) and the cizye (non-Muslim poll-tax) and in the abuses committed during their collection aggravated the discontent of the reaya. The avarz became a tax payable in cash on a regular, annual basis, and its rate continued to rise over the years (40 aspers in 1582, 240 in 1600, 535 in 1681). The cizye, which amounted to 40 aspers per person in 1574, climbed to 70 in 1592, 150 in 1596, 240 in 1630, and 280 in 1691.

A factor with devastating effects for Ottoman financial stability was the depreciation of silver coin, the principal cause of which was the flow of cheap silver from Europe after 1580. Ottoman markets were flooded with European silver and with counterfeit currency. Since the taxes and impositions attached to the timar were not raised, their nominal value remained unchanged although their real value had actually fallen sharply. Not surprisingly, the sipabis and other timarists tried to make up for their loss in income by inventing new taxes or demanding higher rates on the old from the already hard-pressed reaya. The numerous uprisings of the Janissaries during this time also relate directly to their reduced real income and the instability of the currency.

As a result of these upheavals, the Ottoman Empire of the seventeenth century was no longer the vital empire it had been in the sixteenth. The timar system, born of conditions peculiar to the Middle Ages, was irretrievably shattered. It had been supplanted by a gun-bearing army of mercenaries and a central treasury shifting to taxes paid in cash. The Ottoman asper was replaced by European currency; and the economy entered the orbit of the European mercantilists.

THE EMPIRE'S POPULATION AND POPULATION MOVEMENTS

Population

The most reliable figures on the Ottoman population of the fifteenth century come from the tax surveys (see below, pp. 133–39) and cizye, poll-tax registers.1 Regarding non-Muslims the poll-tax registers from the Hegira years of 893 to 896 (December 17, 1487 to October 5, 1491) give the data in Table 1:1. The total cizye revenue for the year 1489 is 32,407,330 akça for all groups. The figures comprise banes (households) and widows who inherited their husbands' land. Hane does not mean all the people living under one roof but married couples with an independent source of income. Thus, a married son living in his parents' house but with an independent source of income constitutes one bane. A household is an economically independent family.

It is, however, not possible on the basis of these figures even to approximate the total non-Muslim population for this period. The non-Muslims subject to the poll-tax were those adult males over 12 or 15 years old capable of sustaining themselves through economic activity. But in rural areas in general the head of the peasant household (bane) was responsible for all taxable persons and paid one cizye for the household. Also, poll-tax surveys excluded non-Muslims exempt from this tax, namely clerics,
slaves, destitute people, the retinue of military personnel and sometimes members of Christian militia.

By the date of our survey, the Ottoman territory comprised the Balkan lands north to the rivers Danube and Sava, excluding northern Bosnia and Croatia which were under Hungarian control, and Dalmatia, under the Venetians, including some fortresses and islands in the Greek and Aegean archipelago. The total of the registered non-Muslim households subject to a poll-tax amounted to about 674,000 in the Balkans and about 32,000 in Anatolia in 1491. Assuming after Barkan that the exempted population consisted of 6 percent of the total population with an average household of five individuals, there was a non-Muslim population of about four million in the Ottoman Balkans in the 1490s. As for Anatolia, the Ottoman territory by 1490 was delimited by a line approximately from Trabzon to the bay of Antalya, leaving out all of eastern Asia Minor. In this region, with a total of 27,131 Christian households, the Trabzon–Rize region, conquered from the Commeni in 1461, was the only one with a compact Christian population by 1490. By contrast, in western Anatolia, which was invaded by the Turcomans much earlier, at the turn of the thirteenth century, the non-Muslim population subject to the poll-tax numbered only 2,605 households, and those in the rest of Anatolia 2,856 (see Table 1:2), most of whom were Greeks and Armenians together with small Jewish communities in the cities.

In the period 1520–35, the taxable Christian households in the five Anatolian provinces numbered 63,300 or 7 percent of the total population, while it had been c. 32,000 around 1490. The increase might have resulted from a population growth which was a general trend for the period 1490–1535 and less efficient registration, or from immigration from the east. The entire number of Balkan converts to Islam numbered 94 households in the Hegira year 893, and 255 for the years 893–96. The Christian boys levied for the Janissary corps and the palace servitors who would later join the military class after training are not included in this figure. In the period 1520–35 there were in Anatolia only 271 taxable Jewish households and in the province of Diyarbekir 288. In other words, by the end of the fifteenth century Anatolia to the west of the Euphrates was predominantly a Muslim country settled by immigrant Muslim Turks, or converted native populations. There was no question that widespread islamanization had occurred. This was mostly a result of a socio-cultural process during the three centuries of Turkish Seljukid rule. Judging from the Ottoman population and tax registers of the second half of the fifteenth century, western Anatolia had by then been mostly settled by Turcomans.

We do not have data for the Muslim population of Anatolia before the period 1520–35. In this period, according to the calculations of O.L. Barkan the taxable Muslim households for the same area in 1490 numbered 832,395. Added to this figure are the military households exempt from taxation which constituted a small group, mostly living in the towns. Through the same surveys, the population growth in the five Asiatic provinces are shown in Table 1:3. By 1580, multiplied by five, the population of these five provinces was 6,802,370 as against 4,636,050.
around 1490. Here the growth rate varies from 41 to 82 percent according to the particular region.

In reality, households in the towns consisted of three to four individuals and were smaller than those in the countryside. Barkan’s coefficient of five for each hane or household is discussed by L. Erder, in light of modern demographic theory. Ottoman hane, Erder points out, is often purely a fiscal convenience and is not geographically constant. Taking the male population above the age of puberty which is recorded in certain types of Ottoman tax and population registers and using the theory of the relationship of population growth rates and the changing age composition of a population, Erder finds all multipliers are confined to a relatively narrow range of between 3 and 4.

In any case, Barkan suggests that the Ottoman Empire joined the spectacular population growth in the Christian western Mediterranean by an average increase of 59.9 percent in the period 1520–80, which Braudel sees as reasonable.

The growth, Barkan adds, was as high as 83.6 percent in large cities. Based on the increase in the number of households, the conclusion must be reliable except for possible small discrepancies in the figures due to the deficiency of successive surveys. In any case, the average household cannot be less than two persons, which gives a population of 1,664,790. Every time we added one person to the household the difference would be a population of about 800,000 higher. So, calculations of population on the basis of taxable households are quite hypothetical. But we are more certain in calculating population increases since our sources use the hane household all the time. By 1535, Syria and Palestine, as well as the provinces of Diyarbekir (southeast Asia Minor) and Zülükadiye had been annexed to Ottoman territory. By 1535, the total number of taxable Muslim households in the Asiatic provinces, including Cilicia and the Arab provinces of Syria and Palestine and the military personnel, numbered 1,067,355 households, or about 5,500,000 individuals if we apply the same coefficient of five. When Christians and Jews were added it came to 1,146,697 or 5,733,468.

In sum, Barkan suggests, for the period 1530–33, a population of 12 or 12.5 million in the Ottoman Empire including the population not entered in the tax registers in the Balkans and Asia Minor. Braudel proposes a maximum of 22 million for the greatest extent of the empire by the end of the sixteenth century. For the end of the century, however, Barkan surmises a drastically larger population of 30–35 million; he estimates a natural growth of 60 percent and adds also the population of the territories annexed after 1535 (Syria, Croatia, Hungary, and Slovakia in Europe; northern Abyssinia, Hejaz, Yemen, Iraq, Al-Hasa, and the North African coasts). Evidently, Barkan’s figure must be exaggerated. In our calculations we have to consider also the particular conditions of the Ottoman conquest. In general, there was a regression in prosperity and population in the newly conquered lands by the Ottomans as documented in Syria, southeast Asia Minor and Hungary. But when Ottoman rule was firmly established and order and security came back, recovery and development followed and the population increased (Table I:4).

### Table I:4. Sançak population increase in the liva (sub-province) of Damascus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of villages</th>
<th>No. of Muslim taxable households</th>
<th>Annual revenue in millions of akçe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1531</td>
<td>844</td>
<td>58,672</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1534</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>65,035</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1539</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>57,897</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Barkan (1957).

### Population pressure

The growing Turcoman nomadic migration into the frontier zone in western Anatolia was one of the principal causes of the westward drive of the Turks in the period 1260–1400. Population pressure, interpreted as economic shrinkage and growing poverty, as a result of the increasing discrepancy between the population and economic resources, is also taken up by several Ottomanists as a major issue to explain the crisis and structural changes in the Ottoman Empire experienced in the period.
Several indices were used to determine whether or not real population pressure occurred in that period. In order to test the hypothesis on population pressure during the sixteenth century in Anatolia, Michael Cook examined demographic and economic data from Ottoman surveys. Earlier studies (in particular those of Akdağ, Braudel and Güker) had to rely on the contraction in wheat exports, rising prices, shortages and famines in the empire as the main indicators of population pressure. Cook examines the question by investigating the ratio of population to economic resources and whether the ratio changed considerably over a given period of time in selected areas. Studying such related phenomena as unavailability of marginal land, a rise in land prices, an increase in the number of landless peasants and emigration he concluded that “the population growth was more rapid than the extension of cultivation.” He also discussed “a demographic saturation under the sixteenth century conditions.” Cook suggests figures for the ratio between the population growth and the extension of cultivation as 17 to 12 in the period 1475-1575 using an index with a base level of 10 in 1475. It should be noted that the average peasant household landholding had fallen from half a gift to a third or even a quarter of a gift by the end of the period, in the areas examined. Reduction in size of the family farm is undoubtedly a sign of crisis for the rural population as well as for the gift-bane system (see below, pp. 133-54) as a whole. Cook also draws attention to the fact that food prices rose faster than wages but no statistical evidence is offered. More intensive exploitation of the soil or a shift to more profitable crops are also suggested as indicators of population pressure.22 Faroqui concurs with Michael Cook in observing the discrepancy between the population increase and grain production growth. Faroqui and Erder examined population changes in the areas of Şebin-Karahisar and Kocaeli in two periods.23 In both cases the authors observe that “some decline of population occurred towards the end of the sixteenth century” and assert that “this was in fact a generalized phenomenon.”

Table 1:5. Population density estimates of the Ottoman Empire and European countries, 1600 (persons per square mile)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Countries</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey in Europe (the Balkans north to the Danube and Drava Rivers)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey in Asia (approximately Turkey today, excluding Thrace)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Population movements

From the beginning, Ottoman society was made up of immigrants, uprooted people, pastoralists in search of pastures, jobless soldiers or landless peasant youths seeking their fortunes and a new life on the frontier. Early popular Ottoman chroniclers say: “These Ottomans sympathize with uprooted strangers (garıbs).”24 Evidently Ottomans believed that prosperity and expansion of the state revenues were primarily dependent on human energy and skills. It will be seen that timar-holders or vakıf trustees encouraged people to come and settle on their territory since the most important component of means of production was labor in this rural economy with limitless marginal land available for agriculture.

The Ottomans always welcomed refugees. Tens of thousands of Jews expelled from Spain, Portugal and Italy came and founded prosperous communities in towns under the protection of the Ottoman sultans during and after 1492. Groups of Moriscos expelled from Andalusia in the sixteenth century were settled in the heart of Galata.25

Old Believers from Russia survived to the twentieth century in northwest Anatolia. In the last centuries of the empire, hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing from Russian invasions of the Balkans, Circassia and Crimea were welcomed and settled by the Ottoman government in Anatolia.26

Although usually circuiting in their yurt, which is an area with well-defined summer and winter pasturelands, the pastoral nomads, particularly numerous in the large area stretching from the desert of northern Syria and Iraq to western Anatolia, sometimes migrated en masse in search of better pastures when the central government’s authority weakened or when they were pushed by more powerful nomad groups. Thus, a continuing stream of nomads, mostly Turcomans, but also Kurds
and Arabs, moving from east to west, reached western Anatolia, the Aegean Islands and the Balkans throughout Ottoman history.

On the other hand, the state's deportation policy, political and social upheavals such as the Celali depredations and sometimes pressure in a particular region played a major role in the shifts of population in the empire. Migrations of pastoral nomads were always particularly conspicuous in the process.

As was true in the Byzantine and Iranian empires, the Ottomans, too, applied the policy of forced deportation of population in an effort to get rid of a rebellious ethnic group or to colonize a particular area important for the state. We find, for example, the rebellious Çepni Turcomans from the Black Sea region of Canik settled in Albania in the early fifteenth century, Tatars from the Tokat–Amasya region, in the Maritsa valley, and Turcomans of Saruhan (western Anatolia) in the vicinity of Skopje by the 1390s. A large-scale colonization occurred under Mehmed II when he deposed en masse peasants from newly conquered lands of Serbia and the Morea, and Turcoman nomads to the villages around Istanbul which had lost their Greek population during the siege of Constantinople. In 1455, he also deported all of the Jewish communities in the Balkan towns to repopulate and stimulate economic activities in his new capital of Istanbul. He caused Greeks to settle in Istanbul also from his successive conquests in the Morea, the Aegean Islands, Trabzon, and certain central Anatolian towns. Armenians from central Anatolia, the two Phocaean and Caffa, as well as Muslims from Anatolia were brought to Istanbul in the years 1459–75. Selim I brought to Istanbul about 200 households of craftsmen from Tabriz and 500 from Cairo.

A massive population shift occurred as a result of the upheaval which the Celali bands caused in Anatolia in the period 1396–1610. In the contemporary sources the exodus to other provinces as far afield as Rumeli, the Crimea and Syria was labeled "the great flight." Then, the government took drastic measures to ensure the return of these peasants to their abandoned villages in Anatolia.

In 1613 in the wake of the Celali disorders the clans making up the Boz-Ulus Turcomans in eastern Asia Minor began to shift to central Anatolia as far as Kütahya, causing great harm to the cultivated lands on their way. During the seventeenth century, the migration from central Arabia of the Arab tribal confederations of the Shammar and the Anazeh to the northern Syrian desert appears to have caused a mass migration of the Turcoman and Kurdish clans to the central and western provinces of Asia Minor. We find then Boz-Ulus Turcomans in the Ankara, Aydin and Amasya–Tokat areas.
The Turcoman nomadic populations and their economy

The Seljuks of Anatolia representing a centralized bureaucratic state supported the peasantry and the commercial interests against the Turcoman pastoral population. Pushed by the state to marginal lands, the Turcomans were concentrated on the frontier zones and mountain pasturage of the ranges of the Taurus mountains to the south and the Pontic mountains from Bolu to Trabzon in the north. On the dry central Anatolian plateau from Konya to Ankara there was another Turcoman pastoral concentration (see Map 7). Actually, because of the necessity of the seasonal transhumance between summer and winter pastures, yaylak and kışlak, the Turcomans took their herds in winter to the lowlands in the valleys of the major river beds in southern and western Anatolia. Ignoring the borders they penetrated deep into the western Anatolia valleys, which were under the control of the Byzantines, from the eleventh century until the time when they conquered and settled these valleys under the gazi leaders.

Known as Türkmen, Yörük, or later Kızılbaş, Turkish nomads made up about 15 percent of the population in the Anadolu province in the 1520s (this province stretched to a line between Sinop and Antalya Bay in the west). If we add the yayla and müsellem, military groups of nomadic origin, the percentage goes up to 27. In fact, the great Yöürük concentrations were found in the sub-provinces of Ankara, Kütahya, Menteşe, Aydın, Saruhan, Teke, and Hamid. These seven sancaks combined had a nomadic population of about 80,000 households (see Table 1:6).

A great number of Turkish tribes had been there since the first Turkish invasion of Anatolia in the last decades of the eleventh century. Later, a constant stream of nomads, mostly Turcoman, continued to increase the nomadic population in the region.

While the general population growth in western Anatolia from the period 1520–35 to 1570–80 is calculated to be 42 percent, the growth of the nomadic population is 52 percent, a fact explainable by immigration from the east rather than natural growth. Turcoman westward mass migration gained momentum when the Ottomans established a bridgehead in the Balkans in 1352. When Turcoman overseas raids were blocked at İzmir by western Crusaders, that is in 1348, Turcoman migration took a new direction and an exodus began from the Denizli–Aydın–Saruhan region to the Dardanelles, and thence into Thrace and eastern Balkans during the early Ottoman conquests. Ottoman surveys show that this Turcoman mass migration and settlement had a revolutionary effect on the demography of the eastern Balkans and Thrace. Along with the Ottoman policy of transferring disorderly nomadic groups into the Balkans in order to turkify and secure new conquests, a large-scale voluntary immigration took place during the fourteenth century in the same regions. A detailed map based on Ottoman surveys by Barkan demonstrates this dramatic change in the ethnic composition of the population. As occurred earlier in western Anatolia that was not, to use Speros Vryonis Jr.'s words, "a typical military conquest . . . but an ethnic migration of nomadic peoples of substantial numerical proportions." In the eastern Balkans between the Black Sea and a line of the Mesta and Yantra rivers, Turkish settlements formed the majority of the population both nomadic and sedentary at the beginning of the sixteenth century (Table 1:7).

The Ottoman administration re-organized the pastoral tribes of eastern Anatolia into two large confederations: the Turcomans into Boz-Ulus and the Kurds into Kara-Ulus. Disputes often broke out between the two ulus.

By that time the majority of the Turks had already converted to a sedentary life in the towns and villages. Even then, Turcomans were still
Introduction: Empire and population

Table 1:8. Muslim nomads in the Balkans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subash (commander)</th>
<th>Number of subash (soldiers)</th>
<th>eykunci (assistants)</th>
<th>yamak (assistants)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salonika (Macedonia, Thessaly)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vize (northern Thrace)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>1,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yanbolu (Upper Tunca river)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3,715</td>
<td>7,548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Eski-Zagra, Filibe)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>2,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofçabolu (Ipıp-Üskip)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>2,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kocak (Yanbolu, Varna, Shumen)</td>
<td>47 (in 1591)</td>
<td>2,125</td>
<td>14,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tannada (western Thrace, Thessaly)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>2,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: Gökbilgin (1937).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the coastal plains in winter. By 1530 many of them became sedentary or were engaged in field agriculture or viticulture as a supplementary activity.

Nomads and the economy

It is misleading to follow uncritically the judgments of the sedentary people, particularly the bureaucrats of the central administration, regarding the nomads. In fact, Turcoman nomads constituted an integral part of the sedentary society and fulfilled certain functions without which the society could not survive.

The Ottoman state, recognizing this fact, took measures to accommodate the nomads in its imperial system. Each clan was given a yurt, consisting of summer and winter pasturelands the limits of which were determined and were entered in the imperial registers. In this yurt area, along with animal husbandry, Turcomans were also engaged, though marginally, in agriculture. They reclaimed land in forests or swamps to grow wheat, cotton and rice for their own needs or for the market. Most of the land, for example, in the river valleys in western Anatolia and in lower Cilicia were malaria-stricken swamps left uncultivated. Coming for their winter encampment Turcoman nomads reclaimed part of this land for such cash crops as cotton and rice (see below, p. 164). When they left for summer pastures they stationed watchmen and came back...
for the harvest. Such temporary settlements turned into small villages over time (pp. 167–71). Ottoman surveys show that in certain western Anatolian lowlands Turcomans grew cotton which was sold to Italians at the ports of Ephesus (Aysoluk), Patalay (Balat) or on the island of Chios. The total value of the raw cotton purchased by the Genoese there reached the enormous amount of more than half a million gold ducats in the 1450s.\(^4\) Pegolotti (toward 1340) mentions such export items as wheat, rice, wax, hemp, gallnuts, alum, opium, madder-root, valonia and “Turkish silk.”\(^5\) In the trade agreements made between the Turcoman emirs and the Italian mercantile states particular reference is made to wheat, dried fruits, horses, oxen, sheep, slaves, wax, hides and alum as export items and to wine, soap, and textiles as imports. Elizabeth Zachariadou’s studies\(^5\) based on Latin sources shed light on the economic recovery of western Anatolia under the Turkish emirates, thus modifying the gloomy picture of the complete destruction and decline of the region under Turcoman rule. Over time, under the tolerant emirs, a symbiosis between the Turcomans and the Greek population appears to have been established.

Along with wheat and cotton, the export of carpets became the subject of an international trade and made a tremendous impact on the Turcoman economy and society in western Anatolia.\(^5\) In the 1330s, Ibn Battuta,\(^5\) speaking of Aksaray near Konya, says: “There are manufactured there the rugs of sheep wool called after the place, which have no equal in any country and are exported from there to Syria, Egypt, Iraq, India, China and the lands of the Turks.” Later on particularly the Uşak–Gördes–Kula basin in the upper Gediz river became an internationally known center of carpet manufacturing. This unique development was associated with various factors. Geography of the region with the high pasturelands on the surrounding mountains densely settled by the Turcoman pastoralists supplied wool in abundance and cheap as well as skilled labor. Best quality madder and alum for dyeing, the fast running streams for washing the raw wool and finishing the carpets and the Gediz river for transport to the sea offered the ideal conditions. Over time prosperous towns emerged in the basin which were all inhabited by the Turcomans, who spent two or three months each summer on the surrounding mountains.\(^5\)

We have to bear in mind that animal husbandry supplied the foodstuffs and basic raw materials such as wool and hides for urban industries and had a vital economic significance in preindustrial societies in the east as well as in Europe. It is no surprise that wool and hides always came on top of the lists of exports to Europe from Ottoman Anatolia and the Balkans from the fourteenth to the twentieth century (see pp. 263–65).

Another fact about the Anatolian pastoralists is that they monopolized land transportation of the empire not only in the private sector but also in state enterprises. The camel is the most important animal for the Yörük. Camels were used to carry baggage under difficult circumstances, but the Yörük also employed them in the transport business and to make money. Considering the importance of the camel, they did not slaughter them for food, and they called them a “major capital” item. Some pastoralists even became capitalists, hiring shepherds to tend their flocks and engaging themselves in long-distance transportation or in the trade of livestock.

In 1555, the Imperial Ambassador Busbecq’s remark\(^5\) that the Ottoman Empire came into being thanks to rice and camels reveals to us an important point (rice was the basic food in campaigns because of its durability). The Turcomans bred hybrids using the Arabian dromedary and Bactrian types, which were suited to the Anatolian cold and rainy climate and rugged terrain. Tavernier observed that new breeds employed in the caravan traffic between Tabriz and Istanbul were larger in size and carried more load than the dromedary.\(^\) They pulled themselves out of mud without difficulty. Anatolia’s huge camel population disappeared only in the twentieth century when the railroad network was completed.

The camel was used in the transport of all kinds of heavy equipment, such as arms and ammunition and provisions for the army, as well as for bulky and heavy commercial goods. The camel had a carrying capacity of about 250 kg, twice as much as a horse or a mule, and relatively little cost was involved. The Ottoman army was able to move from the Euphrates to the Danube in one season with all of its heavy equipment and arms. Without the camel, transport costs would have been prohibitive for carrying wheat, flour and barley for provisioning the army and the isolated fortresses. It was no coincidence that in 1399 Bayezid I took away as part of his booty ten thousand camels from the Antalya region. The camel drivers in this area and in western Anatolia were either Turcoman or “immigrant Arabs.”\(^5\) In short, the Ottoman armies depended on the camel-driving nomads for their transport and logistic services. It was again for this reason that the Ottomans lacked hard surfaced roads. Although the palace maintained a relatively small number of camels for the transport of the sultan’s baggage, they would hire tens of thousands of camels and nomadic drivers for the army during a campaign.
When, under certain conditions, Yörüks were obliged to take up a sedentary life they could do so without much difficulty within a short adjustment period (pp. 170–71). In their pastoral life they often practiced agriculture as a supplement to their economy. Yörüük villages are recognizable by being smaller and more primitive than the surrounding larger villages as observed in Deli-Orman and Dobruja or central Anatolia. The Ottoman tax and population surveys of the fifteenth century show that western Anatolia by then had a predominantly sedentary population of Turkoman origin, and thanks to its integration into European trade through its exports of wheat, cotton, raisins, figs, alum, carpets, wool and hides, the area became one of the most prosperous provinces of the empire.

It has been argued that in the sixteenth century rapid growth in the peasant population caused a general expansion of arable lands at the expense of pasturelands, so that the Yörüks had to retire progressively to marginal lands on the higher altitudes. The increasing number of the settlements of agriculturists in forest areas is primarily explained by the same factor. In the sixteenth century, in eastern Anatolia the struggle between the pastoralists and the peasantry became a serious question for the government. When the region, particularly the Erzurum–Pasin corridor, became the passageway of the Ottoman armies, the peasant population abandoned the land and scattered. Then, pastoralists from the south came to use the land as summer pasture. As the government assigned the land as timar to sipabis, these men brought peasants back and tried to turn the land back to cultivation. Thereupon the pastoralists were forbidden to come and graze their herds. Frustrated by the sultan’s order, the nomads threatened to leave the country altogether and go to Azerbaijan under the shah of Iran. In fact, there occurred a continuous flight of the Turcoman clans to Azerbaijan in the sixteenth century.

Seasonal migration of the tribes, mostly of Kızılbaş Turcomans, in search of pastures on both sides of the Ottoman–Iranian border, was one of the main causes of conflict between the Ottomans and Safavids. Because the herdsmen disregarded the political borders, a similar situation existed between Poland and the Ottoman Empire in the same century (see pp. 281–91). In general, western Yörüks in central Anatolia from the Sivas area to the Mediterranean and from the Sakarya valley to the Aydınpazarı province, taking advantage of the more favorable climatic conditions, were engaged in agriculture as supplementary to animal husbandry, while tribes in northern Syria and eastern Anatolia were more completely dependent on pastoralism. In general, in order to increase their timar incomes, sipabis were particularly anxious to convert the pastures reserved for the pastoral nomads into cultivated lands. One of the excuses they employed was the claim that the nomads had abandoned the pasture. In short, the theory of arable land’s expansion at the expense of pastureland was a fact of sixteenth-century Anatolia.

Since shifting nomads from one area to another did not usually disrupt tax revenues, a situation which was unavoidable with the peasants, the state employed Turcomans on a wide range of public works. It used them as auxiliary troops in the Balkans (Table 1:7), or deported them from Anatolia and settled them in Rumeli in strategically important places along the roads, in the mountain passes, etc. The nomad labor force, in return for tax exemption, was widely exploited in various state enterprises such as mining, rice growing, or training horses for the state. The state also assigned particular groups of nomads to supply regularly the palace or army with certain provisions, such as butter, and bows and arrows.

In their delicate economy, nomads were more susceptible than sedentary populations to adverse factors. An epidemic could wipe out their herds, thus reducing them to utter poverty. Under such conditions, they resorted to brigandage or enrolled in the imperial army as mercenaries for a small salary. Being segmented, unprivileged groups in the Ottoman society, they joined every movement against the established order. Being inaccessible in their mountains, rebellion became endemic with the Yörüks on the Taurus range and among the Albanian tribes in the Balkans. In eastern Asia Minor, where the pastoral economy prevailed, the Ottoman administration tried to compromise with the tribes by respecting tribal autonomy under hereditary chieftains. The taxes, nominal in amount, were collected and delivered by the chieftain, and, in return for privileges, the obligation of military service under hereditary chieftains was required.

Muslim and Christian mountain peoples presented certain common features. As a rule, the imperial administration divided the traditional large tribes into independent clans under chiefs officially recognized and controlled. Although their yurt area and the tracks followed in their seasonal transhumance between summer and winter pastures were defined in official registers, conflicts with peasants and administrative authorities were not infrequent. The pastoralists hated the bureaucratic restrictions, the registration and the taxes and, whenever the central authority grew weak, they became restless and out of control.
NOTES

1 Barkan (1964).
2 See Pincher (1972), map no. XVI.
3 Lowry (1981).
7 İnalck (1986a), p. 47.
8 Barkan (1957), p. 20.
12 Braudel (1972), l, p. 308.
14 Braudel (1972), l, p. 396.
15 Pitcher (1972), map no. XXI.
16 İnalck (1978a), p. 73; Braudel (1972), l, p. 398.
21 Cook (1972).
23 Erder and Feroqhi (1979), pp. 322–45.
24 Oruç (1925), pp. 4–79.
28 Akdağ (1963), pp. 250–54; MTM, 1, p. 82.
34 Wittke (1934).
35 İnalck (1986a), pp. 41, 47.
36 Ibid., p. 45.
38 İnalck (1986a), pp. 45–46.
42 Barkan (1943), pp. 140–42.
43 Barkan (1943), p. 52, article 19, nomads made up 54 percent of the total population in Zilkadinriye, 58 percent in Aleppo province, and 62 percent in Baghdad province in the period 1580–90, see Murphey (1984), p. 192.
44 Barkan (1943), p. 53, article 23.
In the Iranian state tradition the economy was considered exclusively as a means of strengthening the state’s finances and thereby the ruler’s power. In organizing the empire’s economy and trade, the Ottoman regime primarily aimed at accumulating as much bullion as possible in a central treasury. Fiscalism, noted by van Klaveren, is “the endeavour to maximize the public revenues at all times for other than economic purposes”; this indeed was a key principle for the Ottoman Empire.

On the other hand, since military power was believed to be the principal means of securing wealth, military imperialism together with fiscalism formed the basis of the Iranian-Ottoman concept of state, and together they account for the dynamics of Ottoman conquest and the empire-building process. The Ottoman writer Kinalizade (d. 1561) advised Ottoman policy makers that:

Some authorities confined the acquisition of wealth to three sectors: commerce, craftsmanship and agriculture. However, some legislators adding military-political power (emaret) cited four sectors. There was a disagreement on which religiously or ethically was the best. According to the Imam Shafi‘i, commerce was the best because it was the Prophet Mohammed’s noble profession. But Mawardi put agriculture above the others. Some later authorities argued that so many illegal practices invaded the commercial transactions that a distrust on the origin of the fortunes arose; thus agriculture should have precedence over commerce. In the acquisition of wealth, one should refrain first from oppression and injustice; secondly from shameful activities, and thirdly from disgraceful or dirty occupations.

Craftsmanship consists of three categories: noble, neutral or inferior. The professions of ulema, bureaucrats and soldiers are based on spiritual qualities such as reason, rhetoric and valor respectively and thus make up the noble professions. Usury and the entertainment-oriented occupations are inferior professions. For the good order of the world, all these professions are necessary and it is imperative that each group remain within its own sphere of activities. The middle or neutral professions include agriculture which is necessary for subsistence or the jeweler’s work which is not so vital.

In professional activity, Kinalizade pointed out, a craftsman should endeavor to make the best product possible without being content merely to earn his livelihood. While it was necessary, he added, to please the consumer since his satisfaction and prayers are the source of prosperity and salvation in this world and hereafter, it is a waste of time to be too meticulous making luxury goods. It is far better for a Muslim to spend his time in prayers. It is worth underlining Kinalizade’s insistence on the significance of agriculture and the maintenance of an ethical approach to economic activities.

These ideas cannot be altogether dismissed as purely theoretical and ethical advice, since they actually influenced the mind and behavior of the Ottoman elite and populace on social and economic issues, a fact for which we have visible evidence in many situations and institutions in Ottoman history.

The priority given to agriculture as the most significant and necessary economic activity is of particular interest. Sultan Süleyman I recognized the peasant as the true benefactor of mankind and expressed his opinion strongly. Along with the notion of enhancing state power the Ottoman polity developed a parallel principle in the gift-bane system for the increase of agricultural production and the protection of peasantry (see pp. 143–46).

By contrast, what made western mercantilist power different from the Ottoman state was that the European state gave much weight to industries and manufacture in the wealth–power–wealth equation, so that mercantilism and mercantile classes assumed a leading place in society. In other words, while the West moved toward an economy of national wealth acquired through ever-expanding industries and markets under a capitalistic system, the Ottomans stuck to an imperial policy with emphasis on territorial expansion, along with traditional monopolies in manufactures and a conservative policy in landholding and agriculture.

THE OTTOMAN STATE: A WELFARE STATE

Although it seems contradictory with the goals of a power state, there is in the Islamic state an overriding concern for the well-being of the community which called for an economy of plenty. After all, in the pure
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THE OTTOMAN STATE: A WELFARE STATE

Although it seems contradictory with the goals of a power state, there is in the Islamic state an overriding concern for the well-being of the community which called for an economy of plenty. After all, in the pure
Islamic tradition, the state is considered merely a means to promote the ideology of Islam. Deriving their judgments from Islam's canonical sources with some perspective perhaps from Max Weber, modern Muslim scholars assert that economic activities are determined by the value-system of Islam, whose prime concern is the well-being of the Muslim community as a whole. Criticizing the western concept of homo economicus, they point out that the Islamic world-view is based on oneness of this world and the hereafter, since human life is conceived as one harmonious whole oriented towards one ultimate goal, "obtaining the acceptance of Allah." Giving charity to the poor and needy, committing resources for the welfare of future generations and seeking to improve communal life are the real "economic" goals. "Production and profit are not," M. al-Mubahir asserts, "ends but means. The moving force of current systems is profit, but in an Islamic system it is human welfare."

But one may, of course, dispute when and where the Islamic theories have been translated into a reality. In fact, the conflict between the Islamic ideal and everyday practice has been an ever-present issue in Islamic societies. Completely ignoring the elaborate non-Islamic taxation found in all of the Islamic states, the orthodox legist view also asserts that Islam's fiscal system is based on Islamic charity, "which aims at ensuring minimum means of livelihood to each and every individual" and productive use of economic resources for the material well-being of the community. The basic orientation "is the mutual sharing of the community's income between the affluent and have-nots." But at the same time private property is a religiously sanctioned precept in Islam.

There is, however, a theory propounded by classical Muslim legislists which distinguishes necessities and refinements. So, in practice, they say, while luxury goods, mostly imported by merchants, are not subject to state price controls, necessities and local products in the common bazaar are subject to the close inspection of the bazaar inspector (muhetsib) appointed by the state. The maximal price system (narb) and the constant inspection of prices and weights and measures in the bazaar as far as necessities are concerned are among the most important responsibilities of the head of the community, sultan or local kadi; in fact, Ottoman sultans took this duty most seriously. One may argue that political concern too may be involved since popular uprisings for bread are quite familiar in Islamic cities. In any case, to prevent shortages in basic needs and to secure an economy of plenty was a central concern of the sultan (see pp. 48–52). Archival evidence indicates that these principles guided Ottoman bureaucrats in all of their decisions concerning economic activities.

In this context, the important place of charity in Islamic Law is revealing. It is the expression of thanks for God's bounties to his creatures. Thus, interpreted within the religious duty of alms giving, or sadaka, charity is highly meritorious behavior in Islam. Sultans frequently distributed alms, slaughtered thousands of sheep on certain occasions and distributed them to the poor, sometimes with their own hands. Soup kitchens (imaret) were one of the most widespread institutions attached to the religious endowments in cities. Incidentally, Ottoman sultans had difficulty in curbing the influx of beggars into Istanbul during the fasting and charity month of Ramadan. Thousands of "prayer-saying" people (duaghvan) in the mosques throughout the empire, in particular in the fortresses on the frontier, formed a regular salaried group in the payrolls of the state. The belief that charity pleases God and brings God's blessings determined Muslim behavior in many basic acts of economic importance in Islamic states, and the Ottomans were particularly zealous in that regard.

Institutions derived from charity played a significant part in redistributing wealth in society. Large groups of the destitute and unemployed in Ottoman cities and towns were maintained through such charity institutions. Thus, a significant part of the fortunes accumulated in the hands of the elite, although sometimes temporarily employed in commenda enterprises, ultimately were bestowed on charitable endowments. The economic significance of such institutions is not to be underestimated in Ottoman society.

Unlike market economies, Karl Polanyi points out, economic integration in the so-called "archaic" or traditional societies is regulated under institutional arrangements such as kinship, household, temple or state. In fact, the categories in use in market economies such as profit, wage and salary take on a rather liturgical meaning in Ottoman society. Since redistribution presupposes the presence of "an allocation center," the sultan assumes a fundamental role in that society. Obviously, a pious foundation (vakf) in the Islamic state is a primordial institution for redistribution with a basic social and economic integrative function.

On the other hand, reciprocity in the form of exchange of gifts, in particular gifts or pişkın presented to the sultan on special occasions, at the beginning of the New Year festival (navruz) or at religious festivals by dignitaries and foreign embassies, was carefully observed by the Ottomans. The economic consequences of this tradition are not to be underestimated. A group of palace artisans (hıref-i hassa) was created to prepare imperial gifts in the palace. Periodic distribution of woolen cloth to the Janissaries gave rise to an extensive woolen industry in Salonica and
Istanbul. Gifts, baksheesh and service fees expected by the dependents had a quasi-ritual significance, the neglect of which justified protest or rebellion. Money distributed to all the members of the military divisions and employees on the occasion of the accession to the throne of a new sultan had a tremendous impact on the imperial finances and taxpayers; uprisings of the military in Istanbul broke out when the administration was unable to pay.

Mention should be made of transactions intended purely for profit making, such as investments in commenda partnerships (mudaraba), a practice approved by Islamic Law and widely followed in the Ottoman Empire. Also, following the widespread practice of credit giving with interest concealed under religiously approved forms, the use of letters of credit (see below, pp. 206–9), the activities of money-changers and a primitive type of banking (dolab), the Ottoman economy of the sixteenth century employed some practices basic to capitalist market economies, partly because of the influence of the Italian merchant community at Galata and of Ottoman subjects of Italian origin. But all these commercial devices appear to have remained rather marginal or peripheral since the Ottoman socio-economic structure and mind did not undergo any fundamental change because of these, and no development parallel to what happened in the West occurred in the Ottoman Empire. Obviously, in Ottoman society, the state’s control and patrimonial relationships remained an essential mechanism for redistribution. The empire’s economy and finances depended fundamentally on state ownership of land and its control of agricultural production, the main source of wealth. Peasant subsistence as well as the maintenance of a large body of the military class was based on a specific landholding system and taxation policy (see pp. 103–7).

AN OTTOMAN ECONOMY OF PLENTY IN THE FACE OF EUROPEAN MERCANTILISM

The nature of Ottoman economic relations with Europe would inevitably undergo some changes with the advent of the Western nations in the Levant, and the capitulatory regime itself would assume a new direction. Western mercantilism based on the concept of national economy, which was conceived and managed as a nation-wide corporation, was an advanced form of capitalism compared to its initial forms in Italy. Mercantilism was in complete contrast to Ottoman notions of economic relations. Western economies took maximum advantage of Ottoman concepts on economy to promote their own mercantilist policies and to develop their capitalistic pursuits.

Mercantilist theories were derived apparently from popular beliefs which circulated in the West as well as in the East, from a common medieval heritage. For example, easterners also believed that political power depended on the extent to which the monarch was able to accumulate gold and silver in a central imperial treasury, so taxpaying subjects should be protected in order to become prosperous and feed that treasury. To this concept, mercantilists introduced a new idea, asserting that gold and silver accumulation depended on a favorable balance of trade through a continuous growth in home industries and in exports. In fact, this very idea would lead the west in the eighteenth century to complete divergence from eastern economies, to the industrial revolution and free market economies.

Both easterners and mercantilists supported the policy of barring the export of precious metals and allowing their free import. The Ottoman state, we know, exempted silver and gold imports from customs’ duties and prohibited their export. In the medieval East, a country’s prosperity generally was measured by the abundance and availability of gold and silver in the market. Their scarcity, causing hardships in trade and in the payment of taxes, was condemned and attributed to the ruler’s covetousness in hoarding gold and silver in his treasury.

On the other hand, in the Ottoman Empire the sultan frequently prohibited the export of grain and raw materials such as cotton, raw wool and hides, a policy advocated by mercantilists in the West also. But the Ottoman government pursued such a policy with the purpose of preventing shortages in necessities for the masses, while in a mercantilist economy the main intention was to ensure cheap labor and encourage industries to produce export items at competitive prices for a world market.

Despite the similarities, the basic difference between the Ottomans and mercantilists was that in the West a nation’s economy was conceived globally like that of a corporation, with attention to the aggregate balance in favor of the country and computed in terms of its precious metals or durable commodities. In fact this idea of an aggregate balance of trade first originated in the compact mercantile republics of Italy, which prospered in the Levant trade and later served as a model for the newly rising nation-states in the West. On the other hand, in such a regime, a city’s or nation’s wealth was also believed to be dependent on its ability to protect trade routes. The key role of sea power in Venetian supremacy
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The economic mind

were gladly granted to the European mercantilist nations as serving the empire’s interest.

Also, state interventions in the Ottoman Empire, namely regulations for customs and guild manufacture, fixing maxima in prices, market inspection on the quality and measures of goods, monopolies on the manufacture and sale of certain necessities, were different in essence and in intention from the regulation of a mercantilist state. In the Ottoman case, the main concern was always for the fiscal interests of the state and the protection of consumers in the internal market, while in the mercantilist economies economic regulations were determined by a competitive international market. In the last analysis, the rift is linked to the contrast between a social structure which is controlled by an authoritarian ruler in an estate society and a civil society in which the class system and the participation in power of the rising bourgeois class prevailed. To explain the European departure from the medieval economy and its structural differentiation from Asiatic economies, the emphasis should be placed on the fact that fifteenth-century Europe evolved from “a predominantly natural economy to a predominantly money economy,” while in the Ottoman East bartering and long-term credit transactions in trade continued throughout the sixteenth century until Western silver coins invaded the empire after the 1580s.

Also, it is to be remembered that, for the Ottomans, wealth was expected to derive from new tax resources in the lands annexed by conquest, not by intensive methods such as maximizing the income from agriculture, industries and commerce through new technologies.

The Ottomans were committed to their old ways, but sometimes for good reasons. The state itself was not directly involved in development projects or reclamation. Reclamation of wastelands was indeed encouraged, but primarily for fiscal reasons. In constructing dams, canals, or artificial ponds for irrigation, the Ottoman state took the initiative only in some urgent cases, and private participation in such enterprises was encouraged mainly for the tax revenues to be gained. In contrast, as argued by economic historians, in Europe, the relatively small-sized state structures, fiercely in rivalry against each other, and also population pressure, led Europeans to intensive agriculture and to systematic efforts for mercantile gains from foreign trade as well as to a more intensive use of labor at home.

To sum up, Ottoman society did not create the conditions leading to a “development, from an agrarian base, of an industrial, commercial and maritime superstructure coupled with an attempt to secure a bigger share
in the profits of international commerce for [its] own citizens. The Ottoman government's economic measures were not derived from a systematized and coherent theory as in the West, but, as was true in other areas of activity, it simply followed the long-tested practices and traditions inherited from Middle Eastern society and culture.

Nowhere is the contrast more visible than in the Ottoman customs policy, and in the capitulation regime. The Western mercantile system with emphasis on commercial expansion was closely linked to the Levant trade, and Western monarchies followed Italians in this direction, too. In mercantilist Europe, every national monarchy which aspired to expand its economic base endeavored to have first a capitulation from the Ottoman government and set up its own Levant company. The Levant trade and Levant companies became the necessary corollary for the success of European mercantilism.

There is a consensus that, since the early Middle Ages, the deficit in the balance of trade between Europe and the Levant on the one hand and the Levant and the East (India) on the other became a structural pattern, so that there was a continuous flow of silver from west to east. In the period 1450-1550, when the Levant, that is, the eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans and the Black Sea regions, was unified under a centralized empire and the European economy was in a period of expansion, the flow of precious metals intensified — a phenomenon seen as one of the main motives for westerners to go in search of El Dorado. As India and Iran were dependent on the intermediary role of the Ottoman Empire to replenish their stocks of bullion, Europe, in turn, with capitulations and other facilities to trade in the Ottoman Empire, was able to channel its industrial products to Asia.

**MARKET AND ECONOMY**

As far as the urban market was concerned Ottoman policy was based on a limited production of goods for a limited market, which required state regulation and constant oversight by a market controller, muhtesib. This state official had the responsibility to ensure the regulation and inspection of the price and the quality of goods in the market. The production of luxury goods in this system suited the requirements of a limited market, since a small group of elite, who had accumulated cash for conspicuous spending, was interested primarily in the best quality goods.

There appears to be a contradiction between the restrictive controls and the desire for an economy of plenty. The contrast lies in the difference between an economy of protection and command and that of the laissez-faire of a bourgeois society which sought plenty not through regulation but in freedom. Actually traditional societies like that of the Ottomans were aware by experience and tradition that insufficient production leads to higher prices for the consumer, and over-production to low prices unfair for the craftsman; hence, regulation was in the interest of both consumer and producer. Expansion was possible only when giant city markets like that of Istanbul emerged. Thus, traditionally and in general, oriental economies were based on long experience of small towns with limited and static markets where citizen and craftsman alike wanted regulation. In the West, and notably first in Italy, the economies developed on the basis of an ever-expanding market.

In the last decades of the fifteenth century guilds in the great city of Bursa, under pressure from popular demand, ignored the regulations and produced cheaper silks for an expanding market of commoners. The state reacted vigorously and established a new regulation defining the quality and amount of silk and dye which could be used in each variety of cloth. The members of the guilds confessed that there was a demand for cheaper varieties and that the government-appointed market inspector had accepted bribes and had not strictly implemented regulations. Here it is important to note that such a market expansion was observed solely in big cities such as Bursa, Edirne and Istanbul, where a large population created a demand for more and cheaper varieties and the expanding market set in motion economic forces which clashed with state regulations. This case illustrates how the Ottoman economy was bound under the strict control of a strong centralist state to follow a typical medieval economy with a fixed market and production levels. This also explains, I believe, the dichotomy between stagnant Ottoman industries and commerce and the dynamic European market economy which first appeared in Italy and the Low Countries and then in other Western countries. Thus, it was European market expansion and competition which stimulated new technologies producing cheaper and better quality goods. These changes secured Western economic supremacy and the decline of Eastern industries. Ottoman woolen and silk industries and mining were severely affected by the growing import of cheaper Western products at the end of the sixteenth century. It should be emphasized that in economic terms it was the price differential or production costs that were at the root of the divergent economic evolution between East and West.
On the other hand, one might argue that, in the last analysis, these changes had been determined by general social and cultural evolution in the West. Fortunately for the East, Western industrial and commercial supremacy was limited to certain economic sectors, such as woolen textiles and metallurgy, until the Industrial Revolution, at which time the East lost all possibilities of competition in the face of cheaper and better quality machine-made goods in all sectors.

NOTES

1 Inalcik (1973a), pp. 65–66.
3 Kinalzade (1284 H/1867), II, pp. 2–4, 8–10, 72–74, 110; III, pp. 6–8.
12 Dalton (1668), pp. ix–liv; Polanyi et al. (1957).
16 Heckscher (1935), II, pp. 26–103.
18 Inalcik (1960b), p. 147.
20 The contrast between the two systems is already emphasized by A. Smith (1937), pp. 3, 97.
23 Ibid., 17–48.
26 In 1600, it was a revolutionary new strategy for English cloth merchants to manufacture and sell as cheaply as possible. The result was a five-fold expansion in the production of new draperies between 1600 and 1640, see B. Supple cited by Rapp (1975), pp. 512–13; then the inexpensive and imitative English woolens totally replaced Venetian quality goods in the Levant.

B STATE REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

1 SOURCES OF REVENUE

In all of the provinces, including Egypt, the bulk of the state revenues came from the poll-tax and the mukataas, constituting almost 90 percent of the total. A mukataa means a source of revenue estimated and entered into the registers of the finance department, each as a separate unit. For the most part they were farmed out to private contractors under a specific tax-farm system. Since mukataas included a host of revenue sources, a closer examination is necessary to understand what type of revenues were included in this category. An Italian source, actually a copy of an original Ottoman document, provides an early list of the revenues in detail1 (see Table 1:9).

The table clearly demonstrates that in 1475 Ottoman Rumeli was the center of the empire, providing about 81 percent of the total revenue amounting to 1,769,000 gold ducats, excluding the revenues distributed to the benefice holders (timar and hâss). If you add the benefits distributed in Rumeli and Anatolia to the central treasury funds, the total revenue in 1475 is estimated at around 3 million gold ducats.

The poll-tax, the single most important source of state revenue, amounted to 48 percent of the total budget, followed by mines, mints and salt works, representing 28 percent of the total revenue. At this time in Anatolia, the copper mines of Kastamonu (Kûre) are noteworthy; they represent over 45 percent of the total revenue from the Asiatic provinces. The principal zones providing large amounts of revenue to the central treasury were: western Anatolia, a major trade zone with Europe via Chios; Karaman, a zone rich in grain production and the manufacture of cotton goods; the Black Sea trade zone with the port cities of Caffa,
Table 1:9. Poll-tax and principal mukataas, 1475 (in thousands of gold ducats)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rumeli</th>
<th>Anadolu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poll-tax</td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolls at Geibolu and Istanbul</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs dues, Istanbul</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs dues, Geibolu</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt works</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mints (silver coins)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mints (gold coins)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mines</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poll-tax and salt works, Enez</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt works, Salonica</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue, Euboea</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue, Morea</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue, Avlona</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain tax</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue, Sofia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue, Edirne</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsies</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathhouses</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice cultivation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,438</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Trabzon, Amasra and Samsun and, lastly, Bursa, were the center of the Iranian silk trade.

The principal sources of revenue at Aleppo were from the minting of coin, the sheep market, the slave market and the silk trade. The silk scales tax superseded all other sources of revenue under Selim II. Along with Bursa and Istanbul, Aleppo was one of the main entrepots for Iranian silk and the most important export items to Europe (see below, p. 244). What comes as a surprise is that cloth imported from Egypt and Gaza was widely traded in Aleppo. Imperial customs and estate books indicate that Egyptian alaca and kutni fabrics and linens were in great demand all over the empire including Istanbul, Akkerman and Caffa from the fifteenth century onwards. Aleppo must have been a distribution center of such fabrics for Anatolia and the Balkans. The large amount of revenue from the dye-houses is another indication of Aleppo's significance in textile trade and industries. Customs dues from Europeans were comparatively modest in this list. The reason must have been that, except for woolen cloth and minerals, European imports were limited in Aleppo, and they had to import large amounts of silver in order to purchase Iranian silk; however, c. 1575, European imports appear to have more than doubled.

In the second half of the sixteenth century Aleppo was to become the emporium for Indian goods, such as textiles, spices and dyes, which arrived via the Gulf and Basra. Imports of musk and rhubarb from China and Tibet must have reached Aleppo either by caravans from Iran or Basra. As in all other big cities in the empire, domestic trade and urban consumption constituted the backbone of economic life, as reflected in the very large revenues from the slave tax and the sheep tax, which almost doubled in half a century.

The large amount of activity at the gold, silver and copper mints of Aleppo is another indication of the major economic role of this city as the center of exchange between Asia Minor, the Balkans and the Black Sea on the one hand, and Syria, Egypt, Arabia, India and Iran on the other. European merchants had to deliver to the Aleppo mint 400 keylçe of silver annually as a gift (pişkeş). This was probably a custom established under the Mamluks. The para circulated in Arab lands was the principal silver coin at Aleppo; and the provinces of Egypt and Syria prepared their budgets in para (see below, pp. 86, 87).

Another important source of revenue was the manufacture and the trade in soap in Aleppo. (Compare the mukataas in the city of Damascus shown in Table 1:10.) The mukataas in the province of Hungary were quite different in nature (see Table 1:11).

Table 1:10. Principal revenue estimates (mukataas) in the city of Damascus (in para)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1549 for one year</th>
<th>1548 for three years</th>
<th>1562 for three years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mint</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>288,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>222,222</td>
<td>285,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk scales tax</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>118,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dye-houses</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slave market tax</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27,644</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market due on spices from pilgrim caravans</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep market tax</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>213,312</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: BBA, Tapu 169 (956/1529); MD 4175 (969/1562); Sahillioglu (1974), p. 278.
years the central treasury had to supplement the Hungarian revenue by subventions (in 1571–72, 15 million akça).²

MINING AND SALT PRODUCTION

The empire depended on enormous sums of liquid cash for its centralized administrative apparatus, in particular to create, maintain and lead huge armies to distant fields of action as well as to sustain numerous costly garrisons. In Middle Eastern political theory, the power was believed to rest on the ability of the monarch to ensure a large and steady source of revenue. Liquid cash, gold and silver, the only possible means to accumulate sources of revenue at the center, was believed to be the foundation of a centralized power. The paramount concern of the sultan’s bureaucracy was how to bring in and to keep as much bullion as possible in the central treasury, hence the imperial fiscalism.

The mines of gold and silver, as well as the transit centers of international trade producing cash through customs, were the first targets of imperial policy. The persistent Ottoman efforts to get control of the rich silver and gold mines of Serbia and Bosnia had started already under Murad I.³ These mines, vitally important for Hungary and the Italian states (see below, Ch. 11) were one of the main causes of rivalry between these powers and the Ottomans. In establishing the empire, Mehmed the Conqueror needed the cash from these mines and concentrated his efforts during the first years of his reign, from 1454 and 1464, on controlling these regions. Once they were in his possession, he tried to expand production levels of the mines with the assistance of Serbian and Greek financiers. The annual production of gold and silver of the principal

Table I:11. The main mukataas in Hungary: total revenue in 967 (Oct. 30, 1559 to Sept. 21, 1560) (in thousands of akça)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tax</th>
<th>Revenue (in akça)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ciye</td>
<td>1,797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tapu</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>berat</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kılıya</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pencik</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beyazılmal</td>
<td>459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mabeyn</td>
<td>28 (in 966)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table I:12. Principal mining areas in the Balkans, 1468–77 (in thousands of akça for three years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mukataa unit</th>
<th>Tax-farmers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mines in the districts of Vilk and Laz (Serbia)</td>
<td>Yani Cantacuzenus of Novobrodo, Yorgi Ivrana of Seres, Tomanin Cantacuzenus of Seres and Palologos of Istanbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mines of Kratova and Sidrekapi</td>
<td>Ali son of Abdullah of Kratova, Yuvan son of Koya, Vuk son of Mladin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newly operated mines in the province of Hersek</td>
<td>159 (in 1477)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: There were other less important mines (gold, silver, copper, lead and iron) in Bosnia, Trepcä and Menlik in the same period (see Map 8).

Source: BBA, MM 176.

The Ottomans did not make any basic changes in the production methods or technology in the mines which came under their control in Serbia and Bosnia in the period 1435–65. Their regulations on mines were simply a translation of the pre-Ottoman regulations, in which the original German (Saxon) terminology was preserved.⁴ Mining technology was originally introduced by Saxon immigrants to the Balkans in the mid-thirteenth century. The Ottomans grafted their mukataa system onto the administrative organization of these mines. They made every effort to exploit them to the full in order to meet their growing need for precious metals, iron and lead.

Following the conquest of Bosnia, those mines which had been abandoned by the Bosnian kings were farmed out to tax-farmers from Dubrovnik, on condition that the gold extracted was to be delivered to the Ottoman mint. The Bosnian mines of Fojnica and Krševo were particularly rich in silver. At Olovo lead was extracted, in the Srebrenica district silver and lead. In several villages in the district of Hersek and Pavlovići, on the right bank of the Drina and on the river Praca iron mines were operated. Čagnice was the most important center for iron production. The most important silver mines lay in the district of Srebrenica and a very active mint was located in the town.

Salt was not only a necessity in a man’s diet, but was also widely used in the empire for preserving fish, beef and vegetables. The Ottoman government organized, according to special regulations, the production and distribution of salt in delimited regions. Salt mines and salt beds
were considered state property. However, to ensure the continued supply of this necessary item, the state encouraged private enterprise in the production of salt by recognizing the freehold rights of the privately created salt works. Such enterprises had to deliver, however, the canonical one-fifth of the product to the state.

As was true for most of the state-controlled enterprises, the actual undertaking and management was assumed by private contractors (amil) (see pp. 64–66). The entrepreneur was empowered with a special diploma from the office of the sultan, giving him the power to enforce the monopoly. The capital needed for exploitation and management was invested completely by the contractor. In fact, the state closely cooperated with him in finding labor and protecting the monopoly and profits. A salt works operated under a tax-farm arrangement was financially autonomous, having to meet all managerial expenses including wages, staff salaries and repair expenses from its receipts. Because of the insurmountable

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**Fig. 11. Production of leading silver mines in Ottoman Rumelia, c. 1600.**

**Source:** Murphey (1980), p. 79.

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**8 Principal mining sites in Serbia, Bosnia and Macedonia**

**Source:** Beldiceanu (1964a), p. 310.
difficulties in communication, this type of financial decentralization was followed in all state enterprises.

Under a special regulation, the state assigned the peasant population living within the vicinity of the salt works to various activities associated with the production of salt. The salt works of Abyolu (Anchialos) on the Black Sea, for example, attracted workers from neighboring areas including Kirklisile, Rusi-Kasr, Zagra, Kizenlik and as far away as Filibe (Plovdiv). They acquired a permanent special status as salt workers (ência) and enjoyed an exemption from extraordinary levies and services and lower rates for some other state taxes. There were 1,047 peasants registered as salt workers in Abyolu and 1,546 in Salonica. In some areas, the workers also received a share of the salt produced, ranging from 10 percent to one-third of the total amount. It was an incentive for them to continue working and increase production. Those who fled to escape the heavy work load or low income were forcibly returned. The status of a salt worker was inherited by the sons. Thus, the venta sharing the same conditions as the peasants registered as miners or rice growers. In salt production areas, production and labor were organized according to a standard regulation applied in such state-run exploitations.

As in rice cultivation or mining, the production units were under the responsibility of the “chiefs” (reti), who supervised production and managed the sale of the product to salt traders in the region. Under the supervision of the general tax-farmer, they acted as sub-contractors. There appear to have been local upper-class Muslims or Christians who undertook this business for profit and their title and function was inherited by their sons. In general, the salt produced was sold by the agent of the fisc or tax-farmer. In the years 1492–95 in Abyolu, each 45 okka of salt was sold at 30 akça, two akça of which belonged to the “salt producers” (chiefs). Since the salt works had to continue their production uninterrupted and the state collected revenues, the population of a salt “region” had to buy a certain amount of salt every three years whether they were in need of it or not. This method was open to various malpractices and caused complaints and resistance on the part of the people. Towns and villages in each delimited “region” assigned to the sale of a particular salt-production site were supplied either by the private salt traders, who had to buy and transport the salt by their own means, or the state organized the transportation and distribution itself. In the latter case, the salt was stored in the state-owned depots in the bazaars of each town and was sold through sub-contractors. Since the salt produced had to be transported to the depots at a reasonable cost, there were special implications for the transportation of this heavy, cheap commodity. For example, for transport from Kizilca-Tuzla, a salt-production site active since antiquity, the state had organized, under a specific regulation, the “Arab camel drivers” in this region since the fourteenth century. The transport of the annual production of 3,000 tons of salt corresponded to 12,000 camel loads. Granted exemption from extraordinary taxes, Arab camel drivers performed the same transport service in other western Anatolian sanaks, including Saruhan, Aydın and Mentese. In the sanak of Aydın, they also carried provisions such as wheat, dried fruits and cotton from the inland areas to the port of İzmir. The government paid a fixed price per camel load, while private interests offered much higher rates for commercial transport. Resistance from the Arabs finally convinced the government to abolish forced service altogether in return for a fixed tax beginning in 1528. In order to realize the profits from the monopoly, the state prohibited, under severe punishment, the consumption of salt imported from other areas. The regulations even authorized the sultan’s agent to search private houses for smuggled salt.

The principal supplier of salt for Istanbul was the Crimea. In 1587 the Crimean Khanate exported to Istanbul 41,274 kile or 1,000 tons of salt. The responsible Ottoman agent for the transport of this salt was a Greek and most of the shipowners were also Greek captains. The annual net salt revenue for the state treasury amounted to 8.3 million akça or about 140,000 gold pieces (see Table 1: 13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salt works</th>
<th>State revenues (in 1,000 akça)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aydın (1572)</td>
<td>884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gelibolu (1594)</td>
<td>776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agınboz (1569)</td>
<td>705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holobnik (Nicipolis c. 1580)</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menemen (İzmir)</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Işkodra (Albania, 1580)</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vind (c. 1580)</td>
<td>529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menteşe (1583)</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gümüşkene (c. 1570)</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adana (Ayya) (c. 1570)</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzca-Tuzla (Edremid)</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abyolu (c. 1580)</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bağra</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus (1572)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 6,690

By contrast, the rock salt of Wallachia became the object of large-scale trade, provisioning the Balkan cities, including Istanbul. It was also a necessity in stock breeding. Extracted from the salt beds of Telega and Ghițiora near Târgoviște, the salt was brought in carts to certain ports on the Danube. Its sale and distribution were under a state monopoly on both the Wallachian and Ottoman side of the river. Peter the Young (1559–68) is reported to have sold five thousand carts of salt, while in 1583 Voyvode Michnea (1527–83) was to dispatch 2,500 carts to Giurgiu and Nicopolis (one cart carried 1,000 okka or 1,282 kg of salt). Both the Ottoman and Wallachian governments levied customs duties (4 percent at Nicopolis, 5 at Rusuk) and other duties in cash and in kind on salt at these ports. In addition to the dues, the Ottoman government bought the imported salt at a fixed price (47 akça per hundred pieces at the port of Silistre) and sold it at a higher price, 80 akça.

Ottoman customs agents or tax-farmers advanced large sums of capital mostly in the form of gold to the voyvode of Wallachia to enable him to buy the salt destined for the Ottoman market. Also, private Ottoman investors including leading statesmen and ulema advanced capital to the Wallachian voyvodes for the same purpose. Following the depreciation of the akça in 1584, the rigid Ottoman price policy in purchasing Wallachian salt and Ottoman exploitation of Wallachians through credit dealings were perhaps the real reasons for the subsequent rebellion of the Wallachian Voyvode Michael the Brave, and his attempts to divert the salt trade to other countries. Later, in 1630, the Porte agreed to leave to the new voyvode all of the tax revenue at the Danubian ports in return for an increase of 3 million akça to the Wallachian yearly tribute. Thus, the voyvode took the place of the tax-farmers in collecting duties on Wallachian salt.

TAX COLLECTION IN MUKATAAT (TAX-FARMS)

During an imperial campaign, the chief finance minister in Istanbul had full authority to send orders, to supervise all those involved in collecting taxes including commissioners, tax-farmers and kadis, and to dismiss those failing in their duties. In order to collect the unpaid tax and the arrears owed by tax-farmers or others, a special organization with extensive powers was created. With his sixty men, the chief of the organization, başbaskulu, had the power to pursue those who failed to pay the tax and, if necessary, to put them in prison on his own responsibility. Under Mehmed II many tax-farmers were imprisoned and some executed for failing to pay their debts. A tax-farmer had to find wealthy sureties when he made a contract with the government. In the contract, he vowed to deliver to the treasury a certain amount of money in regular installments during the time agreed upon, which was usually three years. The tax-farming system was the principal method of revenue collection from the earliest times. The alternative method was to appoint a salaried government commissioner, an emin, to do the job of a tax-farmer. Another method to collect taxes was for the sultan to send his servants, kuls who were usually members of the cavalry division at the Porte. A tax-farmer or emin had extensive powers in collecting revenues and had to make direct regular payments to the local soldiery if so ordered by the sultan. His reports proposing new means to increase revenue from his district were often followed by the central government.

Tax-farmers, emins and local kadis were responsible for finding new sources of revenue such as a pre-Ottoman customs duty, mines or any other taxable activity. After the local inquiries had established that the new source was large enough and equitable for the taxpayers, it was registered in the finance books in the central finance department with the estimated amount of revenue as mukataa. This process constituted the principal method of creating new sources of revenue for the treasury. The revenue from mukataas in the provinces of Rumeli (Balkans), Anatolia (western Asia Minor), Egypt and Damascus amounted to 166.94 million akça, or about 30 percent of the total revenue of the central treasury in 1528.

The withdrawal to the ruler’s treasury of a huge amount of specie from circulation was always viewed as unjust and unwise in the East. Since the amount of silver and gold in circulation was in limited supply, such a large withdrawal of tax monies caused various disturbances in the market-place and an artificial dearth of money, higher rates of coinage and hardships in payments and transactions. Therefore, flexible financial methods were applied to alleviate the negative consequences. Instead of bringing in all taxes to the central treasury, a decentralized system of collection and payment was followed. Local expenditures, whether for construction work or salaries, were made by a tax-farmer and an emin upon receiving an order of payment sent by the central treasury. The tax-farmers used the payment orders and the delivery documents given by the local kadi to settle their final accounts with the government. This system of transfer saved the finance department from the transport cost of huge amounts of specie and secured quick payments on the spot and a quick return of the specie into the market. By contrast, to carry the
treasury in a military campaign required a long train of camels. The transfer method was widely used by the government and the merchants.

The tax-farming system gave rise to a group of financiers and to speculative transactions which had a strong influence on the entire Ottoman economy. The huge tax-farms, such as the customs zone of Istanbul or the silver and gold mines of Serbia, each valued from 10 to 20 million akça, called for consortiums of Turkish, Greek or Jewish financiers to manage the tax district, together with wealthy citizens serving as sureties. Italians, either Ottoman subjects or foreign merchants settled in Galata, were also involved in such big tax-farms. The government resorted to the tax-farm or mukatua system to levy certain revenues which required rather complicated organizations or were difficult to follow up and collect, such as inheritances without an heir. When sold to private interests such elusive revenues produced maximum yield.

The flexibility of the Ottoman tax-farming system itself facilitated the tax-farmer’s task, since he could divide the job on the basis of localities and sell shares to lesser local tax-farmers responsible to himself, who were in a better position to collect such revenues. At the top of the tax-farming hierarchy stood rich bankers in the capital. Wealthy money-changers (sarrâfs) played the role of bankers by providing credit to the tax-farmers and becoming sureties for them, thus enabling them to fulfill their contractual obligations to the treasury.

The agrarian taxes to be collected from the lands reserved for the sultan (havass-i hümâyûn), or more exactly for the central treasury, were generally sold as tax-farms to private persons. The viziers and governors for their basss benefices and even big timar-holders resorted to the same method, or sometimes they employed stewards. Consequently, over half of the public revenues were subject to tax-farming.

**THE POLL-TAX**

The revenue from the cizye or poll-tax in the Hegira year of 894 (December 5, 1488–October 24, 1489) for the entire Ottoman Empire amounted to 30.71 million akça. There were 681,452 non-Muslim households subject to the poll-tax in the Balkans. In the “budget” of 1528 the revenue from the poll-tax had increased (Table 1:14), and represented about 8 percent of the empire’s total revenue. Tribute from Christian vassal states, which were considered as part of the poll-tax and paid in one lump sum, were to be added (see Tables 1:15 and 1:16).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1:14. Revenue from the poll-tax in 1528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Million akça</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumeli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia Minor and the Crimea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1:15. Tribute from Christian states</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Byantium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbian despotate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dukrovnik (Ragusa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus (Venice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Roman Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscovy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1:16. Tribute of Wallachia and Moldavia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wallachia</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1535-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1545-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1560-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1569-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1575-84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The reasons for increases were: internal struggle for power in the principalties, periodic augmentation in the rate of poll-tax, increase in the population, and Ottoman financial crises or punishments for insubordination.

1 gold ducat or Sultanin = 57 akça between 1535 and 1560, 59 between 1560 and 1574
1 Hungarian gold piece = 55 akça in 1535–60, 57 in 1560-74
Source: Maxim (1972, 1974).
The ciyze was an Islamic tax paid by non-Muslim subjects which was always collected in cash and placed directly into the central treasury. In the hierarchy of taxes it was the most important "legitimate" (bâk) tax. Exemption from it or its grant as a benefice was an exception. For a Christian, active military service was one case leading to exemption. In the first centuries, it was collected directly by the sultan’s kâls, usually by the members of the cavalry division of sipahi-öğlanları, who struggled to retain this privilege since they received a fee from tax payers. Farming out the collection of ciyze to private interests became a common practice from the second half of the sixteenth century.

In classical Islam, jurists set the ciyze rates at 1, 2 or 4 gold dinars or 12, 24, or 48 dirhem of pure silver for the poor, middle class and the wealthy respectively. But the Ottomans adjusted these rates to pre-Ottoman poll-tax levels extant in the conquered countries and levied one fixed rate per household, usually one gold piece or its equivalent in silver coins. This tax was actually less than the equivalent of one gold piece in many areas, 30 akçe in the island of Thassos and 55 in the province of Bitlis but 80 akçe in Syria and Palestine (one gold piece equalled 60–70 akçe in the period 1520–70). In Hungary it was 50 akçe, but a lower rate of 3 to 25 was applied for the poor in the period around 1760. Considering the liberal policy being pursued with the lower rates, an addition of 10 akçe was declared at the accession of Selim II in 1566. There were substantial increases each time a new sultan acceded to the throne and in the period of the akçe’s devaluation during the long campaigns of the last two decades of the sixteenth century.

In order to avoid disputes resulting from the several types of silver coins in circulation, the government declared that it would accept only gold pieces as payment for ciyze. This created another hardship, particularly for the peasants. Fees for the expenses of the collectors and for registration services amounted to 1⁄25 of the poll-tax itself. But the imposition of additional exactations was routine. In many instances, particularly with non-Muslim communities in towns or on islands, agreements were made with the finance department to pay the poll-tax in a predetermined lump sum (makûs) for the whole community. Collecting it among themselves, usually through the local priest, they were spared from the exactations of the Ottoman officials. Although this method guaranteed a stable revenue source for the government, the poll-tax on newcomers was lost.

A particularly onerous condition for the Christian peasantry in the Balkans came about from the Ottoman practice of imposing collective responsibility on village communities for the poll-tax of fugitives and the dead. Under Mehmed II the timar-holder and the villagers were each required to pay half of the poll-tax for fugitives. It later became the sole responsibility of the community. This practice sometimes caused the depopulation and ruin of an entire village. To remedy this situation adjustments were made every three years by counting and registering all adult subjects required to pay this tax and removing the names of the dead and fugitives from the register. The government tried to collect the poll-tax from fugitives by using private tax-farmers who actively pursued them.

It can safely be said that increases and exactations of the poll-tax were fundamental reasons for the alienation of the Christian population from the Ottoman regime from the end of the sixteenth century on. The poll-tax was also responsible for mass conversions in various parts of the Balkans in later centuries.

In connection with the Islamic poll-tax we have also to speak of a customary poll-tax originally of pre-Ottoman origin called ispence (from jovanica) in the Balkans or gate-tax (kapu-resmi) in Hungary. It was levied at the rate of 25 akçe without change over the centuries. As a "customary" feudal tax in its origin it was, as a rule, included in the sipahi’s timar and always levied in cash. The Ottomans introduced this tax in eastern Anatolia in 1540. In the imperial bass lands, ispence was levied together with the poll-tax for the treasury.

Apparently evasion from the poll-tax must also have been quite widespread. In Hungary the total ciyze revenue was 1,350,000 akçe in the Hegira year of 966 (October 14, 1558–October 2, 1559), while in the following year it was 1,797,000 akçe. It has been suggested that the Ottomans levied the poll-tax at a rate much lower than that stipulated by Islamic Law because many taxpayers were already required to perform extraordinary services. But when pressed by a chronic financial crisis, the government invoked the Sharia to legitimate a rate increase in the tax. The rates for all taxes levied in cash went up further with the addition of fees for collectors and scribes and because gold and big silver pieces were accepted at a rate lower than their actual ratio to the akçe in the market (generally 2 akçe less). This measure was introduced probably because of the constant inflation in the akçe (Table 1:17).

PEASANT TAXATION

Taxation had, particularly in the Asiatic empires, a decisive impact on the economy and was the basis of status in rural society (see below,
Table 1:17. Increases in the rates of poll-tax and avariz (oarsman tax) (in akça)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Poll tax</th>
<th>Avariz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1475</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1489</td>
<td>40-70 (Rumeli in general)</td>
<td>23 (special groups)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. 1500</td>
<td>25-28 (Anadolu)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1512</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1537</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1541</td>
<td>50 per household (Hungary)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1545</td>
<td>48 (Adana)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1564</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1566</td>
<td>50 (in general)</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1574</td>
<td>40 (in general)</td>
<td>66 (Hungary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1592</td>
<td>85 (in general)</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1593</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1595</td>
<td>140 (in general)</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1603-4</td>
<td>140 (in general)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In order to balance the state budget the government added 45 akça to the poll-tax of non-Muslim subjects in 1585.


was to convert labor services or customary fees due to local lords or officials into state taxes in cash – a necessary policy for a centralized empire replacing feudal local lords in the Balkans. However, it is important to keep in mind that, because of the underdeveloped economy, some labor services had to be preserved, particularly such services as building a house for the sipahi, to carry the sipahi’s tithes to his barn or nearest market-place, to mow and store the sipahi’s hay, to provide straw and firewood and to work on the land assigned to the direct use of the sipahi. All such services actually inherited from the pre-Ottoman feudal practices were to continue under the Ottoman regime as necessary corvées to relieve the military from non-military occupations.

These services altogether were called kulluk, that is dues owed by the kul, “servile class,” or more exactly a “dependent peasant,” since the Ottoman peasant reaya were not considered enslaved. Nevertheless, the fact remains that under the Ottoman timar regime, in which sipabis lived in the village and actually controlled the land and taxation, the basic characteristics of a feudal society persisted. The important difference from a Western type of feudalism was that the state abolished all personal dependencies between the peasant and the local military, and land titles, taxation and relations between the sipabis and peasants were strictly regulated by the sultan’s laws under the tight control of a centralist bureaucracy (see pp. 108-18). On the other hand, before the Ottomans, under the weakened states in Byzantium and the Balkans, central bureaucracies attempted to fight against the feudalization process except in the regions where the Latins dominated. At any rate, it was because of its customary local origin that the state reserved most of these taxes for the timar-holders. Naturally, tithes, which as a rule were collected in kind and constituted at least half of the rural tax revenues, were also included in timars. Timar-holders, particularly when grain prices were low, preferred to collect tithes in cash, mainly because they needed as much money as possible during the campaign season when they were away from home. In general, approximately half the timar revenues were paid in cash, and the other half in kind. So, a peasant had to convert his surplus produce into cash by taking it to the towns and the rural periodic markets, which assumed a crucial importance in the rural economy. In this regard, small village money-lenders also played an important role. Of course, where it was possible to grow grapes or cash crops, there was more opportunity to gain cash. During the period 1520-80, there was a considerable increase in the number of local markets and their development into important centers in some regions in Anatolia. This development must have been in direct relationship to the general demographic and economic development.
Table 1:7. Increases in the rates of poll-tax and avariz (oarsman tax) (in akçe)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Poll tax</th>
<th>Avariz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1475</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>25 (special groups)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 1500</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1512</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1537</td>
<td>–</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1564</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1566</td>
<td>30 (in general)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1574</td>
<td>40 (in general)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1592</td>
<td>66 (Hungary)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1593</td>
<td>81 (in general)</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1595</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1603–4</td>
<td>140 (in general)</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In order to balance the state budget the government added 45 akçe to the poll-tax of non-Muslim subjects in 1585.


was to convert labor services or customary fees due to local lords or officials into state taxes in cash – a necessary policy for a centralized empire replacing feudal local lords in the Balkans. However, it is important to keep in mind that, because of the underdeveloped economy, some labor services had to be preserved, particularly such services as building a house for the sipahi, to carry the sipahi’s tithes to his barn or nearest market-place, to mow and store the sipahi’s hay, to provide straw and firewood and to work on the land assigned to the direct use of the sipahi. All such services actually inherited from the pre-Ottoman feudal practices were to continue under the Ottoman regime as necessary corvées to relieve the military from non-military occupations.

These services altogether were called kuluk, that is dues owed by the kul, “servile class,” or more exactly a “dependent peasant;” since the Ottoman peasant reaya were not considered enslaved. Nevertheless, the fact remains that under the Ottoman timar regime, in which sipahis lived in the village and actually controlled the land and taxation, the basic characteristics of a feudal society persisted. The important difference from a Western type of feudalism was that the state abolished all personal dependencies between the peasant and the local military, and land titles, taxation and relations between the sipahis and peasants were strictly regulated by the sultan’s laws under the tight control of a centralist bureaucracy (see pp. 18-18). On the other hand, before the Ottomans, under the weakened states in Byzantium and the Balkans, central bureaucracies attempted to fight against the feudalization process except in the regions where the Latins dominated. At any rate, it was because of its customary local origin that the state reserved most of these taxes for the timar-holders. Naturally, tithes, which as a rule were collected in kind and constituted at least half of the rural tax revenues, were also included in timars. Timar-holders, particularly when grain prices were low, preferred to collect tithes in cash, mainly because they needed as much money as possible during the campaign season when they were away from home. In general, approximately half the timar revenues were paid in cash, and the other half in kind. So, a peasant had to convert his surplus produce into cash by taking it to the towns and the rural periodic markets, which assumed a crucial importance in the rural economy. In this regard, small village money-lenders also played an important role. Of course, where it was possible to grow grapes or cash crops, there was more opportunity to gain cash. During the period 1520–80, there was a considerable increase in the number of local markets and their development into important centers in some regions in Anatolia. This development must have been in direct relationship to the general demographic and economic development.
observable in the imperial survey books. But even during this period, as
the local kadi court records show, sipabis and peasants were in conflict
taxes and the mode of their collection as well as over matters
central conflict over land titles and transfers. It appears that sipabis
were constantly trying to gain more labor services for their farms, pastures or vineyards,
and to use the peasants' draft animals for cartage. They also transferred land
titles illegally in order to receive extra fees, whereupon the peasants used
every trick available to pay less and work less for the sipabist. To alleviate
the conflict, most of the sultanic law codes were designed to specify the
mutual obligations and the local kadi courts performed an important role
in enforcing the regulations. During the great crisis of the 1590s in Anatolia
this entire mechanism collapsed.

Instead of outright abuse of the tax system, the sipabis used such legitimizings as referring to extra taxes as pre-conquest customary dues. In many cases, the administration discovered that such customary dues were abolished under the Ottoman regime or were replaced by new Ottoman taxes. But after a certain time the sipabis revived the old dues and thus were able to impose double taxation. Double taxation also occurred when a new timar-holder demanded the taxes and labor services already rendered to the outgoing timar-holder. To prevent such abuses, subsequent regulations specified the exact time of the collection of a particular tax. Already in the fifteenth century, in popular works, sharp criticisms were leveled at the state's extraordinary levies and corvees, and the capacity of the financial administration. Take the following example.

They collect money from people to make state construction works, but they cut the wages of the workers and masters who were forcibly mobilized or forced them to work without pay. This is natural, since the sultan's finances are now under the control of unscrupulous merchant usurers (here "merchant usurers" are tax-farmers).

TIMAR PREBENDS

Along with the central bureaucracy's interest in acquiring mukataa revenues from foreign conquests, there was pressure from the lower ranks of the soldiery to gain timars in the conquered lands. This pressure also became a powerful factor in maintaining the conquest policy and can be considered as a part of the Ottoman fiscalism. The pressure was indeed very strong, since it was not only volunteers and raiders on the frontiers who expected timars in the conquered lands, but also, more importantly, Janissaries and other kuls of the sultan, as well as the military elite, were impatiently waiting the moment of "going out" of the imperial household and establishing an independent life and family as timar-holders in the countryside. The study of the timar registers shows that a high percentage of timar recipients were of kül origin, that is, retainer "slaves" or kuls sharing the privileges of their patronymical military masters. The other groups entitled to timars were members of the pre-Ottoman military class and volunteers. As a reward for valor in a campaign, loyalty or long service, they were given certificates for a timar of a certain size; but the actual receipt of a timar depended on availability in the provinces (see below, pp. 113–17). Actually, it was a relief for the state to be able to create extra timars in the conquered lands, in Hungary, for example, for the Bosnian sipabis, and in the lands of Zülkadiye and Syria for the sipabis from Karaman. Thus, expansion through conquest provided new sources of revenue in the form of timars and therefore became a catalyst for expansionism. It is said that this policy illustrates, in the final analysis, the military expansionist or so-called "feudal" character of the Ottoman state, which was seeking to find new resources in the form of taxes and tributes through conquest rather than through economic means.

As for the methods of remuneration, timar assignment and tax-exemption methods spared the state the expense and delay involved in collecting the revenues and then making payments from a central treasury. Certain distant provinces, such as Egypt, Baghdad and Yemen, were financially autonomous in collecting and spending the provincial revenue and sent a pre-determined surplus to the central treasury (see pp. 83–87). In contrast to the European monarchies, the Ottoman Empire followed essentially a decentralized system in its finances, a situation basically determined by its vast territory and its less advanced monetary economy. During the seventeenth century, a major part of the timar revenues in the hands of timar-holders were entered in the central treasury as "substitute money" (bedel) for exemption from active military service, since the provincial cavalry had become obsolete by that time. In 1699, such revenues amounted to about 15 million akça from the four provinces of Erzurum, Maraş, Damascus and Aleppo. Another way to bring the timar revenues into the central treasury was to convert them into imperial demesne (hass) and to farm them out. On the other hand, in the frontier areas, notably in Bosnia, a different development for big timars and ziamets took place. They were consolidated as hereditary prebends in the
Ottoman state this principle existed from the beginning, when personal service fees were recognized as a legal right. Bribery was considered a crime when the monarch's direct interests were in jeopardy. Since it was hard to make a distinction, the officials involved felt free to exchange favors for profit in any situation with the belief that in the last analysis it was good for the ruler's treasury. Also, pişkeş, "an offering made by an inferior as a mark of respect and dependence" was widely practiced in the Ottoman Empire. Every dignitary, including governors, viziers and patriarchs of Christian communities, had to offer to the sultan a pişkeş, the amount of which was fixed by regulation. For example, the governor of Rumeli gave ten thousand akçe, a Greek Orthodox Patriarch 20,000 gurş (mid-seventeenth century) at the time of receiving the imperial diploma which legally validated their authority in the office. Officials of lesser grades paid a fixed amount of money called the diploma (berat) fee, which altogether amounted to quite a large sum for the treasury. The sultan reciprocated the pişkeş from high office holders by giving a caftan, a horse richly harnessed, a fur coat or a sword, which symbolized the authority delegated and a compensation for their pişkeş expenditure. Originally, the exchange of presents, a custom going back to ancient Iran, established the bond of dependency between lord and retainer or vassal. In the later Ottoman Empire, pişkeş became a kind of auction and source of revenue for the public treasury.

NOTES
1. Babinger (1957); Majer (1982).
3. Neschi (1987), p. 212, "fifty thousand νουκιγια of silver given as tribute" (in Ildis, only "50 νουκιγια").
10. The tax-farmer of Vidin lent 20,000 gold pieces to the voivode, Peter the Young, see Maxim (1982), p. 115.
THE STATE TREASURY AND BUDGETS

THE CENTRAL IMPERIAL BUDGET

In classical Islam, it was believed that one-third of a peasant's income was the maximum amount which could be collected as tax for the public treasury, one-third was for the maintenance of the tillage and one-third was for the nourishment of his family and himself. A number of the Ottoman balance sheets of state revenues and expenditures are available, the earliest dating back to 1475 (see Table 1:9). The real purpose of these balance-sheets was to determine whether a surplus was realized. If so, it was deposited in the inner treasury. In fact, Ottoman and pre-Ottoman Middle Eastern states had two treasuries, the reserve treasury preserved in the inner palace under the direct control of the ruler and the current treasury located at the government offices under the joint control of the grand vizier and finance minister (defterdar). There were separate balance-sheets for certain provinces to determine whether or not they provided a surplus for the ruler's treasury. The fundamental concern of an oriental ruler was a full treasury under his control as a source of support for his power and authority. For a healthy "budget" Ottoman statesmen expected a surplus after expenditures so that those receiving a salary from the sultan's treasury would not have any concerns about their income.

Any budget surplus, extraordinary revenues such as the sultan's share of booty, confiscated estates, and gifts were preserved in the palace treasury. Consequently it contained not only cash but also jewelry, precious textiles and items such as dresses, silver and gold cups and containers. The inner or palace treasury functioned as a reserve bank for the main current treasury. Loans were made from the former with the sultan's
approval in times of shortage to the grand vizier, who gave a written
pledge under his signature as a guarantee for repayment.

The budget can be taken as quite a reliable index for the general
condition of the economy. The total revenue of the Ottoman state is estimated
at around 3 million gold ducats by Venetian observers (see Table 1:18)
between 1433 and 1522, obviously leaving out the timar revenues. Andrea
Gritti’s estimate (1503) of 5 million gold ducats must include the latter.
After the eastern Asia Minor and the Arab lands were annexed under
Selim I, the central treasury appears to have risen to about 4.5 million
gold ducats and to 7 or 8 million in the period 1527–1603. Although
Venetians had access to authentic Ottoman sources, wild discrepancies
nevertheless exist in their estimates. The very high estimates for the reign
of Süleyman I of 12 or 15 million gold ducats must definitely include the
timar revenues in addition to the sums in the central treasury. Some of
these observers, Zeno (1524 and 1530), Barbarigo (1558) and Donini
(1561), give also the amount of the total expenditures, which indicate a
favorable balance-sheet for the Ottoman budget in the period 1524–61.

The earliest official Ottoman balance-sheet available goes back to the
year 1527–8, more exactly March 21, 1527 to March 20, 1528 (see Tables
1:19 and 20). Five million gold ducats for the central treasury and 3.6
million for timars in this official source approximate the figures given
by the Venetians who served in Istanbul as bailos (ambassadors), the closest
figure being that given by Trevisano (1554). The revenues of the pious
foundations (vakf), and of the freehold land properties (mülek), which
originally belonged to the state, could not be included in the current
state budget, but on the other hand various public services such as the
construction and maintenance of bridges, hospices, market-places, cara-
vanserais and hospitals were, on a regular basis, funded by the pious
foundations. As for the state lands, which were turned into freehold
properties, these were mostly required, under the dual ownership system
(see below, pp. 126–30), to furnish soldiers to the sultan’s army.

Lybyer, who estimated that there were 8 million gold pieces in
the current treasury in 1566 and calculated it to be worth less than 70 million
American dollars in 1913, declared it “no large sum for so great an
empire.” Even if we add to it timar and vakf revenues, which he says
probably amounted to about twice as much, the Ottoman state revenues
look quite modest. For the sake of comparison, Table 1:21 gives a list of
the budgets of some European states during this period.

Comparing the regions (see Table 1:22), we find that the highest rev-

198 million akça came from the province of Rumeli, which com-
prised the Balkan lands south of the Danube and Sava rivers excluding
Dalmatia, some ports in Greece, but including some northern Black Sea
areas in the Crimea. The revenue of Egypt and Syria calculated together
at 187 million akça comes out a close second to Rumeli, and Asia Minor,
with 152 million, ranked third.

While the Arab lands yielded about two-thirds surplus, the coreland
of the empire had a deficit of about 10 percent (see Table 1:23).

THE PIOUS FOUNDATIONS (VAKFS)

Certain construction works were undertaken directly by the state. A vast
network for public construction and repair work was organized under the
chief architect. In each provincial capital there was a state architect who was
empowered, when needed, to mobilize the local masters and work force to
build or repair fortresses, bridges, mosques and other public buildings.
However, commercial facilities — bazaars, shops, bathhouses and bedestans
were built in the cities under the vakf system as a source of income to sup-
port the religious and charitable complexes. As a rule, all public construc-
construction works were supervised by a special agent called emin. With allotted
Table 1:19. The Ottoman central “budget” of 1527–28: revenues of the fiscal year of 933–34 March 21, 1527 to March 20, 1528 (in thousands of akça; one gold ducat = 55 akça at this time)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poll-tax</th>
<th>mukastaat</th>
<th>berat &amp; tezkire</th>
<th>beytülmal</th>
<th>mabeyn</th>
<th>Miscellanea</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rumeli¹</td>
<td>42,291</td>
<td>45,920</td>
<td>1,797</td>
<td>2,939</td>
<td>1,116</td>
<td>0,718</td>
<td>94,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anadolu, Karaman,²</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rum and Zülkaderie</td>
<td>3,764</td>
<td>2,507</td>
<td>0,100 (tezkire)</td>
<td>0,447</td>
<td>0,811</td>
<td>3,296</td>
<td>34,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Kastamonu copper mines)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damascus</td>
<td>440</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aleppo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diyarbekir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7,169</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The Balkan peninsula south to the rivers of the Danube and Sava leaving out Dalmatia.
² These provinces comprised Asia Minor to the west of a line from Georgia to the bay of Antalya.

Note: The total revenue from these five zones is 160,704,000 akça. Egypt has a different structure. Since the imperial revenues from Egypt in terms of akça amounted to 116,138,994 akça, the total annual revenue accumulated in the central treasury in Istanbul was 277 million akça or 5 million gold ducats. The revenue distributed as benefits are not included in this sum. When such revenues, amounting to 200 million, are added the total revenue amounted to 477 million akça. The revenues of the sakfis and those originally state lands whose revenue went to private persons is calculated by Barkan (1946–50, XV, p. 377) as 60 million akça. In sum, the total state revenues reached 337 million akça or 9.7 million gold ducats.


The state treasury and budgets

Table 1:20. Total revenue of the empire, 1527–28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue from Syria and Egypt</td>
<td>577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in millions of akça</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in millions of gold ducats</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Barkan (1953–54).
The state treasury and budgets

Table 1:23. Balance of revenue and expenditure by region, 1527–28 (in million akça)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rumeli, Anadolu, Karman, Zülkadiye and Rum</td>
<td>294.85</td>
<td>322.13</td>
<td>-27.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt, Damascus and Aleppo</td>
<td>161.11</td>
<td>61.14</td>
<td>+99.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diyarbekir</td>
<td>21.46</td>
<td>20.10</td>
<td>+1.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For comparison of these figures with those from other sources see Barkan (1953–4), pp. 272–76. Source: Barkan (1953–4), p. 272.


Table 1:22. Total revenues of the Ottoman Empire by province, 1527–28 (in million akça)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Imperial basis</th>
<th>Other basis revenues and timars</th>
<th>Religious endowment and freehold lands</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rumeli (the Balkans)</td>
<td>94.74</td>
<td>92.53</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>198.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anadolu, Karman, Zülkadiye and Rum (Asia Minor)</td>
<td>34.01</td>
<td>73.52</td>
<td>22.08</td>
<td>129.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diyarbekir (eastern Asia Minor)</td>
<td>7.16</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>22.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aleppo and Damascus</td>
<td>24.73</td>
<td>19.83</td>
<td>7.28</td>
<td>51.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>116.53</td>
<td>18.92(?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>135.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>537.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


which was apparently inherited from the Roman–Byzantine tradition. A group of these experts, mostly Greeks, were sent to Mecca and Jerusalem to build the city water system and water conduits. It appears, however, that construction of public facilities such as market-places were undertaken by the state only when it was deemed absolutely necessary for the general improvement, and when they ultimately served the financial interests of
PROVINCIAL BUDGETS

Most of the provinces annexed to the core territories of the empire had an autonomous fiscal organization under the administration of a finance director (defterdar) and the general responsibility of a governor-general (beglerbegi).

The core territories consisted of the provinces of Anatolia, Rumeli and Rum, roughly the area from the Danube to the Euphrates. The Arab lands, Cyprus and Hungary, annexed in the sixteenth century, had their own provincial budgets. In the latter category all of the expenditures of the province were met by local revenues and the surplus, if any, was sent to the imperial treasury at Istanbul. If there were a deficit the imperial treasury had to match it. The central finance department, however, had, through the provincial defterdar, a constant control over the finances of such provinces and received a balance-sheet, often with detailed accounts, at the end of each fiscal year.

This type of financial autonomy gave more independence to the governor-general in Egypt, Yemen or Budin than in other provinces, so that he could face emergency situations at these far-away frontier regions without having to await the decision of the central government. These particular governors, who enjoyed the ministerial rank of vizier already in the sixteenth century, were given supremacy and authority over the neighboring beglerbegis in times of crisis. Governors of Egypt were responsible for affairs in the provinces of Yemen and Habesh (northern Abyssinia), and the governors of Baghdad for Basra, the Gulf and the eastern part of the Arab peninsula. The governor of the Aegean Islands held the rank of grand admiral of the navy and the North African provinces of Tunisia, Algeria and Tripolitania were under his jurisdiction. However, the fact that the government had constant supervision, through the provincial finance director and kadi, over financial activities, and that the governor-general could at any moment be dismissed from office, does not allow us to speak here of a real autonomy. By contrast, the voivodes of Wallachia (Eflak), Moldavia (Boğdan) and the republic of Dubrovnik enjoyed complete autonomy in their internal affairs, being obliged only to send an annual tribute at a fixed amount to the sultan. But here too, the sultan could dismiss the voivode when he failed to send the tribute in time or caused unrest among his subjects by resorting to oppressive methods in collecting the tribute money. In sum, as far as the Ottoman provincial administration was concerned, one may speak of a relative provincial autonomy or of increasing decentralization from the center to the periphery.

Now, let us start to examine some of the budgets of the autonomous provinces with Yemen (for political conditions see below, pp. 331–35). In the Hegira year of 1008, between July 24, 1599 and June 12, 1600, the total revenue of Yemen amounted to about 400 thousand gold pieces and expenditures to about 561,333, with a deficit of 161,333 gold pieces.

The principal sources of revenue were classified as the land tax (barâç), making up 49 percent of the total revenue, tax-farms on livestock, bazaar dues, etc., producing 3 percent, and the dues at the ports, about 29 percent.

In Yemen, the exceptionally high percentage of customs dues and other port dues came from the Indian transit trade, although the land tax was the highest, almost half of the total revenue, which was normal for Yemen and the whole empire. The highest figure in the category of miscellania belonged to the profit from the exchange of gold coins for the debased silver coins and the intestate properties.

As was true for the several provincial budgets of the empire, in Yemen too, the greater part of the revenue income went to pay the salaries of the soldiery, a sum of over 15 million para or 67 percent of the whole expenditure of the province in 1599. About two million of this amount went to the salaries of the garrison troops placed in thirty-eight fortresses.

The governor’s annual salary was fixed at 1,100,000 akça (but actually he took about 900,000 akça in 1599). A governor’s income was extremely high everywhere in the empire, since governors had to maintain quite a large military contingent as part of their household so that they could bolster their authority and respond to emergencies.

In Yemen, the price of the robes of honor given to the native notables or captains navigating in the Indian Ocean amounted to quite a substantial sum – about 1.5 million akça. In this troubled frontier province, the annual balance showed a deficit of 6.59 million para or 161,000 Ottoman gold pieces in 1600, and the deficit was made up by a transfer of funds from the treasury of Egypt.

Syrian provinces also had autonomous budgets, sending substantial surpluses to the central treasury in Istanbul (see Table 1:24). The steady fall in revenue from Syria may indicate a serious economic decline; however, further study is needed to see whether the decrease originates from an increase of local expenditure so that the surplus sent to Istanbul became less. In 1525, out of the 12.6 million akça of revenue for the entire province of Damascus, 3.4 million came from the city of Damascus alone. From the sale of potash the treasury obtained 666,666 para annually in 1548.
Table 1:24. Annual surplus of the revenues of the provinces of Aleppo and Damascus sent to Istanbul (in million akça)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Surplus (in million akça)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1547-48</td>
<td>21 (the share of Damascus alone is 13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1566-67</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1567-68</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1582-83</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 1:25. Main revenue sources in Egypt, 1527-28 (in thousands of akça)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Expenditure in Egypt</th>
<th>Surplus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban mukataa</td>
<td>84,940</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs</td>
<td>17,730</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain supplies</td>
<td>13,860</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116,530</td>
<td>45,840</td>
<td>70,690</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Shaw (1962).

Egypt, too, had an autonomous treasury. Governors collected revenues and covered expenditure locally in the province and sent the surplus to Istanbul annually. Egypt's total revenue is shown as 116.5 million akça in the "budget" of 1527-28 (see Table 1:25). The 70 million akça surplus equals about 1,200,000 gold ducats. The breakdown of the sources of revenue of Egypt in 1595-96 and 1671-72 is shown in Table 1:26. Land tax was paid for the most part in cash in lower Egypt. Some land taxes on cotton, rice and sugar were delivered in kind directly to the imperial treasury or to the imperial granary. In 1670, 421,514 ardab of wheat were levied (one ardab = c. 90 liters).

The principal customs houses were located at Suez which was "the principal entrepôt for Egypt's trade with Yemen, Arabia, India and the Far East. All the trade between these places and Cairo passed through Suez." The total annual revenue from the mukataas of customs and other mukataas attached to them amounted to 16.32 million para in the fiscal year 1595-96.

Fixed miscellaneous revenues amounted to 1,200,000 para in 1595-96 and about 17 million in 1671-72. Among the non-fixed revenues, mention should be made of the revenue from the state-owned boats on the Nile river, which brought in 760,000 para as rent in the fiscal year 1595-96. Variable or non-fixed tax revenues amounted to about 10 million para in that year and 17 million para in the fiscal year of 1671-72.

Table 1:26. Revenue of Egypt in 1595-96 and 1671-72 (in thousands of para)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1595-96</th>
<th>1671-72</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land tax</td>
<td>44,478</td>
<td>63,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poll-tax</td>
<td>3,273</td>
<td>2,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mukataa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs, Suez</td>
<td>3,922</td>
<td>4,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs, Alexandria and Rosetta</td>
<td>5,076</td>
<td>6,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs, Damietta</td>
<td>1,629</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs, Barilios</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs, Bulak</td>
<td>1,737</td>
<td>3,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other urban mukataa</td>
<td>3,516</td>
<td>3,685</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1 para = 1.2, later 2 akça

In sum total, tax revenues demanded for the imperial treasury of Egypt amounted to 69 million in 1595-96 and to 95 million para in 1671-72 (82.8 and 114 million akça respectively).

The principal expenditures of Egypt included salaries (ulufe) of the commanders and bureaucrats, religious officers, salaries of the paid troops, and pensions, which altogether amounted to 31.6 million para in 1595-96 and 56.4 million in 1671-72. Payments in kind were also made out of the imperial granary in Old Cairo. The last payments after the conquest, those Mamluk emirs who declared their loyalty to the Ottoman sultan were employed in administrative positions and received regular salaries. Other expenditures such as payments to tax collectors, for maintenance of public works, in particular water supply and canals, and for repair work on public buildings constituted a smaller amount compared to salaries. One major expenditure for the Egyptian treasury was the provisions supplied for the Holy Cities of Islam, Mecca and Medina, and for the annual pilgrimage. This amounted to 4.3 million para in 1595-96 and 9.5 million in 1671-72. The vakfs of Egypt supplied an additional 3.3 million para in cash and 172,583 ardab of grain to the Holy Cities. It is calculated that the annual overall contribution to the Hejaz amounted to 300 or 385 thousand gold ducats toward the end of the sixteenth century. Tiepolo, the Venetian baiolo, said that the crops of wheat, barley and beans annually delivered to the imperial granary in Egypt were worth 1,200,000 gold ducats. The produce was distributed...
to the Ottoman troops in Egypt or sent to the Hejaz and Istanbul as provisions. The expenditures for the imperial navy and other units for the defense of Egypt and Syria were not reflected here.

A significant portion of the imperial revenue was set aside and assigned as timar for the members of the imperial navy or for the construction of vessels for the fleets based at Alexandria, Damietta and Suez. The captains of these bases alone received 1,800,000 para. Egypt's rich resources and surplus revenue were crucial for the imperial defense finances. In times of shortage, the governor of Egypt, who was responsible for policies and activities in the Indian Ocean, also supplied the province of Yemen through its provincial budget. When in 1573 the governor of Yemen was unable to pay the salaries of the troops, who were putting pressure on him, the Porte ordered the governor of Egypt to send a subvention of 30 thousand gold ducats. After meeting all the expenses and salaries, the province of Egypt sent a half million gold ducats to the central treasury annually, and occasionally also subventions to Hejaz, Yemen and Habesh. It is to be remembered that most of the mukatasas came under the control of the emirs (Mamluks) of Egypt through the tax-farming system.

**EXPENDITURE FOR THE OTTOMAN ARMY**

As seen above, the largest part of the state revenue was reserved for soldiers' salaries. İdris, a reliable source for the early sixteenth century, analyzed the Ottoman army during the campaign against Uzun Hasan in 1473, when the sultan gathered all his forces for this decisive confrontation. His computation is shown in Table 1:27.

In the official list dated 1528, the regular forces numbered about 87,000, of which 37,000 were provincial timar-holders, and 50,000 were salaried troops (Table 1: 28). Timar-holders had to bring to the campaigns auxiliary troops (cebelis) at their own expense. Barkan estimated the number of these cebelis at 60,000 in 1528. In the calculation azebs (see below) were not included.

An Italian source (Bessarion: 1470) and an Iranian source (Ahsan al Ta'awurikh) give a lower figure of 70,000 men, when the irregular forces, the azebs, were excluded. This was a small army by modern standards, but only by considering the extraordinary problems associated with feeding and moving troops into fields of action hundreds of miles away in Hungary, Iran and Iraq can we understand its enormity for the age. For

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**Table 1:27. The Ottoman army, 1473**

| Janissaries | 12,000 |
| Cavalry of the Porte | 7,500 |
| Timariot sipahis of Rumeli | 40,000 |
| Timariot sipahis of Anatolia | 24,000 |
| azebs | 20,000 |
| **Total** | **103,500** |

Source: Barkan (1953-54).

---

**Table 1:28. The Ottoman army, 1528**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Salary or benefice in million of akçe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24,146</td>
<td>65.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,903</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23,017</td>
<td>40.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37,741</td>
<td>200.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>30,180</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand total</strong></td>
<td><strong>117,987</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the Ottoman bureaucrats it was an agglomeration of men “the earth cannot bear.”

In 1528, the timarriot constituted the largest single division in the Ottoman army. It is clear from Table 1:29 that in 1528 prebends bestowed as hass and timar to the military in the provinces (except for a very small number of officials in the capital city enjoying timars) amounted to about 200 million akça or 37 percent of the total Ottoman budget. There were two groups of provincial sipahis enjoying timars, those going on campaigns (eğek[in]), numbering 28,088, and those timariots acting as guards in the fortresses (bisar-eri), numbering 9,163 men. Timar-holders collected directly from the taxpayer the taxes and dues assigned to them as timars. Since about half of the total timar income was paid by peasants in kind, about one-fifth of the state revenue, or 100 million akça, was paid in kind. The total expenditure for the regular army, that is, the provincial cavalry and the standing army in the capital, was about 265 million akça (the entire state revenue amounted to 537 million akça), or about half of the entire budget. It should be remembered that members of the standing army received in addition clothing, bonuses on the accession of a sultan, for campaigns and festivals, and special provisions during campaigns, while the provincial cavalry had to meet all of their own expenses, including provisions during the campaigns. Their equipment, auxiliary men (cebelis) and valets (gulam) had to be brought in the number commensurate with the amount of their timars as specified in detail in the regulations.

Also of interest is the respective revenue reserved for timars and the number of timar-holders in each province. Rumeli and Anadolu provinces provided 129 million akça in revenue, which was distributed to about 28,000 men, while in the areas conquered in the sixteenth century about 60 or 70 million akça was reserved for timar-holders, who numbered about 10,000. This reflected the new trend in the composition of the Ottoman army, giving weight to the salaried footmen (Janissaries) with firearms, as well as the specific conditions of the conquered lands—mostly Arab lands. The salaried (ulusfeli) soldiers, which included the Janissaries, the six cavalry divisions of the Porte, canoniers and other specialized corps at the Porte, numbering 24,146, received 65,88 million akça yearly or 12 percent of the total state revenue. For the salaries of the guards at the fortresses and of the navy personnel, numbering altogether 23,017 men, was allotted 40.13 million akça or 7.4 percent of the budget.

As for the auxiliary troops, they were not included in the proper “military” class and were given no salary or prebend from the state treasury. They earned their livelihood by cultivating land granted to them by the state. In addition, they enjoyed exemption from extraordinary taxes and paid some of their taxes at lower rates. These auxiliary troops consisted of yaya, müsellems, bazdar, canbaz, Yörüks, Tatars, voynuks, efkak, and aksa raids. Each of these groups was organized under a common system very similar to the Byzantine organization of stratiots.

In these auxiliary organizations, each group of 25 or 30 peasant households was registered as a unit (ocak or hearth), and five of them were distinguished as “campaigners”, usually relatives, with each man taking turns to go on campaign (in actuality the number of households in the unit and of camp followers varied). The campaigner collected for his expenses a certain amount of money, varying from 20 to 60 akça, from each of the non-military members or “assistants” (yamak) of the unit and from those camp followers who did not go on campaign in that particular year. This money was interpreted as corresponding to the extraordinary taxes levied from ordinary subjects. In the earlier yaya registers, a standard peasant çiftlik (see below, p. 147) was in the possession of a yaya with his assistants, who were usually his relatives, cultivating and living on the same çiftlik.

The most important of the auxiliary troops were the yayas and müsellems, the latter being mounted and enjoying further exemptions. A late fifteen-century Italian source describes them as “peasant footmen.” Mostly found in western Anatolia and representing a privileged group among the reya with their yaya farms and special tax status, yayas and müsellems numbered about 7,000 peasant families (Tables 1:28, 1:30). In 1574, the müsellems of Kütahya alone, who were drafted for service,
the Ottoman bureaucrat it was an agglomeration of men “the earth cannot bear.”

In 1528, the timar riot constituted the largest single division in the Ottoman army. It is clear from Table 1:29 that in 1528 prebends bestowed as *bass* and timar to the military in the provinces (except for a very small number of officials in the capital city enjoying timars) amounted to about 200 million akça or 37 percent of the total Ottoman budget. There were two groups of provincial sipabis enjoying timars, those going on campaigns (*eskincis*), numbering 28,088,37 and those timar riots acting as guards in the fortresses (hisar-eris), numbering 9,563 men. Timar-holders collected directly from the taxpayer the taxes and dues assigned to them as timars. Since about half of the total timar income was paid by peasants in kind, about one-fifth of the state revenue, or 100 million akça, was paid in kind. The total expenditure for the regular army, that is, the provincial cavalry and the standing army in the capital, was about 265 million akça (the entire state revenue amounted to 537 million akça), or about half of the entire budget. It should be remembered that members of the standing army received in addition clothing, bonuses on the accession of a sultan, for campaigns and festivals, and special provisions during campaigns, while the provincial cavalry had to meet all of their own expenses, including provisions during the campaigns. Their equipment, auxiliary men (*cebeli*) and valets (*gulam*) had to be brought in the number commensurate with the amount of their timars as specified in detail in the regulations.

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In these auxiliary organizations, each group of 25 or 30 peasant households was registered as a unit (*ocak* or hearth), and five of them were distinguished as “campaigners”, usually relatives, with each man taking turns to go on campaign (in actuality the number of households in the unit and of campaigners varied). The campaigner collected for his expenses a certain amount of money, varying from 20 to 60 akça, from each of the non-military members or “assistants” (*yamak*) of the unit and from those campaigners who did not go on campaign in that particular year. This money was interpreted as corresponding to the extraordinary taxes levied from ordinary subjects. In the earlier *yaya* registers, a standard peasant *çiftlik* (see below, p. 147) was in the possession of a *yaya* with his assistants, who were usually his relatives, cultivating and living on the same *çiftlik*.

The most important of the auxiliary troops were the *yayas* and *müsellems*, the latter being mounted and enjoying further exemptions. A late fifteenth-century Italian source32 describes them as “peasant footmen.” Mostly found in western Anatolia and representing a privileged group among the *rayya* with their *yaya* farms and special tax status, *yayas* and *müsellems* numbered about 7,000 peasant families (Tables 1:28, 1:30). In 1574, the *müsellems* of Kütahya alone, who were drafted for service,
Table 1:20. The number of active yaya and müsellems soldiers in Anatolia in 1540

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-province (sancak)</th>
<th>müsellems</th>
<th>yaya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karahisar</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kütahya</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamid</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bığa</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karesi</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>726</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,382</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


numbered 821 men. The total number of the households in the units, however, should amount to over 20,000 men.33

_Yaya_ and _müsellem_ militia were particularly strong in the areas of Turcoman-Yörük pastoralists (see above, p. 35). In the mid-fifteenth century, in the sub-province (sancak) of Teke, for example, there were 361 head-_müsellem_ and 172 _müsellem_ registered. The “assistants” (yanaks), who provided campaign contributions, numbered 3,763. Thus, at this time, the average _müsellem_ unit could not have comprised more than eight members. It should be mentioned that in this period _müsellem_ appear as active combatants equipped with arms and some even wore armor. Every “hearth” was given a farm (çiftlik) varying between 12.5 to 37 acres.

It appears that originally _yayas_ were Turcoman warriors who made up the bulk of the Ottoman army in the first emirate period of the Ottoman state. Apparently each Turcoman warrior was given a çiftlik in the conquered lands. They made up the principal army of the sultan until the Janissary corps was created as part of the sultan’s household in the 1360s. Then there arose a fierce rivalry between the _yaya_ army and the Janissaries, which affected Ottoman politics in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. While the Janissaries and other _kuls_ who were dependent on the central bureaucracy joined and supported Murad II and Bayezid II in their fight for the Ottoman throne, the irregular forces, principally _yayas_ and _azebs_, sided with the pretenders, Prince Mustafa and Cem Sultan in the years 1421–24 and 1451–82 respectively. Popular chronicles claim that there were 60,000 _yayas_ at the battle of Kosovo in 1389.34 Over time the _yayas_ and _müsellem_ lost their original martial qualities and were employed only at such tasks as transportation or founding cannon balls. In 1582 the organization was totally abolished.

Barkan35 calculated that the tax exemptions of the _yaya_ and _müsellem_ amounted to about 2,63 million _akça_ in 1534.

Acquiring the status of _yaya_ was apparently quite popular in the fourteenth century because of the substantial benefits. Later, it became quite burdensome when the _yayas_ were required to assist the heavy logistic services for the regular army and, as a result, they began to abandon their çiftlik in order to avoid the service. This appears to have become widespread as early as the fifteenth century. At an inspection in 1466, for example, 260 _yayas_ were found to have deserted their land as against 516 registered _yayas_ in the province of Hüdavendigar.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries under the system of extraordinary services, a kind of militia called _azebs_ was called to service from the entire Muslim population. Every household unit as defined in the tax registers had to provide an _azeb_ soldier at its own expense. Sedentary populations furnished infantry and nomads provided cavalrymen. According to the chronicles,36 in 1389 Murad I gathered 40,000 _azebs_ to confront the Serbs at Kosovo. On the battlefield against the Akkoyunlu (1473) there were 18,000 _azebs_ in the army. In 1492, 9,000 _azebs_ were recruited in Rumeli who were well-equipped fighting men.37 Even under Süleyman I, a contingent of 20,000 _azebs_ was reported38 to have been levied in Rumeli. _Azebs_ made up an important part of the infantry in the army and were employed as fighting men in the navy.

Also, since Bayezid I’s time,39 the Ottomans recruited militia from among their Christian subjects, who were called _sura-bor_ or _cere-bor_ since a fee (_subra_) was paid for their service. The exemption from this extraordinary service was granted only when a service in another sector, such as mining, was undertaken.

In the fortress garrisons, along with the Janissaries, the cannoniers and other _kuls_, members of several companies were of _redya_ origin. Volunteers or raiders on the frontier were appointed fortress _azebs_ with regular pay when a slot (gedik) in the cadre became vacant. It was such an opportunity that it lured many jobless young men from the countryside to the frontier areas.

**EXPENDITURE FOR THE OTTOMAN NAVY**

Naval expenditures represented the most expensive military undertaking for the empire. The government had to build and maintain huge naval forces in the Mediterranean with principal bases at Gallipoli, Galata,
The state treasury and budgets

advent in particular of the English and Dutch on the Mediterranean (see p. 376) made a recovery of Ottoman sea power impossible.

There was also a state merchant marine, known since Mehmed II’s time. Wood and lumber were transported on state-owned ships from Antalya to Egypt and Syria. Twenty-six large ships (navi) owned by the state were active in the traffic between Syrian ports and Istanbul by 1553. Navy captains and state dignitaries too owned ships sailing between Istanbul, the Black Sea ports, Syria and Egypt. In wartime such ships were apparently used as transport.

THE IMPERIAL CAMPAIGN: LOGISTICS

William McNeill\(^7\) contrasted two methods of provisioning an army on the move: either “to plunder local food producers by seizing their stocks of grain or animals,” or to organize the logistics before the campaign started. The latter was based on the tax and rent system, by gathering food supplies from the peasants and storing them in magazines along the intended route of the march. The first method proved to be self-destructive in the end since the peasants were scattered or unable to continue to cultivate for some time, while under the tax and rent system the peasantry’s productivity and the regularity of provisioning of the army were guaranteed.

The Mongols of Genghis Khan and, later, Timur’s army were typical examples of the predation method, while the Persian–Islamic imperial tradition typified the logistic system. Under the influence of the Iranian–Seljuk and Byzantine traditions, the Ottoman imperial system developed quite a complex pattern of logistics which attracted the admiration of European observers.\(^8\)

Protection of the peasantry against depredation was discussed by the Ottoman historian Aşık Paşazade\(^9\) (d. 1502) in his chapter on Osman Ghazi. In the sixteenth century, during the joint campaigns of the Crimean Tatars and the Ottomans, serious misunderstandings arose when the Ottoman command prohibited the plunder of tributary or subject people in Moldavia, Wallachia or Hungary. Although booty raids into the infidels’ land, interpreted as being ordered and rewarded by God, were systematically organized by the Ottomans, the protection of non-Muslim subjects was guaranteed under the law of Islam.\(^{50}\) What is more, the Ottoman government believed it was good policy for expanding its territories to promise protection to the “infidels” living on the other side of the frontiers in the Abode of War. Foraging or taking goods without

Izmit, Ağnboz, Sinop, Avlona and Alexandria.\(^9\) Also, in order to protect the coasts, squadrons were stationed at Kavala, Mitylene, Rhodes, Suez and Alexandria. The cost of maintaining a fleet of galleys is estimated at no less than half a million ducats a year.\(^4\) The squadrons which were maintained by the Barbary corsairs in the North African provinces of Tunisia and Algeria at their own expense joined the imperial navy during major naval expeditions. In 1571 at Lepanto 100 ships from these provinces reinforced the imperial navy of 200 ships. In 1539, for a naval expedition to recover Nova (Hercegnovi) on the Adriatic coast from the Venetians, the Porte allotted a total 12 million akça or about 20,000 gold ducats for three months.\(^4\) The fleet consisted of 82 standard war galleys, 58 heavy galleys and 11 light galleys as well as 4 ships for the transportation of cannons. The personnel numbered 27,204 men, 22,538 of whom were oarsmen. The rest comprised the crew, Janissaries (2,958 men) and craftsmen. The wages of the crew and craftsmen amounted to 8,481,880 akça, the cost of the biscuits and water-barrels, 2,294,580, and the bonuses distributed to the Janissaries together with other miscellany to 201,411 akça.

Ship building gave rise to quite sophisticated industries at various naval bases where wood supplies from nearby forests were available, such as Gelibolu, Sinop and Izmit. In the mid-sixteenth century the district of Kasimpasha at Galata with its 123 docks became the center of such industries. Skilled workmen in Galata were then mostly Christians, Greeks or Venetians, while crew and fighting men were Muslims.

The enormous expenditures involved in maintaining a fleet were supplemented by extraordinary taxes and services extracted from the subject population. A fleet of 200 galleys required at least 22,000 oarsmen. The Ottoman galley slaves provided only a small part of those needed; consequently, the sultan ordered every household tax unit to send one oarsman to the navy. Under the guidance of the local kadi, the tax units collected money to hire an available young man, usually a peasant drifter, to serve as an oarsman. In the sixteenth century, each Muslim oarsman was given 106 akça, and a Christian, for the same task, 80 as a monthly allowance. When the government asked for money instead, the tax units had to pay cash, 1,500 per unit in 1551. The crushing Ottoman defeat by the Christian allied armada at Lepanto in 1571 and the great financial sacrifices to protect the empire by building a new fleet\(^6\) signaled the end of Ottoman sea power. Although Andrew Hess,\(^4\) taking into consideration Ottoman successes in the Mediterranean after Lepanto, believes that Ottoman sea power survived the defeat, the financial burden and the...
paying while in Ottoman territory was prohibited and was sometimes followed by capital punishment.

However, it was a fact that the corridor zones through which the Ottoman troops passed suffered and tax resources declined. This happened as a result of the provision levies of the government in addition to the occasional forages of the soldiery. To avoid these, inhabitants had no choice but to leave their homes and flee. In 1579, in the campaign against Iran, the corridor of the army's passage had to be changed because on the Ankara route "no settled villages" the official report testifies "were left because the peasants were scattered." The Ottomans could not establish full control over their conquests in Azerbaijan in the period 1587–90 mainly because they became dependent on grain imported from the homeland. A sharp decline in agriculture in the area resulted from the flight of the Shiite population of the region and the exactions which the hungry Ottoman soldiery, without provisions or money, made on the villagers. Using the long-established practice of imposing extraordinary levies (avazar) in times of emergency, the state demanded from its subjects a series of additional services and taxes both in kind and in cash. During war years such unforeseen demands had shattering effects on the rural economy, particularly on the fragile balance of the peasant subsistence economy. Although first applied only during large-scale campaigns, the extraordinary levies were transformed to regular in-cash taxes during the prolonged war period of 1587–1612. Coinciding with the Celali depredations, it became another factor in the ruin of the agrarian economy in Anatolia.

The successful outcome of a campaign depended to a great extent on how well the provisioning of the army and the frontier garrisons was organized. During government deliberations on the opening of a campaign in a particular year, a shortage or abundance of wheat and barley in the country was seriously taken into account. To ensure that armies in motion were supplied with basic foodstuffs and fodder, the Ottomans perfected an elaborate system of logistics. Basically, three methods were followed in procuring wheat or flour for men and barley for animals. First, direct taxes (nüzul), consisting of a certain amount of foodstuffs, were imposed upon household units; secondly, there was an obligation to bring and sell foodstuffs at government fixed prices at pre-determined halting places (sürsat); and thirdly, government purchases were made at locally fixed market prices (iştira). While nüzul was a real tax, sürsat was interpreted by the government as a transaction which formed "an aid" to the army's provisioning by peasants agreeing to sell certain foodstuffs. But for practical reasons, the provisions were actually bought by an army agent at fixed prices and re-sold to the soldiery. There are indications that payments were delayed or not made at all. There were also cases when taxpayers were forced to deliver both the nüzul tax and sürsat at the same time. The government demanded as a rule that the taxpayer meet the transport expenses or carry nüzul levies themselves, which became an extremely onerous obligation for the peasantry. It was the responsibility of the local kadi to collect and organize the transport of the provisions. Kads had difficulty in fulfilling this task: peasants sought to escape their obligations, since it meant either sharing their family's subsistence or selling the surplus at low prices. The household unit for nüzul levies varied from three to thirty households. For instance, in 1579 every levy unit of twenty households had to deliver 25.64 kg of grain. The amount demanded in this case was quite reasonable. Huge supplies, however, were still needed. In 1637, the army needed for its march against the Iranians in Baghdad 13,600 tons of barley, 1,512 tons of flour and 886,000 loaves of bread to be levied from Anatolian and Arab provinces.

As for the origin of these levies (salgın, avarız), it appears that when the military either arrived or was stationed at a place, food and fodder were demanded from the peasants. This customary due was eventually converted to a regular tax for the prebend-holder under the name of salarıyeye or salarlık (dues for the commander) in addition to the canonical tithes. The question of reducing this tax burden to a reasonable rate could be solved by extending it over a large area. But then the question arose of how to collect and transport the wheat and barley to the army or frontier fortresses, because transport costs were prohibitive. Ottoman bureaucrats tried to solve this problem by commuting the tax-in-kind to a tax-in-cash in the remote regions and using the money that was obtained to make purchases in local markets near the passage route of the army, or to stockpile items in the fortresses. Such purchases supplemented the obligatory levies becoming, as Ottoman bureaucrats put it, a source of income and prosperity for the local population. In 1594, nüzul was fixed at 2.5 kile (c. 64 kg) of grain per household unit or as a cash substitute of 300 akça in the district of Rodoscul. It appears that during and after the long war period from 1578 to 1606 such cash substitutes became regular taxes. Introducing new taxes on the basis of customary practices was a well-known process in the Ottoman tax system.
The stations (menzil-bane) along major imperial roads had depots to store grain brought under the kadi's supervision. When the army did not need such supplies, they were sold or distributed to the public in emergencies. When major imperial campaigns were in question large stocks were to be placed in the strategic fortresses near the field of action. Supplies were collected months in advance and transported from regions of plenty, such as Egypt or the fertile Danubian basin, by waterway. For the fighting armies beyond the Ottoman frontiers, provisions were supplied from the depots of such strategically situated frontier fortresses as Van or Erzurum for the Iranian campaigns and Belgrade for the Hungarian campaigns. In times of shortage, the government had access to the grain stored in the depots of hospices, fortresses, or route stations. Despite all the setbacks, the Ottoman logistic system functioned well. Finkel calculated that an Ottoman army of 150,000 men could provide "in an equitable fashion" basic foodstuffs for a march through Rumeli and Hungary. The price of bread was even a little cheaper for the Ottoman soldier than for his European counterpart. But the conditions were quite the reverse in eastern Asia Minor during the campaigns against Iran, especially when the enemy scorched the corridor zones of the Ottoman army. The campaigns against Iran caused widespread discontent in the army and changes in the state's strategic plans.

DEFICITS, EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES

During a war, extraordinary measures were taken to meet the treasury's immediate cash needs, including confiscation of the surplus from the pious endowments, trust funds of minors preserved in the city's bedestan, and forced loans from the wealthy. Because of the deficit in the state budget, Sultan Murad III ordered members of the imperial council and governors of the provinces to build galleys at their own expense for the projected naval expedition against Spain in 1590. In exchange they were given certificates for reimbursement from unpaid taxes of previous years. Reference is made to loans from leading merchants during wartime. Before major campaigns, an extraordinary cash tax was demanded from all subjects throughout the empire: for the campaigns of Belgrade and Rhodes a 15-akça tax was levied. Already under Süleyman a shortage in public revenues was felt. In 1557, for example, 80,000 gold pieces had to be delivered to the current treasury from the palace. Chronic shortages, however, began during the long war period of 1578–1606 (for budget deficit see Table 1:31).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1523-24</td>
<td>118,688</td>
<td>118,793</td>
<td>- 1,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1524-25</td>
<td>141,372</td>
<td>126,581</td>
<td>+ 14,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1527-28</td>
<td>277,444</td>
<td>150,228</td>
<td>+ 127,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1546-47</td>
<td>341,271</td>
<td>171,872</td>
<td>+ 69,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1546-47</td>
<td>183,088</td>
<td>189,617</td>
<td>- 6,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1569-68</td>
<td>348,544</td>
<td>223,532</td>
<td>+ 124,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1582-83</td>
<td>313,744</td>
<td>275,578</td>
<td>+ 38,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1592-93</td>
<td>293,400</td>
<td>363,400</td>
<td>- 70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597-98</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>900,000</td>
<td>-600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1608</td>
<td>503,691</td>
<td>599,191</td>
<td>- 95,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Timar revenues not included.

In evaluating these figures, it must be kept in mind that in 1584 the akça was devalued by 100 percent (see below, Appendix), so that the real value of the revenue in 1592–93 would, in terms of the akça of the previous period, be only 146,700,000 akça. Expenditures in terms of the old akça were 181,700 in 1592. Thus, there was a decrease of 95,878 in expenditure. However, this decrease did not result in a balanced budget.

It was a long-established tradition in Ottoman financial dealings to make salary payments according to the Islamic lunar calendar year (354 days). Since in the solar calendar the succession of seasons does not change, the state fiscal year had to follow the solar year in the collection of agricultural taxes. This led to a discrepancy in the budgetary accounting, especially in salary payments. The salary claim at the end of each calendar year overlapped by eleven days the solar year. The result was one extra lunar year for every thirty-two years. In other words, in a time span of thirty-two years, the salaried could claim payments for thirty-three years, while the state levied taxes for only thirty-two. Thus, the state was obliged periodically to make special extra payments. Sahillioğlu believes that this situation was the source of major cyclical crises in state finances and was responsible for discontent among the salaried soldiers. It should be remembered that the soldiers' salary claimed 12 percent of the entire budget. As Janissary salaries were paid in four installments each year it would be necessary to make one extra payment at the end of eight years and four extra payments every thirty-two years.

To cover this huge emergency expenditure the government had to find new sources of revenue. Failure to pay or to delay a payment led to Janissary uprisings. Sahillioğlu attempts to explain historically known
uprisings of the soldiery through such failures. If the inner reserve treasury of the palace had sufficient funds, the crisis was met by loans to the government. But during the long wars in the last decades of the sixteenth century the reserves were depleted. Then the government resorted to other measures, such as imposing new taxes, debasing the silver akça or starting a war in order to secure booty and land which could be distributed in the form of timars. But these measures in turn led to a further destabilization in the peasant economy as well as the country as a whole. Following the sharp devaluation of the akça in 1584, the Iranian campaign which started in 1578, instead of bringing in new resources, entailed enormous new expenditure for the treasury and threw the empire into a long financial and political crisis. The soldiery welcomed the opening of a new front in Europe in 1593, but here too it was not a profit producing business as it had been under Süleyman the Magnificent.

NOTES

2 Babinger (1957); Majer (1982); for a critical examination of the budget given by Laonicus Chalcocondyles, see Vryonis (1976), pp. 423–52.
3 M. ʿAllī, Nuhbat al-Salṭātīn, MS Fatih Library, Istanbul 29b.
4 On the dual treasuries in Iran, see Nizam al-Mulk (1893), p. 205.
8 Sahillioglu (1985).
10 Ibid., p. 80.
11 Ibid., p. 103.
12 Ibid., p. 169.
13 Ibid., p. 178.
14 Ibid., p. 181.
15 Ibid., p. 183.
16 Ibid., p. 199.
17 Ibid., p. 268.
18 Ibid., p. 270.
19 Faroqhi (1990), p. 123; on the expenditure for the extensive public works, including the water-supply system in Mecca and Jerusalem, ibid., pp. 126–62.
20 Cited by Braudel (1972), i, p. 583.
22 BBA, Mühimme Defteri: no. 23, document no. 239 dated 981 H/1573.
23 According to a document in BBA, Fekete Tasnifi no. 1168, in the year 940 H (starts on July 23, 1533), the surplus sent to the sultan was about half a million gold pieces, and consisted of 369,793 new sultani, 54,490 old sultani.
24 And 75,65 florin; in addition 14,000 sultani was sent to Mecca and Medina to be distributed among the poor; an additional sum of 25,939 was spent for purchases of spices, drugs, pastes, jewelry and cloth for the imperial palace; altogether a sum of 366,877 gold pieces was allotted to the sultan's treasury and miscellaneous expenses.
26 Hâfit Behbûhi, MS Topkapı Palace Library, Hazine no. 1655.
28 Ibid., p. 256.
29 Ibid., pp. 258–65, finds a few thousand more.
30 İnalık (1975a).
33 Angioletto (1909), "musalem."
34 BBA, Mühimme Defteri: no. 26, 216.
35 But Oruç (1925), p. 25, mentions the presence of 10,000 yaylas at this battle.
37 Ten thousand æzebs from Rumeli, mentioned in Oruç (1925), p. 25.
38 The Anonymous Chronicle, MS BN, 105.
39 Charrière (1848), I, p. 322.
43 Ibid., pp. 203–16.
44 İnalık (1974).
45 İnalık (1978); Braudel (1972), II, pp. 1102–6, 1127–42.
47 İnalık (1992b).
49 Angioletto (1909).
56 For logistic problems in the Hungarian campaign of 1593–1603, see Finkel (1988), pp. 131–208.
57 An atavız-hane was a fiscal unit of households organized for the collection of extraordinary levies, see Barkan (1944), pp. 13–19.
59 Ibid., p. 76.
60 Ibid., p. 100.
61 İnalık (1980a), pp. 311–23.
63 İnalık (1980d), pp. 2–3.
STATE-OWNED LANDS (MİRİ)

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE STATE OWNERSHIP OF LANDS

State ownership of arable land was not an Ottoman invention. In Islamic jurisprudence, ownership of land was based in the last analysis on the concept of the conquest and the right of the Islamic community (umma) as God’s trustees. The concept of the fāṣ al-muslimin, in the sense of making the conquered lands the inalienable common property of the Muslims or the Islamic state, took its definitive institutional form during the first century of Islam under Byzantine and Sasanid influence. These were also known as baracı lands, or those lands which were left in the possession of non-Muslims in exchange for land taxes (barâç). The Caliph Umar I (634–44) reportedly argued that if the conquered lands, waters, and peasants or serf-tenants were distributed among the conquerors as the property of individuals, future generations of Muslims would be deprived of this source of revenue. Actually, state lands with peasants of similar status had existed in Byzantine Syria and Egypt as well as in Sasanid Iraq. The caliphal decision was simply legitimized by the Quranic verses on fāṣ.3

Whenever their sovereignty over a territory was challenged, the Ottoman sultans asserted their rights by saying that they had conquered the land “by force of the sword.” The assumption was that the victor acquired an absolute right over the persons of the defeated and over their properties, including the land. In Islamic Law from the Prophet’s time, Holy War and conquest (cihad and fath) had been considered the principles which established the absolute control of the Islamic community over the land and the labor of the men who cultivated it. The imam was free either to eliminate or enslave the defeated or to keep them as tenants
on the land in exchange for the regular payment of a fixed amount of ransom (çizye or harag).

In fact, the conquerors could not take the place of the indigenous peasant tenants; but, leaving them to continue to cultivate, they acted simply as "rent" gatherers. The treasury of the Muslims (bayt al-mal al-muslimin) appropriated such lands with the pre-conquest peasant populations on them as tenants. While the use of the land was left to the farmers, the state retained the dominium eminens (rakaba or rikab), as was stated by the Caliph Umar: "Rakab over land always belongs to us."

There were indeed urgent practical reasons for the state ownership of land. It was in order to build up a public treasury, to support the army and to defend and expand Islamic territory that the Caliph Umar made conquered lands the common property of the Islamic community or the state. Clearly, the rationale for state ownership of land was presented as the necessity to create a central treasury for the empire.

The dominium eminens of the state on conquered lands was sometimes interpreted as a simple right of legal control (valâ'), in consideration of the fact that the state controlled the land's use but did not in principle actually use it itself. The Ottomans, basically following Islamic tradition, recognized two principles which established proprietorship in land, namely, conquest and reclamation. Conquest gave dominium eminens on all lands to the community of the conquerors, the Muslims as a whole, or, more precisely, to the state as its embodiment. The state, then, was the only legitimate authority establishing proprietary rights on land under certain conditions, the most important of which was reclamation. Ownership of the wasteland (mevâd) was initiated by occupation of the land with the permission of the head of the Islamic community (imam); it was then completed by actual reclamation. The imam's authorization excluded interference by others and established legitimation/legalization of the acquisition. "Pure ownership" (mulk mahz) comprised all aspects of disposition (tasarruf) in an absolute fashion. But still the state held dominium eminens and under certain conditions could abrogate proprietary rights on freehold property, or such lands might be turned by its owner into vakîf in the name of the Islamic community's interest.

Controversy over whether or not the state's legal validation was necessary for the appropriation of the wastelands is of particular interest. Most authorities agreed that it was necessary. The underlying argument always was that such lands belonged to God, or to the imam as His trustee, who represented the Islamic community; it was his duty to see that such lands were administered in the way that would best serve the interests of the community and Islamic state, Din u Dawla as the Ottomans used to say. Furthermore, authorities such as Shafi'i, who gave priority to the umma (Islamic community) and its welfare in the face of dynastic-monarchical interests, saw no necessity for legalization by the political authority. The theory that the state had the dominium eminens of all lands postulated that, without the legalizing power of the state, no possession or ownership could be established. The Ottoman bureaucracy was very strict on this point, so that at the time of land surveys, titles to land in freehold, arable lands and pious foundations were checked carefully by the surveyor; and then a special diploma of the reigning sultan was issued. Thus, the principle of the first occupation did not establish ownership on land; it was the state's dominium eminens based on conquest and consequently its validation power that established ownership.

In the Mirror-for-Princes literature of Persian origin in Islam, the fundamental principle which guaranteed the whole politico-social structure was expressed in the maxim: "The land and the peasant belong to the sultan." Found in Nizam al-Mulk's famous treatise on the politics of the twelfth century, and in the Ottoman law codes, the motto actually expresses the foundation of all oriental imperial systems, and this principle always was based on the right of conquest.

In the first centuries of the Ottoman Empire, matters concerning landholding and land taxation were treated as an area of civil administration independent of religious authorities. The state (mirî) lands, about 90 percent of all the arable lands, were placed under the responsibility of the nizâm, a civil bureaucrat, and run according to a sultanic law code drawn up by the civil bureaucracy. It was this law code, actually a combination of Islamic and local practices related to the Roman-Byzantine legacy, which administered the relationships in Ottoman landholding and taxation. In fact, the system was closely analogous to that of previous Islamic and Byzantine states, and there was no reason for the Ottomans to revolutionize tested methods as long as the state received its revenues. Dependent peasant masses provided the basic underlying factor of continuity, producing within the same system but for a new ruling group. On the other hand, it is equally true that the Islamic - and Ottoman - landholding system had its own evolution in relation to changing historical conditions, and it was the task of the jurisprudence to choose and legalize certain practices or principles in response to the requirements of the situation.

It is significant that while systematic Islamic law books had no specific chapter on landholding, jurists wrote independent treatises on the subject.
in response to the need of the state administration. Actually, these later additions sought to legalize existing or surfaced conventions in the field of landholding and land taxation. As will be seen, Ottoman jurists of the sixteenth century referred to such authoritative books to make the Ottoman rules and practices conform to the Islamic tradition.

A further scrutiny of the nature of state ownership of land in Islam shows that, as in Roman Law, ownership in land presupposed three basic elements, rakaba (abusus or dominium eminens), tasarruf (abusus or possession), and istigilal (fructus or usufruct). However, in Islamic Law, these three elements were treated independently, each forming a separate object of disposition. The state retained rakaba and handed over the rights of possession and usufruct to the farmer as separate elements. Abu Hanifa, making an absolute distinction between rakaba (here, ownership) and mansif’a (usufruct), went so far as to assert that even by establishing a pious foundation (vakf) the original owner gave away only its usufruct and retained the rakaba, and so he had the right to abolish the status of vakf at any time. When Mehmed II decided to abolish private and vakf properties, this principle of inalienability of the state’s rakaba apparently was employed. We shall see that the right of usufruct was treated as another independent object of transactions, such as sale, mortgage, or transfer by will or inheritance. Thus, it is said that usufruct rights actually entailed a kind of disposition indistinguishable from ownership, a development that occurred during the eighteenth century when possession rights were extended under the dual tenancy (icaratayn) system.

Also, in the tapu contracts (see below), the transaction usually was called a sale (hav or satma) without implying the sale of the land itself but rather the rights of actual possession or usufruct.

Ottoman religious authorities asserted that state lands were those arable lands whose ownership always belonged to the public treasury but whose actual possession and usufruct rights were “fully entrusted” (ta’avis) to farmers. Also it should be kept in mind that state ownership was applied as a rule to arable lands reserved for grain cultivation, that is, those necessary for basic food production. In legal language arable land was defined as “the land ploughed,” “the cultivated land,” or “the land for which tithes are paid.”

Ömer Lütfi Barkan saw in the state’s right of eminent domain a control system necessary for the maintenance of a specific military-political regime by an all-powerful state. Instead, he should have rather emphasized a specific agrarian production mode based on the peasant family farm (see below, Ch. 6). By insisting on its character as the fundamental legal basis of the whole socio-economic system of the Ottoman – or the so-called Asiatic – empire and the determinant of the “relations of production,” the Marxist interpretation of state ownership of land admittedly offers a broader view of its significance and implications. According to the Marxist interpretation of eminent domain, basic taxes paid by the direct producer formed a land rent shared by the sultan or dominant class created around him, because “Der Staat ist hier der oberste Grundherr.” It has been argued that state ownership of land in the Ottoman Empire (as well as in the Mughal Empire of India) originated from and was based on the right of conquest and served to exploit the direct producers, or to appropriate the surplus product by a military “feudal class.” In other words, state ownership in land is seen as a legal device for exploitation imposed by a dominant class on the direct producers. Thus, in Marxist interpretation, it makes no difference whether “the usurper” is a local seigneur-landowner or a centralist state.

Close state control of landholding is also found by Marxists to be responsible for the failure of Ottoman agriculture and agrarian relations to venture into new directions, and thus for the stagnation of the Ottoman economy and society in general. Archival documentation demonstrates that the Ottoman centralist government always vigorously strove to maintain its miri system against new developments.

Accentuating Karl Marx’s notion that the Asiatic ruler established his real and actual ownership on conquered land, the Marxist legal historian F. Malkova sees in the Islamic-Ottoman rakaba something more than the dominium eminens or nuda proprietas of the state. She suggests that the Ottoman state, exercising public authority, monopolized the right of real proprietorship, which is actually the subject of civil law, and thus what the state collected as revenue from land had the nature of simple rent, as Marx and Engels claimed. She argues that the sultan exercised direct control through his exclusive right of choosing the use of the land in each individual case throughout the empire. In addition, the state reserved for itself the right to directly exploit mines, forests, and certain other soil resources. Let us add that when the state saw it necessary, as in the case of rice cultivation, it would directly organize even the production process itself. Land tax in the Marxist sense thus is simply a rent. Interestingly, this interpretation agrees in principle with that of the Islamic jurists (see below, pp. 145-53). But, as will be discussed later, the nature of Ottoman state ownership of land can be understood only within the tifti-bane system.
State-owned lands (miri)

The state-owned lands are basically divided into tapulu and mukataalu, the former comprising all lands given to peasants under the tapu regulations, and the latter includes those lands leased under a simple rental contract, mukataa. The tapulama, leasing under tapu, giving a specific status to the land, brought it under the çift-bane system. The tapulu çiftlik was family farm units given over to peasant households. The mukataalu ones were those rented to any person who, under a rental contract, a lease, paid only a lump sum rent agreed upon (maktu) for the tithes. The renters were not liable for any peasant taxes. Here, the specific nature of the çift-bane system clearly emerges. While the simple rental contract, the mukataa, was freely concluded between the state and an individual, the tapu implied a certain status stemming from an original “subjugation” (kulluk) which entailed, in addition to the tithes, certain personal obligations such as the payment of the çift-resmi or the ispence (see below, pp. 149–51). In the case of the tapulama, the one who leased the land was a dependent peasant or raïyet (singular of reaya), who had to pay all taxes and also provide certain services to the state and sipahi. According to an interpretation of the jurists, raïyet belonged to the group of subjugated non-Muslims who were left on lands belonging to the Islamic community or the state.

The lands which were subject to the tapu contract were called tapulu arazi (lands under tapu) and were ideally divided into çiftlik units. In general, tapulu lands included fields for the cultivation of grain, which made up far the greater part of arable land, as well as pasturage lands, registered meadows and lands reclaimed by peasants. Vineyards and orchards were excluded from the tapulu lands because of their status as private freehold. Vegetable gardens, when registered and taxed in the survey books, were considered among the tapulu. In other words, tapulu lands were all those arable lands registered in the survey books with fixed tax revenues, and constituted the area of the çift-bane system. Sometimes they were called “the land reserved for the peasants” (raïyetlik-ye). The Ottoman law code ruled, 13 “any land that is ploughed is miri. It is given under tapu. This is the established law.” A vineyard or garden automatically became state-owned (miri) when ploughed for cultivation, and henceforth paid regular tithes and the peasant taxes.

In addition, those arable lands reclaimed by a peasant within the boundaries of a timar automatically became tapulu and the timar-holder took for himself the taxes applicable to such land. However, as they were sometimes considered as accretions not registered in the original registers, the revenue was claimed by agents of the public treasury. But the Law Maker eventually decided in favor of the sipabi, because of their great service during campaigns, and added that the boundaries of timars be clearly distinguished. In general, the state left such windfalls to the sipabis as an incentive to increase the arable lands under tapu, and enjoy the extra revenue until the next land survey. In general, the sipahi made every effort to unify pieces of land to create a family farm (çiftlik), or encourage his peasants to reclaim land within the timar.

The eligibility to acquire land by tapu was limited to those who could cultivate it and pay taxes, i.e., the peasants (reaya). In principle, townsfolk or members of the military class were excluded. When they obtained it one way or another, they were subject to the obligations of peasants and were treated as such. Nomads who were not registered in the state surveys were qualified only for state-owned lands not already given to the villagers under tapu. When a family farm land became vacant, first those relatives who had preeminent rights and then the inhabitants of the village were eligible to bid for the tapu.

Acquisition of the tapulu land was distinguished from that by simple lease contract, purchase or bequest by a simple procedure called tapulama or tapuya verme. In practice, the tapu contract, as found in the court records, 14 was drawn up in the form of a sales contract. In it, the state agent declared that he “sold” the land described with all the pertinent rights and, in return, received the tapu payment in cash. Then, the other party declared that he accepted all the conditions. The kadi certified that the entire procedure took place in full accordance with the prescriptions of the Sharia, and the contract was kept in the kadi’s register. The usual formula used in such contracts was as follows:

The reason for the redaction of the document is that Mehmed, holder of the timar in such and such a place, expressed his will in the court as follows: I gave the possession of the çiftlik situated [within the boundaries described] to ‘Ali who is holding this document on condition that he shall cultivate it and collect its produce and pay the tithes and dues each year, and I received from him the tapu fee in cash, in the amount of . . . akça. Then ‘Ali accepted the statement.

This contract stipulated nothing about the conditions of possession, the inheritance rights, land use, taxes and labor services, etc. All of these aspects are detailed in the sultanic law codes which are separate from
Islamic Law. The word *tapu* used in the contract implies that either party agreed on all the provisions prescribed in the sultanic laws.

The *tapu* contract gave the parties the legal guarantee to go to court in case a dispute arose about the conditions of possession. Sultanic law confirms the peasant's possession rights as follows: "When the land of a peasant (raṣiyyet) is given into the peasant's possession, no one can take it away from him under the *tapu* law. And once possessed under *tapu*, a land cannot be subject to a new *tapu*.

It appears that most of the time the parties did not need to go to town and pay the court fees, and everything proceeded as required by custom. Therefore, sultanic law recognized that if a peasant held the actual possession of land long enough, and no one disputed it, this constituted legal possession. The relatively small number of formal contracts in the court records suggests that the legal formality was often neglected by *timar*-holders and peasants. Moreover, if a *timar*-holder let the peasant cultivate land without the *tapu* document for some time, successive *timar*-holders could not claim the *tapu* fee.

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**THE NATURE OF POSSESSION RIGHTS UNDER THE *TAPU* SYSTEM**

The peasant's possession right, generally described as *tasarruf*, was further clarified as a *taفز* or *tasvir*. *Tasarruf* means simply actual possession. *Taفز*, meaning "giving full authorization," actually designated the peasant's independence in organizing the entire process of production. Other portions of the law, as well as the kadi court records, make clear that the *timar*-holder could not interfere in the peasant's cultivation activities except when the peasant diverted the use of the land so that it affected regular grain production or its *miri* nature. From the Islamic Law standpoint, the legal nature of the *taفز* of state-owned land was a renting of the land. However, a *taفز* contract did not contain all the conditions of a regular Islamic renting or lease procedure because the peasant was not free to negotiate the conditions of the lease. In the attempt to interpret *miri* land possession in terms of Islamic leasing, contradictions inevitably emerged, since the specific provisions of state ownership originally were determined by a set of empirical rules for maintaining a historically shaped agrarian system, or * çift*-*bâne*.

In possession under *tapu*, the principal rights which established a real ownership were denied. The possessor of state-owned land could not sell, donate, endow, mortgage or leave it by will, or change its original use by turning it into a vineyard or orchard or by constructing buildings on it. On the other hand, possession with *tapu* entailed certain privileges which distinguished it from a simple tenancy, such as the rights of transfer (*ferag*) to another farmer, bequeathing to sons, and preeminent rights of acquisition by wife, daughter and brother.

Now let us examine the reasons why these particular restrictions were made and privileges added in the *tapu* lease. The sale of state-owned land was prohibited mainly because, when sold, the land would then become the object of private ownership with all its consequences. According to Islamic jurisprudence, all debts of a deceased person were paid out of his properties before division of the inheritance. In practice, the court records contain instances when lenders attempted to take the peasant's land for an unpaid debt and to deprive the son of his inheritance. Apparently because such cases became quite widespread, the sultan issued a law, in 1601, that under no circumstances could *miri* land be sold to pay a debt. In particular, Ottoman legists expressed the concern that in such cases, the *ciftlik* units of the peasants would be apportioned among the heirs or buyers and the whole Ottoman tax assessment and prebendal system would collapse. The integrity of the *ciftlik* units was particularly stressed in the Ottoman land laws (see below, p. 148).

However, as Abussu'ud indicated and court records attest, *miri* lands became the subject of sales.16 Although it was extremely difficult to sell a piece of state-owned land because the local sipahi or others had vested interests in keeping its *miri* status intact, there were loopholes and legal devices by which the law could be circumvented (p. 112). Once sold with a court document, land could not revert to its *miri* status, because it became the subject of a sale contract under Islamic Law, which establishes absolute ownership. It required the sultan's radical decision to recover such lands for the state as seen in Mehmed II's land reform.17 Islamic Law, of course, was supreme, and it was a sin to act contrary to its prescriptions. Thus, in survey books, the registers of the kadi and the records concerning private estates and pious foundations, we frequently find a note emphatically stating that the land in question was acquired through a sale in accordance with Islamic Law. Sometimes the transaction gives the impression of collusion. The same device was widely employed by private interests to convert state (*haraci*-*fey*) lands into private estates in the early centuries of the caliphate; it was obviously to serve the state that some jurists introduced the rule that any sale of *haraci* lands was contrary to the law and consequently null and void.18
The Sheyhülislam Abussu’ud’s rulings give the impression that, by the middle of the sixteenth century, the illegal sale of state-owned lands had become widespread enough to cause alarm in government circles. Since the religious courts were instrumental in these sales, the opinion of the Sheyhülislam, the most authoritative religious person in the realm, was needed to stop the practice. Abussu’ud ruled that “the delivery by the kadis of such documents of sale is absolutely null and void.” In various rulings he declared these sale documents absolutely against Islamic Law; the question was even asked whether a kadi who issued such a document was liable for punishment. It appears that in most cases a sale of state-owned land occurred because the situation was ambiguous, or it was impossible for the kadi to investigate and establish the true nature of the possession. Of course, bribery or favoritism also played a role. Successive sales of such lands further consolidated the proprietary rights of its owner.

Ambiguity seems to have stemmed mainly from the fact that the transfer (ferag) of state-owned land in return for monetary compensation, which was a lawful transaction, also was called a sale. To reduce this ambiguity, the religious ruling required that in such transfers the kadi should specifically state that “the possessor of the land transferred its full possession (tasarruf) to so-and-so with the sipahi’s permission in return for such-and-such a payment of money; and thereupon the sipahi too confirmed it by giving it in tapu for such-and-such an amount of money paid as hakk-i karar” (payment for the establishment of permanent possession rights). Such a formula made it definite that the object of the transaction was not a regular sale with freehold rights but a simple transfer of possession or tenure.

When an influential member of the ruling class entered into possession of land by sale, he usually went also to the sultan to obtain a document granting freehold rights on it in order to consolidate his proprietorship.

In the mid-sixteenth century, Sheyhülislam Abussu’ud (d. 1574), preoccupied with the problem of the state land versus freehold status and taxation, formulated responses (fetwas) on the land regime with commentaries based on classical Islamic theory.

Given by the most authoritative religious scholar of the time, his fetwas had a decisive effect on the subsequent Ottoman interpretation of landholding and taxation practices in the empire. Abussu’ud’s formulation on state-owned land was to be included in the new law codes and survey registers as the ultimate and definitive commentary of the Ottoman land law. Obviously, Abussu’ud’s main concern was to give an authoritative definition of the Ottoman miri regime and land taxation, in order to stop practices which threatened the landholding system. He pointed out that some judges who were unaware of the miri nature of a certain category of land were issuing documents legalizing freehold rights on these lands; this malpractice, he said, had become so widespread that it began to threaten the entire traditional order in the public as well as private sectors. In an effort to provide the religious sanction, he tried to explain the Ottoman miri regime within the principles formulated by the great jurists of the ninth century, in particular, Abu Yusuf, the most liberal exponent of the Hanafi school.

According to Abussu’ud, the miri meant, in Ottoman practice, the land under the state dominium eminens. He asserted that, though termed öprü, that is, subject to tithes being in the possession of Muslims, in practice such lands were originally haraci. If pre-conquest non-Muslim cultivators were allowed to continue cultivating such lands, they had to pay on their harvest a haraç rated from one-fifth to two-thirds, depending on the circumstances. In contrast, those conquered lands which were distributed among the Muslim conquerors, or the lands acquired in peace, rendered only one-tenth (öprü). Abussu’ud stressed that all lands in the Ottoman Empire had been acquired by military force so that they were all haraci lands, and thus owed a land tax at the established rate of haraç. This interpretation was bound to have revolutionary effects on the Ottoman peasantry because, prior to this ruling, the imperial laws had fixed the percentage of the tithe as only one-eighth for lands reserved for grain cultivation. And, as the survey registers show, these laws actually were applied in the conquered lands in the fourteenth (Bithynia, Thrace, northern Greece, Bulgaria and western Anatolia), fifteenth (Albania, Morea, Serbia and Bosnia) and sixteenth centuries. The rate of one-fifth was imposed only in the lands conquered after Abussu’ud had issued his commentary, that is, in Cyprus (1570–71), Georgia (1570) and Crete (1669). In the lands of earlier conquest, tithes at a rate of one-eighth generally were maintained, while the extraordinary taxes (avartiz) now were more frequently imposed. It appears that, in one way or another, state revenues had to be increased in order to meet the needs of a quickly expanding budget. But at this time, as Abussu’ud himself tells us, peasants who were taking the one-tenth in its literal meaning, disputed even the tithe of one-eighth, and claimed the right to pay only
STATE-OWNED LANDS AND THE TIMAR SYSTEM

Timar allotments are delimitated following the boundaries of villages, çiftlikts and mezaras. Although timar grantees were unable to own or use the land for their own benefit, they were authorized by law to have control of arable lands, vacant or possessed by the peasant reaya, pastures, wastelands, fruit trees, forests or waters, within their timar territories. Timar grantees supervised the manner of possession and transfer of the tapulu lands, rented vacant arable lands and collected taxes for themselves from outsiders, using the pastures and waters or cultivating the unregistered lands within the boundaries of their timar. Fruits from the naturally grown trees also belonged to them. In brief, one can speak of the “territorial” rights of the sipahis within the boundaries of the timar.

The timar-holders also had police authority to pursue and arrest wrongdoers in their respective territories. But no penalties, even the smallest fines, could be imposed by them without a prior verdict from the local judge in accordance with imperial penal law. In brief, their duties consisted of protecting the persons and rights of peasants who were assigned to them in their timar territory and to join the imperial army during campaigns when called. Higher echelons of the timar hierarchy, those in possession of ziamets, were also responsible for maintaining security and consequently shared in the revenue from fines occurring in sipahi timars. However, this situation caused frequent disputes and called for reform. The territories of the ziamet holders were immune from the periodic security tours of the governors and their lands formed a privileged category called serbest, immune or autonomous.

Already in the surveys under Murad II (1421–51), more than one sipahi jointly held a single timar. Such timars might have developed out of the government’s policy to keep the registered timar units (külç) intact while increasing the number of sipahis. This was also the case when a timar was granted to a sipahi’s sons in common upon his death. However, in the sixteenth century, joint timars usually were held by non-relatives. On the other hand, timar-holders were given shares in various villages to make up their timar instead of receiving an entire village. This was a natural outcome of the need to make assignments of various sizes and promotions without being obliged to partition large timar units. On the other hand, there is a deliberate policy behind it: to prevent a sipahi from acquiring complete and independent control of the land and peasantry of a village in the same fashion as a feudal lord. Likewise, the bass lands of the governors lay scattered in various parts of the sancak, subprovince, or béşer béşerlik, province. But in this case there was an additional reason, namely to make the governor equally concerned with all parts of his territory, particularly during his periodic tours for security.

In their control of land and the peasants, timar-holders cannot be compared to western feudal lords. They were authorized to collect the assigned tax revenue but had no specific rights to land or peasants except for services defined by the law. They were not landowners, though the laws sometimes conventionally referred to them as the “owner” (sahib) of the land or the peasant reaya. As state agents, they simply supervised the possession and use of land. But they were expressly prohibited from possessing and cultivating lands reserved for the peasant reaya. They could have a çiftlik and/or a vineyard and a meadow to satisfy the needs of their families, retainers and horses. In the classical age, it was against the basic rules of the timar system to transfer the father’s timar as a patrimony to a son or sons in common. The latter case occurred in the early centuries of the Ottoman state mainly as a transitory measure, when indigenous seigneurial families were incorporated into the Ottoman timar system. In Albania, during the first half of the fifteenth century, when it was a frontier land where Ottoman rule was not firmly established, most ordinary timars were transferred to the sons. Thus, while in earlier times a hereditary principle regarding timar transfers seems to have prevailed, with the progress towards government centralization, the non-hereditary principle won out. In fact, the lack of inheritance rights on land and the frequent dismissal from timars is an essential characteristic of the Ottoman timar system. This impressed contemporary European observers and was interpreted as the principal reason why the Ottomans did not have a patrimonial feudal system or hereditary landed nobility as in the West. Not only were bass allotments held as long as the high office was occupied, but also timars and ziamets were retained contingent upon active service. When dismissed, timar-holders lost all rights and control over the land, peasant reaya and income. However, they retained the title of sipahi and were eligible for another timar or ziamet on condition that they remain in the military class by participating in the imperial campaigns. This “candidacy” (mülahazet) period ended when they proved themselves useful during campaigns and obtained a timar. If a dismissed sipahi engaged in the occupation of a peasant and failed to do
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military service for seven years, he lost his title of sipabi and all the privileges of the military class. Then, as a peasant (rahiyeyet) he was obligated to perform all subject (kul) services and pay taxes.

As a rule, upon the death of a sipabi his son or sons were eligible for timars, the size of which was determined by the rank and the actual size of the prebend held by the father. But a sipabi could also give up his timar and ask the administration to assign the whole or part of it to his son or sons.

As seen earlier, there was fierce competition for the limited number of timars and this became one of the most important questions for the empire at all times. The number of candidates for a timar grew over time, creating a difficult situation by the time of Mehmed II. Initially, candidates were chosen and recommended individually or as a group to the government by the commander under which they served. Upon receipt of the memorandum (tezkire), the sultan issued an order that commanded the provincial governor to award the candidate a timar within his territory. Such a candidate, “with the sultan’s order” (eli emirlii) went out and sought a vacant timar fitting his conditions. Most of the time the search and waiting was long and success largely depended upon his ability to give gifts and bribes to the governor and his staff.

It is a common mistake to assume that timars were reserved exclusively for native Turks or that they constituted the majority. In the Balkans, it is true that Turks fighting on the frontiers, or volunteers or deportees (sürgün) from Anatolia received timars. But even in this case the system favored patrimonial relationships in the process of being recommended to the government and in receiving a timar. A great number of the timarholders were actually dependent men of the governor. On the other hand, Janissaries, palace gate-keepers, imperial kitchen assistants and others who, after a period of service, were entitled to a “release” from palace service and to receive a timar were in a privileged position. Dismissed sipabisi anxiously seeking re-allocation, as noted above, also swelled the ranks of candidates. It has been suggested that there was a regular rotation system so that timar-holders were “dismissed” after serving a defined period of tenure the length of which, however, varied widely. In any event all these timar candidates, while still taking part in the sultan’s campaigns, formed a competing group, clamoring for favoritism, patronage and resorting to corruption. It is no wonder that dismissed sipabisi are mentioned among the organizers and leaders of the rebels in the reports to the sultan during the terrible Turcoman insurrections in Anatolia in the period 1510–29. The government had to take drastic measures to meet the crisis either by turning existing timars into jointly held ones, dividing the timars into shares or creating extra timar units through new surveys or by conquering neighboring countries and distributing the land as timars.

On the other hand when the provincial sipabisi proved to be inadequate for modern warfare during the war against the Habsburgs in the last decade of the sixteenth century, they were neglected. Sekban and sanca mercenary troops equipped with firearms and a considerably expanded Janissary corps increasingly replaced the conventional troops in the battlefields.

**Hassa çiftlik**

Prior to Süleyman I’s time, sipabis were each given direct possession and management of one çiftlik land, as well as of vineyards, meadows, fruit trees and flour mills – a pre-Ottoman practice in the Byzantine and Balkan states. This type of possession was known as hassa. It was supposed that the sipabi could find time and means to manage all these properties through the labor services provided by the dependent peasantry. But, unlike the Byzantine and Balkan pronioia holder, the Ottoman sipabi had to go on campaign almost every year and had little time to care for these possessions. In addition, the Ottoman regime cut down many of the labor services or converted them into cash taxes. Under the new conditions the sipabis were unable to attend to the exploitation of the hassa resources, even when they could rent them to private persons under the mukataa or renting system and merely collect the income. Actually, as revealed in the survey books, the Ottoman sipabi usually had recourse to the latter method instead of attempting direct management. In other words, this was a development in the direction of further professionalization of the military and its alienation from all types of involvement in production. The renting system as applied to public revenue resources was actually the basic system of exploitation employed by the government and by the members of the elite. From another point of view, the renting system depended on a more progressive monetary economy and the presence of people in the countryside who could pay cash rents. In brief, it can be argued that the Ottoman imperial system signified a more centralist regime with less labor services, or more professionalization in the military class and more peasant independence in the production process.

Whatever interpretation for the spread of the renting method under the Ottoman centralist regime is offered, the fact remained that the sipabi proved to be an inefficient manager of hassa land and inefficient as well
in pursuing the rent for the resources reserved for him. The Ottoman
surveyors reported this inefficiency to the central government repeatedly
from all over the empire. Possession under renting was considered a
better way than possession by tapu to guarantee the upkeep of the sipahi’s
“reserve” (bassa) land, meadows, fruit trees or flour mills. When in 1339
this fact was observed and reported by the surveyor in Bosnia, the sultan
ordered the abolition of the bassa status of such lands, that is, the direct
control and renting of the sipahi and the “sale” to reysya under tapu. The
same policy was applied in the Hüdavendigar sancak in Anatolia in about
the same period.

NOTES
1 Abü Yusuf (1302 H/1884), pp. 28-39, also see pp. 23-27, 52-58; Morony
2 Modarressi (1983), pp. 105-51, baraci lands of early Islam correspond to
Ottoman state-owned lands, see Haque (1977), pp. 92-95, 105, 117-50, 152,
163, 170.
3 Abü Yusuf (1302 H/1884), pp. 23-27; Lokkegaard (1950), pp. 38-72; Haque
(1977), pp. 121-70.
5 İnalıçık (1975b) and (1975c).
6 For example, Abü Yusuf (1302 H/1884).
8 On karanayn, see MTM, I, p. 52; Akgündüz (1988), pp. 354-99; Kreiser
9 MTM, I, p. 87, the law stipulates that “all land that is ploughed and cultivated
is absolutely state-owned (miri) . . . land which is ploughed and cultivated
never becomes freehold.”
147-58; no. 58, pp. 403-302; no. 59, 414-22.
12 İnalıçık (1982a).
13 MTM, I, p. 51.
14 See the karsunname of Zvornik dated 1548, Djurdjev et al. (1957), pp. 108-11.
15 Law code of Mehmed II, text 15r.
16 MTM, I, p. 51.
17 For the “abrogation” of the oekf and freehold status of agricultural lands,
19 MTM, I, p. 51.
20 MTM, I, p. 58.
21 For examples, see Göbekli (1952), p. 436; Barkan (1988), pp. 69, 102-3,
235-35.
LAND POSSESSION OUTSIDE THE MİRİ SYSTEM

DEAD LANDS (MEVAT) AND THE SULTAN’S GRANTS OF LAND (TEMLİK)

“Dead” or waste land having the potential to be revived and owned, and mainly used to create estates through a sultan’s grant (temli̇k) for the elite, played an extremely important role in the social and economic history of Islamic empires. “Dead” land involved the questions of private and state ownership of land, expansion of arable land and the tax base, as well as a specific type of agrarian exploitation. Thus, from the earliest times, the activity of legists added an important chapter to Islamic Law regarding the problems related to “dead” land. First of all, the state’s dominium eminens was established by the Prophet’s tradition saying: “Verily all uninhabited, uncultivated and ownerless lands are for God and his Messenger.” The first controversial question was how to define the “dead” land. Corresponding to res nullius in Roman law, it was defined first of all as wastelands such as forests, swamps, marshes and deserts. But some legists added those arable lands which were abandoned by their cultivators and remained uncultivated and ownerless over a long period of time. If, however, the previous cultivators returned before much time had elapsed, they had preeminent rights to reclaim the land.

As it placed the extensive lands recorded in the Ottoman land surveys as mezraa, deserted, or halı, uninhabited, lands in the category of dead lands, the commentary had very important consequences in practice. When applied, it would allow the state to make land grants (temli̇k) of arable land which had been deserted by its former inhabitants to members of the ruling elite. Usually such lands were exploited by neighboring villagers as a kind of reserve land or were inhabited by them or by wandering peasants or nomads. Sometimes the previous village population even returned. The sultan’s grant of private ownership of deserted and uninhabited lands meant the loss of these advantages for the nearby villages and led to the exploitation of peasants by landowners, since the peasants on such lands had to hand over a higher percentage of their produce as sharecroppers. However, in the Ottoman Empire, in contrast to the experience of lower Iraq in Abbasid times, such lands were often settled under conditions of regular tenancy by peasants. Evidently, difficulty in attracting sharecropping workers into the uncultivated lands was the reason for favoring the peasants in the Ottoman case. One may speak of the expansion of agriculture and the tax base only in those cases where estates were created from dead land, forests or swamps.

In principle, the Ottoman sultan granted deserted or uninhabited lands to individuals when settlement and cultivation was possible only through this method. Otherwise, in order to obtain revenue from abandoned lands, the government used the simple renting method (mukataaî). Actual reclamation could precede or follow the imam’s permission for reclamation. Thus the state was in a position to prevent appropriation of abandoned arable land reserved for the peasantry. In reclamation, real improvements, such as preparing the land for cultivation, were required for acquisition; it was not enough just to enclose the land by hedges.

The legists, finding the imam’s permission a prerequisite for the ownership of reclaimed land, added arguments of a practical nature, saying that without a regulatory authority the acquisition of such lands would lead to constant conflict and even fighting among interested individuals. As kadi court records show, the appropriation of village commons, pastures, threshing floor, etc. by notables, at the expense of the peasants, was a general problem against which the imperial bureaucracies in the Byzantine and the Ottoman empires constantly had to fight.

An analysis of the imperial land grant (temli̇k) deeds can further clarify the Ottoman notion of landownership. As a rule, the procedure for obtaining a land grant started with a formal application to the sultan, directly or through a high dignitary such as the grand vizier or the begler-begi. The occasions for the application varied extensively: in most cases, the applicant stated that he needed the revenue to establish a charitable work through a pious foundation—a mosque complex, a medrese or fountain—or, less frequently, for his own benefit and that of his descendants, or to make an addition to an already established property or pious foundation.
The land applied for had to be defined clearly. The object of a grant was usually cultivated land—a village or villages with its peasants (rayas), or abandoned arable land or pastures and meadows, or wasteland, or land reclaimed by the applicant and turned into an estate, or sometimes simply the use of a defined amount of water from the public system.

In the title deed, the sultan conferred ownership on the applicant, recognizing that he deserved such a favor because of his loyalty and his distinguished services. The land granted was delimited carefully in the title deed. Usually, after the official grant, the interested person wanted to be certain of the boundaries and obtained a separate document with their description.

A special document of delimitation known as surnamz name, in the form of an imperial diploma, was issued; this guaranteed freehold possession of the defined land and prevented any intervention by outsiders, including the local authorities. The grantee’s freehold ownership was established on everything within these boundaries, including the arable land, wasteland, hills, forests, rivers, lakes, and springs. The state relinquished in favor of the grantee all its rights, including taxes and the right of entry to pursue criminals. A special formula emphasizing this immunity from official control was used, stating that the land was given “in the way of full immunity” (sersbetiyet) and it was “crossed out from the registers in the state bureaus,” and the local authorities or anybody else were prohibited “from setting their feet” on the land.

The full autonomy and immunities pertaining to such lands led to important changes in the Ottoman social and administrative organization. Most significantly, peasants abandoning their farms in their villages tended to come and settle in these sanctuaries. Thus, land grants had the effect of ruining the family farm system on regular state-owned lands. This is why the abuse in granting land by the sultan was vehemently condemned by the bureaucrat-critics. On the other hand, since police forces in the rural areas under the jurisdiction of the local authorities, that is, sancak-begs or suqdas, could not enter these lands, individuals who were pursued for their illegal acts took refuge in them. Because such land grants or vakf lands usually welcomed potential labor of whatever origin to expand their cultivated area, disputes arose between their managers and the local administrative authorities. However, in the sixteenth century, this development was not so widespread as to permit us to state that land grants subverted the state-owned land system and gave rise to a class of landowners. Besides, it should be remembered that such land grants were made less frequently from miri lands than from reclaimed wastelands.

From the beginning of the Ottoman state, the sultans made land grants mostly to enable the members of the elite to found pious endowments—a purpose made explicit in the grant diplomas. Also one of the most popular kind of land grants were those made in favor of the founder of dervish convents (zaviyes), which had vital functions in creating Turkish rural settlement in the conquered lands. Under Süleyman I, however, many convents of the heterodox Turcoman kizilbas were closed down and their vakf lands confiscated because they had become centers of anti-Ottoman propaganda. But later, again in the reign of Süleyman I, it was admitted that a safe and easy journey, as well as prosperity along the highway to Erzurum in eastern Asia Minor, was disrupted as a result of their abrogation, so a number of them were restored. In any event, early convents and estates/vakfs based on property grants were mostly created out of lands reclaimed from swamps and forests.

As stated above, the grant blocked all taxes due to the public treasury, so that a tax collector could not visit the estate or vakf. However, it was exceptional that the poll-tax, an Islamic tax paid in cash, also was included. In general, tithes and customary dues made up the income from the land grants. In most cases, the landlord simply sent a steward to the estate to collect the income—the same taxes and dues as under state control. The steward’s functions were the same as a timar-holder’s, that is, to collect the assigned dues, to ensure that peasant families did not alter the status and use of the land, and, to maintain or increase the number of the peasant family farm units.

Except in the case where the land was reclaimed and granted as freehold, the grantee was usually not directly involved in the production process. In any case, shifts in the status of the villages from miri to the private estate/vakf or vice-versa did not affect its production organization at the level of the direct producer, or the peasant’s obligations towards the landlord or the state.

In the first three centuries of the empire, large land grants often were granted to sultans or to viziers, mostly to enable them to establish a major vakf establishment. For example, in order to enable Sokollu Mehmed Pasha to build a mosque complex in the newly conquered city of Beşkerek, several abandoned villages were given as freehold in the 1530s. The powerful Sultana Kösem (d. 1651) constructed a monumental bridge linking northern and central Greece, thanks to the rich vakfs in the area, previously granted as freehold by Süleyman I to his daughter Mührumah and subsequently managed by the sultanas.

In some situations, the grantee might later on request additional rights in the lands previously granted. For example, Hürrrem Sultan, the wife
of Süleyman I, requested the freehold ownership of six villages which had come into existence within the boundaries of land for which the grant previously had been given to her. During the period 1541–51, the new villages had emerged when a number of peasants from outside settled on her property. In general, the transfer of peasants to such grants or vakf lands was not welcomed by the central bureaucracy since it caused harm to settlements under the public trust. In this case, the additional grant was made, but further settlements by outsiders were not allowed, nor could agents of the sultana encourage peasants to come and settle.

The land granted in favor of Grand Vizier Ahmed Pasha in 1554 shows how a freehold property was established out of abandoned lands. Ahmed Pasha requested the temlik of the two plots deserted by their peasant populations which he bought from a certain Yahya and, settling his Bulgarian, Hungarian and Serbian slaves, turned the plots into villages with cultivated lands. Since these lands originally belonged to the category of the conquered lands, the dominium eminens belonged to the state and a rent always had to be paid to the state treasury. When Ahmed received the grant, that is, the freehold proprietorship, this rent also was granted to him.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, sultanic grants of state lands to individuals consisted mostly of those lands which were found abandoned and unused. Also, a significant portion of them were merely wasteland (mevât). The sultans, or more exactly, the bureaucrat-statesmen, were reluctant to give away prosperous villages with their peasant families to individuals. By granting "dead" land to members of the ruling elite who had the capital to reclaim or revivify abandoned lands or wastelands, new sources of revenues were created and eventually important public services were provided, since most of these lands soon were donated by their owners to charitable purposes through the foundation of religious endowments (vakf) – such as the construction of mosques, schools, libraries, bazaars and shops, bridges or fountains.

In reality, the struggle carried on by the central bureaucracy against the greed of the other members of the ruling elite was an eternal question in the Ottoman Empire, as was the case in earlier patrimonial empires. Even as early as the first half of the fifteenth century, and particularly during political crises when the sultans had to make significant concessions to the religious and military elite, a great amount of state-owned lands escaped state control through land grants and vakfs.

The fact that the state always retained dominium eminens is clearly seen in cases when someone with a freehold grant did not comply with its conditions. So, for example, if he did not cultivate the land for three successive years, he lost his ownership rights. The imam legally could give the land to another person. Thus it was the actual reclamation and cultivation that was the real purpose for land grant and legalized ownership. In the last analysis, ownership of land appears to have been always dependent on the paramount interest of the Islamic community or state.

In the Ottoman Empire a revision and "abrogation" of such land titles occasionally was carried out, although the operation always entailed a profound political crisis, as happened in the period 1470–1512 (see below).

Granting of arable lands as private estates goes back to the early Islamic period, when it eventually engendered a similar social transformation. During the first two centuries of the caliphate, a powerful centralist government was able to maintain the integrity of the baraci, the state-owned lands. Then, in the subsequent period, the estate system spread both on the reclaimed "dead" lands as well as on the regular baraci lands. In other words, in Islamic empires, including the Ottoman, the weakening of the central power entailed a relative dissolution of the classical landholding system.

We have seen that the state's main interest in the granting of land was to bring abandoned or wastelands under cultivation and thus create sources of revenue for public works projects. But an individual's motivation for investing capital to improve such lands was evidently his desire to create a religious-charitable work in the form of a vakf, or in most cases to ensure a perpetual source of revenue for his family and offspring under the so-called family vakf.

As far as the economic organization was concerned, estates and vakfs from wasteland constituted a category which contrasted with the state-owned lands where the peasant family farm under state control, or çift-bane system, was the norm. As the above examples demonstrate, in many of the estates land and labor organization were different at the beginning, with wage or servile labor and sharecropping, and sometimes the land would simply be turned into a ranch for breeding cattle. However, over time, the land and labor organization in many estates and vakfs also began to take the regular form of a family labor farm or çift-bane under tapu. As we have seen, peasant families from state-owned lands often settled on these estates and vakfs, and also, because the slave population which settled there was organized as peasant families on the basis of çift-bane, they later acquired mostly the status of the regular free reaya. Then, the regulations concerning the general status of the peasants
and land use were applied as in the state-owned lands, and the same rent/tax and dues constituted the income. Besides, there was always a chance that freehold and even vakfl lands would revert back to their original miri state. The only significant difference was that the peasantry on the freehold or vakfl lands enjoyed immunities and better protection. In the private estates or vakfls, as well as in the imperial domains, the most interesting feature, from an economic viewpoint, was the fact that the peasants collected a large amount of surplus wheat to export to distant markets in the urban centers of the empire and in Europe. Many of them also were oriented towards the production of cash-crops – cotton, sesame, flax and rice, to mention the most important ones.

Thus, as long as the owners of estates and vakfls did not appropriate state-owned lands, they apparently played an important and positive role in the economy of the empire. Being in a position to accumulate cash capital, the ruling elite formed the main group in the society able to invest in and expand the arable lands. In the classical age, those who controlled such estates were the high dignitaries of the central bureaucracy under the direct control of the sultan. This state of affairs was particularly true when grants were made from wastelands, and these sometimes formed important economic projects. However, because of the basic patrimonial character of the state, it was common to find land grants made from lands in good condition, and assigned to the sultan's favorites. In the sixteenth century, such aberrations remained limited as long as the sultan's centralist authority was intact, and conscientious bureaucrats like Celalzade and his disciples used it to preserve the original imperial system. At the turn of the century, the memorialists and counselors to the sultan bitterly complained of the growing influence of the palace favorites in the government and of the sultan's loss of independence, which resulted in the plunder of the state-owned lands through the awarding of irresponsible land grants.

THE EXTENSION OF STATE OWNERSHIP AND DUAL OWNERSHIP OF LAND: THE DİVANİ-MALİKANE SYSTEM

In 1478 Mehmed II ordered that all founding charters of freehold and vakfl lands were to be investigated and those not meeting the requirements for re-valuation should be "abrogated" and re-assigned to state ownership. The justification given for this radical move was that vakfl buildings in a ruined condition or diverted to other uses were considered to have lost their real charitable and religious purpose, and so the vakfl lands had to return to state ownership. Every new ruler had the ultimate right to inspect the legality of freehold and vakfl lands for re-validation. Villages and farms granted by the early sultans must have amounted to a substantial part of total revenues when Mehmed II ordered the revision of all freehold lands and vakfls in his dominions. According to the testimony of Tursun Beg, an official directly engaged in the revision, state ownership of over 20,000 villages and farms was re-established.13

Practiced by other, earlier Islamic rulers, the state's claim over freehold land and vakfls actually was based on the assumption that the eminent domain of the state never became obsolete on arable lands conquered from non-Muslims. On the other hand, the state claimed a "government share" (divani), also on the assumption that the peasants, and water used, always belonged to the state. In particular, the peasant's personal taxes of customary origin (gift-tax) formed the basis of state taxation. Mehmed II's bureaucrats believed that state lands had escaped state control and served the personal interests of certain "inactive" groups such as retired ulema, dervishes and absentee lords. Small plots granted to dervish convents by early sultans particularly became a target of abrogation. Following the empire-wide revision the sultan distributed "abrogated" lands as simars to the soldiery to expand his provincial cavalry army.

This radical "reform," reminiscent of the confiscation by absolutist Western monarchs of ecclesiastical and feudal lands, triggered a deep social and political crisis throughout the empire. The traditional non-military groups, which suffered most by the abrogation, began to form secret opposition centers, particularly in Amasya around Prince Bayezid and in Konya. Among religious opponents, the Sufi orders, in particular Halvatiyya dervishes, became most active in organizing secret opposition against the "despotic," "anti-Sharia" measures of the sultan, who was rumored to have been misled by evil councilors. At Mehmed's death, the general discontent exploded in a terrible insurrection in which the Grand Vizier Mehmed Pasha was ferociously murdered and Bayezid was brought to the throne instead of Cem, who was supported by the military faction. Under Bayezid II a reaction, rather a counter-revolution, swept the empire and most of the confiscated freehold and vakfl lands were returned to their former owners by the new sultan, who was highly praised as the "restorer of the Islamic Law and tradition." The land surveys and other documentary collections of this reign attest to the
intensity and extension of the restoration. However, it was not universal, and the Conqueror’s “reform” survived to consolidate the power of the Ottoman centralist monarchy under his successors. A more conciliatory device to solve the problem of using freehold lands to secure additional troops was the so-called “dual ownership” (iki bastan, or divani-malikane), in which the state and landowner shared the surplus of the peasant production as tax or rent. As a rule, Ottoman sultans recognized the land grants previously made by Muslim rulers, while they considered themselves free to bestow such grants in lands conquered from the Christians in the Balkans. Freehold arable land, acquired by grant, sale or inheritance, was quite extensive in the countries which came under Islamic rule before the Ottomans. Thus, in central Anatolia and the Arab provinces, the Ottoman state had to confirm the hereditary freehold rights of the old landowning families. But, at the same time, the state claimed that such lands originally fell into the category of conquered (barac), and that the state, having inalienable sovereign rights over the reaya cultivating such lands, had an exclusive right over the state taxes. Therefore, in return for confirming the ownership rights in cases where such rights could not be denied, the state imposed on landowners the obligation to furnish auxiliary soldiers for the sultan’s army. However, unlike an ordinary sipahi, the landowner could not be dismissed and lose the land when he failed to fulfill the military aid. In such cases he had only to pay compensation. He disposed the land as freehold in all its legal aspects, namely, he could sell, donate, mortgage, and leave to his legal heirs who could in turn partition the land. Thus, private ownership rights sanctioned by Islamic Law continued, which a Muslim state could not ignore. The owner’s share in tithes (malikane), as well as the state’s share (divani), were taken in varying rates according to the fertility of the soil and local custom. State insistence on its exclusive control over the labor of the reaya is of particular interest in this case. The private owner might be an individual or a pious endowment, and the sultan might assign the divani share to its agents, sipabis or state officials, as prebend, or to any person as a favor. Of course, both the owner’s and state’s share of the produce always were paid by the direct producer, the reaya, separately to the private owner and the state. Most malikanes over time were converted into pious endowments; the sultan sometimes added the divani portion as a favor to vakfs endowed by eminent persons.

When attempting to interpret the second set of taxes, and the obligation to equip an auxiliary soldier for the army, the Ottoman ulama had difficulty in finding a completely satisfactory answer in the earlier Islamic religious literature. Abussu’ud stipulated that such lands were a separate category of arable land on which Muslims had full proprietorship, including the right of dominium eminens (rakaba). Thus, the landowner’s share is a rent. But earlier practices contradict this interpretation.

The dual ownership system represents an attempt at reconciliation or an intermediary regime between the ownership rights of the local hereditary lords and the Ottoman miri system. The concentration of the dual system in the Amasya–Tokat–Sivas district is not accidental. This was Turcoman country, where Ottoman rule established itself only after a long struggle, and where aristocratic families in control of numerous Turcoman clans and a regime of big estates as family patrimony were dominant. During the interregnum period 1402–13, Mehmed I, in his struggle against his brothers, had to make concessions to these local magnates to secure their support. Mehmed I’s successors confirmed these privileges in recognition of their service in this critical period. In the provinces further east, conquered under the autocratic Sultan Mehmed II, dual ownership did not exist. Actually dual ownership was a system applied in Islamic lands long before the Ottomans. The Ottomans confirmed it and extended it to the western parts of their empire. It is obvious that under dual ownership the peasant was intensively exploited. Thus, in the course of the sixteenth century, this remnant of “feudal” landownership declined as a result of periodic governmental surveys and the extension of the miri land system.

In 1528 the total revenues of freehold and vakf lands made up 12 percent, or about 60 million akçe, of the total imperial revenues of 538 million akçe (for a breakdown in various regions, see Table 1:32).

Historically, from the outset, the paramount question in the Ottoman state was to define, supervise and maintain the status of various types of land. Since the degree of land control determined power relationships between the state and the leading families in the empire, the question of
state lands et deja freehold and endowed lands was especially important. We mean not only the newly established Ottoman leading military and ulema families, but also those non-Muslim native seigneurial families that the Ottomans maintained at the first stage of their conquest. The crises between the state and the leading families focused on both control of the land and the peasantry. Land alone did not mean much without productive peasant labor organized as dependent family labor. These crises broke out at times when the state, that is the sultan, with his centralizing bureaucrats, attempted to abolish or diminish the military and ulema class control by re-introducing state ownership of land as a paramount principle against the established rights of private ownership or pious endowments (vakf). The signs of such a crisis, historically detectable, are to be found already under Murad I (1362–89) and gained momentum under Bayezid I (1389–1402). The collapse of the first centralist bureaucratic empire which came about in 1402 marked the re-establishment and consolidation of feudal control of land.

As seen earlier, the most dramatic outbreak in the struggle came during the rise of the centralist Ottoman Empire under Mehmed II (1451–81). With the succession of the authoritarian sultans, Selim I (1512–20) and Süleyman I (1520–66), the ever-present question of miri versus freehold and vakf stirred the powerful military and ulema groups, and then the centralist bureaucracy turned to the same Sharia principles to find support for state ownership over land, or, more precisely, the full establishment of state control on the grain-producing lands and peasantry. Since the usual device through which the state lands escaped were the land sales in the kadi courts, in accordance with the principles of Islamic Law, the state bureaucracy concentrated its attention there. Always a supporter of state policies, Ibn Kemal, the Sheyhülislam under Selim I and Süleyman I, summarized the legal principles regarding state-owned land. “Since neither timar-holder (sipahi) nor tiller of the land (peasant),” he said, “owns the land itself and its rakaba (proprietas nuda), they are not allowed to sell it or donate it or make a vakf. However, its lease, cession and transfer is permissible; and under the sultan’s law the sale of the possession right through cession and transfer in inheritance to the male children is also permitted.”

NOTES

1. On temlik (tambik) and (ıketa) for the pre-Ottoman period, see Cahen (1953), pp. 25–52; Morony (1983), pp. 133–75; idem (1984), pp. 209–23; Haque (1977), pp. 254–84; but Ottoman temlik is a direct continuation in content and basic terminology of the Turco-Mongol soyurghal, see Subtelny (1988), pp. 479–509.
3. On the revivification of the wastelands, slaves from East Africa were brought to lower Iraq under the early caliphate, while Ottomans employed war captives.
4. The formula used by Muslim bureaucrats is “mefruz al-kalam wa maktu’ al-kadem.”
5. For a collection of temlik documents originating in Süleyman I’s reign, see MS British Library, Or MS 9503, fol. 2–34.
6. Ibid., fol. 15, dated 961 H/1554.
7. Ibid.
9. Termination or weakening of state control on land through temlik, leasing or tax-farming entails decentralization in provincial administration, as occurred in the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century, see İnalci (1977b), pp. 27–52.
10. For a similar development under the Abbasids with the prevalence of the muzara’a or sharcropping system, see Haque (1977), pp. 310–46; sharcropping was the system particularly practiced on ıkta’ lands.
11. For example, see Kocı Bey (1939), pp. 38–40.
13. İnalci and Murphey (1978), text 18a, but in 1690 one thousand.
14. Ibid.
15. See İnalci (1982b), pp. 78–79.
16. The pioneering study in dual ownership is Barkan’s (1939), pp. 119–84; see also Venzke (1986), pp. 451–69.
17. On the so-called urfı taxes, see İnalci (1980a), pp. 311–37.
18. Ibid., and “Mehmed I,” EF.
21. MTM, 1, p. 62.
LAND SURVEYING

5

LAND SURVEYING (TAHRIR) AND REGISTERS

When examined carefully, the reports of the intended conquests reveal that the first question for the monarch and his bureaucracy was how much revenue could be derived from the region; and the first act after the conquest was to put down in the registers all possible sources of revenue. In fact, two factors, the prestige of the dynasty and the need for financial gain were the main driving forces for continued Ottoman conquests. These conquests, of course, were supported at the same time by Islamic ideology and the cibad legitimation.

The purpose of surveying is made clear in the preambles of instructions to surveyors. It was with the intention, they assert, of protecting the reaya against abuses introduced by the local military that the survey was made as a general inspection—an avowed policy with the emphasis on the protection of the reaya, that is, the taxable population. But at the same time it was asserted that, as the ultimate goal, the survey sought to record and make available all taxable sources and to uncover evasions, and to inspect all kinds of tax immunities so as to ultimately achieve an increase in public revenues. Throughout the document one can see these two points as the main concern of the administration. In order to make a compromise between these two rather conflicting goals, the sultan ruled that all taxes should be assessed and collected with “justice” under the stipulations of the existing laws and “ancient custom.”

In 1574 the surveyor Ömer Beg was praised because he accomplished the survey in perfect justice so that peasants as well as the military who had timars were agreeable to and thankful for his decisions. At the same time it was pointed out that his efforts proved to be advantageous for the treasury.

The first survey of a conquered land was decided when it was annexed to the Ottoman Empire, and the timar system was to be established. Thereupon a detailed registration of all sources of revenue was undertaken and the results were entered in a detailed register (deft-i mufassal). Then these revenues were distributed among the members of the military class, mostly among those sipabis who had participated in the conquest of the land. The latter usually were sipabis without timars or dismissed sipabis from neighboring Ottoman provinces. Those members of the sultan’s standing army (kapu-kulu including the Janissaries) who performed well during the campaign were given priority in the distribution of timars.

All this explains the dynamism of Ottoman expansion, with the military anxious to get timars in the lands to be conquered. The survey was a prerequisite to the distribution of revenues among the military. A separate book called a “summary register” (deft-i icmal) was drawn up for the distribution. It contained all three categories of prebends—timar, ziamet and has, indicating the location with a short note about the number of taxpayers and amount of the revenue.

A detailed description of an after-conquest survey can be seen in the case of the survey of Cyprus in 1572. From the correspondence between the central government and those responsible for the survey, we learn that the government was most anxious to win over the peasants and to preserve and, if possible, increase sources of revenue on the island. This concern was spelled out even before the conquest, as we read in an order to the governor of Içili advising him to do his utmost to win the hearts of the masses and to convey the sultan’s pledge that if the island is conquered, the native peasant population shall in no way be molested, and that any property which they and their families have owned shall suffer no violation. “It was supposed,” a contemporary Western source tells us, “that there were some fifty thousand serfs (paroikoi, or parici) who would be ready to join the Turks.” During the military operations a great number of the peasants on the plain took refuge in the mountains and it was found that seventy-six villages in the Masarea and Mazoto region did not have any farmers. Since their population did not return, the government took measures to settle the land with farmers from Anatolia in order to restore tax resources. Strict orders were sent to the Ottoman agents to give confidence to the Greek serfs. “It is my desire,” the sultan said in a firman while the census was in progress,

to ensure that everybody attend to his daily work and concerns with a mind free from discomfort and anxiety, and that the island be restored to
Albanian resistance started following the registration of 1431–32 and continued until Skanderbeg's death in 1468. In 1527 Turcomans killed the surveyor and started an insurrection in a large area from Kayseri to Amasya.

Survey books not only constituted a record and reference to identify the resources to be assigned to the military, but also were a status book for the land and population which determined, until the next survey, the social position and tax liabilities of lands, persons and groups. A person recorded as a married peasant in possession of a farm of a defined size could not escape without penalty his registered status and its attendant obligations. As a rule he could not abandon the cultivation of his land and go to town and acquire the status of townsman. The married peasants in possession of a çiftlik, those with half a çiftlik, married and non-married peasants with no land or little, were each recorded separately. When the registration of peasants who were classified in accordance with the çift-tax system was completed, the surveyor determined the totals of tithes in kind on the basis of production during the previous three years. The value of wheat, barley etc. was computed later when the sultan announced the fixed price of each type of grain for the whole region. Being of great concern and consequence for the state revenues as well as for the rural economy and its population, an average regional price was determined through the local kadi on the basis of prices during three consecutive periods of the year. The imperial diploma ordered that all tax immunities were to be carefully investigated and recorded in the new registers. A particular concern for the central government was to restore deserted villages (mezraa) and çiftlik during the survey. Those abandoned were carefully recorded to be auctioned among renters later on.

In order to make peasant farms and individual fields identifiable, their local names were carefully recorded, in some cases with second names. Thus, survey books ensured the central administration a close and effective control of the reaya and the peasant farms.

Following the çift-tax and tithes, the third category of taxes consisted of dues (rüsum) which included taxes on vineyards, grain mills, fullers' mills, beehives, fishing and market dues as well as the bride tax, tapu dues and fines. The surveyor was to determine the amount of each in view of the population size and economic conditions.

As for the fourth category of taxes, avanız-ı divanîyye, or extraordinary levies for the state, which affected rural as well as urban populations, the surveyor or kadi determined and registered each category of reaya separately, as well as those enjoying exemption.
The reaya who were permanently required to provide a service for the state, such as working in the mines or on state-owned lands, or as guardians of bridges or mountain passes, were exempt from the extraordinary levies. Wherever reaya were found to have abandoned their original land of settlement or service, they would not be registered in their new abode unless their new settlement was of more than ten years. They were to be forcibly taken to their place of service. A note of particular interest stated: "the surveyor shall keep in mind that those single men who have in their possessions peasant farms [çiftlik or baştına] are classified as married reaya." Thus, the land unit was considered the decisive factor in determining the tax liability. A çiftlik owner was always treated as a household as far as impositions, tax or services were concerned.

Considering how important registration was for the people and the government, the sultan warned the surveyor to proceed with extreme care and caution and not to deviate from impartiality nor to take bribes. The surveyor was given the power to make full investigations on all matters concerning taxation, possession of land, legality of immunities, tax exemptions, etc. Thus, as he was responsible for implementation of the established Ottoman principles concerning land tenure and personal status, and was in constant consultation with the central government, the surveyor had the power to investigate and decide every particular case during the survey. His decision as recorded in the register had the strength of law. He drew up a list of controversial issues and requested the sultan's decision as the ultimate authority.

The surveyor also was asked to investigate and record ancient customs on the rates of market dues or other local impositions, and also measurements, the time of their collection, etc.; but the rates and collection methods of basic Ottoman rural taxes – çift-tax, tithes, dues on vineyards, vegetable gardens, orchards, mills, beehives, fees for marriage and building plots or fines – were already described in the general sultanic law codes. The surveyor drew up a draft regulation, kanunname, for the sub-province, with provisions on all the taxes as well as rules on matters of frequent dispute between the peasant reaya and the sipabis and imperial agents, or among the military. In fact, the decisions of the kadi regarding disputes drew upon the regulation as a guide or legal text. These regulations thus ensured the smooth functioning of the whole Ottoman agrarian-fiscal system.

The register as well as the draft regulation of a sub-province was ultimately submitted to the sultan, that is, to his central bureaus to be examined and to receive final approval. From that moment, the register determined the status of individuals, their tax obligation, place of residence, and so on. Once registered, there was re-inspection at regular intervals. It is obvious that the central administration had to know the changes which occurred over time: on the sources of revenue, the beneficiaries, the status of land and the reaya, or immunities, old or newly established. Over a period of time the peasantry grew in numbers; a new generation of taxable peasants came into existence at the same time as new lands were opened for cultivation and new settlements were established. All of these changes necessitated a new survey updating the status and tax liabilities of the reaya. As noted in the instructions, "by the passing of years the figures and names change and the number of the population increases or decreases" and "the established rules and customs change or deteriorate," so that a new survey became imperative to prevent injustices, mistakes and losses for the treasury.

In the intervening period between the two surveys, the extra revenues from the peasant youth who became taxable or from the reclaimed or recultivated lands were collected by the timar-holder for his benefit or by state agents. Therefore, it was recommended that a new survey be conducted at ten, fifteen, or twenty-year intervals for purposes of inspection or to record the impact of an event – new conquests, rebellions or large-scale population movements. Surveys which were completed around 1430–32 might be connected with the capture of Salonica following the important conquests in the Balkans; those made around 1455 with the conquest of Istanbul, and those made around 1528 with the invasion of Hungary. Sometimes a new survey was ordered immediately as a result of the shortcomings and complaints about the survey in progress, and was completed upon the appointment of a new surveyor. As the number of peasants and the size of arable land changed over time, the actual income of the timar-holders from the peasants' taxes also changed. If there was a considerable drop in the actual income of the timar-holders, the military service could be impaired; so a re-adjustment through a new survey became necessary.

In a new survey, the extra farms with peasant households and their estimated tax revenue were registered separately under the heading "additional increases" (ziyade, ifraz). Obviously, the comprehensive tabulations of such increases may indicate either that there were omissions in the prior survey or a real increase or both. When an increase is unexpectedly high, this surely may indicate a real improvement in economic conditions.

A general survey of the entire empire was to be carried out at the time of the succession of each sultan to the throne, since, upon the death of a sultan, all deeds and titles became legally null and void until the new
sultan confirmed them. Sometimes a survey was entrusted to one who guaranteed that he would find a considerable surplus. During the period of decline when the sources of revenue suffered in certain regions, the government either selected such persons as surveyors or stopped making new surveys. The old registers continued to be used as assessment documents despite the discrepancies and injustices such a decision entailed.

An Ottoman survey is not a cadastre in the modern sense. But the Ottoman system of registration of land and population, comparable to the English doomsday book, was functional and practical and made a systematic cadastral registration unnecessary, which was in any case an impossible task under medieval conditions. In addition to being a long and costly process, the cadastre was not practical under conditions of extensive grain cultivation. Just by counting households with complete or half çiftlik, the administration knew the extent of both the land and the population and the potential tax revenues. Precise measurements were made on valuable lands such as vineyards or when a serious dispute arose. Only then, under the local kadi’s supervision, were exact measurements made using a standard rope, and a final document was issued with all the details noted.

In the sixteenth century, a separate survey register was prepared for each sub-province (sancak), although the kadi’s jurisdiction, the kada, was the main registration area. In earlier times, the Ottomans adhered to the preconquest administrative boundaries, which usually were decided by physical and economic factors. In short, the survey books, including about 2,000 volumes preserved in the Ottoman archives in Istanbul and Ankara, record not only the adult male population or households, but also landholdings, the type and amount of products, taxes and dues.

The Ottoman survey system was intended to serve as a base and as a device to implement the çift-bane system. Data in the survey books should be interpreted within the requirements of the system. Attempts by modern historians to use them to obtain exact statistics on population and production appear to be too ambitious. However, by knowing the methods employed in the survey and the exact definition of the terms and measures used, quite a reliable picture can be obtained of the vast regions subjected to Ottoman registration. In fact, there exist Ottoman survey books on Hungary, Slovakia and Kaminiec-Podolski (Poland) in the north, the Balkans, Anatolia and the eastern Mediterranean islands which made up the core lands, Syria, Palestine and Iraq in the south, and on Georgia and Tabriz in the east. This huge collection constitutes our only detailed source on the social and economic structure of the regions under the Ottoman rule. Repeated periodically for each region, the surveys enable us to follow demographic and economic changes. We must, however, remember that the collection offers complete material only for the sixteenth century when the Ottoman çift-bane system was in its most developed stage, and surveying and bookkeeping methods reached their perfection. It is no wonder that the Ottoman Empire’s centralist golden age coincides with this development. Surveys of most provinces indicate that they experienced a large-scale growth in sources of revenue, a strong settlement movement with the extension of cultivated lands, a decline in the number of deserted villages and farms, reclamation of marginal lands, growth of villages and towns in population and income.

OTTOMAN LAND CATEGORIES: A RECAPITULATION

The classification of landholding from the legal–fiscal and administrative–military point of view can be summarized as follows:

A. Legal classification

1. Miri lands, whose eminent domain belongs to the state: this type of land is not subject to sale, mortgage or donation by its possessor and inheritance rights are restricted. However, the possession rights can be subject to transfer, by the possessor under the supervision and permit of a state agent or trustee of a vakf. Miri lands are classified as:
   a. Tapu, that is, possessed under a specific tapu contract and land law. A tapu contract is a kind of perpetual lease made directly with the peasant, who acquires the possession and usufruct of the land and automatically leaves these rights to his male descendants upon his death. Tapu also makes the peasant subject to certain obligations to fulfill specific services to the state or sipahi. The tapu is the basis of what we call the çift-bane or Ottoman agrarian–fiscal system and involves the great majority of the arable land in the core regions.
   b. Mukataalu lands, those possessed under a simple lease contract by anyone, not necessarily a peasant. They are not subject to the obligations of tapulu land; namely, the possessor is not obliged to carry out the cultivation himself or fulfill personal services. He can lease the land to a third party. His sole obligation is to deliver to the state or its agent the cash or tithes agreed upon in

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long time and covered with shrubs. Anyone improving such lands for cultivation acquired full ownership rights. In practice, these two categories are confused and deserted arable lands often were categorized as "dead" land.

B. Administrative-military classification: the timar system

The bulk of the state-owned lands in the core provinces were divided into prebendal "territories" with fixed limits and rights. The timar registers classified prebendal territorial divisions within the larger territorial divisions of sancaks and kadas. Like the peasant çiftlik, the fixed timar or zamet territories (kılıç) and their fixed revenues (basılı) could not be partitioned. The newly created timars subsequent to the previous survey were given a territorial status as a unit only in a new survey. This military-administrative division of land must be considered as a system parallel to the legal and economic classification, although all are juxtaposed in practice. The administrative-military classification of land comprises the following principal types:

1. Imperial demesne (bass-i humayun), the revenues of which are reserved for the central state treasury (not for the sultan's private use as sometimes stated).
2. Hass for dignitaries which were prebends for viziers and beges. These were units conventionally registered with over 100,000 akça in income.
3. Ziamets, prebends assigned to the lesser commanders (subas or zaim) of the timarlıot army in the provinces. Conventionally, these units varied between 20,000 and 100,000 akça.
4. Timars or dirlik, prebends assigned to the sipabis or the provincial cavalry. Typically, these units went up to 20,000 akça. The average timar was around 1,000 akça in the fifteenth century and double that figure in the sixteenth century. In fact, a distinction should be made between the poor sipabis who barely sustained themselves and those who had a relatively high income. The minimum subsistence level defined by the kâdis was 500-750 akça during the fifteenth century, while the timars of many sipabis were below 1,000 akça.
5. Mevkuf, detainted timar. The income of timars which became vacant was collected by government agents called mevkufçu for the treasury, until they were re-assigned to sipabis.
6. Non-military appanages called arpaîk, paşmakli, özengilik etc. When granted as appanages or pensions to palace favorites or retired members of the elite, the bass and timars were considered by the

the initial contract. In the last analysis, the position of the contractor of such lands can be compared to that of a tax-farmer. Mîri lands of this type include those arable lands not possessed and cultivated under the tapu by dependent peasants. They are mostly abandoned lands which the treasury tries to turn into a source of revenue. Mukataâl lands become tapulu when it is given to peasants under tapu. Those who actually rent such lands under mukataa are village communities, urbanities and members of the military class. Accumulating cash through salaried income, the latter became particularly aggressive during the second half of the sixteenth century and many of them, profiting from the loopholes in the legal system, were able to turn such lands into hereditary private estates. This became the main device for the "powerful" to appropriate mîri lands. The mukataâl lands which, for the most part, are separately registered in the survey books as çiftlik or mezraa, made up as much as 50 percent of the arable lands in some regions.

Freehold lands, mülek, fall into four main categories:

a. Mülek through sultanic grants (temlîk) of freehold rights on mîri land.

b. Mülek acquired through reclamation of waste land.

c. Mülek through a sale contract made in accordance with Islamic Law.

d. Mülek lands in the hands of the pre-conquest elite, confirmed by the Ottoman sultan.

In principle, no sales were valid for arable land without a sultanic grant in the conquered regions, but once sold by collusion or as a result of neglect it became hereditary freehold property under the supremacy of Islamic Law. Mostly vineyards and orchards, or arable lands concealed as such, were subject to the sales establishing freehold property rights.

Pious endowment, vakf (plural evkaî). The greater part of freehold lands transformed into vakf often served personal and family interests. Vakf lands, though always under state supervision, were held independently and administered under a charter by a trustee who was in most cases a progeny of the founder.

Mevat, wastelands. They consisted of lands which never had been under cultivation, such as virgin forests, swamps or deserts. Some lands included in this category were arable lands abandoned for a
the initial contract. In the last analysis, the position of the contractor of such lands can be compared to that of a tax-farmer. *Miri* lands of this type include those arable lands not possessed and cultivated under the *tapu* by dependent peasants. They are mostly abandoned lands which the treasury tries to turn into a source of revenue. *Mukataalu* land becomes *tapulu* when it is given to peasants under *tapu*. Those who actually rent such lands under *mukataa* are village communities, urbanites and members of the military class. Accumulating cash through salaried income, the latter became particularly aggressive during the second half of the sixteenth century and many of them, profiting from the loopholes in the legal system, were able to turn such lands into hereditary private estates. This became the main device for the "powerful" to appropriate *mi ri* lands. The *mukataalu* lands which, for the most part, are separately registered in the survey books as *ciftilik* or *mezraa*, made up as much as 50 percent of the arable lands in some regions.

2 Freehold lands, *mül k*, fall into four main categories:
   a. *Mül k* through sultanic grants (*temlik*) of freehold rights on *mi ri* land.
   b. *Mül k* acquired through reclamation of waste land.
   c. *Mül k* through a sale contract made in accordance with Islamic Law.
   d. *Mül k* lands in the hands of the pre-conquest elite, confirmed by the Ottoman sultan.

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4 *Mevâr*, wastelands. They consisted of lands which never had been under cultivation, such as virgin forests, swamps or deserts. Some lands included in this category were arable lands abandoned for a long time and covered with shrubs. Anyone improving such lands for cultivation acquired full ownership rights. In practice, these two categories are confused and deserted arable lands often were categorized as "dead" land.

B. Administrative-military classification: the *timar* system

The bulk of the state-owned lands in the core provinces were divided into prebendal "territories" with fixed limits and rights. The *timar* registers classified prebendal territorial divisions within the larger territorial divisions of *sancak* and *kadâs*. Like the peasant *ciftilik*, the fixed *timar* or *zi amet* territories (*küçük*) and their fixed revenues (*hassıl*) could not be partitioned. The newly created *timars* subsequent to the previous survey were given a territorial status as a unit only in a new survey. This military-administrative division of land must be considered as a system parallel to the legal and economic classification, although all are juxtaposed in practice. The administrative-military classification of land comprises the following principal types:

1 Imperial demesne (*hassî humâyun*), the revenues of which are reserved for the central state treasury (not for the sultan's private use as sometimes stated).

2 *Hass* for dignitaries which were prebends for viziers and begs. These were units conventionally registered with over 100,000 *akça* in income.

3 *Ziamets*, prebends assigned to the lesser commanders (*subâbâ* or *zâim*) of the *timariot* army in the provinces. Conventionally, these units varied between 20,000 and 100,000 *akça*.

4 *Timars* or *dirliks*, prebends assigned to the *sipâbis* or the provincial cavalry. Typically, these units went up to 20,000 *akça*. The average *timar* was around 1,000 *akça* in the fifteenth century and double that figure in the sixteenth century. In fact, a distinction should be made between the poor *sipâbis* who barely sustained themselves and those who had a relatively high income. The minimum subsistence level defined by the *kadîs* was 500–750 *akça* during the sixteenth century, while the *timars* of many *sipâbis* were below 1,000 *akça*.

5 *Mevküf*, detained *timar*. The income of *timars* which became vacant was collected by government agents called *mevküf* for the treasury, until they were re-assigned to *sipâbis*.

6 Non-military appanages called *arpâlık*, *paşmaklîk*, *öngelik* etc. When granted as appanages or pensions to palace favorites or retired members of the elite, the *hass* and *timars* were considered by the
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2 Freehold lands, *müll*, fall into four main categories:
   c. *Müll* through a sale contract made in accordance with Islamic Law.
   d. *Müll* lands in the hands of the pre-conquest elite, confirmed by the Ottoman sultan.

In principle, no sales were valid for arable land without a sultanic grant in the conquered regions, but once sold by collusion or as a result of neglect it became hereditary freehold property under the supremacy of Islamic Law. Mostly vineyards and orchards, or arable lands concealed as such, were subject to the sales establishing freehold property rights.

3 Pious endowment, *vakıf* (plural evakıf). The greater part of freehold lands transformed into *vakıf* often served personal and family interests. *Vakıf* lands, though always under state supervision, were held independently and administered under a charter by a trustee who was in most cases a progeny of the founder.

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bureaucrats as a deviation and interference with law and regulation. It is claimed that timars were originally intended to provide prebends to the active military-administrative personnel; hence, these appanages were set up separate from the military fiefs.

NOTES
1 İnalçık (1969b), pp. 1-23; on tabrîs see İnalçık (1954b), pp. xviii-xxiii.
2 Cited by Hill (1948), III, p. 842 note 2; Ottoman sources estimate 80,000, see İnalçık (1969b), p. 20.
3 For instructions to the surveyor, see İnalçık (1969b), p. 7.
4 Ibid., p. 9.
7 İnalçık (1975b) and (1975c).
8 For a tentative list of the surveys, see Lowry (1980), pp. 46, 54-55; many registers have already been published in facsimile or translation, see TA.
9 On the minimum subsistence level, see İnalçık (1982b), pp. 126-27.

THE ÇİFT-HANE SYSTEM: THE ORGANIZATION OF OTTOMAN RURAL SOCIETY

THE PEASANT FAMILY FARM (ÇİFT-HANE) IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND THEORY

It is no coincidence that the agrarian, economic and fiscal policies undertaken in areas which came successively under Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman rule share striking similarities. Since the late Roman Empire, the family farm unit, cultivated and managed by “free” peasant households, was the dominant form of agrarian production in these empires. In the semi-arid belt of dry-farming, agricultural production was devoted mainly to wheat and barley. Agrarian organization was based on the peasant family’s labor (caput, oike, bane) and the yoked pair of oxen (jugum, zeugarion or çift), which together determined the size and production capacity of the farm land. The late Roman colonus, the Byzantine paraikos and the Ottoman raïyyet (plural reaya) all defined this type of peasant. As the theoretician of peasant economy, A.V. Chayanov,1 argued, in this geographic zone the traditional peasant family farm was the most economically efficient system of production and, irrespective of political changes, it remained for thousands of years the “basic cell” of rural society. In fact, it constituted “one of the organizational forms of private economic undertakings.”

As a basic mode of production, Chayanov argues, the system had its own logic which was totally independent of the forms under the capitalist regime. Here, the peasant’s motivation is not maximization of interest or surplus, but the whole production process is determined by “the equilibrium between drudgery and marginal utility.” In this type of production the family as a whole, without hired hands, supplies labor, and this labor is adaptable under various situations. It is “an economic structure serving exclusively to meet the needs of the laboring families.” Thus, labor-
consumer balance is “the basic economic equilibrium between drudgery of labor and demand satisfaction. Therefore, family labor and capital are organized into a specific unit, a distinct production machine which represents an independent mode of production.”

Chayanov stresses that the unity of family labor as the basic factor was of central importance in the whole production system. Here family, or more exactly peasant household, was considered as one single unit and its annual income “as a single labor income.” The “full male worker” in the family was taken as the standard measure and female and child labor are expressed in its terms (in the Ottoman survey books peasant taxes are based on male adults). In the areas where the patriarchal family survived, the household often included married sons as part of family labor. However, Chayanov adds, the biological nuclear family was always essential.

On the other hand, it was the family make-up that determined variations in the volume of capital, notably the size of land and, let us add, animal power. Family composition, whether young, mature or aged, defined consumer-demand equilibrium, and consequently the labor and production process. The family adjusted the intensity of its work to existing conditions, basically to the consumer-demand equilibrium. The self-exploitation of the family was intensified in conditions of limited availability of land. However, where possible the peasant expanded his land by purchase or renting, or by encroaching upon communal land in the village. Thus, the system worked better in thinly populated lands where land was relatively more available.

“Since,” Chayanov says, “this production is carried on within the limits of the family farm, its special features have decisive influence on the degree of its labor and capital intensity and on its labor organization and some influence on the assortment of produce grown on the farm.” However, the peasant labor farm was “naturally limited by the relationships between family consumer demands and its work.” It was established at a level and in accord with the production conditions in which the farm family found itself. Also, it should be emphasized that in the system, family labor, land and animal power were articulated into one organic unit of production. From this observation, it becomes clear why wheat and barley, so vital for peasant subsistence, always constituted the predominant produce. Shifting to more labor-intensive labor crops is a way out when land becomes scarce or other external pressures become effective. However, the shift means “a smaller labor payment than do more extensive crops.”

Chayanov believes his theory applies well to all traditional, agrarian systems including those of Russia and the Ottoman Empire. “This production machine,” he observes, signifies an independent mode of production, which is to be found under various regimes, Western feudalism, Russian servage and even in a capitalist system of national economy. Such an ingenious “machine” is actually the outgrowth of a long experiment in human history.

I believe Chayanov’s theory, based on empirical data on the traditional Russian peasant economy, furnishes a comprehensive framework for understanding the basic agrarian structure in the core lands of the Ottoman Empire. However, it is necessary to add that the most important prerequisite for the continuity of such a system appears to have been centralist state control over land possession and family labor. An imperial bureaucracy had systematically struggled to eliminate encroachments of local lords, while concomitantly striving to prevent its own provincial agents from transforming themselves into provincial gentry. In this system, the peasant was both dependent and free: “dependent” in the sense that his mobility and use of land were regulated strictly by the state to ensure that he surrendered to the government whatever amount of revenue had been decided in the state registers, and “free” in the sense that he could independently organize the production of the family farm and no one could use his labor arbitrarily.

Another basic element overlooked by Chayanov in the family labor farm system is animal power, the team of plow oxen, zemgari or gift which recur so persistently in the Byzantine and Ottoman surveys. The system can no more be explained without reference to it than modern capitalist agriculture can be explained without agricultural machines.

THE OTTOMAN ÇIFT-HANE SYSTEM

Just as the Ottomans considered the craft guild system as the fundamental institution of the city, so they regarded the family labor farm system as the foundation of agricultural production and rural society in their empire. Maintenance of these two institutions formed, so to speak, the constitutional underpinnings of the traditional imperial system until the nineteenth century, when the Tanzimat reformers discarded them in favor of Western-inspired liberal policies. Since the Ottomans considered this dual system the backbone of their estate society, the state strove to maintain it through the vigilance of a central bureaucracy equipped with a highly developed system of controls, in the form of survey registers
and periodic inspection. In fact, the fundamental instrument which the imperial bureaucracy used in regulating the system was the survey and registration of the peasant family-land units (çift-banes) — a task which the Ottoman government in the classical period considered of the utmost importance (see above, pp. 132–38).

Thanks to incomparably rich and systematic surveys it is possible for us to give a detailed description of Ottoman rural society based on the çift-bane system. In principle, surveys consisted of the registration of all taxable adult male peasants who represented a çift-bane unit or its fractions. The regular unit was a married peasant (bene) holding a certain unit of land, a çiftlik, a farm workable by a pair of oxen.

Thus, the çift-bane unit basically was a combination of three elements: fields forming a certain unit workable by a team of oxen and used to grow grain, the family household which provided labor, and a team of oxen as traction power. The first of these elements, the çiftlik, had to be large enough both to feed a family and to yield enough surplus to cover protection money (tax) as well as reproduction costs. Actually, as will be explained later, these three elements were considered as forming an indissoluble agrarian and fiscal unit.

It was mainly because of the state’s concern to keep the çift-bane units intact that the Ottoman sultans declared all arable lands in the empire — more exactly those regions of dry-farming in Asia Minor and the Balkans — to be miri, that is, under state ownership. Dominium eminens on land empowered the government strictly to control the land and maintain the çift-bane, which constituted the basis for the state’s agrarian-fiscal organization. The peasant, for his part, enjoyed the status of perpetual tenancy under this land regime. The peasant’s lease on the land gave him hereditary rights of possession through the direct male line. The law stipulated that the farm unit never was to be divided. The state strictly forbade its agents — usually sipabis — from occupying and cultivating land reserved for peasant households.

Thus, corresponding to the Roman ıugum-caput and the Byzantine stasis or zugofkefalai, as a production unit, the Ottoman çift-bane formed at once a fiscal unit consisting of a peasant family farm with two oxen and a defined amount of land. Let us now examine each of the components of the çift-bane unit separately.

### The size of the çiftlik

It has been argued that in pre-capitalist agricultural systems based on the family labor force, its ability to realize and sustain the highest possible income from land was the economic principle which determined optimal farm size. Since the size of this labor unit could not be increased or decreased at will, Chayanov points out, other factors of production had to be put “in an optimal relationship to this fixed element.” “Peasant farms,” he continues

are structured to conform to the optimal degree of self-exploitation of the family labor force and in a technically optimal system of production factors as regards their size and relationship of the parts. Any excess of production means available to labor of or land above the technically optimal level will put an excessive burden on the undertaking. It will not lead to an increased volume of activity, since further intensity of labor beyond the level established for its self-exploitation is unacceptable to the family. As the capital intensification of the farm grows and its relative labor intensification falls the productivity of the capital expenditure continually declines.

Thus, as the family labor farm reaches optimal size, any incentive to expand the farm further disappears.

Because of this structure, traditional peasant society consisted mostly of households in possession of two oxen and a certain optimal amount of farm land. As will be seen, the Ottomans in their regulations set this amount at between 5 and 15 hectares, according to the fertility of the soil (see Table 1:33). This whole unit, composed of separate independent fields (tarlas) was called raiyyet çiftlik. Çift, originally referring only to a pair (of oxen) stood also for the land workable by a pair of oxen, or the Turkish construct çiftlik (land for a çift) was also used. The raiyyet çift or çiftlik denoted primarily fields used for grain cultivation.

The law said, “the consensus on the size of a çiftlik is that a çiftlik should be of the size sufficient for the fields actually cultivated and those left as fallow. The peasant farmers call it a çiftlik.” The definition of the size of a peasant çiftlik differed in the regulations for various parts of the empire (Table 1:33).

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**Table 1:33. A peasant’s (raiyyet) average çiftlik land in dönüms (one dönüm = 920 sq. meters)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-province</th>
<th>First quality</th>
<th>Middle quality</th>
<th>Poor quality</th>
<th>Barkan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hıdıravendik (1489)</td>
<td>70–80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>130–150</td>
<td>p. 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aydin (1528)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>130–150</td>
<td>p. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konya (1528)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100–120</td>
<td>p. 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erzurum (1540)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>p. 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smyrna (c. 1580)</td>
<td>70–80</td>
<td>100–110</td>
<td>120–130</td>
<td>p. 508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morea (1711)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100–120</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>p. 327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diyarbekir (1540)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>p. 131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Barkan (1943), index: çiftlik.
Ideally, arable land was to be organized into raiyyet çiftlik, and both their integration into big landed properties and their partition into smaller holdings were to be prevented. In fact, however, both the Byzantines and the Ottomans accepted half of the zeugarion or of a çift under the name voidion or nim-cıft respectively as the smallest land unit for a family. When a family possessed less land than this, officials classified the peasant as poor, faıkir or yoksul in Turkish, or as pezos or aktemones in Greek. Although there were peasant families which possessed more than one çiftlik, these were regarded as exceptional cases. Normal sized raiyyet çiftlik typically made up the state-owned lands throughout Asia Minor and the Balkans and the administration strove to put all arable lands under this type of land tenure.

*Indivisibility of the çiftlik unit*

Economic, demographic, and political pressures as well as the fact that other forms of land tenure survived and developed affected contemporaneously the size of the çiftlik. The state nevertheless went to great lengths to ensure that the çiftlik would remain indivisible and sufficiently large for the upkeep of a peasant family. The law reads: 12 “It is by no means permissible for çiftlik and bashinas [çiftlik in Slavic provinces] to be divided up and parcelled out.” In actuality, although contrary to law, there were loopholes for breaking up and distributing a registered çiftlik. In such a case, if a peasant came forward, offering to return the divided çiftlik to its original form and willing to pay all of its taxes, the authorities would give the broken-up land to his possession. Another measure to ensure the unity and continuity of a çiftlik or family possession was this: should a deceased raiyyet leave behind a minor son unable to manage by himself the cultivation of his land, it temporarily was taken away from him until he reached maturity. A widow, however, could retain possession of a çiftlik for herself or her minor son if, through the use of hired hands, she could manage its cultivation and pay the tithe and other taxes. Widows in this system were recognized as taxable persons (bive) and recorded as such in the registers.

In his discussion of the principle of the indivisibility of the çift, Abussu'ud 13 set forth the fiscal argument that it was almost impossible for the government or the timar-holder to collect the çift-tax from a divided çift.

The varying composition of the peasant family itself in part accounts for the variations. The existence of half çifts is one indication of it. Whereas çift households (families possessing a çiftlik and normally also a pair of oxen) certainly were “mature” families, half-cıft households (families possessing less than a çiftlik and presumably only a single ox) evidently were “young” families.

*The fiscal basis of the çift-hane system: çift-tax*

The whole agricultural fiscal system was actually epitomized in a peasant family tax which was called çift-tax (çift-resmi) in the Ottoman tax system. In the Ottoman law on peasantry, “personal” taxes were based on the person’s labor capacity. A peasant with a family paid the highest rate, while those who had limited work capacity, such as single men or widows, were subjected to the minimum rate, and those who could not do any productive work, such as the elderly, disabled, single women and children, were altogether exempted.

This was actually a tax system assessing peasants’ labor and land in combination, i.e., çift-hane. It also typified the organization of rural society as a whole. The classification and statutory organization of the rural population on the basis of personal labor tax, an outgrowth of an age-old bureaucratic experience, was a translation in bureaucratic terms of the actual complex socio-economic structure of the peasant population in the countryside.

The fiscal system of the çift-tax is actually the key to understanding social stratification in Ottoman rural society. It classifies peasants capable of paying the çift-tax, the half çift-tax, the married peasant (bennak) tax, and the poor or unmarried peasant (mucered, caba or kara) tax. The tüsin-resmi (hearth tax), the dönüm-tax, and other minor taxes also fell within the system. Broadly speaking, in this tax system the amount of land, together with the labor capacity, determined tax status. The registration of peasants in an imperial survey book, based on his tax status, established his obligations until the next survey. The laws required a peasant family in possession of a full çift or çiftlik to pay the equivalent of one gold piece, or 22 akça in silver coins, and those in possession of half a çift, 12 akça. If less than one-half çift of land was involved, then the laborer’s marital status, that is, the potential labor force which he represented, determined tax rates. A family in possession of less than half a çift was called bennak and had to pay 9 akça, and an unmarried peasant, or a widow, in possession of land, only 6 akça. The assumption was that, irrespective of the quantity of land in his possession, a married man would control a larger amount of land than would a bachelor. As soon
as an individual came into possession of enough land to create a çift or half a çift, he had to pay correspondingly higher taxes, either 22 or 12 akça. It appears that originally this tax was calculated as 10 percent of the economic value which a peasant family was expected to create in a year. So the family unit with a çiftlik constituted a work team which would pay, in addition to tithes, a çift-resmi as peasant family tax. Unmarried sons who did not serve their father and who made their livings separately were subject to the 6 akça kara tax which corresponded to an adult male’s work.

A synonym for çift-resmi, kulluk akçası, more precisely discloses its nature and origin. “Kulluk” refers to the status of being a dependent, or a subject, or services owed as such. In this light, the cash payment, or çift-resmi, becomes the equivalent of the peasant’s obligations to the landlord for kulluk or labor services. Fifteenth-century Ottoman law codes record the 22, 12, 9, and 6 akça taxes as cash equivalents of certain labor services or kullucks owed to the lord. These equivalents were 3 akça for three days’ personal service, 7 akça for providing a wagon-load of hay, 7 akça for half a wagon-load of straw, 3 akça for a wagon-load of firewood, and 2 akça for service with a wagon. As the law code of Mehmed the Conqueror states, “if money is to be taken for these seven services then twenty-two akças will be taken.”

Although this law code demands only 3 akça for personal labor service, the landless unmarried peasant had to pay 6 akça. The same code resolves this seeming discrepancy. It explains that, in order to earn money, landless peasants usually worked as agricultural workers or owned animals or carts which they used to carry goods for people, or occupied themselves with crafts. This personal labor was the only service which a landless peasant could perform. Only those with land and capital equipment could undertake the other services.

In their tax registers, the Byzantines classified dependent peasant families in the same way. A zengate, someone possessing a pair of oxen or a definite amount of land, corresponds to the Ottoman çift and paid one gold nomisma as a land and hearth tax; a voidate, someone possessing one ox or half of the land of a zengate, corresponds to the Ottoman half-çift; and aktemones, someone possessing no land or, more accurately, a plot of land less than one-half a çift, corresponds to the Ottoman bennak; and finally, a pezos, or the poor peasant, corresponds to the Ottoman oaza or kara.

The state evidently was unable to use the feudal labor services existing within the empire and consequently converted them into a lump sum cash tax to create important revenue for the treasury. Replacing labor services, the tax was fixed once and for all to be paid in two installments at the convenience of the peasant. At the same time, the state abolished most of the personal services which the local lord or sipabi could easily abuse. The Ottoman conversion of labor services into cash payments was revolutionary in nature and obviously beneficial to the peasantry.

Labor services had existed since pre-Ottoman times and served an important function in Byzantium and successor states. As part of their services, peasants then helped maintain the military, they cultivated land set aside for the sustenance of the families of soldiers and lords, cut the hay for their horses, and supplied their firewood and straw. In order for the cavalrymen to survive and perform their services in royal campaigns or to protect the peasantry and agriculture against marauders, these basic labor impositions were deemed necessary. Since the peasantry resented these services and did their best to avoid them, the Ottoman bureaucrats sought to convert them, under the çift-tax system, into lump sums whenever economic-monetary conditions made it possible. From a practical point of view, the cash payment to the sipabi alleviated the load on the state treasury, since in the timar system the çift-tax was always paid in cash to the timar-holder to enable him to meet his expenses during imperial campaigns in distant lands. On the other hand, the çift-resmi and its components made up a complete tax system comprising and shaping the entire agrarian society. The state considered peasant labor taxable and varied its rate according to the combinations of labor and land, or marital status whenever labor became the main component; then labor capacity alone was considered taxable. The state considered a landless peasant still productive and able to earn a livelihood. In rural areas, such persons commonly worked as agricultural laborers, as carriers with carts, as blacksmiths, or as weavers of coarse fabrics. When the state permanently assigned to a specific group certain services – such as the guardianship of a mountain pass or work in mines or salt-works – it reduced substantially the rate of the personal tax and exempted them from emergency services for the state. The regulations state explicitly that the reason for such reductions or exemptions was the special labor service.

In general, in the ancient and medieval world, the peasant represented not only a producer of soil products, but also a potential labor force capable of providing services and creating other kinds of economic value. It is interesting to note that in the Roman Empire, too, the rates of personal tax varied according to labor capacity. In A.D. 386 one captus, or peasant family, was fiscally computed as two and one-half men or
four women." Another interesting case is the personal tax imposed upon the labor of a manumitted slave farmer in the Ottoman Empire. A manumitted sharecropper-slave (ortakça kul) had to pay between 45 and 60 akça, even if he was no longer engaged in agriculture. This amount equalled one gold piece – between 10 and 14 percent of the estimated subsistence earnings of the labor force of an adult male – in the late fifteenth-century Ottoman Empire. Many taxable subjects who lay outside the regular peasant populations paid 50 akça in personal taxes. These were the so-called ellicis, "those who paid fifty akças," or florici, "those who paid one gold piece."

In the Mediterranean basin and in Western Europe, from ancient times and through subsequent periods, the personal tax assessed on the labor force of an adult married male had been set at the rate of one gold piece. It existed under the Islamic caliphate as the cizye or harac, under the Byzantines as one gold nomisma tax, and under the Ottomans, in an assessment of 22 or 25 akça, as çift-tax or isprre respectively.

In this system of taxation, the gold piece was usually divided into twenty-four units and the authorities charged the peasant population, classified according to land and labor capacities (a married man with two oxen and land, married without land, or single), at rates based on this duodecimal system. (The Ottomans used a 22 rather than a 24 akça system, I believe, because in the 1330s one mithkal of gold was worth 22 akça.) As Svoronos has shown in his edition of the cadastre of Thebes, the Byzantine agrarian tax system followed the same duodecimal breakdown – twenty-four, twelve, nine, and six. Since the establishment of elaborate land cadastres or personal income lists was impractical, this system obviously constituted a convenient bureaucratic device for assessing with some fairness rates of personal taxes on the basis of work capacity.

Finally, I would like to touch upon the long controversy over the nature of ingatio-capitatio and zengaratikion in pre-Ottoman empires. F. Lot and V. Déleage in their studies of the land–head tax (ingatio-capitatio) in the late Roman Empire, and Marc Bloch in his analysis of the socio-economic nature of the medieval mansus, showed that the existence of the family farm unit as the basic cell of rural society continued after the decline of the Western Roman Empire. Always aware of the enigmatic nature of this peculiar head–land tax, Ostrogorsky defined the ingum, which corresponds to the Ottoman çift, as "a piece of land that can feed a caput, and the caput stands for the human labor expended on a ingum."

Actually, the tax imposed upon the peasant family was always related to "the occupation of a definite unit of land."

The problem of ingatio-capitatio in the late Roman Empire has provoked the propounding of various theories. Most recently A. H. M. Jones, in a paper on ingatio-capitatio, has agreed that there is "a system of assessing land tax and other levies on inga, fiscal unit of land, and capita, poll tax, which are combined in some way, and this is still a problem to be investigated. The laws, census records and lists of estates give only fragmentary evidence, and it is not possible to make a full description of the system." Nevertheless, Jones asserts that one point at least is clear, that in a number of laws "inga or ingatio and capita or capitatio are coupled together as the units of assessment for various taxes and levies." "A tax," he points out, "might be levied on both units combined (as was usually the case) or on one only." On the nature of inga he agrees that "there is no question: they were units of land" whereas capitatio covered human beings or coloni and animals at the same time. In a listing of estates in western Anatolia we find zugokefali in which, Jones points out, farms and coloni are combined as an "assessment unit."

It is my belief that a complete description of the Ottoman çift-hane system – made possible through the utilization of the Ottoman survey registers – helps clarify the nature of ingatio-capitatio in the late Roman and Byzantine systems. A person's productive force was the basis of tax assessment. He paid more or less according to his personal status – whether or not he controlled the labor of a wife and children, whether or not he possessed a piece of land and the requisite animal power. But the family farm unit was the economic and fiscal basis of the entire system. Despite changes in the political super-structure, the peasant family farm remained at the core of the rural economic and fiscal order throughout medieval times. The Ottoman Empire inherited and maintained this system.

NOTES
1 Chayanov (1966), pp. 41–42, 116; there are, however, questions whether or not Chayanov's theory is valid for peasant societies outside Russia.
2 Ottoman Law allows for a reduction in the rate of tithes for crops such as flax which demand more intensive labor than grain.
3 The diffusionist theory believes that the family farm unit emerged for the first time in Sumer, spreading therefrom to the rest of the world: see Duby (1962).
4 State ownership of arable land combined with a class of independent peasantry is a dominant feature of the agrarian system in most traditional empires.
including the Byzantine Empire; recent studies on Byzantine rural society 
estimate this point, see Udalsowa and Chvostoka (1981); Kaplan (1981); 
5 See Ostrogorsky (1954), pp. 296, 303; Lefort (1974), pp. 315-344; Laiou-
Thomadakis (1977), pp. 69, 147, 153, 161-163, 173 note 46. In the Byzantine 
practice the fiscal unit is defined on the basis of either the number of oxen or, 
less frequently, the size of land, but actually these two were the components of 
the unit zugobesalai, see Delage (1945), p. 194, who defines the unit as 
"l'unité-joung" or "l'unité-tête," cf. Mommessen (1869), p. 431 and Jones (1957), 
pp. 88-91; iugum-caput corresponds exactly to the Ottoman cift-bane; and it 
is interesting to note that the land measure madd is borrowed from the Byzant-
7 Ibid., p. 92.
8 Barkan (1943), p. 47, article 17.
9 The minimum size of the Byzantine stasis is 40 modios or 3.6 hectares and 
the maximum is 215 modios or 19.3 hectares, cf. Laiou-Thomadakis (1977), 
pp. 147, 153, 161-163; for the late Roman Empire, see Lot (1928), p. 121.
10 Inalcik (1965c), pp. 32-33.
11 Ibid.
12 For details, see Inalcik (1959a), pp. 576-81.
13 See, for Mehmed the Conquerer's law code, Kraelitz (1922), pp. 13-48 and 
15 Still basic for the Byzantine agrarian-fiscal system is Ostrogorsky (1954); also 
see Savonos (1959); Lefort (1974); Laiou-Thomadakis (1977), pp. 161-163, 
and Inalcik (1958b), pp. 237-42.
16 It must however be pointed out that Ottoman extraordinary levies, or avariz-
divanlilik, actually replaced feudal levies and most of the labor services so 
that there was in the end no real relief for the peasantry, especially when the 
empirical government had recourse to emergency levies too frequently; 
enlightened Ottoman bureaucrats warned the sultan not to misuse this 
privilege.
17 Lot (1928).
19 Ibid.
21 Lot (1928) and Delage (1945).
22 Postan et al. (1963), p. 205.
23 Jones (1957).

7
2

SETTLEMENTS

THE RURAL LANDSCAPE AND THE FIELD SYSTEM

The state's determining role in promoting and maintaining a particular 
agrarian system under the state ownership of land (miri) and cift-bane 
system, and its consequences for the whole rural landscape, cannot be 
minimized.

We have seen that only the grain fields were subject to state ownership, 
a point stressed in the regulations on several occasions. "The miri lands 
are cultivated lands that lie around the villages." For example, 
conversion of such fields into pastures, vineyards or orchards was prohib-
ited because they could then be disposed of as freehold property; they 
could be sold, donated or given as surety and partitioned among the 
eirs. Conversion of a field to pasture or orchard was interpreted as the 
abandonment of its cultivation, and no state-owned land could be left 
uncultivated for three consecutive years. Vineyards, orchards and vege-
table gardens in the vicinity of towns and villages were freehold property. 
Although they made up a vital part of the urban economy, they were 
distinguished from fields at large under state ownership.

Orchards and gardens were more widespread in the villages near large 
agglomerations than in remote areas; consequently, freehold farms privately 
owned by urbanites or rented were more numerous in such villages. Such 
lands usually were irrigated lands, and private irrigation made a 
considerable difference in landholding rights.1

There is strong evidence to support the view that the ability of the 
Ottoman state to establish and maintain its specific land regime through the 
tapu system in a region determined the settlement and field pattern 
of that area. On the other hand, changing relations between the state and 
and provincial title-holders to land, for instance the takifs and the ayan regime
of the eighteenth century, led to considerable alterations in the social fabric and the emergence of new patterns. Obviously, the rural landscape varied in the Ottoman Empire from one region to another and from one period to another.

It is not a coincidence that the rural landscape and social structure, in the core lands where the çift-bane and tapu system prevailed, differed fundamentally from the peripheral provinces – Egypt, parts of Syria and Iraq, all annexed to the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century. Of course, physical conditions, irrigation cultivation, and the Islamization of these lands long before the Ottoman conquest account for the difference, which actually made the application of the tapu system impractical. By contrast, the Ottoman regime was successfully applied in Hungary, Cyprus, and Georgia. It is important to note that in the parts of Syria and Iraq where grain cultivation with dry-farming prevailed, the Ottomans were able to introduce their tapu and timar system. Discussing the point at the level of microeconomy, the average peasant farm size in the village parish (the village including fields) in Anatolia under traditional agriculture was limited to an average area of 100 dönüms.

Human geographers have examined the interrelations of social structures and settlement patterns in rural areas by focusing primarily on the “settlement situation.” They have studied the cases where the settlement was carried out by a group of nomads, migrant peasants, by squatters from nearby villages, or by state initiative. Hüteroth believes that the decisive factor in land distribution and the ground plan of the fields depended on the “settlement situation.” But, in the earlier periods, we know, a settlement of nomads or slave farmers ultimately led to independent family farms under the tapu system. It is suggested that as far as the ground plan of the fields is concerned, the field pattern depended first on topography; on the flat land we find regular strips and in hilly land irregular square fields. As for the ethnic-social conditions, Hüteroth observes in nineteenth-century Syria, for instance, Bedouin settlement involved the mshbaa system – the division of state-owned lands into regular compounds of field strips, with periodic re-divisions to give fair allotments to settlers. A similar situation emerged in eastern Anatolia when tribal chieftains turned into big landowners. In the inner Anatolian steppe, the patterns in settlement and the field system were due to the successive settlements by indigenous peasants, Turcoman and Kurdish nomads and immigrants from the Balkans, Caucasus and the northern Black Sea (Fig. 1.2). By contrast, in Balkan and west Anatolian villages, communal ownership existed only on village commons – pastureland, harvest plots and forest, not on arable lands. It should be recalled that during the classical age, every peasant family with an indivisible çiftlik or half çiftlik ideally had permanent possession rights and independence in organizing exploitation of the land. As a result, ground plans must have had basically a permanent character, and were not subject to divisions. In Syria and Palestine, too, the same pattern must have been the norm in the traditional village. Since the Ottoman archives do not yield ground plans of fields we can only speculate that the new settlements of Turkish nomads in western Anatolia and the Balkans must have begun with a square field system but over time these, too, were divided into strips. Such was the evolution in the settlement of inner Anatolia during the nineteenth century.

Hüteroth suggests that a particular ground plan of fields reflects the settlement history and social structure of a village (see Fig. 1.2). He gives examples of villages of various origins with differing field patterns. In the first phase of village formation, he says, square fields prevailed, followed by a strip field pattern by successive divisions of square fields jointly possessed and tilled. In fact, the head of the family farm in the Ottoman çift-bane system sometimes decided the actual partitioning of land when his sons married and continued to live in the father’s household. Also under the tapu system, the family farm had to be possessed and cultivated jointly by the sons after the death of the father. But Ottoman law also speaks of the land being partitioned among the sons for tax purposes. Thus, the partitioning must have led to the strip (open) field system.

In the strip field system, the fields lying quite far from the village are not fenced but bounded only by a low hedge for delimitation and against grazing animals. In general, strip-cultivation is identified as more advanced than the square field system. But the fact that the square field with stone hedges is found mostly in the mountains (in Syria for instance) indicates that a specific type of land use – horticulture, olive groves or orchards, and gardening – may also be a determinant in the square field system, at least in certain territories. In any case, the patriarchal-patrimonial character of landholding in general with a dominant father, state or big landowner as well as the characteristic agricultural pattern – dry-farming with grain cultivation on the flat lands – must have been the basic determinants of the traditional field system in the Ottoman core lands.
state protection for small farmers against marauders as well as the capacity of its own agents. Also, mass flight to inaccessible places such as mountains, islands or forests because of epidemics, brigandage, plunder and tax abuses gave a specific pattern to the settlement under the Ottomans. Peasants frequently chose to have their main settlement sites on the hillsides and maintained a mezraa down on the flatland as a satellite exploitation. This holds true for many areas in Anatolia and the Balkans. The period 1470–1570 witnessed a general expansion of arable land and settlement of marginal lands on the highlands as well as on the lowlands.

In Asia Minor, the Balkans, Syria and Palestine, regional development after the Ottoman conquest shows a gradual replacement of the pre-conquest “feudal” landowners by the sipabis with the typical Ottoman timar regime and adjustment to the gift-bane system. Ottoman surveys provided a mechanism to achieve the change. Peace and better protection of the peasant under the new regime generally secured a substantial increase in cultivated arable land, in population, and urban development. The subsequent long-term crisis at the turn of the sixteenth century apparently derived from the imbalance between the rapid population growth and food resources.

A parallel development is the settlement of nomads either forcibly by the state and/or spontaneously under the pressure of economic factors. No doubt, nomadic settlement led to a further extension of cultivated land, although in some regions it resulted in serious crises which expressed themselves in insurrection or flight, generally into Azerbaijan, which attracted Turcomans with its lush pasturage and favorable political atmosphere.

Under Süleyman I, the Yörüks in Sivas province, for example, formed many communities, mostly by settling deserted villages. Along with these settlements we find a great number of summer and winter pasturage, each assigned to a particular nomadic group (see Table 1:34).

The table shows that in nomadic settlements the strikingly high percentage of small or temporary settlements, mezraas, is observed. The Yörük of the region included the historically well-known tribes of Zülkadiye, Bayındır, Avşar and Harbendel. Here, the nomadic groups that exclusively engaged in stock raising were clearly distinguished from those which did some cultivating at the same time. On the other hand, several Yörük groups became sedentary while keeping their nomad-clan status. To understand better the process of a nomadic settlement, we shall take the history of the Yörük settlement of Sakal-Tutan, a village 35 km from the city of Kayseri.
Table 1:34. The settlement pattern of the Yeni-ıl kada in the province of Sivas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>mezraa</th>
<th>yaylak and yurt</th>
<th>Groups (cema'at)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>125</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Munsha'at, British Library, Or. MS 9503, fol. 5–12.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the plain of Köstere where Sakal-Tutan village emerged was the grazing ground for numerous clans of nomadic Yörüks. But the survey of 1583 indicates an extensive settlement with 35 villages, and its economy was transformed from sheep breeding to grain cultivation. It is interesting to note that the area was originally under the control of a local lord of the pre-Ottoman Zulkadirid principality, in which nomadic Turcomans predominated. The Yörüks of the Köstere plain belonged to the Danishmendili tribal confederation. Settled by different small clans, the villages were noticeably of small size at the early stage, but in the period 1555–83 their population recorded an increase of 50 percent. Talas and Tomarza, older villages situated in the better watered land to the north of Erciyas mountain and inhabited earlier, in majority by Christians, experienced “a phenomenal population growth” in the same period.14

Down to the twentieth century, the Yörük villages remained backward in their general culture, being less exposed to the influence of Kayseri city than the older, non-Muslim villages. Situated in the favored riverine valleys, the latter were engaged in horticulture and irrigated cultivation, and they marketed their produce in Kayseri.

We observe in Bursa province the same economic, social and cultural contrast between the Turkish-Yörük villages, depending predominantly on grain agriculture inland, and the older Greek villages of the Marmara coasts engaged in wine and olive oil production for the İstanbul market.15

At least two-thirds of today’s villages and nine-tenths of the cultivated parts of inner Anatolia were established only in the period after 1860.16 Until then, no noteworthy new settlement had occurred in the greater part of the country. Settlement became possible, Hütteroth believes, mainly as a result of better security against nomads, and better protection of possession rights through the state-sponsored title deed. However, I believe the persistence of nomadism in the central steppe area, down to 1860, might be due to specific economic conditions. For example, the Cihanbeyli tribal confederation that raised stock dominated in the northern part of the inner Anatolian steppe because stock raising was then the most profitable and rational exploitation of this marginal land. The chief of the tribal confederation annually was supplying, under a government contract, 300,000 sheep to İstanbul. Similarly, persistence of stock raising and seasonal transhumance with the dominant tribal social organization in eastern Anatolia must have been due to the fact that this region supplied livestock to all the big cities, including İstanbul, Aleppo, Damascus and Jerusalem.17

As in earlier centuries, the temporary or small settlements in the central steppe area constituted the initial phase of village formation. At the beginning, the tribal chief (agba), the patriarch and leader in the community, played a dominant role in the formation of the village, deciding all matters concerning the land and cultivation, thus replacing the state agent (timariot sipahi), convent sheikh or governor’s steward. The nucleus in a mezraa type settlement was always “a joint family,” or çift-bane household.

One interesting set of settlements was on the Çukurova (Cilicia) flood plain, concentrating on the large Yüreğir marshes which stretch to the sea between the Seyhan and the Ceyhan rivers. Here too, the landscape changed little down to the nineteenth century in its basic settlement pattern.

According to the register of 1572, here most of the arable land was used as mezraa and cultivated by nomadic groups. Sixty percent of the cultivable lands were converted into regular agricultural exploitations under the çift-bane system, while the rest still was cultivated on a temporary basis by nomadic groups. The first group can be considered seminomadic with fixed holdings while the second group also held mezraas but mostly used it for grazing and a winter camp and paid a lump sum for its use. In the spring they left their mezraa with the herds for the mountain summer pastures, in a short circuit, which took 10 to 15 days to walk.18 In general, settlement was very sparse in the plain compared to the hilly country in the north. In 70 percent of the settled places or mezraas the population did not exceed twenty households. Village formation occurred almost exclusively in the district east of the Ceyhan river, whereas in the west there were only nomadic groups and their mezraas. Essentially, the regular transhumance of the large nomadic population between the summer pastures in the Taurus Mountains to the north and the Yüreğir plain accounted for this situation there.19 In the Yüreğir plain, nomadic as well as public revenues showed a noticeable growth between 1547 and 1572 in common with the general demographic and economic growth. The annual cotton production (amounting to
Every mezraa is, however, referred to by a specific toponym which often reveals its origin or first possessor. In the province of Karaman, for example, many mezraa names are coupled with hisar, referring probably to abandoned Byzantine castles, or with ağış, sheepfold, or having reference to a nomadic group which used the site as pastureland. A great number of village names in Anatolia bearing viran orören (meaning, abandoned or in ruin) must originally have been mezraas which over time were transformed into full villages. When we speak of a mezraa as an abandoned village we mean, basically, not just the site of the village itself, but also its fields.

On the other hand, human geographers place mezraas among the periodic settlements or small rural settlements on the way to becoming villages. The fact that a small group of permanent settlers with their houses may be found there does not change its basic mezraa character. Settlement of marginal lands as a result of rural overpopulation is considered the underlying reason for the spread of these types of mezraa. In fact, the term mezraa was used for arable lands which were cultivable or actually cultivated by nearby villagers, wandering peasants or nomads. Summer and winter pasturclands could also be the scene of settlement and agricultural activities and could be transformed into mezraas or villages. Like mezraas, kom, oba and divan are mentioned as types of small rural or periodic settlements. Kom is to be found in eastern Anatolia; it differs from a mezraa in being a kind of ranch for animal breeding, usually owned by an absentee landlord. It encompasses sheepfolds and shepherd huts. Oba is the grazing area of a nomadic household and should be studied rather within the yayla pastoral land structure. When settled by a nomad household which shifts to agriculture as its main occupation, the oba assumes the character of a mezraa. The process is attested from early Ottoman times. At present, all obas are of this developed type. A divan was apparently the name for a tribal superstructure over the oba, which disappeared as settlement progressed. Some isolated çiftlik, settled by one or a few families devoted to agriculture and livestock breeding, are considered, like the mezraa, as a kind of settlement liable to develop into a village. In Palestine, Transjordan, and Syria, mezraas were “small agricultural areas, dispersed amongst the hills, lying within the village area but apart from the main fields belonging to the village, as is still the case today.”

According to the regulations and survey registers, the size of a mezraa varied widely. It could consist of only one or two çiftlik or have the size of a village, judging from its estimated revenue.
In western Anatolia and the Balkans, the Ottomans inherited the Byzantine rural landscape with its sub-villages and periodic settlements. Under the Byzantines, the mezraa-type lands as dependents of a village were known as agridia and proasteia, the former designating partly settled and the latter unsettled satellite land. As was the case under the Ottomans, when the village rented such land collectively, it paid the rent collectively. But this special case cannot be used as an argument for the theory that in general village land was subject to collective ownership. From the standpoint of land use, a mezraa is basically a field for grain production as opposed to pasture, vineyard, orchard, etc. Viticulture, horticulture, olive growing and livestock breeding were only preponderant on the hillsides while fields for grain production were located in the mezraa on the flatland. The Syrian and Palestinian villages with hillside vineyards, orchards, and olive groves and lowland or valley mezraas also provide instances of this pattern. This village/mezraa pattern develops into an upper village and a lower village when the satellite mezraa on the lowland is fully settled. Village names preceded with zir-, bala-, yuksar- and aşıği-, or in the Balkans dolni-/dolne-/dolnej- and gorni-/gorne-/gornje- reflect this process.

The fact that most of the mezraas were registered as dependent on a village shows that the Ottoman administration generally recognized the mezraa as an indivisible part of village economy, a kind of reserve land. Such mezraas secured an extra source of income for the villagers and provided land for the surplus population. Often villagers cultivated this land without the government’s knowledge, arguing that it had always belonged to them. As a result, the rule was made that no abandoned land could be exploited without the sultan’s prior approval. Because the benefits of such exploitation were vital for the village economy, villagers vigorously contended against timar-holders or government agents who chose to rent mezraas to outsiders or to distribute them under the tapu system. In opposition to outsiders, including members of the military elite, who were interested in renting mezraa to turn into estate çiftlik, villagers often rented them collectively.

Under the renting system, abandoned or unregistered lands such as mezraa or çiftlik were offered to any bidder, military or townsfolk, Muslim or Christian, or even foreigner, anyone who would guarantee to the treasury a steady revenue. In 1545 in Bosnia, for instance, Venetians were able to rent mezraas. Otherwise, in principle, the government’s policy was ultimately to convert all such lands into villages or peasant çiftlik. Once registered in the survey with an estimated rent, a mezraa could be subject to various types of assignments by the sultan – it could be granted as freehold property, a vakfl or a timar. In the survey registers, a mezraa often was assigned as part of a timar or a vakfl, since it could be cultivated and produce revenue. When it was included in timar revenue, its cultivation became the timar-holder’s concern. He could rent it and obtain a lump sum for its rent or he could let “outsiders,” nomads or wandering unregistered peasants, use it in return for the payment of fines and incumbent dues.

The next question to determine is how mezraas emerged and under what conditions their numbers changed. Peasant populations abandoned their villages, temporarily or permanently, for various reasons. Natural and economic conditions conducive to mass flight included exhaustion of the land, desertification, and epidemics. Social and political conditions were no less important. On the Istanbul–Belgrade highway, peasants abandoned their villages to set up new ones on inaccessible sites. First and foremost, peasants left their villages en masse to avoid attack by passing troops, brigand bands or caravans. A particularly important cause of flight was to avoid registration for taxes and tax collection. The peasant’s most effective means of getting a tax reduced or abolished was the threat to abandon the tract. Assuming the character of a mass protest, this flight from the land became in effect a peasant strike. Since peasants did not own the land and as there were always other lands available, flight from their tract was frequently resorted to. The growing number of villages in the forests was largely due to this phenomenon. On the other hand, the big landowners, and particularly vakfl lands, promised better conditions to attract the registered peasants of the lands under tapu.

In the Ottoman Empire, a shift of rural population was a continuous process which produced thousands of deserted villages and farms in the countryside. But there also occurred mass migrations due to famines or insecurity over a large area. Famines were so destructive that peasants migrated to the neighboring regions or towns for a livelihood and even sold themselves and their children as slaves. Peasant migration as a result of famines or insecurity totally upset the empire’s settlement pattern fixed in the land and population surveys and destroyed the state’s tax basis and military structure. During the famine of 1583–84 the Bedouin of the Syrian steppe fell upon the cultivated lands between Damascus and Tripoli with their 450,000 camels and destroyed all of the fields. The most destructive of such peasant migrations occurred during the Celali depredations in Anatolia, called “the great flight,” during the period
In this case the exodus was not caused by natural factors, but rather by attacks of unemployed mercenary troops, the sekban and sancak companies, upon defenseless settlements in the countryside.\(^{15}\) Celali depredations were followed by the devastation of cultivated lands by the herds of Turcoman pastoralist nomads, known as Boz-Ulus, in eastern Anatolia and in the northern Syrian steppes, who migrated to central and western Anatolian provinces from 1613 on.

The changing number of mezraas can be taken as an indication of demographic and economic decline or development in a particular region, and the relative number of villages and mezraas can be determined for most of the provinces through the survey books.\(^{16}\) In 1597, in some districts of Palestine,\(^{37}\) the number of mezraas was two or three times greater than the number of villages (in the sancak of Safad there were 610 mezraas as against 282 villages), whereas in the sancak of Aleppo both the villages and the mezraas numbered each about one thousand.\(^{38}\) By 1800, apparently about half the Anatolian population depended on the various types of periodic settlements.

In the formation of mezraas, conditions other than peasant flight also have to be considered. Sometimes the peasants used nearby marginal land or pasturelands for cultivation, or reclamation were made on wasteland in the forests or swamps.

When the central bureaucracy's control of the provinces weakened during protracted wars, struggles for succession to the throne, or uprisings, the military's appropriation of abandoned lands became more widespread. For example, in certain districts of Konya province, which had become the scene of protracted rebellions, a number of settlements were abandoned by its peasant population. To encourage their re-settlement, they were granted to the members of the military class or sheikhs as freehold or timar.\(^{39}\) In this example, an extensive amount of uninhabited land, ciftlik and mezraas, was given as hase to the Ottoman crown prince sent there as governor. The prince-governor exploited them on the basis of sharecropping by attracting reaya or nomads from the surrounding areas.

At other times, because of a labor shortage, the military converted their mezraas into livestock ranches. During the Celali disorders, the Rescript of Justice abolished such ciftlik, saying,\(^{40}\)

\(\text{those who set up ciftlik on the lands of the villages whose peasant populations fled because of the exactions since 1600 shall demolish the houses and stables and take away their servants, draft oxen, sheep and cattle and leave the site completely [for the peasants].}\)

Settlements

Such ranches were mainly owned by members of the sultan's standing army, Janissary and sipahis. Once the military established such a ranch, pressure or intimidation caused further abandonment of land by peasants in the surrounding villages.

When mezraas owners were able to attract reaya, they usually had recourse to sharecropping (ortaktılık). They furnished land and often also seed, oxen, and domiciles to the sharecroppers. In the sub-province of Novigrad, for example, those who obtained mezraas under the renting system were the petty commanders of the provincial army, such as alay-begi or garrison commanders.\(^{41}\)

Such shifts in land use, however, may also have resulted from economic factors, since animal breeding sometimes proved to be more profitable than grain production. In Anatolia, large areas of arable land abandoned by villagers were converted into ranches, partly because of the generally high price of meat and partly because the military found it difficult to obtain sufficient labor for cultivation.

Reconstruction (Senlendirme) and Methods of Colonization

It is a universal phenomenon, both in the West and the Middle East, that when peasants had to desert their lands, the military took over the land and turned the newcomers into their sharecroppers, colons, or serfs. The Islamic caliphate, Iran, and the Ottoman Empire were not strangers to this type of agrarian transformation.

The Ottomans in their policy toward unused and waste lands seem to have emulated the Byzantines, who gave pronoria-holders and monasteries similar opportunities to reclaim such lands. The big landowners either partitioned the land and rented the parts to their own paraikoi or unregistered outsiders, or they took complete ownership of the land by obtaining an imperial diploma and thereby turning it into an estate. Obviously, aside from a small reserve which his paraikoi was obliged to cultivate for him, the pronoria-holder controlled directly only those unused lands which were not in the possession of the paraikoi.

In the Ottoman Empire there were cases where state slaves or serfs cultivated abandoned land for the ruler's treasury, which often furnished them with land, seed and oxen, and closely supervised the production. The most spectacular example was that of Mehmed the Conqueror in 1453. Seeing that the Greek peasants of the 164 villages around his new capital city of Istanbul had fled or were enslaved during the siege, he
brought war prisoners and settled them in these villages as his sharecropper slaves, as well as ‘Turcoman nomads.’ In reconstruction, the state often employed, as in certain areas of newly conquered Hungary, the renting system, coupled with such attractive conditions as temporary exemption from taxation. In contrast, the direct organization and supervision of production using servile labor must have been preferred in the settlement of the Istanbul villages because of the urgent situation. Once the area was restored to its original prosperity, the slave sharecropping system was relaxed, giving way to the basic agrarian system of the empire, çift-bane based on free peasant families, reaya, on land divided into peasant farms under tapu.

As seen earlier, a grant of land as freehold to the high echelons of the military was another method in reconstruction. The following example will illustrate this. The village called Baş-Cıflik in the district of Niksar with its two mezaras, being on the highway, was abandoned and stayed uninhabited for about forty years. Then it was granted by the sultan’s diploma as a freehold estate to Sinan Beg for his services in an imperial campaign. It was exempted from taxation, including extraordinary levies. Enjoying such favorable conditions, it grew into a village with the settlement of local peasants and unregistered immigrant peasants from other areas. Sinan Beg built a mosque and a dervish convent in the village and reclaimed some land around the granted land. Finally, during the new survey under Süleyman I, the whole estate was registered as a village with two mezaras and the reclaimed çiftlik. Sinan Beg retained one share of the land out of fifteen as freehold for himself, and the rest was made a vakıf for the dervish lodge he built in the village.

Without the laborers who would cultivate and make the improvements, however, the entire enterprise of reclamation or reconstruction would have been futile. Such laborers might have been drawn from the slaves whom the Ottoman elite employed extensively during the first period of conquests, or from “outsiders” who were mostly uprooted and impoverished peasants or impoverished pastoral nomads, or from peasants already registered on timars who offered themselves as sharecroppers or day laborers for pay. The last group thus would be responsible both for giving tithes to the owner for the reclaimed land, and for paying personal taxes to their timar-holder to whom they were assigned in the registers. While the Ottoman government encouraged such reclamations of land, it also warned the new landowners not to force registered peasants to work such lands. The state’s attitude meant that the usual practice was to invite and settle “outsiders” on such lands.

The grant of land to dervishes is a method widely used from the beginning of the Ottoman state. In general, the dervishes were given mezaras, or rather, a piece of land of the çiftlik size to bring back to cultivation, and in return the state expected them to perform a public service by giving shelter and food to travellers in their hostel. Since villages tended to locate away from highways, the government used this institution to promote settlement on abandoned lands along the highways.

In Serbia, abandoned villages were brought back to cultivation by the settlement of nomadic Vlachs in the same way that nomads or wandering peasants were encouraged to settle mezaras in Anatolia.

A particularly interesting example of the government’s efforts to convert mezaras in use by neighboring villages into new settlements is Syria’s reconstruction after the conquest. In this region, the vast stretches of abandoned arable land were first liberally recognized as mezaras pertaining to nearby villages. But later on, when security was re-established and peasants who had emigrated began to return, these mezaras, as well as çiftlik which were much larger than the standard peasant çiftlik, were surveyed and distributed to immigrant peasant families. The native villagers then attempted to prevent the newcomers from settling. The newcomers were mostly wandering peasants who had abandoned their homes during the Hungarian-Ottoman wars of 1521–26. The distribution of the large mezaras under the renting system, followed by the application of the tapu system, was the most effective policy pursued by the central government to expand the tax base in the provinces or in newly conquered and ruined countriesides.

Under the impact of the Istanbul market, a specific settlement process occurred in the Kilia-Akerman region between 1484 and 1540. In addition to the economic boom which the region enjoyed when the south-north trade route shifted from Caffa to Kilia-Akerman and the lower Danubian ports (see below, pp. 285–99), Istanbul’s growing demand for foodstuffs and raw materials triggered an unprecedented expansion of agriculture and cattle raising in the virgin fertile lands of the Buçak (lower Bessarabia). Two economic factors should be underlined for this spectacular development. First, there was the low cost of sea transportation of bulky necessities, transport costs being the most important determinant for interregional trade in the Ottoman Empire. Secondly, the great demand of the Istanbul market led to an unusual cash accumulation. The case has a particular interest since it shows how a market economy could rise within an oriental empire and make a tremendous impact on the development of agriculture and colonization in
an undeveloped area. Although the region’s development had its own unique characteristics, it had common features with other developing areas under the traditional Ottoman methods of agricultural expansion and settlement. These included reclamation and settlement and the use of renting by contract in opening new arable lands. Since the demand for sheep, cattle and horses for the capital and army grew, settlements showed a spectacular expansion in the countryside of Akkerman, Bender and Kilia in the period 1538-70. Then a large amount of abandoned or reclaimed land around these towns came into use as big farms or ranches (çiftlik, mezraa or κςλάκ). Over time many of these would develop into prosperous villages (see Table 1:35).

Originally meaning the winter camp and pastureland of nomads, the term κςλάκ in this area assumed a special connotation. The local military or townspeople, engaged in large-scale livestock exports by sea to Istanbul, used abandoned land to create livestock ranches called κςλάκ, sometimes synonymously called mezraa or çiftlik. Those transhumant people using a κςλάκ may also have engaged in limited cultivation.

Such çiftlik, being held under a renting contract (mukataa), changed hands over time, so there was nothing unusual in a çiftlik held by a military person later falling into the hands of a tailor or a peasant. The renter of a mukataa land paid a lump sum to the treasury and exploited the land in the way he thought the most profitable for himself. If he invited people of peasant reeya status to cultivate it, he took tithes. But the specific peasant taxes were to be paid by the reeya to the treasury or its agent because “the reeya belong to the sultan,” or to the timar-holder. If the sultan granted land with full ownership (temlik) then these taxes too belonged to the beneficiary.

In the same region çiftlik and κςλάκ, each comprising originally quite an extensive area, were divided over time into normal-sized Ottoman peasant çiftlik. There were 82 çiftlik in the survey of 1542, by 1570 they numbered 186.

In short, various methods were employed by the state, members of the military class, or peasants to develop sub-village or periodic settlements. Concerned to maintain and develop the tax base in the countryside, the state led in the settlement and exploitation of such lands. And by incentives such as lower tax liability or complete tax exemption, the state encouraged individuals or groups to rent and exploit abandoned lands. The mukataa renting system specifically applied to this category of lands since it had more favorable provisions than the tapu system and offered a basic advantage for those who rented such lands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>1542</th>
<th>1570</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kilia</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akkerman</td>
<td></td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1:35: Village formation in Kilia and Akkerman

Source: Vainstein (1985).

Ottoman survey registers also show that, besides belonging to villages, a great number of “vacant” çiftlik and mezraa were registered as “dependent” on towns within the boundaries of the urban kada district. This situation reflects the economic dependence of the towns on such agricultural reserve land, without which the towns could not have survived. Given the high transportation costs of the time, towns had to rely on this Lebensraum for an important part of the foodstuffs, fuel and raw materials such as cotton, wood, fruits, vegetables and hides, for their populations. The social and economic dynamics of such villages and sub-village settlements appear to be extremely vivid and complex compared to that of “independent” rural settlements. As a result, mezraa around towns bear quite special characteristics. In describing the city of Bursa, Erliya speaks of “the great number of its mezraa and abundance of provisions.” Many villages near towns were transformed into mezraa or çiftlik also because the village population, attracted by better opportunities in town, migrated there. Once deserted, the village land was acquired under mukataa by well-to-do town residents and turned into a kind of estate-ciftlik. In the survey registers we find that most renters of such çiftlik and mezraa were military or well-to-do townsman. While mezraa at large were exploited mainly for grain production, great numbers of vineyards, orchards and gardens around every important town provided fruit and vegetables.

ŞİPAHİ AND VILLAGERS

A village community on the whole was isolated and defenseless in the open country and was exposed to attack and plunder from all kinds of marauders. This precarious situation made effective protection for the peasantry a fundamental requirement of rural society. Like western feudal lords, the şipahi lived in the village as a visible instrument of imperial protection. Whenever an attack occurred, the şipahi was to alert
the district local commander, subas/aqm, who would summon all the sipabis in the area. During the campaigns some sipabis were left behind in the villages as a protection. In about 1634, Henry Blount incisively observed that the timarists had the responsibility "to awe the provinces wherein they lived and cause them to be well cultivated." Also, the provincial commanders of higher ranks, sancak beys in particular, had the duty to make periodic tours of their jurisdictional areas and to identify vagabonds or wrongdoers. At the turn of the seventeenth century, the central government lost effective control of its provinces in Anatolia, and commanders made exactions on defenseless villagers to sustain their retainers, while the towns had relatively better protection. In the justice rescripts the basic duty of the governors is formulated in these terms:

The real purpose in appointing beglerbegi and sancakbegis to each province and in assigning them haseki prebends is not just to make tours of the country and to collect money and goods, and thus cause the ruin of the land, but to guard and protect and make the country prosper by following God's command to act as one is ordered in the divine words and to refrain from what is prohibited in order to prevent anyone from committing injustices and oppression against the peasants contrary to the stipulations of the Islamic and sultanic law and to take into custody through proper means those who disturb public security.

The timarists formed a vital part of the çift-bane system, acting to ensure the survival of the village communities. As a rule, the reaya were prohibited from owning or using weapons.

As reflected in sultanic regulations, peasants had many complaints about their relationship with the sipabi and with government agents who visited their villages. To protect peasants the rules regarding the collection of taxes were particularly detailed and restricting. According to one law, peasants could not harvest their fields, put grain in a barn or pick fruit until the sipabi was present. To prevent the product from perishing the law makers introduced new regulations. If the timar-holder did not appear in time to determine, together with the peasant, his share of the tithes on the harvest, the village head, or kethuda and imam were authorized by law to do the job. Also, the sipabi disregarded the law that exempted fruit and vegetables and beehives for family consumption, as well as all crops harvested by hand, from tithes. Again, sipabi did not respect the law which prohibited collection of dues on lands reclaimed by peasants from the forest and waste land which were not entered into the official survey books. Among the sipabi's exactions, double taxation was the largest and most common. Double taxation was possible as a result of the alternatives the law maker considered, revival of an abolished custom, or confusion in the text of the law. After a peasant delivered one carload of wood and one carload of hay as part of his obligatory service, the sipabi still required payment of the cash equivalent of these services. Since the central government sought to be solicitous to complaints about illegal exactions and injustices peasants often sought the local kadi's intervention or that of the Porte. Bribery, of course, existed at every level. But as long as the central bureaucracy was efficient and the bribery did not cost too much, the complaint system functioned. In the seventeenth century, a special bureau and registers were created at the capital for such individual or communal petitions of grievance.

An imperial order of 1549 indicates that Janissaries were actively engaged in agriculture in the villages. Although there was no special treatment or exemption for the military as far as taxation was concerned, the law recognized certain personal immunities for the servants of the sultan. They were, for instance, exempt from the yoke-tax, a typical levy on the dependent peasant reaya. Also, the law prohibited sipabi from forcing Janissaries to perform labor services, such as carrying the sipabi shares to the market place or to his barn. The military also was exempt from paying market dues or marriage tax owed by the ordinary reaya.

**THE VILLAGE AS A COMMUNITY AND VILLAGE TYPES**

Since village types varied from one geographic region to another and were influenced by various ethnic and cultural traditions, it is meaningless to talk about the Ottoman, even Anatolian or Rumelian village. The point here is whether or not the Ottoman regime imposed certain common characteristics or uniformities resulting from a common imperial landholding system, taxation and local administration. Such an inquiry makes sense when we remember that the Anatolian and Rumelian provinces, the core lands of the empire, were subjected to a general law code along with the universal timar regime. To constitute a village it was not enough to have peasant families assembled and living in a certain area, since there were other types of rural settlement which were not considered villages. One determinant factor was registration for a certain length of time in the imperial Ottoman registers. Official registration defined a village as a communal and territorial unit with fixed boundaries of arable land and
pastures and total tax liability (hāsil). The number of peasant families or the amount of arable land were not apparently decisive factors. Thus, the continuity of a settlement with an agricultural base was the decisive factor; so the surveyor inquired as to whether the settlement had a cemetery, a water source, pastures and fixed boundaries verifiable by the testimony of trustworthy local witnesses. The tomb of a saint was often accepted as proof of the continuous existence of a village. The administration attempted to restore deserted villages to their original state. In other words, tradition and the imperial concern for maintaining the tax base were the guiding principles in establishing villages.

Under the çift-bane system, the peasant family was a legally autonomous unit, in terms of the possession and exploitation of land. Villages under the Ottomans generally constituted agglomerations of independent peasant households. It was an exception to find villages in possession of common arable land and practicing periodic parcelling and redistribution. Nomads who carried out transitory agriculture on mezas or settled permanently on such land were the exception. But even such exploitations were over time transformed into typical “Ottoman” villages under the tapu system with independent çift-bane units. Thus, it can safely be said that the classical Ottoman regime tended to extend a specific type of village throughout the core lands of the empire. Since, in the tapu system, a peasant maintained a certain status with specific obligations and tax liabilities which were totally different from those of an urbanite (şehiril), a clear definition of each group was needed. It is specified that a peasant is a man who is the son of a peasant registered as such in the official survey and actually living in the village.

The village community acquired its communal character through its common interests in such areas as the village meadows, threshing floor, water sources and, in particular, pastures. The village acted collectively when there was a need to protect the village territory and its fields against outsiders, particularly against pastoralists. Peasants did not have too many livestock, so cooperation became a necessity in the pasturing of animals. Since this was one of the basic concerns of peasant households, they jointly hired a shepherd who gathered animals each morning in the village square and took them to the outlying common pastureland. A pasture’s protection was a common responsibility which led not infrequently to “battles for pastureland” among the neighboring villages. To protect the communal rights and interests, the leaders of the village, sipahi and the village kethûda or imam, sought the local kadi’s legal sanction. If a solution could not be reached locally, the village had the right to complain directly to the sultan by submitting a joint petition or by sending a delegation. Thus, in defining a settlement as a village, the presence of these two agents was considered necessary. The sipahi represented the sultan’s authority and interests, the kethûda or imam, chosen from among the villagers or invited from outside, was paid jointly by the villagers and represented the village community.

Specific social, economic and administrative conditions gave rise to various types of villages under the Ottoman regime. Aside from the ordinary type of village, those which developed from a dervish group around a convent preserved the initial character of the village with a saint’s tomb, visited by outsiders and with tax immunities. Villages centrally located or situated near a thermal spring or fountain were apt to become the bazaar for neighboring villages. A great number of villages throughout the core lands were distinguished by certain permanent services assigned by the state, such as safeguarding a mountain pass (derbendo), or bridge (köprücü), working in state mines (kürer) or rice exploitation (çeltiçik); or supplying bows and arrows (okçular) or butter (yage). Today, the toponymy of villages throughout Anatolia and the Balkans reflect this Ottoman background.

It was of vital importance to delimit a village. Those who were attributed the revenues of a village as part of a prebend, freehold or vakfi land, had to know exactly the area granted. Disputes often arose among the prebend-holders themselves or between them and neighboring villages or government agents. Each prebend-holder was to collect the revenues from the land and the peasants personally assigned to him in the register. The boundaries were determined by the local kadi or one of his deputies who went to the place and made inquiries of trustworthy people on the spot and produced a document delimiting the village boundaries according to the locally known signs – trees, rocks, streams, etc. On the basis of the kadi’s document, the sultan conferred a delimitation document, sunnumname (sunur is a loan word from Greek). In fact, the boundaries of villages must go back long before Ottoman times. What was customarily established from olden times was taken as proof of communal rights. Villagers’ conservatism was espoused by the imperial bureaucracy. So it was the state which mainly was responsible for the continuity of the rural landscape and topography. The state was concerned because the protection of tax resources depended on the identification of village units.

The village inhabitants might change drastically but the village, its fields and its name remained. There were few villages which disappeared altogether from the survey registers. The deserted villages were registered
as **mezraas** mostly under the same name and the state took measures to restore them to their initial conditions. Thus, it was possible to identify each village, each **mezraa**, each **çiftlik**, and each pasture through the registers; and it was possible to identify even each field (**tariia**) with its local name. Each unit in the village had a specific name, mostly after the name of its registered first possessor; thus the unit was identifiable to the officials making assignments in Istanbul and to the local taxpayer. Identification by name of a land unit eliminated the need for the administration to perform a detailed cadastral survey.

It not infrequently appears that there were no precise boundaries between the villages and because of this members of the elite sometimes included in their estates large tracts of land traditionally belonging to neighboring villages. Kadi court documents provide evidence of frequent disputes between village communities and the elite over boundaries. The central government supposedly remained impartial in such confrontations, but influential landlords, such as the pashas, viziers, sultan’s daughters or sons-in-law were favored and took advantage of their position to enlarge their domains. Also, disputes occurred frequently over lands commonly exploited by two villages. In such cases the law maker usually recognized its common possession (**mubahaa**). Then the **timar**-holders collected taxes not on a territorial basis but on the registerment of the peasant. Wherever the peasant cultivated he paid taxes to his own registered **sipabi**. Where the land between two villages was a large wasteland such as a mountain or forest neither could claim it. In such a case the boundary of each village extended to the land that opened onto the wasteland.

To sum up, all of the arable lands in the empire were divided as traditional village parishes and each represented a territorial, communal and fiscal unit. Each village in turn was divided into **çiftlik** units or its fractions, depending on the available peasant families or work force. To survive as an economic unit each village needed arable land sufficient to sustain the community, pastureland for draft animals and livestock, a meadow usually not too far away from the village, a harvest floor, a fountain and a cemetery. Thus, in a village where there was a stream to supply water power, we also find a flour mill. **Çiftlik**s and its fractions were further divided into fields measured in **doniums** (each **donium** was about 920 sq. meters). Grain fields generally were bounded by a ditch, shrubs or stones.

Since fields predominantly were reserved for grain or other relatively cheap produce, no elaborate enclosures were necessary. As explained above, the open-field system predominated in the Ottoman rural landscape as today it does in the Middle East. To protect crops from roaming animals or nomadic herds was an important village concern. Each village maintained collectively a watchman, **kur-bekşi** or **deşibân**. Gardens and orchards often were enclosed by stone walls that were to be respected. The spiritual mentor of Mehmed II, Sheikh Ak-Shemsheddin, became furious when he learned that a shepherd had let the herd get into “his pasture protected by a wall.” The **sipabi** collected a special fine from those not taking care of animals which harmed the crops of others.

### NOTES

1. İnalck (1938a), pp. 878–83.
3. Ibid., pp. 40–41.
6. Ibid.
7. Venâk (1931).
9. Hüteroth (1974), Table 2b.
12. For a Malhussian approach to Ottoman demography, see Cook (1972).
22. Ibid., p. 78.
25. Tunçdilek (1960), p. 44.
26. Ibid., pp. 47–54; Barkan (1943), pp. 28–32.
29. Ibid., p. 114.
Istanbul and the Imperial Economy

Feeding a Giant City

Istanbul was the great transit center of the south-north trade artery between the Black Sea and Danubian ports, and the principal cities of the eastern Mediterranean, Arabia and India. The Istanbul-based merchants imported manufactured goods of European origin, principally woolen cloth, and also the so-called oriental goods, in particular, pepper, and other spices and dyes. Caffa, Kilia and Akkerman were the chief transit centers for this north-south trade, with Akkerman superseding Caffa, particularly after the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul. Istanbul merchants and industries supplied the Black Sea and northern area with woolen cloth, ready-to-wear clothing and Bursa silk textiles, which were also in great demand in Poland, Sweden and Muscovy. But much more important than international commerce was the regional trade between the northern and southern Black Sea areas. A major concern of the imperial government was to ensure an uninterrupted flow of the principal foodstuffs for the huge population of Istanbul. Intermittent wheat and flour shortages among the masses caused serious problems for the government.

Providing bread to the urban masses on a daily basis, and at a reasonable price, became such a vital governmental task that one of the most important duties of the grand vizier was to go personally every week to the bazaar and inspect grain supplies, bakeries, and the price and quality of bread. In times of severe shortage, the sultan would visit the bazaar in disguise and inflict the severest punishments on those merchants found guilty of cheating the public. Anyone creating public discontent was considered as undermining the sultan’s rule; hence, the sultan had to prove to the public that their daily bread was his personal concern. In times of shortage, the government strictly regulated prices by periodically
Istanbul and the imperial economy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ships coming from</th>
<th>Provisions</th>
<th>Type of ship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean and Black Sea ports (mostly Tekirdağ, Yozgat, Caffa, Akkerman)</td>
<td>Barley, millet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly Bandırma, Burgos, Biga, Silivri, Çekmece</td>
<td>Straw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly Karabiga, Şehrîköy, Anadolu-Hisar, Bâneli-Hisar, İzmir, Midyere, Terkos, etc.</td>
<td>Broadbeans, resined wood, Charcoal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İstanbul, Bursa, Inebolu, Midyere</td>
<td>Logs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abydos, Sakkara, Ereğli, Herî, Mireffe</td>
<td>Lumber, Nuts, Big and small jugs, Vinegar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enes, Şar, İlye, Crete, Kalyomos, Varna (from Samakov)</td>
<td>Harub (carob), Iron, Burrstone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sator island, Foça, Kars, Korykos</td>
<td>Stones for building, Acorns of valonia oak, resined wood, olive, pitch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karaköy on the Bosphorus, Kardaş, Metylen</td>
<td>Olive oil, pinetree bark, Yogurt, cream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erũp, Uşkûdar, Mytilene</td>
<td>Kajkavol, cheese Tekerlek cheese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tebriz and Çorlu, Wallachia and the Black Sea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallachia and Rumelı</td>
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<tr>
<td>İzmir, Derince, Yalova</td>
<td>Tulum cheese, Jewish kaser cheese, Kızıl-tekerlek cheese</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tâlın, Ağinboz, Anadolu Black Sea</td>
<td>Tallow for candle making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table lists the ships arriving in Istanbul by sea (according to a register of market dues [ihtisas]) dated Zilâkade 1692/1681, preserved at the Municipal Library, İstanbul, Cevdet Collection, B. 2.

Recalculating and adjusting prices and distributing free grain to the poor through the hospices. To remedy delays in the flow of supplies, the government also organized milling operations. Even seed was given to the growers at a loan discount of up to 50 percent off the market price.

Istanbul's daily grain consumption in the early eighteenth century has been estimated at about 200 tons. The principal grain-growing regions for Istanbul included the following: the plains of Thrace from the port of Tekirdağ; the Danubian basin, shipped from Braila, Isaccea, and Costanța; Bulgarian grain from Burgaz; the steppes region from the Dobruja to the Don river, shipped from Kilia, Akkerman, Azov and Caffa; the plain of Thessaly from Volos; western Anatolia from Foça and İzmir; and Egyptian grain and beans exported from Damietta and Alexandria. All of these regions were thus easily accessible by sea to the imperial capital. Since Mamluk times, Egypt had supplied the Hejaz with large quantities of grain.

It was from the Black Sea region that Istanbul received the largest part of its provisions and raw materials including grain, meat, hides and lumber. Fertility of the land and large surpluses, low prices and water transportation were the determining factors for this dependency. In order to deliver grain supplies on time and in sufficient amounts the government took strict measures.

Without a doubt, shipping constituted the most serious problem in Istanbul's provisioning. The Greek shipping businesses centered at Yeni-köy on the Bosphorus were mainly responsible for the transport of bulky goods from the Black Sea to Istanbul. Big vessels departing from Istanbul kept regular schedules but small ships at specific ports-of-call around the Black Sea plied the sea lanes between İstanbul and the ports on the
recalculating and adjusting prices and distributing free grain to the poor through the hospices. To remedy delays in the flow of supplies, the government also organized milling operations. Even seed was given to the growers at a loan discount of up to 50 percent off the market price.

Istanbul's daily grain consumption in the early eighteenth century has been estimated at about 200 tons. The principal grain-growing regions for Istanbul included the following: the plains of Thrace from the port of Tekirdağ; the Danubian basin, shipped from Brăila, Isaccea, and Costanța, Bulgarian grain from Burgaz; the steppe region from the Dobruja to the Don river, shipped from Kilia, Akkerman, Azov and Caffa; the plain of Thrasyly from Volos; western Anatolia from Foçalar and İzmir; and Egyptian grain and beans exported from Damietta and Alexandria. All of these regions were thus easily accessible by sea to the imperial capital. Since Mamluk times, Egypt had supplied the Hejaz with large quantities of grain.²

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### Table 1:36. Provisions arriving in Istanbul by sea (according to a register of market dues [ibtsiab] dated Zülkade 1092/1681, preserved at the Municipal Library, Istanbul, Cevdet Collection, B. 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ships coming from</th>
<th>Provisions</th>
<th>Type of ship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Spices, rice, flax, henna, sugar, ammonium, nitrate</td>
<td>Big ships (kalyon) and mini boats; small boats (fıbrata and şayka)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İzmir, Kuşadası, Edremit, Foçalar, Karaburun, İskanlı, Marmara Sea region</td>
<td>Dried fruits (raisins, figs, etc.)</td>
<td>Mini boats (kayık)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Black Sea ports</td>
<td>Apples, chestnuts, Citrus fruit</td>
<td>Mini boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aegean ports</td>
<td>Nardeni, hazelnuts</td>
<td>Mini boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giresun and other southern Black Sea ports</td>
<td>Dried olives, Molasses, pickles in jars</td>
<td>Mini boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erdek, Aydın, etc., Gallipoli, Burgos, Bosphorus, Kastalı</td>
<td>Uncured cheese, Dried beef meat of Kilia</td>
<td>Mini boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemnos, Mytilene, etc., Kilia</td>
<td>Soap, Lemon juice</td>
<td>In sacks of 3 &amp; 3 kantar by ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripoli (Syria) and İzmir</td>
<td>Olive oil, fruit, Olive oil</td>
<td>In sacks of 3 &amp; 1.5 kantar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edremit and vicinity</td>
<td>Olive oil, Fruit</td>
<td>Mini boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mytilene</td>
<td></td>
<td>In boats of 1,000, 600 or 300 kantar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Sea ports</td>
<td>Sesame, Flax seed</td>
<td>Şayka, mayeestra, darbuna, Mayeestra, darbuna Şayka, and Bartın kayık</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galatz</td>
<td>Rock salt</td>
<td>Şayka, mayeestra and darbuna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of ship</th>
<th>Provisions</th>
<th>Type of ship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barley, millet</td>
<td>Mediterranean and Black Sea ports (mostly Tekirdağ), Volos, Caffa, Akkerman</td>
<td>Straw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadbeans, resined wood</td>
<td>Mainly Bandırma, Burgos, Bigdib, Silivri, Çeçmece</td>
<td>Charcoal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumber</td>
<td>Mainly Karabiga, Şehrıkoy</td>
<td>Logs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
<td>Anadolu, Hüsar and Rumeli Hisar</td>
<td>Lumber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinegar</td>
<td>Iznik, Terkos, etc.</td>
<td>Bricks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harab (carob)</td>
<td>Akkoli, Bartın, Inebolu, Midye</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>Akşay, Sakarya, Ereğli</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burrstone</td>
<td>Hora, Mirette</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stones for building</td>
<td>Enez, Şir</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acorns of valonia oak, resined wood, pitch, olives</td>
<td>Çır, Kalyomoz</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive oil, pinetree bark</td>
<td>Varna (from Samakov)</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt, cream</td>
<td>Santor island, Poça</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaşkaskal cheese</td>
<td>Karak on the Bosphorus</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tekerleek cheese</td>
<td>Kastalı cheese</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulum cheese</td>
<td>Wallachia and Rumeli</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish kajar cheese</td>
<td>Iznik, Darca, Yalova</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kızılı-tekerleek cheese</td>
<td>Talanda, Aghbivos, Anadolu</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallow for candle making</td>
<td>Black Sea</td>
<td>Big and small jugs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
western and southern Black Sea coasts, the Marmara Sea or the Aegean islands and their ports (see Table 1.36). The most favorable season for navigation on the Black Sea was limited to the six-week period between 15 August and 30 September. During the winter months navigation almost stopped. These conditions required an efficient system for organizing shipping and storage.

All types of boats or ships of varying size moved between Istanbul and the Black Sea ports. According to a ship-tax register, dated 1483, 2,019 ships and 2,265 boats visited the port of Istanbul in one year.

An official report of 1520 indicated that 70 or 80 ships from the ports of Istanbul, Trabzon, Samsun and Sinop crossed the Black Sea regularly and carried cotton goods, silks, mohair, figs, lemons, etc., to Brăila, where they then loaded grain coming from the Danubian ports of Nicopoli and Vidin. The transport of wheat from the Danubian provinces by water, through the Danube and the Black Sea to Istanbul, was the cheapest and only sensible way. Concerned with the low price of this basic commodity, the government also required that customs duties be imposed only once on the producer. Also, in order to protect the local producer, the government agents took measures to keep local prices at reasonable levels. Extremely low prices adversely affected the tax revenues and income of the provincial sipahis. The government made careful investigations through the local kadis and fixed grain prices separately for each sancak.

In the early seventeenth century, the government commissioned 118 ships belonging to a consortium of fifty-six shipowners to make 658 individual grain transport voyages to deliver to Istanbul about 17,000 tons of grain and flour from the ports of Isaccea, Azov and Burgaz in the Black Sea region. This cost the government about 5.5 million akça. Freight rates were quite high. For example, grain shipments from Isaccea on the lower Danube to Istanbul were assessed at the rate of 8 akça per kilo (25.65 kg), about 15 percent of the intrinsic value of the goods shipped.

The availability of wheat supplies, so vitally important for provisioning the imperial capital and armies on campaign, was strongly influenced by Italy's demand for grain and the higher prices Italian cities were willing to pay.

GRAIN SUPPLIES AND EUROPE

In short, Venice and Istanbul competed for the grain supplies of the Levant. It is suggested that the drop in Italy's wheat imports from the


Ottoman dominions during the period 1564–1600 can be taken as an indication of population pressure in the Ottoman Empire. But the yearly fluctuations in grain trade were dependent on such factors as wars, government policies, and climate. The question remains whether or not the changes observed were really long-term ones determined by population growth or short-term ones caused by other variables.

Mustafa Akdağ suggested, on the basis of the growing frequency of reports on shortages in the major cities, that it was not before the middle of the sixteenth century that a long-term shortage in grain seems to have appeared in Turkey. And later on the government, increasingly concerned with the difficulty of supplying the big cities, made every effort to stop contraband wheat trade. It is interesting to read in Ottoman reports of widespread contraband trade carried on in the coastal areas: the profiteers, offering 20 percent more than the officially set prices, amassed in their storehouses large quantities of wheat to sell to European ship owners. Thus timar-holders, governors, Janissaries and even members of the ulema were actively involved in this profitable trade. According to Akdağ, however, the real cause of long-term shortage in Anatolia
was not the contraband trade stimulated by higher European prices, but the spread of the çiftlik system which produced a decrease of cultivated land in favor of animal breeding. The grain trade in the second half of the sixteenth century, according to the Venetian documentation of Aymard, can be summarized as follows:

1548–53 Bad harvests and shortages in Italy; exceptional abundance and low prices in Turkey; 300–400,000 staia (240–320,000 hectoliters) were exported from Turkey in 1552.
1553–60 Poor crops persist in Italy (excluding 1553); the Ottoman government imposes export prohibitions because of shortages and warfare.
1565–67 Ottoman prohibitions.
1570–72 Ottoman–Venetian War prohibitions.
1574–75 Shortage and famine in Anatolia and Istanbul.
1582–88 Fluctuations in the imports from the Levant.
1588 Shortage in Istanbul.
1589 Great shortages in the Levant.
1590 Great shortage in Italy; wheat imports from Baltic countries.
1591–93 Re-opening of wheat markets in the Levant.
1594 Ottoman prohibition; Italy’s massive imports from northern countries.
1595–1629 The Levant competes with Baltic countries in supplying Italy’s wheat needs.

Whether by permit or smuggling, the Aegean area and Albania provided the main source for Venetian wheat purchases. The crop shortages and rising prices in western Anatolia in 1564–65, mentioned by the Venetian sources, led to active traffic in wheat from Macedonia and Thrace to the Aegean coasts of Asia Minor. Akdağı, in a sweeping generalization, concluded that there was an almost permanent shortage of grain and high prices in western Anatolia and the Marmara basin in the sixteenth century because Western nations made massive purchases there. As to the shortages and rising prices in Istanbul in the 1580s, these are attributed in the Venetian sources to a diversion of surplus grain to the army fighting in Iran between 1578 and 1590.

Prior to 1549, the republic relied upon Italian wheat-producing areas, and then after 1593 massive wheat imports from the Baltic countries changed the pattern without, however, eliminating the imports from the Levant. In fact, in the years 1600–1 and 1628–29, because of favorably low price levels, Levantine wheat supplies replaced those from Baltic countries. Within this broad picture variations in wheat imports from the Levant do not seem to suggest a progressive decline which might be attributed to a constant factor, such as long-term population pressure. The boom of 1549–53, taken as the beginning of a new era in the east-west trade, may simply have been the outcome of an unusual disparity of prices between the two areas resulting from exceptionally good harvests in the Levant and great shortages in Italy. In any case, because of the high transport costs, imports from the Levant were economically feasible only when prices in the Levant sank below half the Italian prices. In fact, price seems to be the most comprehensive single indicator of the east-west trade.

The major challenge always was to supply the Istanbul grain market and to keep prices low. One might recall that ultimately Ottoman state ownership of arable land and the çift-bane system were designed to ensure a steady supply of grain to the market. Thus, the provisions of Istanbul and the army could not be left to traders and to the free interplay of market forces, since famine and the ensuing suffering often brought the populace and the troops to the brink of revolt.

But eventually, the state had to resort to more flexible methods, since trade monopolies and price fixing often produced opposite results. Deliveries fell behind if peasants were forced to sell at low government prices. These realities forced the government to resort to more liberal and economically sound methods of making purchases at market prices. Such liberal methods were applied particularly in sensitive ethnic areas and borderlands where it was important to gain peasants’ support. During the critical war period between 1593 and 1606 in Hungary, wheat, barley and meat provisions for the army were procured either from the local market or by sending supplies by river boats from the depots in Belgrade and the southern Hungarian fortresses.

Burgaz, Varna, Kilia and Akkerman on the Black Sea, and Vidin, Nicopolis, Rusçuk and Silistre on the Danube were the principal ports for channeling the surplus wheat of their respective hinterlands. While on the Aegean it was difficult to prevent contraband trade in wheat, the government exercised more control over production in the Marmara and Black Sea regions by checking all traffic through the straits. In times of shortage or famine, special agents of the government resorted to forced purchases in the production areas or principal outlets. Annually the vovodes of Wallachia and Moldavia had to provide, at fixed prices, a predetermined amount of grain for the Istanbul market.
A Venetian bailo observed that purchases at fixed prices was believed to be one of the main reasons for the drop in wheat production in the Ottoman Empire. Peasants had no incentive to produce for low prices more than what was required for their own subsistence. This unwise policy appears to have made Istanbul more than ever dependent for its food supplies on the Danubian principalities. The revolt of the Wallachian Voyvode Michael the Brave (1593–1601), who stopped the requisite supplies, caused the prices of wheat and meat to soar in Istanbul. Egypt, another important source of wheat for Istanbul, sent huge amounts of wheat to the Ottoman capital.

We saw earlier that Istanbul’s growing demand for grain and meat transformed the steppe between Dnieper and Varna into a vast region of commercial agriculture and livestock breeding. By digging wells and using underground water, Tatars and Turks settled the Dobruja steppe, which was previously a no-man’s-land. Most new villages in the sixteenth century were named after the local well-digger. Varna, a port outlet of the steppe region in the north, densely populated by Yörüks, was an active commercial center for livestock, wool, hides, and leather products. Similar changes, from animal husbandry to grain growing, occurred in the steppelands bordering Kilia and Akkerman. In the Danubian delta, Brăila developed as the main transit port between the Danubian lands and the Black Sea. By 1520 the port was visited by some eighty ships from Trabzon, Sinop, Samsun, Istanbul, and from Europe. Ships arriving from the Danubian ports from as far away as Vidin brought grain, textiles and iron products, which were sold in the local marketplace or were directly transferred to sea-going vessels.

The southern coastal villages of the Marmara Sea present another interesting example of the structural impact of the Istanbul market on regional agriculture. Perched on the slopes of the coastal range of the southern Marmara Sea, the Greek villages of Kuruşlu, Seki, Mudanya, Bigados, Stos, and Koçi, principally producing wine, olives and fruit, were totally dependent on the Istanbul market. They maintained quite a high standard of living compared to the inland villages, which depended on wheat and barley production. To maintain the prosperity of the Greek villages, the Ottoman government gave to them the status of a sultanic endowment, which perpetuated their ethnic, economic and social character into the twentieth century.

The demand for milk and milk products, such as yogurt and fresh cream, gave rise to a great number of dairy herds in the countryside surrounding Istanbul. Members of the ruling elite, interested in the potential profits, owned many such dairies and farms, particularly in the Eyüp and Uskudar areas. An important sector of regional trade for the empire derived from providing Istanbul with aged cheese. Wallachia, Rumeli and certain Black Sea ports exported significant amounts of tekercik and tulum cheese to Istanbul, while the islands of Lemnos and Mytilene were mentioned as exporters of uncurd cheese and Jewish kasar (koshar) which came from the nearby mainland towns of İzmit, Darca and Yalova. Cheese appears as an important trade item in all of the customs’ daybooks.

Bulky, cheap and perishable goods such as fresh fruit as well as olives, molasses and pickles came from the fertile plains and valleys surrounding the Marmara Sea. Consequently, horticulture, which was tied to the huge market of Istanbul, flourished in these regions. Other fruits such as apples, citrus fruits, chestnuts and hazelnuts came from more distant areas. Raisins and figs came from western Anatolia, hazelnuts from Trabzon and Giresun, and chestnuts from Bursa and the southern Black Sea coast. The island of İstanköy (Cos) in the Aegean was an important producer of citrus fruit. Olives and olive oil, a basic foodstuff for the masses, were imported principally from Edremid and Mytilene, the nearest supply areas. Olives and olive oil also came from the rich groves of the valley near Athens.

NOTES

2 Annually 48,000 tons in Murphey (1988), p. 222; the figure given by Faroqui (1990), pp. 18–22, is much lower.
4 Beldiceanu-Steinherr (1964b).
5 Güler (1972), pp. 60–86.
9 Ibid.
10 See İnalck (1978a), pp. 80–83.
11 Akdağ (1949), XV, p. 513.
13 In the 1550s, for instance, the two principalities shipped nearly 5,000 tons of barley to Istanbul for the imperial stables, Bulgaru (1969), p. 666.
15 Ibid., p. 671.
17 İnalck (1993).
INTERNATIONAL TRADE: GENERAL CONDITIONS

CAPITULATIONS AND FOREIGN MERCHANT COMMUNITIES

The stipulations of Islamic Law were supreme and governing in Ottoman relations with Europe, and no study can be intelligible without them. That is why the grant of capitulations or supplements thereof had always to be approved by the Sheyhülislam. Having said this, one must admit that the Ottomans adopted practices from such non-religious areas of government operations as customs regulations and commercial taxation; thus Byzantine and Italian practices were incorporated into the Ottoman imperial laws.

Prior to 1800, international trade between the Ottoman Empire and Europe was conditioned not only by transport costs but also by the frequent conflicts between the two religiously and culturally competitive worlds, constant frontier warfare, and corsair activities. Nevertheless, imperative economic interdependence compelled both sides to maintain close trade relations even during wartime. The imam-sultan granted the necessary guarantees for residence, travel and trade in the Ottoman territories under the Islamic principle of amnesty (aman), only to those non-Muslims from the Abode of War who gave the pledge of “friendship and sincere good will.” Consequently, those nations or individuals considered hostile to Muslims were denied such formal guarantees. Such people could be enslaved by any Muslim in Ottoman territory. Trade with Austria, for example, did not fully flourish until the eighteenth century, mainly because the sultans did not grant the Habsburgs the same trade freedom which the “friendly” nations such as the French or English enjoyed. It will be seen that the favor and political decision of the Porte was generally responsible for the prosperity or crisis of a particular

nation’s Levantine trade. On the other hand, even Western nations lacking capitulations until the second half of the sixteenth century had been quite active in the Levant trade thanks to the privilege of traveling and doing business either under the flag of a nation having capitulations or through the go-between role of the Genoese, Venetians and Ragusans.

The basic principle of a capitulation is always an “amnesty” formally granted by the head of the Islamic community in return for the pledge of friendship on the part of the non-Muslims. The Ottomans often were inclined to interpret such pledges as a kind of allegiance. Capitulations belonged to the category of documents known as ahdnames. An ahdname is given unilaterally but recognizes, under oath, a privilege which binds the giver before God.

On the basis of the “friendship” pledge, Ottomans expected, though not expressly stated in the document, reciprocal privileges for their own subjects. Ottoman non-Muslim subjects, Jews, Armenians, Greeks and Slavs particularly, profited from Ottoman protection abroad and created, already in the fifteenth century, thriving merchant colonies in Venice, Ancona, and Lwow. On the other hand, citizens of the city state of Dubrovnik spectacularly expanded commercial and maritime activities in the sixteenth century thanks to its being under Ottoman suzerainty (see below, pp. 256-70). Ottoman colonies abroad also included Muslim Turks and even Iranians. In the second half of the sixteenth century, the Muslim colony in Venice became large enough to have its own fondaco dei Turchi in 1592. Muslim merchants, however, were suspiciously watched, even harassed in the city.

In conferring capitulations the Ottomans primarily anticipated securing political advantages from the applicant state, the opportunity of acquiring an ally within Christendom. Venice often was, for example, neutralized by such commercial privileges and prevented from putting its powerful navy at the service of the crusading Popes. The Western nations – France, England and the Dutch – obtained their capitulations when the Porte believed they were “fighting against idolatry” and common enemies, the Habsburgs and the Pope.

The Ottomans also benefited from trade relations with Europe, obtaining scarce and strategic goods such as tin, lead and steel, gunpowder, chemicals, and, in particular, silver and gold coins, as well as luxury goods consumed by the elite, in particular fine woolen cloths, jewelry, crystal and mirrors, and watches.

The fiscal benefits derived from trade was considered one of its most important aspects. Customs dues provided a substantial amount of much
needed cash revenue for the imperial treasury. This factor explains the scrupulous concern of the sultan to abide by the provisions of capitulations. A capitulation guarantee had preeminence over the laws of the empire and, upon drawing up a capitulation, the sultan sent orders to local authorities to abide strictly by its provisions. As the European powers in the eighteenth century won military supremacy over the Ottomans, the Europeans began to interpret the capitulations as binding bilateral treaties. Prior to this development, the sultan had full discretion to decide unilaterally when the grantee had broken his “pledge of friendship” and when, in consequence, the capitulation became void. Since a capitulation was granted by each individual sultan personally, it had to be renewed by his successor, giving the ruler a chance for a revision. On the other hand, at each renewal the European nations sought to add new provisions, mostly to secure a formal sanction to a long-exercised practice, or to extend the scope of the original document. As noted earlier, each new provision was carefully checked by the administration and had to be approved by the religio-legal authorities. A threat to boycott Ottoman ports, and consequently reduce customs revenues, alarmed the Ottomans, and of course gifts and bribes also helped to convince the Porte to allow such supplementary clauses.

FOREIGN MERCHANT COMMUNITIES

The Ottoman government considered the foreign merchant communities as millets or tâifes, autonomous groups or assemblies organized under a deputy or consul. Consuls received diplomas from the sultan which confirmed the privileges of these assemblies and promised to enforce the decisions of the consuls with the cooperation of the Ottoman authorities. Such a situation originated from the basic Ottoman notion of capitulations. From the beginning, Ottomans were aware of the Byzantine experience with the Genoese and Venetians; they did not permit European merchant communities to establish themselves as independent colonies and never recognized territorial rights. Even the resident ambassadors at the Porte were regarded simply as representatives of their respective millets. But by 1600, with the advent of the French and English and as a result of the Porte’s growing economic and political dependence on westerners, the European notion of extra-territoriality became prevalent — so that consuls and foreign communities began to be regarded as being under the direct authority of the ambassadors representing their respective governments. In the later capitulations, a consul gained full diplomatic immunities as the deputy of the ambassador. A consul was to supervise the affairs of the merchant community in the area under his jurisdiction. He was supposed to register imported goods and to collect the appropriate fees for the ambassador and himself. No ship of his nation could leave port without his permit. He resolved disputes and settled suits between members of his nation according to his home country’s laws and customs. However, criminal cases and suits between tâife members and a Muslim had to be heard in the Ottoman courts. Many new articles were added to the capitulations to ensure that the foreigners received just treatment in court. A case could not be heard unless the dragoman was present — a provision already introduced in the Venetian capitulations of 1121.

Apart from Istanbul, the most numerous foreign millets were resident at Izmir. From the end of the sixteenth century chiefly the English, then the French and the Dutch established communities, but there were only a few Venetians. In Sidon, the French; in Aleppo, the French and later on other nationalities; in Cairo, the French, the Venetians and for a time the English were the largest millets.

The collective responsibility of the millet for crimes or debts of individuals was recognized in the capitulations from the earliest times. In case of pirate attacks or the failure to pay a public debt arising from a tax-farm held by a millet member, the Ottoman government imposed a collective fine on the nation. Foreigners complained, mostly about the so-called avânis from Arabic ‘awân, “anything extorted”), the fees or gifts expected by local authorities, in particular governors or customs officers, from foreign merchants. European consular reports frequently mention avânis. Not infrequently, it became an arbitrary and heavy burden on merchants which threatened to disrupt the normal course of trade. In the end, consuls began collection of a special tax,cottimo, from their merchants to pay for the avânis. Over time this fee became a regular impost. To stop avânis European nations insisted on introducing additional articles to the capitulations.

Under the capitulations non-Muslim foreigners were granted permission to go around and trade freely throughout Ottoman territories. But in practice the members of foreign nations were permitted residency only in certain ports and within these ports in specified quarters or caravanserais. In Izmir, Aleppo and Galata they enjoyed considerable freedom of movement.

Since travel in general was hazardous for individuals, even for Ottoman subjects, a blanket permit for foreigners was actually impractical. Every
foreign merchant or visitor had to obtain from the sultan or local kadi a special authorization for safe conduct. According to Islamic Law, an individual Muslim had the right to enslave a non-Muslim foreigner who did not qualify for capitulation guarantees. So foreigners were even permitted to wear Muslim dress and to carry arms during travel. In general, residences of foreigners were non-violable; but upon suspicion of harboring fugitive criminals or slaves or smuggled goods, Ottoman officials made searches. Foreigners residing on the waterfront in İzmir occasionally were caught smuggling goods out their back doors into vessels.

Numerous articles were introduced into the original capitulations to safeguard the property of foreign merchants. If a merchant died in Ottoman territory or if his heir(s) were resident elsewhere, his estate was taken into trust by the local kadi and passed by him to the consul or to the partners or friends of the deceased. The kadi usually appointed an executor to take care of the affairs of the deceased.

Islamic maritime law developed through the capitulations, particularly under the Ottomans. The sultan granted freedom of navigation to nations bearing capitulations. Safeguards even against Ottoman corsairs were given. Officials had to provide anchorage in Ottoman harbors and to permit capitulation-holders the right to take on supplies and water at any point along the Ottoman coasts. In some capitulations, a special article was added to block the state's impressment of foreign ships and crews. Also, foreigners were pledged assistance and protection if driven ashore. Actually such safeguards were badly needed, as the dire situations outlined in some reports indicate.

Ottomans claimed sovereignty over the Aegean Sea, the Black Sea, the Red Sea, the Straits (Bosphorus and the Dardanelles) and the Strait of Otranto. The sultan's fleet had to make periodic tours in these waters to deter Christian corsairs. Coastal waters within the range of cannon were declared under direct Ottoman sovereignty.

Frequent inspections by Ottoman authorities enforced regulations on goods prohibited from export to hostile countries. If ships were discovered taking banned items to hostile countries, the sea patrol not only confiscated the goods but also seized the ship and enslaved the crew and passengers.

HISTORY OF THE CAPITULATIONS

In the fourteenth century, the newly established Turcoman principalities in western Anatolia, namely from south to north Menteşe, Aydın,
Byzantium and the Catalans—was concluded. Only the text of the renewal of the 1387 capitulation has survived.

Down to the fall of Pera in 1553, the Ottomans continuously supported the Genoese and secured the cooperation of Genoese colonies in the Levant despite the intermittent anti-Ottoman policies of the Genoese mother city. In return, the Ottomans obtained immense economic profits and naval assistance.

It is interesting to note that in the same period, toward 1352, when under attack by the Ottomans, the czar of Bulgaria sought Venetian support. Bulgaria was one of the countries from which Venice obtained vitally important wheat supplies. Venice secured trade privileges from Bulgaria quite similar to those current in the Turkish capitulations of 1352 (3 percent customs duty).7

After the Genoese capitulations of 1352, the Venetians obtained their own capitulations under Murad I, some time between 1384 and 1387. Venetian capitulations were renewed with new concessions, particularly regarding wheat exports, by Süleyman Çelebi in 1403. Later, renewals were granted by Musa (1411), Mehmed I (1419), Murad II (1430) and Mehmed II in 1446 and 1454. Warring with Venice over control of the Balkan coasts and the islands in the Aegean, Mehmed the Conqueror favored the Florentines with the same capitulations as those granted to the Venetians. Also Bayezid II, when he declared war against Venice, extended capitulations to the king of Naples in 1498.

2. Upon the conquest of Egypt, in 1517, Selim I renewed Mamluk capitulations which the Mamluks had extended to the French and the Catalans. Thus, for the first time the French had gained privileges to trade in the Ottoman dominions, though they were not as extensive as the Italian capitulations. Under Süleyman I (1520–66), Ottoman concern to find allies in Western Europe against the Habsburgs as well as economic advantages led the Ottomans to extend full capitulation privileges to France (1569). Later on England (1580) and the Netherlands (1612) obtained capitulations.

The most comprehensive capitulations granted to Venice in 1540 were extended to France in 1569 when the Ottoman government decided to declare war against Venice for the conquest of Cyprus. The so-called French capitulations or “treaty” of 1536 was drafted but never ratified by the sultan. The French commerce in the Levant developed fully in the Ottoman dominions only after the capitulations of 1569, when France replaced Venice in the dominant trading position in the Levant. A special article, dated 1581, permitted other European nations, including the

CUSTOMS ZONES, ORGANIZATION AND RATES

The Roman and Byzantine Empires organized into large customs zones the frontier and coastal regions, and the provinces in the interior which formed economic units on the main trade routes. As a rule an important port, a frontier post on a trade route or an administrative center was chosen as the center of a customs zone.8 Although as a result of the economic and administrative changes customs zones in the Byzantine Empire underwent rearrangements, the main zones seem to have survived down to the Ottoman period. The Constantinople–Hellespont customs zone, for example, came into existence, at the latest, in the second half of the fifth century; Hieron (Ottoman Yoros) on the Bosphorus and Abydos on the Dardanelles were two posts of control on the northern and southern tips of the zone. At the beginning of the seventh century, the Hellespont was included in the customs zone of Asia, that is, western Anatolia. Byzantium never gave up its control over the vital trade route of the straits between the Crimea and the Hellespont.

The Ottomans maintained these customs zones as economic-fiscal units under the mukataa or tax-farm system. As a rule the administrative center was at the same time the center of the customs zone. However, because a mukataa can be farmed out by a tax-farmer into smaller units, some local ports had their own customs houses. Thus, a mosaic of customs zones in the empire emerged. Customs dues were to be paid in each zone, and each had its own separate regulations and rates. To give an example, Istanbul's customs zone under the Ottomans included the ports or landings all the way from Varna on the Black Sea down to Kiliçlar or Ece-ova on the Gallipoli peninsula. On the Asiatic side, it covered the coasts from Yoros at the mouth of the Black Sea down to the southern end of the province of Aydin, on the Aegean coast. In 1482, the Sinop–Samsun customs zone was placed under the Istanbul customs regulations, although certain higher rates of customs were continued in the Black Sea. As for the customs zones in the interior, centers were established on the main caravan routes. Caravans had to follow officially assigned routes so that they would pass through the customs center,
possibly a commercial center or just a village or caravanserai. For example, caravans coming from Tabriz to Bursa had to pay their first customs at the city of Tokat and the second at Bursa. It was prohibited to take loads to places other than these centers. In Bursa, the caravanserai, called İpek Han, was reserved for the caravans from Iran where their silk bales were weighed and the scales-tax was paid. Then, bales were handed over to brokers who sought purchasers at a fair price for both sides. Iranian merchants were permitted to leave the caravanserai only after they had obtained a document to show that they had paid all the incumbent taxes. The document protected the merchant against further claims. By 1473 Mehmed the Conqueror’s order for a second tax on raw silk at Tokat caused deep discontent among Iranians, and was used against him as a device of political propaganda. In the seventeenth century, when İzmir became the chief outlet for Anatolian and Iranian trade with Europe, the government could not prevent caravans deviating from Bursa to other locations. Finally a third customs charge for raw silk was placed on merchants at the İzmir port. Caravans from Mecca had to pay customs dues for their loads of spices and textiles in Han-Yunus at the crossroads of the pilgrim caravans from Palestine and Egypt, or at the village of Kise near Damascus on the pilgrimage road from Damascus to Mecca. There were four customs zones in the Black Sea, including that of Istanbul from Varna to Sinop on the southwest coasts, that of Sinop extending to Trabzon, that of Kefe (Caffa) on the northeast extending to Circassia, and Akkerman on the northwest. The Akkerman (Moncastro) customs zone included Cankerman (Özü), Kilia and Bender (after 1538). The Danubian ports in the sancak of Silistre, Brăila, Tulcă, Sakçi, Mačin, Harsova and Kara-Harmanlik were related to the Akkerman zone since they were transit centers between the Danubian lands and the Black Sea in this region. Ships from all over the Black Sea could come all the way to these ports and customs agents were present at the ports of Brăila, Tulcă, Sakçi, and Mačin. Principal goods subject to customs dues included imports of wine, textiles and spices, and exports of livestock, horses, meat, fish and flour as well as slaves.

The best studied customs zone of Caffa (Kefe) gives a clear idea about the great port of Caffa (Kefe) and the ports of Azak, Kerch, Taman, and Copa, each having its own customs regulations. Basic customs dues were common to all of these ports and were collected by the principal customs administration located at Caffa. The regulations of the dependent ports determined only the local dues. Standard customs duty in the zone was different from Istanbul: it was 4.2 percent ad valorem for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

In one customs zone duty was paid only once. No duty was payable if the same item was transported to other points in the same zone. The Istanbul customs zone, as the transit center between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, was considered the central zone. Its regulations were extended to the Antalya customs zone in 1477 and to that of Sinop in 1482. In the Istanbul customs zone, those ships sailing between Istanbul and the Black Sea coasts were checked at Yenice-Hisar, also known as Anadolu-Hisari, and at Yoros at the tip of the Bosphorus on the Black Sea, while those vessels active between the Mediterranean and Istanbul were inspected at Kilidlûbahır, opposite Çanakkale in the Dardanelles. Traffic between Rumeli and Anatolia was checked at Lapseki (Lampasque) and Gelibolu. Trade between Anatolia and the island of Chios, which became then the emporium of trade between Europe and Anatolia, was monitored at the ports of Çeşme and the two Foçalar (Phocaea). Caravans between Istanbul and Bursa, the emporium of imports from Arabia, India and Iran, was subjected to customs duties at Bursa itself or at Mudanya on the Marmara Sea in the Bursa customs zone.

Merchants had to take their goods first to one of these centers, and only then could they move inland. Those who brought their wares by sea had to pay import dues, but no duties were required on goods transported over land. Mehmed II changed this rule and imposed customs dues at the same rate on all goods, whether coming by sea or by land. Muslim merchants trading between Arabia and Bursa and importing goods of high value, such as precious textiles, spices and sugar, complained bitterly about this innovation. Mehmed’s successor Bayezid II, who reversed his father’s harsh policies in various fields, also abolished this innovation. Once again only goods arriving by sea were subjected to customs dues, as previously. Goods arriving by land were to pay dues if they were imported by foreign non-Muslims, but not by Muslims and tribute-paying non-Muslims. In other words, the Ottoman government considered all goods coming or going by sea as import or export items. This interpretation must have derived from the Christian European mastery of the Mediterranean Sea and the papal order to blockade Islamic lands in 1291. However, goods exported to Syria and other Islamic lands by sea were still subject only to the minimum 2 percent rate. Export to Europe was discouraged and subjected to the highest rate because Muslims believed that economic prosperity and political stability depended on a well supplied internal market, and that “enemies of Islam” should not be favored by an easy export policy. However, they were permitted to bring in goods which were in high demand in the Levant, such as
fine woolen cloth, metals and, in particular, bullion from the west. The Ottoman government periodically issued lists of goods the export of which was prohibited.

The Roman and Byzantine Empires placed commerce, circulation and sale of merchandise under state control. The export of certain goods of economic or strategic importance, such as wheat, wine, olive oil, iron, arms or silk was prohibited. Smuggling brought arrest of the merchant and the confiscation of his goods. Duties were placed on imports as well as on exports. In addition, there were a host of dues imposed upon circulation and sale. The original customs duty, *portorium*, was one-forthieth or 2.5 percent of the value of the goods. Originating in the first half of the fourth century, the *octava* was a composite tax consisting of 2.5 percent customs duty and *dekate*, a tax originally granting a license for the sale of real estate or slaves. Called *kommekion* (Ottoman *gümüşük*) toward the end of the eighth century, the new composite tax was generalized as a standard customs duty of 12.5 percent. However, the one-forthieth, the *quadragesima*, continued as a customs duty in such lands as Asia, Bithynia, Paphlagonia and Pontus. Payment of the *kommekion* guaranteed the payee import tax immunity and a license to sell his goods. Goods were also brought to and taxed in special places, called *apotheiki* (in the Ottoman Empire *kapun* or *kabban*). Customs agents stamped the goods after they were weighed and taxes paid. A certificate called *poliza* was delivered to the merchant. Government agents collected customs duties but, from the ninth century on, the farming out of customs operations became widespread. Bursa and Ankara were important customs centers from Roman times. Revenue from customs duties constituted a substantial part of the state budget. Taxation on the basis of measure, paid half and half by the buyer and seller, called *pratikion* or *metristikon* was included in a separate category of commercial taxes which was known under the Ottomans as *bac* and *tanga* dues. *Silquaticum*, a 2 percent sales tax paid half and half by the buyer and seller may be the origin of *tota* tax in Caifa under the Genoese and Ottomans.

Roman-Byzantine customs principles and organization were basically followed under the Ottomans. They were apparently borrowed by the Umayyads and continued under the subsequent Islamic empires.

Taxation on commercial commodities is interpreted in Islamic Law as part of *zakat* or obligatory property tax and its rate is determined as one-forthieth of the merchandise for Muslims, one-tenth for the people from the "Abode of War," and 5 percent for non-Muslim subjects. For Muslims, however, religious intention for this type of *zakat* is necessary.

The rates of one-forthieth and one-tenth correspond to 2.5 and 10 percent of the Roman system and survived only as 2 and 5 percent rates under the Ottomans in the fifteenth century.

Some Muslim legis were of the opinion that even if religious intention for *zakat* was expressed, commercial taxes cannot be accepted for Islamic *zakat*. In reality, pre-Islamic practices and rules were followed in regard to commercial taxes. Muslim legis favored a low rate in the tariff if it was advantageous to the community to encourage the import of certain goods. Ottomans seem to have directly followed Byzantine practices.

Since Roman times the 2.5 or 2 percent customs duty appears to have been established as the basic regular tax in Mediterranean lands. Higher rates of 10 or 12.5 percent applied to precious goods did not replace the 1 percent everywhere. While the 12.5 percent rate was in force in Syria and Egypt on precious goods, the 2 percent rate was the norm in the commercial treaties of 1220 between the Anatolian Seljukid sultanate and Venice, of 1403 between the Menteşe principality and Venice, of 1439 between Byzantium and Florence, and of 1454 between Venice and the Ottoman state. The Byzantine government imposed the rates of 3 percent for the Catalans and 4 percent for Provence, while it maintained 2 percent for the Venetians and Genoese. Then the latter two nations obtained full exemption from the Byzantine government. Later on, until the reign of Mehmed II, the Ottomans adhered to the 2 percent rate, although they never granted any nation full exemption.

Under the Ottomans, customs duty was a tax on imports and exports, not on a commercial transaction itself, and could be adjusted according to existing conditions. Thus, to a certain degree customs policy reflected the state's commercial policy. Capitulations, granted to certain Christian states, were principal instruments which regulated trade with European countries. In fact, customs rates varied according to the kind of commodity, legal status of the importer or exporter, and the customs zone (see Table 1:37).

 Customs dues were computed ad valorem, that is, on the value of the commodity as estimated by the government agent or the tax-farmer. Apparently, the evaluation of the imported goods at the customs house was made on the basis of the prices at the local market, as suggested in a note by the Venetian consul in Aleppo dated 1596. Because of the frequent conflicts on estimated values, European nations would later impose a tariff system.

As noted above, the rates of dues differed from one customs zone to another. Foreign merchants had to pay for the cloth they imported into
International trade: general conditions

Table 1: Customs duty rates, 1470–1586

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Non-Muslim subjects</th>
<th>Non-Muslim foreigners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Galata</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at Istanbul</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 or 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galata</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gelibolu</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>market</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Istanbul,</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galata</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samyun</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Sinop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caffa</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akkerman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aydin</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursa (mohair)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursa imports</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanova</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akkerman</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feth-i-Islam</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bursa at the rate of 3 percent; in Istanbul, 5 percent; and 4.2 percent at Caffa. Also, different kinds of goods paid different rates. While imported luxury textiles paid normal rates, necessary provisions such as wheat and flour paid half or three-quarters of regular rates. In Cairo, under the Ottomans, who were obviously continuing the Mamluk practices, customs on all kinds of spices was 10 percent and was levied in kind, as in Aden. Spices stored at the state storehouse had preemptive right for sale unless the sultan’s spices were sold, no spices were cleared from customs. Since this practice clashed with the principle of freedom of trade, in 1586 foreigners objected to it and quoted the capitulations, saying that “all men were at liberty to buy where they could.” Although an embargo or “monapolya,” a preemption on the sale at the market of goods belonging to the sultan or members of the military class for a certain period of time, was a general rule in the Ottoman Empire, the capitulations superseded native laws. In principle, foreigners’ freedom of trade was guaranteed by the capitulations and secured a free market at price formation. Local authorities not infrequently ignored the principle, claiming that what was in the best interest of the imperial treasury was followed and usually a compromise was reached.

Goods destined for the consumption of military units or shipments belonging to the state were exempt from customs and other dues. Such shipments came under the category of “state shipments” (irsalat, or irsaliyya).

Since Ottoman customs taxation was based on the ad valorem principle, law-makers abolished the practice of taking a percentage of the wares in lieu of customs dues. However, on certain goods in the Arab provinces, for example, at Damascus and Basra, the former practice survived for a long time. Also, for certain types of goods customs dues were not taken on the basis of estimated value but per measure. Duty on wine, for example, was taken per cask, and per bale on paper or glass, which arrived in bales. Customs dues on imported woolen cloth were levied by bolt (pastav). This practice should not be confused with regular market dues (bac or tamga), which were always taken per load or bale. The latter dues consisted usually of small amounts and the regulations specified in each case the nature of the tax. Also, for market dues, a tariff was drawn up specifying the amount of duty for each item. An important rule was that an imported item paid customs dues whether or not it was sold, while a tariff (bac) had to be paid every time the same item was subject of a commercial transaction.

Regulations made it clear under what circumstances wares on a ship were to be considered imported goods and subject to taxation. If a ship lowered its anchor into the sea, the cargo was subject to taxation. Apparently in theory, only while at anchor could items be unloaded. The transfer of goods from one ship to another was also considered importation and entailed taxation. If wares changed hands between merchants at the port and the second merchant took them away, he also paid a duty for export. In order to prevent smuggling, the loading of certain goods, particularly grain, was subject to the permission of the responsible customs official. No ship could load wares and leave a port without a permit. For the protection of the merchant but also for the government controller, it was mandatory to receive documents from the tax-farmer or the government agent which indicated wares imported, with their exact amount, and whether the goods were on the way from one port to another in the same customs zone, or loadings were made for export.

The customs system was designed to ensure collection of duties on all goods imported or taken from one customs region to another. However, smuggling was a general practice, perhaps excused by the perpetrator because duties on trade and the circulation of goods were considered injustices unapproved by Islamic Law. Since customs revenues were, as a rule, farmed out to private interests, there was a constant struggle between the tax-farmer and taxpayer. For his part the tax-farmer believed...
Brokers in a particular bazaar were organized under the head broker, who was responsible to the government. The broker had to have the completed sale registered in the book of the tax-farmer or the government agent within twenty-four hours. This provided another means of checking that all incumbent taxes were paid. Brokerage also provided an extra revenue for the government. The broker received a fee for his service from both the seller and the buyer. At Caffa, for example, it was 30 akça per slave.

If a merchant sold his wares without the services of a broker, he still had to pay a brokerage fee for himself and for the buyer. Because of his function of guaranteeing a fair sale and of checking on the actual conditions of sale for purposes of taxation, a broker was appointed by a special diploma of the sultan and conducted his functions under the supervision of a head broker called simsar. His appointment was made with the consent of the pertinent tax-farmer. He had to find a guarantor whose name was registered in the official book kept by the government agent.

A broker could not be involved in commercial transactions in his own interest, be a merchant at the same time, or become a partner with a merchant. He was in charge of selling in a particular bazaar so that he could not sell in another bazaar. A measurer would help a broker in measuring precious cloths sold at the bazaar, and an additional tax was paid for his services.

The head of the brokers was also appointed by the sultan’s diploma and he himself was under the supervision of the city steward. Both had to be present at sales involving large sums, as was the case with sales of silk loads coming from Iran and bound for Bursa. The head broker was responsible for the brokers under his authority. Their appointments and dismissals were made through him. While brokers were walking around in the bazaar, the head broker had to sit in a certain location all the time. He was not allowed to change the location as he pleased, so that merchants could find a responsible person any time they had business or problems connected with the sale of their goods. Representing the interests of the townspeople, the town steward supervised dealings to prevent tricks, in particular those causing unjustified price hikes on raw materials needed by the guilds. We find a steward present at the kadi’s court whenever there was an important dealing concerning the government or townsfolk.

In the bazaar, the broker, as a rule, put goods up for auction and tried to reach a fair price for the item. Cases are mentioned, however, in which a broker attempted to conspire against fair prices with the auctioneers.
The porters serving the brokers were also subject to strict discipline under the brokerage regulations. They were not permitted to carry goods from one place to another without the permit of the tax-farmer and the government agent.

MARKET DUES

Market dues (bac) were taken on goods brought to the town market to be sold wholesale. No dues were paid on sales made in villages although they were taken at fairs held in the countryside. Imported goods, for which customs due had already been paid, did not require the payment of any other dues. Grain bought by the sack for home consumption was not considered wholesale and did not attract market dues, nor did any retail sales. Market dues were paid by load, pack, weight or according to value. Cheap bulky goods, such as wood, hay and fish paid by the cart; foodstuffs and cheap cloth paid by horse pack, as well as by weight; and wine paid by the cask. Expensive goods such as spices, iron, tin, lead and copper were weighed on the public scales (kantar) and dues were taken on the basis of weight.

For foodstuffs such as butter, honey, and dried fruits, which were sold in containers by weight, the seller paid market dues by the load. But if they were brought in great quantity and taken to the public scales at the town hall (kapan), the importer paid a scale fee – 2 akça per kantar. Market dues for fresh fruit and vegetables were paid by horse pack or cartload, and, for livestock, by the head (see Table 1:38).

In accordance with the general trend of incorporating the dues or fees which were taken by local authorities into the public treasury, the transit dues and customs duties taken at Smederevo port on the Danube about 1500 were added to the public revenues and taken exclusively for the treasury. In principle, commercial dues were paid by the importer and the seller of the merchandise, although in certain special cases both the seller and buyer paid dues at equal or different rates. Market dues were paid on the sale of cattle at equal rates, 2 akça for cattle at Smederevo. When cattle was weighed on the public scales and sold, both the seller and the buyer paid the scales due.

As for the rates of market dues, they were set at a modest level, apparently estimated on the basis of the Islamic property tax zakat, one-fortieth of the value of the goods. Since, in general, transit and market dues were strongly criticized by the public as a nuisance and as being contrary to Islamic Law, the government compared these rates to the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Dues in akça</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>4-wheeled cart 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>2-wheeled cart 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>horseload 1 to 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine</td>
<td>per cask 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slate</td>
<td>per head 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain</td>
<td>per head 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth</td>
<td>per pack 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth of Bursa</td>
<td>no dues, only customs dues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cepes, cotton goods</td>
<td>when they pass in transit for Wallachia and Hungary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shovels</td>
<td>per cart or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shovels of wood</td>
<td>per cart or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fez cloak</td>
<td>horseload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fez cloak</td>
<td>per cart or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumber</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumber</td>
<td>horseload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep for slaughter</td>
<td>per head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>per each four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>per two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain for sale</td>
<td>per kule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh fruit</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions, garlic</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter, tallow, honey</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hides of cattle, sheep</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinegar</td>
<td>per tazlem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt of Edirne</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat and cotton</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain loaded in boats</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt loaded in boats</td>
<td>per cart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BN, MS: Paris no 85.
International trade: general conditions

limited amount of total silver stock in the market. Although copper coins were issued on a large scale and met the everyday bazaar needs of the commoner, they were never used in transactions between merchants.

Since comprehensive price lists have not been collected and published, questions such as differentials in price structure between the main trade zones in the Ottoman Empire, and between European countries and the Ottoman Empire, cannot be answered. Without such materials no conclusions can be reached on such topics as Ottoman-European trade patterns, shifts in production, changes in living conditions, state tax policies and changes in economic conditions in general. The pioneering works of ÖL. Barkan and L. Berov in this area can be expanded through a systematic use of the immense materials available in the Ottoman archives. Since Barkan considered only foodstuffs there are discrepancies in his calculation of price changes from those of Berov.

In examining changes in price structure as a basic factor in the East-West balance of trade, Berov suggests that, in the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth century, because of the prohibitive land transport costs, market prices of the basic foodstuffs and raw materials – wheat, meat, wool, hides and wax – doubled in Istanbul in comparison with those in the Balkans. İstanbul was the principal Ottoman market for these goods competing with Europe. Berov concludes that in this period “prices of wheat and most other important articles calculated in terms of weight of silver were comparatively close to the level of prices of these articles in the main countries trading with Turkey such as Italy, France, England and the Netherlands.” So, during that period the foreign trade of the empire with Europe, Berov suggests, decreased as a whole. However, a closer look at his charts reveals that Ottoman prices correspond in general to the lowest European prices although they show sharper fluctuations as, for example, in the 1570s and between 1610 and 1620. The general trend in wheat prices in the period 1550-1640 is a steady increase. But still Ottoman wheat prices proved to be substantially below those in Italy so that after 1560, especially in the 1580s, Turkey’s exports experienced a “substantial increase.” For the same reasons olive oil and rice exports became profitable. However, exports were profitable only when the price differential between Turkey and Italy was about 1 to 2. In this calculation transport expenses, duties and insurance or losses at the hands of pirates were to be added. These factors are of importance for the export of bulky goods. According to Berov, average freight for transport by land per 10 kg of goods over a distance of 100 km vacillated between 5 and 47 grams of silver, but in most cases it was between 100 and 120 grams. Transport expenses alone from İstanbul to Italy reached

MONEY AND CREDIT

Since precious metals were in limited supply in the market-place and gold and silver coins were not readily available, most of the transactions were made through credit or bartering, particularly before the massive flooding of western silver into the Ottoman Empire in the 1580s (see below, Appendix). Bartering was also widely practiced in rural areas among the peasants, who paid in wheat for most of the goods and services they needed, such as the services of a village imam, field watchman and shepherds. It was also widespread among the big merchants, both local and foreign. Pearls imported from Bahrain were particularly welcomed in payment by Iranian silk merchants because they were high priced and small in weight and convenient to carry and conceal from customs agents.

Credit extended for goods sold were usually on a six-month or one-year basis to allow the purchaser to sell the goods and obtain the cash to make the payments. Sureties were always provided and carefully recorded in the kadi’s court register. In 1485, for instance, a money-changer of Bursa, Musliheddin, sold to the merchant Muzaffer of Tabriz rubies and pearls worth 64,500 akça on credit for six months with another merchant from Tabriz acting as surety. A concealed interest was added to the payment on credit as if it were a loan. If the sum was not paid at the end of the term, the debt was renewed with interest. Under Mehmed II, when all of the Ottoman silver coinage in circulation was ordered to be changed with newly minted ones, the total stock of silver coins thus obtained amounted to 218 million akça. Although quite a substantial portion of the coins in circulation was not exchanged with the mint, for one reason or another, this figure nevertheless shows the
approximately 10–15 grams of silver per kg and duties amounted to 7 to 29 grams. During the second half of the sixteenth and the first years of the seventeenth century, Berov concludes, the trade balance of the Ottoman Empire with Europe "gradually ceased to be as active as it was in the beginning. . . . At the beginning of the seventeenth century prices in Turkey reached a record level . . . and approached those in Europe. . . . Consequently, conditions for Turkish exports changed in a negative direction, particularly in terms of wool, hides, wax, and silk."

On the other hand, it has been suggested that low population density and the relatively abundant land and cheap labor in the Ottoman Empire, along with the rise of the capitalist economy in the West, had created a specific structural pattern of trade based on the exchange of textiles and metals with foodstuffs and raw materials between East and West. In other words, the price differential between the two regions, determined by varying land rents and labor costs, was responsible for a kind of division of labor between East and West. Europe, however, had to compete with Istanbul for imports from the bread basket of the empire in the north-western Black Sea steppe, Thrace, western Anatolia and the plain of Thessaly as well as Egypt, which were all linked to the crowded Ottoman capital by sea. The imperial bureaucracy, vitally concerned with provisioning Istanbul and the army, was engaged in a continual struggle against Europe's high prices, which attracted speculators, mostly from the military class in control of large estates and vakıfs. Prohibitions proved to be ineffective in the face of extensive smuggling activities, particularly in the Aegean islands.

A kind of letter of credit was a havale. Havale was an assignation of a fund from a distant source of revenue by a written order. It was used in both state and private finances to avoid the dangers and delays inherent in the transport of cash. A real letter of credit, in Arabic sufiqta or sakk, was known and used in the first centuries of Islam. Orthodox Muslim legists did not legalize it because of possible elements of speculation and unjustified profits. However, the transfer of credits through a document issued by a kadi, and thereby used to make payments and clear debts between people living in distant places, was possible and the Ottomans practiced it. Sahilioğlu identified this kadi letter as a letter of credit, giving examples from the Bursa court records.

Although such a practice was not frequently applied, payments through proxy between merchants living in distant places were a routine practice. From the mid-seventeenth century, the use of letters of credit, in Turkish piyas from Italian polizza, became quite widespread among merchants and in government payments.

GREEKS AND JEWS

Ottoman Jews and Greeks were particularly active in tax-farming in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. In fact, tax-farming became the major means of capital formation in the empire. The tax-farmers' main capital sources included commenda (mudaraba) in trade enterprises, in particular, profits from transporting Istanbul's provisions. Many starting from scratch as scribes at a customs house or at the mines ended up as big businessmen. These "capitalists," accumulating huge sums, became indispensable for the state finances and the palace, and, thereby, played a major role not only in the empire's finances but also in politics.

In Giacomo Badoer's Book of accounts (1436–40), Greeks form the second largest ethnic group after Venetians in Constantinople's commercial life. However, Greek merchants were overshadowed by Italian predominance except in retail trade and shipping, which was of secondary importance. But Greek merchants were engaged in international trade and banking, too. For example, just before 1453, a Greek shipowner, conducting business with the Venetians and Jews, had acquired a very prosperous position with a large fortune. His capital was estimated at 70,000 ducats.

The most important change which occurred with the Ottoman conquest was that Italian predominance was terminated in favor of the native Ottoman non-Muslim subjects, Armenians, Jews and Greeks in particular. After the Ottoman conquest, Greeks replaced Italians in large-scale trade in Caffa and Pera/Galata, while in the pre-Ottoman period the Genoese as a rule excluded natives from overseas big business. Moreover, already in the fifteenth century Ottoman Greek and Jewish merchants began to settle in such major Italian commercial centers as Ancona and Venice.

Galata was the center of activities for Greek businessmen under the Ottomans as was the case under the Palaeologus. The city had become a Greek town population-wise even before the Ottoman conquest. Many rich Greek financiers, among them Yani Palaeologus, continued to live in rich bourgeois life in Galata after the conquest while many rich Genoese families had left the city during and after the Ottoman occupation. Greeks were favored by Mehmed the Conqueror, and they played a particularly active role in Ottoman finances and politics during his reign. He made Greek converts viziers, as in the case of Rum Mehmed, Hass Murad and Mesih, the last two being of the Palaeologian family.

It appears that after 1453 many Greeks continued their business and careers as tax-farmers, as large-scale merchants and in shipping; the last
field became particularly prosperous thanks to the provisioning needs of the growing Ottoman capital. In the period immediately after the conquest of Constantinople, we find many Greeks active in tax-farming for the government. Members of the old Byzantine aristocracy, the Palaeologoi, Cantacuzeni, Chalcocondylis and Rhalis, were prominent tax-farmers under Mehmed the Conqueror and his successors. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the western Anatolian ports, with Istanbul as their center, made up one large customs zone, and it often came under the sway of Greek tax-farmers, who were competing with Muslim Turks and Jews for its control. A list of the Ottoman treasury accounts demonstrates how the customs zone of Istanbul changed hands during the period from October 1476 to December 1477.

1. The estimated customs revenue for three years was 9.5 million akça from October 1476. Ya'kub, newly converted Muslim, Palologos of Kassandros, Lefteri son of Galanos of Trabzon, Andriy a son of Halkokondil and Manul Palologou, offered an increase of 1,500,000 akça on October 16, 1476.

2. Hoca Satir, Çiriş İlyas, Şahin, freed slave of Yusuf Simsar (chief broker) and Hoca Bahadedin, together offered an increase of two million just five months later.

3. The Greek group then offered an additional increase of 833,334 for each year on condition that the tax-farm should be farmed out to them for a period of four years. This bid was made on May 6, 1477.

4. Seydi Kâcık of Edirne, Altan (a Jew) and Nikoroz Efrenzi (an Italian) offered an additional increase of one million four months later.

5. The Greek group made a new bid one month later and then the group of Seydi, Altana and Nikoroz made a bid of 20 million akça altogether for four years on October 12, 1477.

In 1481, the mints of Gelibolu and Edirne were farmed out for 18 million akça or c. 360,000 ducats to a consortium which included Andronikus Cantacuzenos. Apparently, just before that date, he had converted to Islam and had taken the name of Mustafa.

During the same period another Byzantine aristocratic family was active in Serbia, farming out the rich silver and gold mines in that province. In 1474 Yani Cantacuzenos, his brother Yorgi, Nicola Dandjovil and Lika farmed out, in partnership, the silver and gold mines in upper Serbia for a total sum of 14 million akça for six years. In the previous year the entrepeneurs were Yani Cantacuzenos of Novobrdo, Yorgi
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In competition with Muslim or Jewish tax-farmers, Greek businessmen were also active as tax-farmers of the important monopolies of salt production and distribution in the Balkans on the Aegean or Black Sea coasts in this period. These monopolies were, as a rule, farmed out together with the revenues of fisheries in the neighborhood. Demetrios Palaeologus, the last despot of the Morea, was involved in this business. According to an Ottoman register of tax-farms, “Kir Demetrios Tekfur” possessed the poll-tax and other state revenues of Aenos on the basis of a timar. But from July 11, 1469 onwards, a partnership of three Jewish tax-farmers, Eleazar son of Yakub of Salonica, Avraham son of Eleazar of Nicopolis and Musa son of Ismail of Vidin undertook it. The total sum of these revenues was estimated as 555,000 akça for three years. Six years later, Yuvan Dhapovik and Knez Yuvan of Novobrodo attempted to outbid Yorgi Ivrana and Toma Cantacuzenos without success.

Ethnic, personal or factional connections as well as secret practices appear to have played a part in managing big tax-farms. Apparently, Greeks or converts with influence at the sultan’s court favored Greek bidders. Complaints against favoritism for Greek or Jewish tax-farmers during the Conqueror’s reign are voiced in contemporary Muslim sources. Perhaps it is not just a coincidence that members of the Palaeologoi family obtained the tax-farm of the Istanbul customs zone exactly in the 1470s when two pashas, Hass Murad and Mesih of the same family were the most influential people with the sultan.

In the second half of the sixteenth century the spectacular fortune of Michael Cantacuzenos is worth mentioning. Like many other Greek tax-farmers before him, Michael made his fortune first at the salt works of Anchialos and in the Istanbul customs. Like other tax-farmers, he was engaged also in commerce. The sultan appointed him as his “imperial” agent to buy furs in Russia. Thanks to his wealth and connections with the Ottoman palace, Michael became the most distinguished and revered
archont in the Greek Orthodox community. He played a major role in the election and dismissal of patriarchs and the voivodes of Rumanian vassal principalities. But finally, falling into debt with the Ottoman treasury, allegedly 30 million akça, he was executed by order of the sultan in 1578. Upon his death, in his palace at Anchialos his legendary riches, including one hundred servants, forty pages and a harem, were all confiscated.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, Jewish bankers and tax-farmers gained a predominant place in Ottoman finances and long-distance trade.

In the mid-sixteenth century, victims of the Inquisition in Catholic countries, the Marrano Jews decided to immigrate to the Ottoman Empire. Controlling the spice trade in Europe, the Marrano banking house of Mendès moved to and settled in Istanbul. In 1552, under the protection of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, the head of the family, Dôna Gracia Mendès, arrived in Istanbul. Her relative and partner, Don Joseph Nasi, became the most prominent member of the family. Initially his spectacular rise was due to his financial services to Prince Selim, who had made him one of his intimates as a müteferrika (distinguished attendant) in his provincial palace. When, in 1566, Selim acceded to the Ottoman throne he appointed Don Joseph “the duke of Naxos” (Naşka Dükası), which comprised the Cyclades Archipelago, a group of islands producing rare wines for export. This appointment must be related to his being the tax-farmer of wine exports to the northern Black Sea countries, and to Poland in particular. The tax-farm from the dukedom was fixed in the amount of 6,000 gold pieces. Joseph's control of this trade was a loss for Venice. Previously, the duke of Naxos had been a Venetian who did not give up his claim and harassed Don Joseph afterwards.

Customs dues on wine exported from the Aegean and from Venetian Crete to Poland entailed Joseph's actual monopoly of the wine trade, since under the Ottoman tax-farm system the government controlled the traffic to enable the tax-farmer to prevent smuggling, and to realize the maximum amount of revenue. His annual revenue from the monopoly on the export of Cretan wine was estimated at 15,000 ducats a year. Around 1575 it is reported that one thousand casks of wine were exported from Crete alone.

Don Joseph's influence on Ottoman policy against Venice in Cyprus, which was another center of wine production, comes to us in the form of a tale. Believed to be an expert in European affairs, Don Joseph became one of the most trusted counselors to the sultan at this time, and evidently he was one of the supporters of Vizier Lala Mustafa's plan to conquer Cyprus, in opposition to grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed, who was against the plan and wanted to continue the war in the north against Muscovy. The plan to colonize the conquered island with Jewish settlers is also worth noting in this context. The conquest of Cyprus leading to the Christian Holy League in the Mediterranean resulted in the Ottoman disaster at Lepanto in 1571. However, Don Joseph continued to keep the sultan's favor. Upon his death in 1579, Joseph's estate was confiscated by the government. Here it should be remembered that, although Islamic Law strictly forbids confiscation of private property from either Muslims or non-Muslims, the property of the tax-farmer or any government-related fortunes were always suspect as to their origin and were therefore subject to confiscation. Speculative possibilities in making fortunes through the sultan's favor and serving the interests of the ruling elite, as well as the precarious nature of such fortunes, clearly demonstrates the conditions and the nature of capital formation in the Ottoman patrimonial system.

Later, in 1588, Alvaro Mendès, like Joseph Nasi, an arch-enemy of Phillip II of Spain, came to settle in Istanbul bringing with him reportedly 350,000 gold ducats, and received the same favors once enjoyed by Don Joseph. The Jewish woman Esther Kyra, a favorite of the ladies in the palace and a liaison between them and Jewish interests outside, became involved in tax-farming and trade undertakings and amassed a large fortune during her long connection with the Seraglio. In the end, deprived of large profits as collectors of the non-Muslim poll-tax, the sipabis at the Porte rebelled and murdered her and her sons, who had obtained control of large tax-farms. Her fortune at the time of her death was reported to have amounted to 50 million akça.

It is suggested that the Marrano Jews introduced into the Ottoman Empire the techniques of European capitalism, banking and even the mercantilist concept of state economy. Also, perhaps under the guidance of Jews from Europe, Ottoman financial officials became aware of the working of the Gresham Law in the market and made monetary reforms accordingly in 1589.

Large-scale banking operations formed part of the activities of the House of Mendès in the Ottoman capital in this period. International trade and banking operations were inseparable and the family's operations were carried on through a network of agents in the principal centers of Europe. Thus, the Mendès family controlled a large portion of international commerce, which consisted of the exchange largely of
European woolens for wheat, pepper and raw wool. Also, investments by merchants in the treasury's tax-farms seem to have been quite high. In 1555 when Pope Paul IV confiscated the possessions of Jews in the papal territory, the sultan protested, saying that many Jews of Salonica and Istanbul had gone bankrupt and were unable to meet their payment obligations to the treasury to the sum of 400,000 gold ducats. Under the management of Dona Gracia (d. 1568 or 1569), a Jewish bank (called dolab in Turkish, hence dolabi later meant speculator, fraudulent person) appears to have involved Ottoman finances and capital investments within European markets. Gracia's son-in-law, Don Joseph, became a big creditor for European kings. His large loans to the king of Poland procured for him various commercial concessions. Under the sultan's protection, he obtained a monopoly on the export of beeswax from Poland. Also, when, in 1555, the French King Henri II was pressed for money, Don Joseph floated a loan in France in which the interest increased from 12 to 16 percent. Little wonder that many Turks invested money in the loan through Don Joseph.

Judging from the conditions of Jewry in general under the Ottomans during the sixteenth century, Salo Baron concludes that "the rise and splendor of Ottoman Jewry" is unparalleled in that century:

the Sephardic and Romaniot [Jewish] communities now lived almost exclusively under Ottoman rule and its system of legislation was characterized by great stability and basic protection of human rights. . . . With the great freedom of movement guaranteed by legal and administrative enactments, communication between the various Jewish communities became very intensive. . . . Making use of the vast opportunities offered it by Turkey's Golden Age the regrouped Mediterranean Jewry, too, now enjoyed a new efflorescence. It, too, may have legitimately classified the sixteenth century as another Golden Age of its own.

Along with its liberal policy of encouraging Western nations to import their goods under capitulatory guarantees into the empire - a policy considered to be contributing to the economic well-being of the empire as a whole - the Ottoman government also actively protected its own subjects in international trade. Thus "the victory of the Ottoman Empire symbolized, in the sphere of economics," in Stoianovich's words, "a victory of Greeks, Turks, renegade Christians, Armenians, Ragusans, and Jews over the two-century-old commercial hegemony of Venice and Genoa." While the old school of Levantine trade, represented by Wilhelm Heyd, declared that the "barbaric" Ottomans had no interest in promoting commerce and were concerned exclusively with outright military conquests, they were held responsible for the ruin of the Levant trade. But new research examining events within a broader context and freed from eurocentrism has modified this view fundamentally. In the first place, the native ethnic groups had been kept apart by the Genoese and Venetian masters as employees and dependents and not permitted to participate in overseas commerce. These groups now cooperated with the Ottomans and to a great extent replaced Italians in both the regional trade and in the international traffic between the Ottoman ports and Muscovy, Poland, Transylvania, Hungary and Italy, venturing as far as Lyons and Antwerp; in 1582 the duke of Brabant authorized four "mercatores graeci ex provinciae [Galatiae]" to bring Ottoman wares to Antwerp, and provide themselves with goods for export to Turkey. Under Ottoman protection, Dubrovnik achieved a spectacular expansion and challenged Venetians in Mediterranean traffic. Even the Levantine Genoese adopted Ottoman "citizenship" as dhimmi in Pera and Chios and thus became part of the Ottoman imperial system, enjoying continued prosperity until the Ottomans changed their policy and took Chios under their direct control in 1566. Four years later the Ottoman decision to end Venetian domination on Cyprus seems to have been part of this new strategy, in which Jewish interests associated with Ottoman finances apparently played an important role. On the other hand, between 1450 and 1600, Turkish or Muslim merchants played a major role in the interregional trade and in some sectors became numerically superior to the non-Muslim subjects.

Also, although the actors changed in the Levant trade and even a decline appears to have been true from the Genoese and Venetian standpoint, the Levant trade as a whole seems to have made a substantial growth in international as well as in regional trade. It is especially noteworthy that trade in bulky goods produced in the Ottoman lands - such as grain, cotton, wool, hides, fish, wine, olive oil, dairy products and textiles - recorded spectacular increases while the traditional grand commerce in spices, drugs, raw silk and precious stones resumed its importance in the Levant in the period 1520-1600. As will be seen below, the Iranian raw silk exports in particular responded to the expanding silk industries in Europe and rapidly growing demand for silk created a boom that competed with the spice trade in value and importance. Thanks to Ottoman protection, Florence could prosper in the Levant trade, particularly in the exchange of its fine cloths with raw silk in the period 1460-1566. Venice, enjoying long periods of peace (1481-97, 1503-37, 1540-70) with extensive commercial privileges under the capitulations,
realized one of the most prosperous periods in its Levantine trade and its economy as a whole.\textsuperscript{34}

\textbf{NOTES}

1 On capitulations in general, see Ínalcık (1971).
4 Mason (1896), pp. 1–4.
5 See Zachariadou (1983), pp. 123–73; the earliest of these trade agreements was made between the Duca di Candia Marino Morosini and the emir of Menteşe Orhan in April 1331, then between the duke and the emir of Aydin in 1337 and 1333, the duke and the emir of Menteşe in 1337, 1358 and 1375. Similar agreements were concluded between the Hospitallers and the emir of Aydin in 1348, and the Genoese and the Ottomans in 1352.
9 Ínalcık (1992b).
12 BN, MS Paris no. 85118b.
18 Ínalcık (1981), document no. 5.
24 For examples, see Ínalcık (1981), document nos. 131, 133, 142, 155, 156.
29 Thiriet (1958–61), III, no. 3009.
34 Ínalcık (1967), pp. 154–47.
expensive and of better quality, Iranian raw silk was imported to Italy by the Genoese as early as the middle of the thirteenth century. Beginning in 1300, most of the raw silk consumed by the Italian silk industry came from the Caspian provinces of Iran. Around 1400 travellers’ sources described Gilan, Shumakhi and Karabagh as the most important silk-growing areas in northern Iran. However, as early as the first half of the tenth century, Istahri made reference to Lahican (in Gilan) as a center of raw silk production.

The impact of the expansion in the use of silk cloth and of silk industries in Europe cannot be underestimated. It formed the structural basis for the development of the Ottoman and Iranian economies. Both empires drew an important part of their public revenues and silver stocks from the silk trade with Europe. The silk industries in the Ottoman Empire, principally in Amasya, Bursa, Istanbul, Mardin, and Diyarbekir, depended on imported raw silk from Iran. The growing demand in Europe for raw silk seems to have been responsible for the expansion of silk production in the provinces of northern Iran at the expense of rice agriculture, principally in Mazandaran, Gilan and Shirvan.

Bursa became a world market between East and West not only for raw silk but also for other Asian goods as a result of the revolutionary changes in the network of world trade routes in the fourteenth century. By this time, under the Mongols, Tabriz had assumed a central role in world trade. The city became the great emporium for Asian trade, overshadowing Baghdad and other Near Eastern outlets of world trade. The trade route from Tabriz followed the Erzincan–Sivas “imperial” route to Konya or to Ayas (Lajazzo) on the bay of Iskenderun, which had become the main outlet for Asian products under the Mongols. From Konya, caravan routes reached, via Denizli, the ports of Ephesus or Antalya. The spectacular evidence of this boom is the series of monumental caravanserais built during the period on the caravan routes in Seljukid Anatolia. Western merchants obtained Asian products, silks and spices, from these ports. Through this network of international trade routes which experienced unprecedented development under the Pax Mongolica, Asia Minor became a vehicle for world trade and experienced great prosperity. Italian merchants settled in Tabriz could exchange their woolen cloth there with Iranian silk and Indian spices arriving via Hormuz and Baghdad.

By about 1350, although the center of world trade once again shifted south to the Red Sea, to Egypt and Syria under the Mamluks, Asian goods, particularly raw silk, still followed the old route from Tabriz (or
11 Trade routes of the empire
rather Sultaniyeh, which replaced Tabriz under Olaytu) to the Anatolian ports of Ephesus, Antalya and Trabzon. After the massacre and expulsion of Italians from Tabriz (1340–41) and the siege of Genoese Caffa by the khan of the Golden Horde, Djanibek, in 1343, the Genoese had to rely on the Trabzon–Pera or Constantinople route for silk supplies from Iran, hence the commercial revival of Pera–Constantinople. This new situation, which made Pera the main Genoese entrepôt, must also have paved the way for Bursa's future as a market for Iranian raw silk. The Genoese obtained their first trade privileges, the so-called capitulations, from the Ottoman sultan Orhan in 1352.

On the other hand, the Caspian Sea–Astrakhan–Tana silk route assumed a new significance when the Italians were expelled from Tabriz. The Genoese received Iranian raw silk at Tana or Caffa which was vitally important for their expanding silk industries and trade, and they transported it by sea to Genoa. Incidentally, supplied by this source, Caffa had, like Genoa, an important silk industry exporting its famous products as late as the fifteenth century. The silk of Shirvan, Gilan and Mazandaran was taken directly to Astrakhan by sea and then either went to Saray on the Volga or by caravan to Tana. Demand for Iranian silk became particularly acute when the price of Chinese silk went up or it ceased to be imported because of the collapse of the Pax Mongolica across Asia in the mid-fourteenth century. In 1395, Timur's deliberate destruction of the trade centers of Astrakhan, Saray and Azov seems to have been aimed at bringing back to Tabriz the raw silk supplies of Shirvan (Shamakhi) and Gilan (Lahjaki and Rasht), which were then moving directly by sea to Astrakhan. The Tabriz silk trade as well as substantial customs revenue on silk must have been lost from this diversion. Before Timur, in 1341, the revenue in Tabriz from the raw silk customs dues (tangga) reached 500,000 dinars, which was the highest among all tangga revenues. Timur's efforts to protect Tabriz as the center of the trade of raw silk and silk cloth ultimately favored the earlier Tabriz–Asia Minor route. Before long Asia Minor came under Timur's control. His destruction of the main stations of the silk trade in the north and the ensuing long struggle for the throne among the descendants of Batu Khan in the Golden Horde, each of whom rallied the rival tribes around him, made the Eastern European steppe a dangerous region for caravans. Barbaro, who visited the area in 1436, asserts that by this date spices and silk supplies had already left the northern route for Syria. Although there is evidence that caravans followed the Astrakhan–Tana route as late as 1520, it evidently lost its importance after Timur's blow. Besides, by then Bursa had become one of the major world markets for raw silk and the Genoese of Pera, favored by the Ottomans, could find as much silk as they wanted at this market. It should be added that, along with Constantinople and Pera, the rise of Bursa as a world market in the second half of the fourteenth century became the economic foundation of Ottoman power.

Bursa's rise as an international market must be dated back to the middle of the fourteenth century. The granting of trade privileges to the Genoese in 1352, and the Ottoman annexation of Ankara in 1354, were important steps in this direction. Also it is interesting to note that in the second half of the fourteenth century the Ottomans concentrated their efforts on taking control of the principal centers of the silk route to the east, namely Ankara (1354, 1362), Osmani (1392), Amasya (1392) and Erzincan (1401). This daring push on the way to Tabriz brought the ambitious Ottoman sultan Bayezid I in conflict with Timur at the battle of Ankara in 1402. What is clear is that the Ottomans were always concerned with keeping the silk route open or maintaining it under their control. Under Selim I, they occupied Tabriz for the first time (1514). The local dynasty of Gilan, one of the richest silk-producing provinces of Iran, always sought Ottoman protection until its independence was eliminated by Shah Abbas I in 1592.

There is no doubt that toward 1400 Bursa was reputed to be one of the great centers for silk commerce and industry. At that time Johannes Schniberg"26 observed: "[the silk] of which good stuffs are made at Tamash [Damascus] and at Kaffa [Caffa] and also at Wursa (Bursa) ... the silk is also taken to Venice and to Lickka (Lucca) where good velvet is worked." On his return from Samarkand in 1405, Clavijo used the Tabriz–Bursa silk caravan route. By the end of the fourteenth century, the old silk routes of Caffa–Istanbul, Trabzon–Istanbul and Sivas–Istanbul had lost their former importance.

Western Anatolian ports also appear to have profited, like Bursa, from the Iranian silk trade as early as the mid-fourteenth century. Raw silk, obviously of Iranian origin, was also exported from Ephesus (Altuluogu) and Milet (Palatia–Balat) and must have followed the old caravan route Tabriz–Konya–Denizil. In about 1341 Rudolf von Suchen observed that silk as well as cotton and wheat were exported from Ephesus. By annexing Ephesus and other western Anatolian ports in 1390, Bayezid I brought under his control all important outlets of Iranian trade via Asia Minor.

Now under Ottoman protection, silk caravans could travel safely as far as Bursa from which Italian merchants, stationed in Pera, could purchase the precious commodity. As Bursa court records from the second
half of the fifteenth century demonstrate,27 Iranian merchants, mostly Muslims from Azerbaijan, exchanged in Bursa their silk loads for Western goods imported by Italians. During the period when the Mongol route was disturbed, Bursa rose as an international market not only for Iranian raw silk, but also for spices and other Asian products. In the silk trade the only other market competing with Bursa was Aleppo, where the Iranian caravans using the southern route Bitlis-Diyarbekir-Mardin brought their silk loads to Aleppo (Table 1:39).

Since Iranian raw silk merchants were obtaining cash and making their purchases at Bursa, the Ottoman capital became an entrepôt for all kinds of exports to Iran. In addition to the Western woollen cloth, they bought in Bursa pearls from the Gulf, sugar from Cyprus and Egypt and even spices from India.

Bursa’s role in the silk trade explains the enduring close cooperation between the Genoese and the Ottomans in the period 1352–1453. Ottomans also granted the Genoese the very profitable monopoly of the alum trade from Anatolian mines. According to the Genoese capitulations renewed on June 8, 1387,28 Murad I exempted the Genoese from customs dues for the goods imported and exported from Perä and instead required a market duty at the rate of 8 percent on the value of goods. This meant that the Ottoman sultan was not considering Genoese Perä a foreign land. An Ottoman agent was settled in Perä who was responsible for the revenue from the market duty.

Later, in 1432, Bertrand de La Brocquiére29 observed that “Turks visit Perä very frequently” (“grant hantise”) and because of trade they have an agent in Constantinople. In order to go to Perä, La Brocquiére waited in Bursa to meet “the merchants who were to come and take spices to Perä which they would purchase from the caravan [which arrived from Damascus].” Traffic between Bursa and Perä was under Ottoman control, so La Brocquiére could pass to Perä in the company of Genoese merchants who had capitulatory immunities. To pass over to Perä from Usküdar, he boarded a ship belonging to Greeks. Perä’s dependence on the Ottomans became so strong that in 1423 or 1424 the Peran Genoese proposed to Murad II that he put his emblems on a tower to be built on the walls and asked him to provide materials and a monetary contribution.30

In 1453 Constantinople was conquered and the sultan tried to take Perä unharmed under an agreement with its Genoese, Greek, Armenian and Jewish population. Although many Genoese fled in panic at seeing the fate of the population of Constantinople, some stayed in the city and agreed to become Ottoman subjects, as did members of other religious communities. Genoa’s citizens who stayed in Perä under the capitulary privileges continued, according to the notary records, with their normal commercial activities “as if nothing had changed.”31 In the following period we find the Genoese among the most active silk traders at the Bursa market. A caravan route from Bursa to Çeşme on the extremity of the Aegean peninsula linked the Bursa market with Chios. It is reported that already in 1456 a sizable silk cargo was shipped from Chios to Genoa.32 But the shorter route of Bursa–Mudanya–Perä was the principal channel for the export of Iranian raw silk. This was a riposte of the Muslim world to the papal declaration of a blockade of the Muslim lands in the eastern Mediterranean since 1291. The Latins tried to hold on to their Levantine strongholds – Caffa, Trabzon, Chios and the other eastern Aegean islands as well as Cyprus (Acre, the last stronghold remaining in Western control, had fallen in 1291). Under the circumstances the Italians retreated and placed their main business headquarters in Constantinople–Perä, which became the main center of their activities and enjoyed a period of renewed trade boom. On the other hand, the rise of the Turkoman principalities in western Anatolia and the emergence of the Ottoman state, the nearest to Byzantium and Genoese Perä and the most powerful and promising power in the region, are intelligible under the new conditions in the Levant. Stimulated by great demand and the high prices offered by Florentine, Genoese and Jewish merchants, the Bursa silk market made record imports of raw silk during the period 1487–1512 (Table 1:40).

La Brocquiére and Maringhi (below, pp. 234–35) provide testimony that the trade pattern between Perä and Bursa and its clientele did not change from 1432 to 1500. On the other hand, as the tributary of the
sultan since 1415, the Genoese of Chios too had a lively trade at Bursa. Merchants from Chios brought to Bursa large quantities of mastic to exchange for raw silk. Bursa became a market for mastic, where Eastern and Western merchants purchased this precious commodity, and this explains why the Genoese of Chios had a policy independent from Genoa toward the Ottomans.

Although, as a result of Mehmed’s prohibition, greatly reduced from their previously flourishing trade in the export of slaves from the Black Sea, the Genoese trade in the Levant flourished particularly in raw silk (Table 1:41). By 1500 Mariinghi mentions only Genoese and Jews as competitors with the Florentines for Iranian raw silk at the Bursa market. The Genoese of Caffa continued to be active partners of the old Genoese Chios–Pera–Caffa traffic system until Caffa was conquered and the Genoese population was deported to Istanbul in 1475.²⁹

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the overwhelming majority of Iranian silk merchants coming to Bursa were Muslims, Iranians or Azeris mostly from Tabriz, Shamakhi, Saad-çukuru, Gilan, and Shirvan, but also from Yazd, Shiraz, Kazvin, Kazerun, Isfahan, Kashan and Sebزوار. Some of them settled in Bursa: for instance, a Hoca İmadeddin, who authorized a certain Alagöz to collect his credits from the merchants in Bosnia. Bursa became, like Tabriz, a headquarters for Iranian merchants and money-changers who acted as agents for their partners in Iran. In Bursa they conducted business transactions directly with Italians or sent their own agents to the Balkans and Italy. A typical Iranian wholesale merchant was Hoca Abdürrahim of Shamaki who brought to Bursa, in 1467, 4,400 lidr or 1,468 kg of raw silk worth 220,000 akça or 5,000 gold ducats.³⁰ Turkish silk merchants also exported the raw silk they bought in Bursa from Iranians directly to Italy, sometimes employing their freed slaves as agents.

In the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth century, Muslim Iranians dominated the silk trade together with the Ottomans and Italians. Iranians are referred to as Azemi (from the Ottoman Acesi for Iranians and Azeris) in Italian documents. During the period Armenian merchants are mentioned less in the Bursa court records.³¹ From the time of Shah Abbas onward, however, they replaced the Muslims and dominated Iranian trade as far as Venice and Leghorn.

The growing silk industries of Italy were dependent upon the supply of Iranian raw silk, imported from the Bursa market in the fifteenth century. We have a vivid picture of this market in 1500 from the business reports of a Florentine merchant by the name of Giovanni di Francesco Mariinghi (see below, pp. 234–36).

As we have noted, around 1500, trade in Iranian silk at the Bursa market flourished (see Table 1:41). The foreign merchants impatiently awaited the arrival of the silk caravans in Bursa and were in keen competition to buy as much silk as possible. In the first half of the year 1501, the Florentines bought 60 bales, a purchase twice as much as the Genoese and Jewish purchases combined.³² In August when there was no silk to buy, the price went to 69 akça per lidr. So prices fluctuated seasonally between 62 and 69 akça according to available supplies in the market, with silk prices in Florence following those of Bursa. The peak season was in the spring. Approximately six silk caravans arrived in Bursa annually, each carrying an average 200 fardello of raw silk, or an annual total of 96 metric tons (at 79.821 kg/fardello). Bursa home industries, with one thousand looms at this time,³³ consumed quite an important part of it. On average, 36 tons was needed annually. In 1617 Shah Abbas offered to the English 2–3,000 bales for export; the total annual production was estimated at 20–22,000 bales. Three-quarters or half of the Iranian raw

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Table 1:40. Total revenue from the scales (mizan) tax on raw silk at Bursa (for a three-year period, in million akça)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1487</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1508</td>
<td>5.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1512</td>
<td>7.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1513</td>
<td>7.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1521</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1533</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1551</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1540</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1542</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1557</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1558</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1577</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1606</td>
<td>5.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1618</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1514–20 blockade</td>
<td>Gallipoli scales-tax revenue included</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1:41. Genoese imports from the Ottoman Empire, 1519 (in gold ducats)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raw silk</td>
<td>369,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool</td>
<td>106,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>67,377</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from Gioffré (1960), pp. 233–34.

silk imports were re-exported to Italy. Aside from the consumption of the Bursa silk industry, raw silk was exported to the Balkans, and central and northern Europe in the 1300s, as witnessed by the customs registers of Caffa, Akkerman and the Danubian ports. The best quality raw silks sold at the Bursa market in this period were astarabadi (strawai), lahisan (leggi) and sari.

It is no exaggeration to say that the silk trade, like the spice trade, constituted one of the most important economic issues affecting world politics from 1230. The states involved in the silk trade, namely Iran, the Ottoman Empire and the Italian city-states, were keenly conscious of its vital importance to their economies and finances. The struggle for control of the silk route between Tabriz and Bursa persisted between the Ottomans and the rulers of Iran in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. In 1472, Uzun Hasan deliberately destroyed Tokat where Mehmed II had established a new customs house in order to prevent smuggling. However, under Bayezid II, who kept peace in the east, silk imports reached record levels (see Table 1:40). Determined to destroy Shah Ismail, Selim I resorted to an unusual measure. He placed an embargo on all silk imports from Iran and prohibited trade in raw silk in the Ottoman territories. The definitive embargo was declared in the spring of 1514 when the campaign against the shah started. In order to stop all Iranian silk exports to Europe, the sultan extended the embargo to include Arab lands under the Mamluks. He declared that any Turk, Iranian or Arab found with Iranian silk in his possession was subject to cargo seizure.

Despite dispatching an ambassador to explain the decision, this measure became an additional cause of friction with Egypt. Selim's embargo seems to have been an unusually radical move. In the Middle East tradition, conflict between rulers should not concern or cause harm to the taxpaying common people. The latter, whose only concern should be earning their livelihood, must be protected in all circumstances. Interference in the everyday life of his subjects or their source of livelihood was something a just ruler should carefully avoid in order to maintain his reputation. Consequently, the idea of an embargo was an unacceptable innovation for the society at large. The prohibition was evidently a temporary measure during the period of hostility. Since it was illegal to confiscate any traders' merchandise for political reasons, seized goods were carefully recorded with a declaration that they would be returned when normal conditions resumed. Nevertheless, this unusual and drastic measure had such an impact on public opinion that Ottoman historians take pains to explain that the actual purpose of the sultan was not confiscation, but merely to deprive the enemy of its source of revenue. To justify this action, it was also argued that merchants were taking weapons to Iran. Iranians caught in Ottoman territory were deported to Rumeli and placed under custody and their silk loads were seized. In 1518, the sale of raw silk was altogether banned in Ottoman territory. Ottoman subjects, acting against orders, were forced to deliver to the treasury the equivalent money of the amount of silk sold. Besides the harsh measures against the silk merchants, the embargo had disastrous economic consequences, not only for Iranians, but also for the Ottomans and Italians. There must have been extensive unemployment and bankruptcies in the Bursa silk industry as a result of the embargo. When, later in 1586, the Ottoman Empire and Iran were at war, again only half of the Iranian merchants arrived, causing raw silk prices to soar on the Bursa market and three-quarters of the silk weaving looms in Bursa to shut down. Big weavers, owning as many as 60, 40 or 30 looms, went bankrupt and many of them disappeared apparently because of their debts. During the period of the embargo, 1514–18, raw silk coming from Georgia via Sokhum was exempt from restrictions. There was some production in the Ottoman territories, including Morea, Peizaren, Albania in the Balkans and Bursa, Bilecik and Amasya in Anatolia. In normal times, the high quality and relatively cheap raw silks of Iran was available in abundance at the Bursa market, which discouraged the development of native production.

Selim's embargo, which deprived the Italian silk industry of its main source of raw material, created panic in Italy. The enterprising Genoese planned to revive the old trade traffic of the Astarabad–Caspian Sea–Astrakhan route. The Astrakhan–Moscow route was already active by 1476 when Contarini visited Astrakhan, through which Moscow was receiving silk cloth from Yazd. Later, the English tried to establish such a trade route for Indian and Iranian goods. (see below, pp. 364–72).

It was evident that the embargo imposed by the forceful Sultan Selim was causing great losses for all concerned by disrupting a long-established pattern of international trade. When Süleyman I (1520–66) succeeded his father, not only did he restore the silk trade with Iran, but he also released the detained merchants and returned their silk if it had been preserved under a trust, and if not, they were compensated. But from this point on, direct control of the silk-producing provinces in Azerbaijan must have been an Ottoman target. During Süleyman's Iranian campaigns in the years 1533–36, 1548–50, and 1553–55, Azerbaijan was invaded and Tabriz occupied twice (1534, 1548). Since Selim I's time, local dynasties in Dagestan, Shirvan and Gilan sought Ottoman protection. But it was
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**THE FLORENTINES IN PERA AND BURSA**

Florentine merchants had a privileged position in Byzantium for selling their woolen cloth. As it was in great demand in the luxury trade throughout Asia, it secured a good profit for the city. However, until the final acquisition of Pisa in 1421, Florence, in her trade with the Levant, depended on the Genoese and Venetians who used to buy and re-export Florentine cloth to the East. In 1423 the Venetian Doge Tommaso Mocenigo could still boast that the Florentines were sending annually 15,000 pieces of cloth which Venice channelled into Barbary, Egypt, Syria, Cyprus, Romania [Balkans], Crete, Morea and Styria. They deliver, in addition, many other commodities the value of which reaches 70,000 ducats a month or 840,000 ducats a year. They buy, in exchange from Venice, wool of France and Catalonia, cloths dyed of cochineal, carded wool, silk, silver and gold threads and precious stones.\footnote{\vspace{-1em}}

The presence of Florentine merchants in Bursa is documented as early as 1432.\footnote{\vspace{-1em}}

In the period 1463–1500, the Florentine colony of Pera had become very influential and prosperous, thanks to the policy of Mehmed II.\footnote{\vspace{-1em}}

When the Venetians and the Genoese challenged Mehmed II’s plans to expand into Morea, Albania, Bosnia and the Black Sea, he showed special favor toward the Florentines, in order to lessen his dependency on their rivals, the Venetians, in the vital trade relations of his empire with the West. The Ottomans also were aware that fine woolen cloth, the principal export item from the West, was originally made or finished by the *arte di lana* of Florence, and exported to the Ottoman markets through Venice.\footnote{\vspace{-1em}}

**International trade: general conditions**

The Levant trade experienced a real boom in this period. Benedetto Deli, a Florentine agent settled in Galata, became the most trusted advisor to the sultan in the years 1460–72. In fact, Mehmed II’s interest in encouraging Florence in the Levantine trade dated back to the days of his conquest of Constantinople. Already by 1455, the sultan was extending favors to the Florentines in his territories. Indicative of the growth of trade after 1454, the number of Florentine ships visiting Istanbul increased from one to a convoy of three ships annually in the period 1454–61.

Considering the huge benefits they obtained, Florentines gladly paid the annual expense of 5,000 gold pieces to maintain their agents in Galata. In 1461, the sultan found a pretext to expel the Venetians from government-owned houses and settled Florentines instead. The following year, when Mehmed conquered Mytilene, the three Florentine ships then anchored in the Golden Horn joined in the victory celebration to please the sultan. Again in 1463, on the occasion of the sultan’s victory in Bosnia, the Florentines of Pera decorated their houses and streets and the sultan himself honored them by visiting and dining at the mansion of the banker, Carlo Martelli. Finally, the consul Mainardo Ubaldini, head of the Florentine colony of Pera, and the Florentine agents and merchants of Pera, were actively involved in Mehmed II’s decision to declare war against Venice in 1465.

While at war with the sultan, the republic of Venice dispatched a special ambassador to Florence asking that ships not be sent to Istanbul during that particular year. The reaction of Florence is of interest. A great amount of cloth, they said, was already prepared for the Ottoman market, and the ships to be sent actually could protect the large number of Florentines residing there. In fact, political and economic circumstances created a natural alliance between the sultan and Florence against Venice. The pressure which Venice and the Pope placed on Florence was countered by Mehmed II, who demonstrated an unusual friendship toward the Florentines in Galata.

When in 1467, under pressure from public opinion in Italy, Florence decided to evacuate Pera and all the heads of the commercial houses set sail for home with their wealth on Anconian ships, the Venetians intercepted them and looted everything. Florentine traffic with Galata remained halted until 1472. Although Florentines were now able to continue traffic with Pera via Genoa, in 1467 and 1469 the outbreak of a terrible plague in the Ottoman territories, including Istanbul and Pera, caused another setback to Florentine trade in the Levant. The epidemic
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**THE FLORENTINES IN PERA AND BURSA**

Florentine merchants had a privileged position in Byzantium for selling their woolen cloth. As it was in great demand in the luxury trade throughout Asia, it secured a good profit for the city. However, until the final acquisition of Pisa in 1422, Florence, in her trade with the Levant, depended on the Genoese and Venetians who used to buy and re-export Florentine cloth to the East. In 1423 the Venetian Doge Tommaso Mocenigo could still boast that

the Florentines were sending annually 15,000 pieces of cloth which Venice channelled into Barbary, Egypt, Syria, Cyprus, Romania [Balkans], Crete, Morea and Syria. They deliver, in addition, many other commodities the value of which reaches 70,000 ducats a month or 840,000 ducats a year. They buy, in exchange from Venice, wool of France and Catalonia, cloths dyed of cochineal, carded wool, silk, silver and gold threads and precious stones.

The presence of Florentine merchants in Bursa is documented as early as 1432.

In the period 1463–1500, the Florentine colony of Pera had become very influential and prosperous, thanks to the policy of Mehmed II. When the Venetians and the Genoese challenged Mehmed II’s plans to expand into Morea, Albania, Bosnia and the Black Sea, he showed special favor toward the Florentines, in order to lessen his dependency on their rivals, the Venetians, in the vital trade relations of his empire with the West. The Ottomans also were aware that fine woolen cloth, the principal export item from the West, was originally made or finished by the arte di lana of Florence, and exported to the Ottoman markets through Venice.

The Levant trade experienced a real boom in this period. Benedetto Dei, a Florentine agent settled in Galata, became the most trusted advisor to the sultan in the years 1460–72. In fact, Mehmed II’s interest in encouraging Florence in the Levantine trade dated back to the days of his conquest of Constantinople. Already by 1455, the sultan was extending favors to the Florentines in his territories. Indicative of the growth of trade after 1454, the number of Florentine ships visiting Istanbul increased from one to a convey of three ships annually in the period 1454–61.

Considering the huge benefits they obtained, Florentines gladly paid the annual expense of 5,000 gold pieces to maintain their agents in Galata. In 1461, the sultan found a pretext to expel the Venetians from government-owned houses and settled Florentines instead. The following year, when Mehmed conquered Mytilene, the three Florentine ships then anchored in the Golden Horn joined in the victory celebration to please the sultan. Again in 1463, on the occasion of the sultan’s victory in Bosnia, the Florentines of Pera decorated their houses and streets and the sultan himself honored them by visiting and dining at the mansion of the banker, Carlo Martelli. Finally, the consul Mainardo Ubaldini, head of the Florentine colony of Pera, and the Florentine agents and merchants of Pera, were actively involved in Mehmed II’s decision to declare war against Venice in 1465.

While at war with the sultan, the republic of Venice dispatched a special ambassador to Florence asking that ships not be sent to Istanbul during that particular year. The reaction of Florence is of interest. A great amount of cloth, they said, was already prepared for the Ottoman market, and the ships to be sent actually could protect the large number of Florentines residing there. In fact, political and economic circumstances created a natural alliance between the sultan and Florence against Venice. The pressure which Venice and the Pope placed on Florence was countered by Mehmed II, who demonstrated an unusual friendship toward the Florentines in Galata.

When in 1467, under pressure from public opinion in Italy, Florence decided to evacuate Pera and all the heads of the commercial houses set sail for home with their wealth on Anconian ships, the Venetians intercepted them and looted everything. Florentine traffic with Galata remained halted until 1472. Although Florentines were now able to continue traffic with Pera via Genoa, in 1467 and 1469 the outbreak of a terrible plague in the Ottoman territories, including Istanbul and Pera, caused another setback to Florentine trade in the Levant. The epidemic
began in mid-summer of 1467, and, according to Kritovoulos,\(^4\) an eyewitness, there were more than 600 deaths a day in the Ottoman capital. Despite these setbacks, there were fifty Florentine commercial agents in the Ottoman Empire located in Edirne, Istanbul, Gallipoli and Pera.

The first formal capitulation was granted to the Florentines by Mehmed II, the text of which has not been discovered. Without such an instrument, the Florentine colony could not have remained in Pera. Despite the restitution of peace with Venice in 1479, Bayezid II (1481–1512) was no less concerned with encouraging friendship with the Florentines and their continued presence in his capital; perhaps all the more so because of Cem Sultan, pretender to the Ottoman throne, who had been in Europe since 1482. In 1483, through his ambassador to Florence, the new sultan promised to purchase, annually, and exempt from tax, 5,000 pastav (one pastav or fardello was about 50 arsun or 34 m) of woolen cloth for the palace.\(^4\) In 1507, Florentine merchants at Galata numbered sixty or seventy, with an annual turnover reaching 5–600,000 gold ducats.

The capitulations granted by Bayezid II and Selim I to the Florentines were renewed by Süleyman I in October 1527.\(^6\) A comparison with the capitulations granted to Venice in 1482 shows that the Florentines were granted the same guarantees for freedom of trade and travel, and the same provisions concerning security for the persons and properties of the merchants and customs rates.

In the instructions to the Florentine envoy in 1488, complaints were voiced about the difficulties caused by local Ottoman authorities at Avlona when the Florentines took the Lecce–Avlona sea route, as well as the reimposition of the same dues twice or three times on the way from Avlona to Edirne. Florentine merchants took the sea route from Ancona or Ragusa to Istanbul usually on Anconian or Ragusan ships. But in order to avoid corsairs or Venetians, they preferred the sea and overland routes of Ancona–Ragusa–Sarajevo–Novibazar–Edirne–Pera, or Lecce (in Puglia)–Avlona–Edirne–Pera. These overland routes, also used by Ragusans and Muslim merchants, became the main trade routes crossing the Balkan peninsula from the Adriatic to Edirne. Finally, a special provision (article 20) tells us what difficulties and hazards the Florentine merchants were exposed to while crossing the Balkans overland.

The security of merchants passing from Avlona to the Italian coast also was of vital importance for the Florentine merchants, so a special provision guaranteed the security of their property against piracy at sea committed by the Venetians and the Genoese. By implication the same guarantee was applicable to the acts of the Ottoman privateers (levends) at Avlona. The Florentines felt it necessary to enter in their capitulations special provisions concerning double taxation, the hiring of native non-Muslims as aides, and the validity of documents issued in the different zones of jurisdiction, because local authorities often annoyed them in such situations. It was indeed a special favor on the part of the Ottoman government to agree to add such specific provisions in the document. There were Florentine consuls and merchants in Istanbul, Pera, Bursa, Edirne, Gallipoli, Sofia and Rhodes.

In a challenge to Venetian supremacy, Benedetto Dei claimed, Florence's business in the Ottoman Empire was expanding and had great prospects for the future.\(^5\) While the volume of Florentine woolen cloth exports to Turkey was far larger than Florentine silk goods, the latter textiles, including precious velvets and brocades, supplied, on a large scale, the fairs of France, England and the Netherlands (Antwerp).\(^2\) The "Golden Age" of Florence in the Levant was rapidly disappearing in the age of Selim I, although both this sultan and his successor Süleyman I renewed the capitulations. Foreign competition and the discovery of the New World, which "turned men's attention from the Levant," may be the main causes of Florentine decline. Lower prices paid for foreign woolens and the availability of cheaper stocks of silver and gold originally coming from the New World must be particularly emphasized in the process.\(^3\) Venice itself then produced relatively limited amounts – never beyond 3,000 pieces of woolen cloth.\(^4\) But in 1569 the Venetian annual output of fine cloth was over 26,000 pieces. During the sixteenth century Venice's woolen output became "one of the pillars of the city's economy."\(^5\)

However, Florentine trade experienced a boom at the turn of the sixteenth century. The Ottoman–Venetian War of 1499–1503 excluded Venetians from the Ottoman markets and, as prices were high, this stimulated Florentine business in Ottoman Turkey. Florentines were happy to see that, because of the war, the sultan became more favorable to them than ever.\(^6\) After the Ottoman–Venetian peace was signed in 1503, the aggressive trading policy of Venice appears to have been the real cause for Florentine commercial decline in the Levant in the first decades of the century. It was not a coincidence that the upsurge in the output of Venetian woolen industries occurred from the second decade of the sixteenth century\(^7\) and the Florentines were replaced by the Venetians in the Levant markets. As noted above, Sultan Süleyman encouraged trade by renewing the trade privileges with Florence in 1527. In the period 1530–70 the empire's unprecedented accumulation of wealth and growing
A Florentine agent in Pera: Giovanni di Francesco Maringhi, 1497–1506

The letters of the Florentine merchant and agent, Giovanni di Francesco Maringhi, in the period 1501–2, to the Florentine firms he represented and to his agents in Ottoman trade centers, uniquely portray the activities and conditions of Italian business in the Ottoman Empire. Maringhi was a Florentine resident agent at Pera from 1497 to 1506. He represented the Florentine firms of Venturi, Medici, Galilei and Michelozzi and appears to have been a partner rather than an employee. In March 1502, for example, he made an agreement with Leonardo Venturi of Florence as an associate for three years. According to the contract, he would draw three-fifths of the profit and Venturi two-fifths. They would share the living expenses of “apprentices” on the same basis. Venturi & Co. had to invest at least 7,000 ducats and dispatch all the panni (bolts of woolen cloth) they finished to Maringhi for sale or barter in Turkey. An alternative to such agreements to procure panni was to buy up with ready money in Florence.

Maringhi’s business headquarters was in Pera, and he had salaried agents in Bursa, Gallipoli, Edirne and Sofia who bought and sold for him. One of his agents, named Risalit, who knew Turkish, made regular trips between Florence, Pera and Bursa and back to carry goods and information. His travel expenses overland amounted to 700 akça per load of silk. Some of his agents made agreements with firms similar to Maringhi’s so that it was not easy to keep them in the service. Maringhi himself made visits to these market cities.

Maringhi sold cloth at Galata to the wholesale drapers. He had to sell at least 200 panni a year to cover his annual expenses in Pera, that amounted to 180–200,000 ducats. Panni bought by indigenous merchants, mostly Jews of Istanbul or the Genoese of Pera, were dispatched or taken to other market towns in the empire. For instance, Antonio da Lagnasco, a well-known Peran Genoese draper, used to buy on credit and take panni to Caffa, paying his debts when he sold the cloth.

Maringhi’s main business was the exchange of Iranian silk for Florentine panni on the Bursa market, as was true for the whole Ottoman–Florentine trade in general. However, as a typical Renaissance merchant, he was involved in trade in every commodity, including Ankara camelots, silk cloth and furs, as well as pepper, wax, Chines rhubarb, musk, scamon, coarse woolens, and flax of Alexandria, among other items. His planned joint business venture with three other Florentine partners in Moncastro (Akkerman) is of particular interest. In March 1502, Maringhi planned to invest 200 or 300 ducats in a partnership that intended to send an agent to Moncastro to get hold of 4–5,000 pieces of leather or hides. This would be repeated each year.

As the political atmosphere was always of prime importance for trade in the Levant, Maringhi kept in close contact with the Ottoman government through the Florentine emino in Istanbul.

Maringhi died on February 22, 1506, with properties worth at least 97,000 ducats in value and “goods from various merchants to the value of 127,000 ducats.” His career can be taken as an example of other Florentines who were active in the Ottoman Empire, for example, members of the Medici family, Francesco, Giovanni and Raffaello, who were trading at Pera, Bursa and Edirne. Francesco at Pera in 1470 already represented Medici & Co. and visited Bursa and Edirne. Other Medicis in the empire were engaged in various economic activities from banking to the manufacture of soap and cloth dyeing.

Records kept at the Bursa kadi’s court give a closer picture of the actual transactions and disputes of the Italian merchants and agents in the city. In 1478 a Florentine agent by the name of Piero bartered Western cloth valued at 207,920 akça or 4,000 ducats, to four Muslim merchants for raw silk and cloth. The breakdown of Western cloth bartered is shown in Table 1:142.

In October 1478, when Piero died in Bursa, the kadi appointed a Genoese as executor for his estate to collect his credits from his debtors.
The silk trade between Bursa and Florence was the most profitable business of all. Around 1509 a profit of 70 to 80 gold ducats per bale of raw silk was realized in Florence despite the fact that transport costs were unusually high — 900 akça or 18 ducats a bale. According to the account book of Guanti, between 1484 and 1488 the total weight of raw silk sold in Florence under his name amounted to 4,795 pounds (one Bursa pound or lidre equaled 320.7 gr.), costing 6,022 “large” florins, with expenses amounting to 1,172. (One “large” florin equaled about 48 akça.) The net profit came to 977 florins (Table 1:43).

Woolen cloth of Florence Exchange of woolen cloth for raw silk in Bursa was the basis of Florentine prosperity. In the period 1400–1630, Bursa was the international market for raw silk from Iran and also the emporium of Western fine woolen cloth for the whole of Asia. Already toward the mid-fourteenth century the customs regulations of Tabriz speak of “European manufactures such as cloths and scarlet,” which demonstrates the importance of the trade of Western cloth in Iran. As noted earlier, in the second half of the fourteenth century, traffic between Italy and Tabriz shifted from the Trabzon–Constantinople route to the direct caravan route between Tabriz and Bursa. Thus, the Ottoman capital became the major international market for the European cloth trade. Western cloth bales arriving at Byzantine Constantinople and Genoese Pera from Italy were now transported to Bursa. Besides the re-export to Iran, a significant part of the imports, of course, was purchased by the local merchants for shipment all over the Ottoman Empire. It can safely be said that the prosperity of the Florentine and woolen industries in Florence depended on the import and re-export of Iranian silk acquired at the Bursa market. Greater purchases of silk encouraged increased production.

It turned out that the famous Damascene spice merchant, Abdurrahman, held a debt of 86,000 akça owed by the late Florentine agent. The Syrian merchant first put claims for Piero’s advance to four Italians, Zano, Berto (or Breto), Andrea and Bartolomi and the estate of the deceased. Then the Greek executor Michael intervened and Abdurrahman reached an agreement for the debt, which was formally entered into the court records. Bartolomi, a resident of Pera, owed to Piero 67,200 akça from the sale of 1,101.5 lidre of raw silk.

Like Marighi, Piero bought and sold raw silk on credit from Iranian merchants and spices from Arab merchants of Damascus. Thus Arab, Iranian, Genoese and Florentine merchants were involved in direct transactions. Levantine Italians or Greeks, familiar with local conditions, also were involved. On the other hand, the kadi of Bursa arranged and guaranteed all legal matters. In other words, the Bursa international market was a complex net of relations in which the Ottoman kadi played an important role in its smooth functioning.

Commodities exchanged

Silk In Florence, the arte di seta existed as early as 1193 and “by the fifteenth century it ranked with the arte di lana in importance and in wealth.” In 1473 silk manufacturers had agencies in the Ottoman Empire as well as in France, England, and the Netherlands; there were 270 shops belonging to the wool merchants’ guild and 83 to the silk merchants’. In the 1470s Benedetto Dei, Florentine agent at Pera, boasted that in these places are sold “more Florentine wares of all kinds, especially silken cloth and gold and silver brocades than [from] Venice, Genoa and Lucca put together.”
of woolens because of the high profit realized in bartering them for silk. Maringhi observed that it was a better business to barter silk with woolen cloth than to sell directly to drapers in Bursa. In one instance, 91 pieces of calisse, an inexpensive kind of cloth of Spanish manufacture, were bartered for one and a half bales of silk. Bartering silk bales with woolen cloth was a well-established practice in Florence, too. Thus, the Florentine agent always stressed the great demand for and good profits in the trade of woolen cloth, urging firms to send more and more. He said, for instance, that 260 panni sent by Venturi & Co. in the course of three years could have been consumed in one year and urged the firms to supply him annually with at least 500 to 600 bolts of cloth. Woolen cloths made in Turkey could not compete in quality with those of Florence, but every shipment sold quickly and prices were rising constantly.

In addition to their own high-quality panni, Florentine firms re-exported, after finishing, a great quantity of woolen cloth from France, Spain (calisse), and England (panni inglesi). In one instance in 1501, 4,000 pieces of calisse were imported for re-export to the Ottoman Empire. Foreign panni were handled separately from panni fiorentini.

Because of the high ratio of gold to silver at the Bursa market and the difficulty of bringing gold from Florence via Ragusa, bartering was always preferred. However, Florentine woolen cloth sometimes did not arrive in sufficient quantities, so that the Florentines had to import cash from Florence; Maringhi regularly dispatched cash in gold pieces and akça to his agent in Bursa.

For calisse and panni, there was always a ready market in Turkey. By 1500, Florentine firms exported 4–5,000 pieces (136–170,000 meters) of first-quality panni, called San Martino, designed for palace and elite consumption, and a much larger amount of poor-quality cheaper cloths called panni de Garbo. In the 1490s a better quality of the latter, called sopramani, was manufactured for the Ottoman market; one panno of poor-quality cloth sold for 20 large florins in Bursa. In this period the trade in Florentine panni brought a net profit of 11.9 percent, but when profit from the sale of astarabadi silk sent from Bursa was added the profit realistically amounted to 20 percent. The average rate under normal conditions when the interest rate in general was 13 percent. Transport costs amounted to 31 percent of the production costs for panni and 19 percent of the purchase value for raw silk. Customs duties were 4 percent on the transit from Chios to the Ottoman mainland, 2.5 percent for Avlona and 3 percent at the Bursa customs house. All in all there was no big difference in customs payments between the Lehigh-Chios-Bursa and Lecce-Avlona-Bursa routes (see Tables 1:44 and 45).

Pepper Bursa was an important transit center for spices from India and Arabia in the fifteenth century. The city imported a great quantity from Aleppo and Damascus, mostly by Syrian Arab merchants. From Bursa, pepper was re-exported to the Balkans and to the northern and east-central countries beyond the Danube and the Black Sea. The Florentine agent Maringhi experimented with pepper exports from Bursa to Florence, but his shipment did not sell well. The price of pepper was then 24 ducats per load in Florence, which Maringhi believed high enough to make a good profit. But soon it became evident that it was not a good investment and Maringhi asked for the return of the balance from the three sacks of pepper. "There is," he observed, "no bargain to be expected from the spices" (see Table 1:46).

Other goods Besides raw silk, typical Ottoman exports included rhubarb, wax, musk, mohair, pepper, Bursa silk cloth, drugs, and occasionally fish-roe, wool, cotton, fine cotton cloth, rugs, hides and furs.
Rhubarb brought high profits in Florence. Bursa silk brocades were greatly admired there, but exports were in very limited amounts. Conversely, Florentine silk cloth, as a luxury item, sold well in Bursa but again apparently in small quantities.92

The mohair of Ankara was an expensive luxury textile in great demand in Italy, where it was much in vogue among the elite. Bursa was the principal market for the famous Ankara mohair.93 In March 1502, Maringhi bartered Florentine panni for three bolts of mohair and remained in debt for an extra 200 or 250 ducats.94 He sent his agent, Viatti Erminia, to buy mohair for him in Ankara. One bolt (tavola) contained 50 pieces of mohair and each piece sold in Florence at from 4.75 to 5 gold ducats. Florentines re-exported part of their mohair imports to Lyons in France.

Business practices

Maringhi’s letters shed light on the Italian business strategies and practices in Turkey. He regularly informed cloth makers in Florence not only about profits to be gained from bartering and the available raw silk supplies but also about the size, quality and color of the panni that was popular on the Ottoman market. He sometimes even sent samples.95 Such practices would be followed later on by mercantilist-capitalist Western economies to promote market expansion. In 1501, for instance, Maringhi informed the firms that red and dark blue cloth would make a good profit. He urged them to maintain their high quality to keep up the reputation of Florentine cloth in the Bursa market. However, as happened with Ottoman silken manufacturers, less expensive cloths sold well and created a wider market at Bursa. Later on their competitors, the English in particular, would take advantage of this trend and beat out the expensive, high-quality cloth of Florence and Venice. Turkish and Greek merchants ventured to Florence “to buy big loads of panni,”96 since the profits were so attractive.

Bursa and the silk trade

In Bursa most transactions were on credit and at the end of a certain period accounts were balanced.97 This was practiced not only among Florentine merchants but also between Florentines and Ottomans. The Florentine agents in the empire often sent silk or mohair loads to liquidate debts owed to the Florentine firms. Maringhi’s agent in Bursa sold a Jewish draper 8 panni of Florentine cloth to be paid for in four monthly payments.98 Maringhi’s estate showed that he had credits with Turks, Jews and Italians. Jewish drapers predominated among indigenous merchants buying panni on credit at Pera or Bursa. Sales on credit for short periods of two to four months were common. The creditor had to wait until the debtor was able to sell the panni he had purchased. When unable to pay as agreed, the debtor was able to make new arrangements. Florentines frequently had to deal with the kadis or customs agents. In one of his letters to Nicolo Michelozzi in Florence,99 Maringhi wrote that he had one box of musk inside a sack of pepper to avoid duty. In any event, he managed to make friends with the emino, who helped him make arrangements to retrieve the debt for panni which he had sold to a Peran Genoese merchant on credit.100

The Venetian ducat was the standard gold coin in Ottoman foreign trade. The fact that it replaced Florentine florins (fiorini d’oro) from the beginning of the fifteenth century101 can be interpreted as an indication of Venetian supremacy in the Ottoman trade. In May 1501, the ratio of gold to silver was about 19 percent higher in Bursa than in Genoa. So cash dispatches from Florence were in gold ducats, and when cash was short bankers at Pera purchased loans at interest with the rate at 15 percent per year.102 For payments in gold long credit periods were allowed. Sales in gold were always considered more profitable.

Trade routes

The sea traffic between Florence and Ottoman commercial centers, usually on Genoese ships, moved between Pisa or Leghorn and Chios, whence cargoes were taken to the Anatolian port of Çeşme, and by caravan reached Bursa and Istanbul. The long sea route was not secure because of Venetian control of the sea and of piracy, against which Florentines were powerless. This situation illustrates once more that, in the late Middle Ages, control of the overseas markets depended fundamentally on naval supremacy. It will be seen that later, Venice too would lose the Levant market to the English and Dutch mainly because these
Western nations established their naval supremacy in the Mediterranean in the 1590s.

By contrast, thanks to Ottoman protection, the land route starting at Dubrovnik or the Albanian port of Avlona and Scutari offered more security. From 1492, the Ottoman government, anxious to promote economic activity in Avlona, settled Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain. This important port, seat of a sancaz-beg, and the Adriatic base of the Ottoman navy, was the terminus of the southern highway crossing the Balkan peninsula over Salonica to Edirne, Istanbul and Bursa. The northern terminus, Dubrovnik, profited from Ottoman protection as a tribute-paying city-state. Most of the traffic between Florence and Pera or Bursa was carried out via Dubrovnik. Florentine cargoes left the Italian ports of Pesaro, Fano or Ancona to reach Dubrovnik and then took the land route. Even during this short passage on the Adriatic Sea, Florence sought capitulatory guarantees of Ottoman protection against Venice and piracy. Incidentally, such requests were always interpreted by the Ottomans as leading to a protectorate. The cargoes left or reached Dubrovnik by horse and mule caravans following the route Bosnasrara-Novibazar-Skopje-Plovdiv-Edirne. Edirne was the distribution center in the Balkans where merchants of Pera maintained their agents. Traffic from Edirne to Bursa took the Gallipoli-Lapsevi route. The whole land passage required about six weeks. (A messenger, moving much faster, made the journey between Galata and Dubrovnik in ten days.) In one instance, the Istanbul-Florence transport costs for one and a half bales (about 375 lidre or 120 kg) of raw silk was c. 900 akça or 18 gold ducats. Florentine diplomats made special efforts in Rome to keep open the Florence-Ancona land route, while traffic across the Adriatic and the Balkans was the responsibility of the Ottoman government.

An interesting episode indicates the Ottoman concern for security on the land route. A shipment of silk of about 150 ducats in value (one load of seta leggi) was stolen in Novibazar. The sultan sent an officer and asked the villagers to find either the load or the thieves. Finally twenty villagers agreed to pay 15,000 akça as compensation. Fees and bribes amounted to about 2,000 akça.

The Ottomans always showed a keen interest in Apulia and the port of Ancona. They always remembered their short occupation of Otranto in 1480, and Suleyman I’s so-called Corfu campaign originally was intended to be an invasion of Italy. In 1487, Boccolino Guzzoni’s plot to bring Ottoman forces to Italy to help seize the marches of Ancona caused alarm throughout Italy.

Later, in an effort to replace Venice as the center of spice distribution in southern Europe, the grand duke of Tuscany approached both the Ottomans and the Portuguese, and finally made Leghorn a free port in 1593.

Ancona Pre-Ottoman Bosnia already had established an active trade with Italy through Dubrovnik as well as through the ports of Split, Zadar, Šibenik, and Tragir on the Dalmatian coast. In the second half of the fourteenth century, merchants had settled in Ancona from Kotor, Zadar, Zagreb, Medrusa and Dubrovnik, maintaining trade relations with the mainland. Emerging as the main transit center for the Florence-Ottoman trade, the seaport of Ancona, beyond Venetian control, emerged as one of the first areas in Europe with a merchant colony from Ottoman territories.

In 1514, the Ottoman government obtained special commercial privileges for its subjects in Ancona, both Muslims and non-Muslims, and the “palato della farina” of the city was turned into a fondaco for numerous “mercanti turchi et altri Maometani.” Toward the mid-sixteenth century, there were about 200 Greek trading houses in Ancona and many Ottoman Jewish firms. Not only grain exports for growing urban centers in Italy, but also oriental luxuries followed the Ancona route. Through the Adriatic ports, such wares reached the central Italian fairs of Lanzan and Recanti to such an extent that Venice became worried over its own Levantine trade. Now “the Ottoman merchants, Greek, Turkish and Azemini [Iranians] were present doing business directly in these fairs.” In the middle of the sixteenth century, rumors about Ancona’s inclination to seek Ottoman protection caused serious anxiety in Rome and Venice. In 1555, when Pope Paul IV began to arrest and burn Marrano Jews and confiscate their possessions, the Ottoman government intervened vigorously on their behalf, because many Jews of Salonica and Istanbul, whose capital was invested at Ancona, had gone bankrupt. Actually some of these Jews were agents of Ottoman merchants. The Jewish banking family of Mendes then attempted to get the Jews in the Ottoman Empire to declare a boycott against the city of Ancona.

THE TRADE FROM 1550 TO 1630

Silk industries were introduced in Western countries quite late: in France under Francis I (1515–47) and in England under Elizabeth I (1558–1603). A mercantilistic concern to prevent the huge amount of gold involved
in France 4 million gold pieces were paid for Italian and Eastern silks) from leaving the realm was the stimulus for their rapid development. Lyons was said to have had 7,000 looms by 1600.

In England large quantities of raw silk imports began in the 1590s, and by the 1620s silk had become its largest import.

In 1616 the English silk industries required an estimated 300–600 bales of raw silk annually, while the shah proposed to send 2–3,000 bales. By 1628 the annual demand by the Dutch had reached 1,200 bales. The English and the Dutch re-exported their surplus imports to other European countries, thus replacing Venice and Genoa in this market. By the mid-seventeenth century, silk became “the most important among a number of imported goods.” The new expanding silk markets obtained their supplies of raw silk through the Ottoman Empire from Iran. In other words, the Iranian and Ottoman economies now found, in the expanding silk market of the West, a new source of prosperity.

“At the beginning of the seventeenth century silk was for Asian trade,” Steensgaard noted, “what gold and silver had been for the conquistadores . . . and the Persian raw silk, after all, was the second biggest European import from Asia.” As the Dutch ambassador in Istanbul reported in 1615, trade in silk had increased considerably “on account of the passion for display that is daily becoming greater in Christendom.” In the 1620s, total European imports of Persian silk are estimated at about one million lb per annum.

By 1600, Aleppo was the most important silk-exporting market in the Levant, where Venice alone purchased half of the Iranian and Syrian raw silk, amounting to about 140 tons with a value of 1.5 million ducats per annum. The second half was bought by other European nations (see Table 1:47). From Venetian consular reports it is possible to follow fluctuations in the silk trade in the years 1578–1627 at this market.

While the traffic slackened during the Ottoman–Iranian War of 1578–90, the following period of peace from 1590–1602 witnessed a boom in this market, reaching its highest level from 1599 to 1602, just before the resumption of the Ottoman–Iranian war in 1603. The Aleppo customs experienced a record annual revenue of 300,000 gold ducats during this period, the greater part of the annual total revenue surplus of 460,000 sent from Syria to the Porte. Despite war, customs revenues still amounted to 200,000 gold ducats in 1604. It is to be noted that Venetians actually paid for raw silk at Aleppo by the sales of substantial amounts of woolen and silk cloths which they imported. In the 1590s they imported annually 200,000 braccio (ell) of silk cloth alone (Table 1:48).

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Table 1:47. Estimate of the annual import of Persian silk to Europe in the 1630s (in bales)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marlies</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>(previously only 100–200)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>but only 300 in 1623 and 600 in 1629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>but only 295 in 1623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genoa, Lucca</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Messina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Total</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Steensgaard (1972), pp. 159–64.*

Table 1:48. European imports at Aleppo, 1605

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Imports (1,000 gold ducats)</th>
<th>Ships coming to Alexandria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>4–5, mostly woolen and silk cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>20, mostly silver coin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>2–3, chiefly kerseys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The rise of Izmir/Smyrna in the seventeenth century was to a great extent due to the fact that, in competition with Bursa and Aleppo, the city became the principal market of Iranian silk for the Europeans. What actually happened was that Izmir assumed the commercial role that Ephesus, Chios, Çeşme and the two Foçaş had played in the region prior to 1590. Initially Western nations used Chios as a transit center for Asian trade before obtaining from the sultan direct trade privileges under the capitulations; the newcomers, the English and Dutch, overshadowed other nations in Izmir. Its port prolonged the cheaper seaway into the Anatolian continent and offered a safer refuge against the corsairs and the vagaries of the Aegean Sea. Leghorn, converted to a free port for the Atlantic mercantile nations in 1593, shared Izmir's role as a market for Iranian silk. Employed by Shah Abbas as part of his policy of selling Iranian silk directly to Europe, the Armenians of Iran became very active first in Izmir and then in Leghorn in making the latter city the chief silk market in Europe in the seventeenth century. Five or six Iranian caravans each year followed the Tabriz–Erivan–Kars–Erzurum–Tokat–Ankara–Afyon–İzmir route. By 1670, out of the 22,000 bales of silk produced in Iran, 3,000 arrived in Izmir for export. By 1671, the
French considered Aleppo in fourth place among the Levantine centers of trade, following Izmir, Alexandria and Sayda (Sidon). By 1621, Izmir was "the greatest emporium of all kinds of merchandise in transit between Europe and Asia." 

**Shah Abbas' attempts to divert the silk route from Ottoman lands**

The embargo policy imposed in 1514 by Selim I, designed to destroy Iran economically and financially, was attempted by Shah Abbas I (1587-1629) for Iran in the period 1603-29. Abbas' plan was to divert the silk route from Ottoman territory to the Indian Ocean. He found that the English and Dutch, who had established their supremacy in the Indian Ocean by that time, were eager to cooperate in eliminating the Ottomans as an intermediary because of the extra taxes which were paid at the Ottoman ports. Ottoman-Iranian rivalry took on the nature of an economic war leading to a mutual blockade. As the Iranians prohibited silk exports, the Ottomans took measures to prevent the shipping of gold and silver to Iran, which intensified the monetary crisis in Persia. Shah Abbas tried to find a solution to this problem by selling a large quantity of silk to the northerners at Bandar-Abbas. Let us see how this interesting struggle, which threatened to isolate the Ottoman Empire from the rest of the world, unfolded.

In the summer of 1599 the shah sent a man from his personal entourage, named Huseyn Ali Bey, together with Sir Anthony Sherley, to the major European capitals. This delegation was charged with working out an alliance with the Christian sovereigns against the Ottoman Empire, and gaining assurances that the trade route would be redirected, outside Ottoman dominions. The German emperor, who was at war with the Ottomans, received the delegation warmly and gave a favorable reply. Besides promising to continue to strive toward the goal of organizing a league against the Turks among Christian governments, he announced that he would attempt to ensure that the Christians would not engage in trade with the Turks. The Iranian delegation went on to Spain and from there to England.

The shah was unable to come to an agreement with the Spanish on this subject because the Spanish had designs on Bahrain, and the situation in Hormuz was causing the Persians additional anxiety.

In 1603 war broke out again between the Ottomans and the Iranians. Shah Abbas again sent representatives to Europe. In 1610, along with another delegation sent to Europe, he shipped 200 bales of silk to Lisbon as proof that the sea route was more economical. According to information from the Venetian ambassador in Madrid, one of the main objectives of the Iranians was to deny the sultan the large amount of revenue he derived from customs duties on Iranian silk. The envoys' proposal also carried a political–military stipulation that Spain attack the Ottoman Empire. These initiatives alarmed the Venetians, as it was thought that they would wreak havoc on the Venetian market. In 1611 Robert Sherley (the brother of Anthony Sherley), a member of the Persian delegation to England, wanted ships to be sent to Persia for silk and to deliver arms to be used against the Turks. However, negotiations yielded no results. Meanwhile, envoys from Istanbul arrived in London and the king of England refused Sherley an audience. In that same year, substantial quantities of English steel and swords were sent to Turkey. But, on the other hand, the English, following the Dutch, severely crippled the Indian trade of the Ottomans through the Gulf and the Red Sea. By 1613, the raids of English and Dutch corsairs in the Red Sea had reached such serious proportions that the Ottoman Imperial Council felt it necessary to take strong action against them, and sent five galleys of lumber to Egypt for construction of a fleet in the Red Sea. Shortly thereafter, the English government seriously took up the matter of attempting to seek a new route for the Persian silk. In 1617 the English ambassador to India, Thomas Roe, by order of the king of England, sent an agent to Persia to enter into negotiations for diverting the silk trade from Turkey. It was hoped that this would lead to the establishment of a less expensive and more secure silk route than through the Ottoman ports. The English thought that, as a result, even if they were obliged at some point to abandon their Levant trade, they would be able to procure the cotton and gallnuts they needed most through other European merchants. Because the Spanish and Portuguese took measures to block trade between Persia and England, the English preferred the Moscow route to the Indian Ocean as a new silk route. They envisaged shipping cloth and tin to Persia by this route, in exchange for silk. The English calculated that silk purchases from the shah would amount to three or four million gold pieces for England alone. The English, considering the difficulty of coming up with that amount of cash inside the kingdom and naturally reluctant to ship it abroad, offered payment in kind. Shah Abbas offered a credit system. Finally, in 1618 he agreed to accept a payment of one-third currency and two-thirds goods. These details show once again Iran's dependence on precious metals coming through the Ottoman territories. It appears that the Ottoman government, too, felt the impact of the
Persian embargo: the grand vizier told the Venetian bailo that his country’s silk demands could be met by domestic production alone, if necessary. The loss incurred by the Ottoman treasury when the silk and spice route was severed in 1622 is estimated to have been at least 300,000 gold pieces annually in customs duties. The Venetian bailo in Istanbul sent a message to the Ottoman government warning that the traffic in silk and other goods along the Syrian silk route might completely cease. The grand vizier noting, in particular, the length of the sea route, did not seem to have shared this concern. In fact, by this time, peace had been signed with Persia (the Peace of Serav in 1618), and great quantities of silk and other goods had begun to arrive at the Aleppo market via the Baghdad route.

It is interesting to note that in the Serav peace treaty the Ottomans, who had lost all their conquests in the Caucasus, accepted an annual delivery of two hundred bales of silk as a tribute from Iran. As soon as peace was concluded, the Venetians announced the good news that a caravan from Baghdad had brought one thousand bales of Iranian raw silk and one thousand boxes of indigo. Nonetheless, some Persian silk was still reaching England via northern Persia and Bandar-Abbas.

At this time the shortsighted policy of the Ottomans in Aleppo of trying to collect new taxes on silk only served to intensify the resolve of those working to establish an alternative silk route. The Venetian representative in London reported in 1622 that three ships had arrived from India, loaded with substantial quantities of Persian silk. Shortly after this a new Ottoman–Persian war erupted. During these years, Anglo-Persian friendship developed considerably, and in 1622 the Persians, with the assistance of English ships, conquered Hormuz from the Portuguese. In 1624 Baghdad, which was at that time an important transit center for Indian commerce in the Near East, fell to the Iranians. A new Iranian diplomatic delegation visited Spain, France, Holland and England (eighty bales of silk were sent along to the last nation). Their purpose was to sign an alliance and commercial agreement in London. In 1626, in response to the shah, Charles I sent a delegation to Persia. The shah promised to deliver 8,000 bales of silk per year to England from Persian ports. Having taken Baghdad, he was holding out the possibility of capturing Aleppo from the Ottomans and transporting the silk via this shorter route. However, the difficulty in finding gold and silver, particularly sought after by the Iranians for the purchase of that much extra silk, the length of the southern route, the hostility of the Portuguese and Spanish, and finally the uncertainty concerning the future of the Levant Company, left the English in a state of indecision regarding the shah’s proposals. The English, and after them the Dutch, were assuming the position formerly held by the Spanish and the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. Not only were they cooperating with the shah in the Persian Gulf, but, at the same time, they were attacking the pilgrim and commercial traffic leaving India for the Red Sea. This resulted in a decrease in tax revenue in Cairo, which angered the Ottoman government. In 1627, a party of Arabs approached the Ottoman Imperial Council with complaints that the English and Iranians were plundering their ships in the Persian Gulf. The shah’s newly established port of Bandar-Abbas (Gombroon) began to expand rapidly as a result of English and Dutch commerce. In 1633, the Venetian ambassador to England reported that English trade in Bandar had greatly increased and that silk brought from there was being shipped to many destinations in Europe.

Now the Portuguese–Spanish, who had lost their supremacy in the Indian Ocean to the British, found themselves in an unusual venture with their old enemies, the Ottomans. They offered to transport spices, silk and other Indian goods via the Gulf and the Red Sea. Recognizing the possibility that this might open the way to an Ottoman–Spanish rapprochement, the English ambassador sent an urgent note to the Ottomans saying that the plan was unfeasible and deceptive, and reminded them of the danger of reopening the Red Sea to the Spanish.

Nevertheless, for the reasons mentioned above, Iranian trade did not completely disappear from Ottoman ports. The long, debilitating struggle between Turkey and Iran, the economic aspects to which we alluded above, was brought to a long-term conclusion. Upon the death of Shah Abbas (1629), his successor abandoned his silk policy. Abbas was compelled to follow a monopoly policy in the silk trade in Iran itself in order to divert raw silk to Bandar-Abbas. Before him the silk, which was gathered by countless private individuals, was shipped to Ottoman markets. According to the Venetian ambassador, the new shah’s decision to leave the operation of the silk trade completely to his subjects was very popular at home.

The Ottoman Empire, while able to partially salvage the Iranian silk trade, had almost completely lost the Indian spice traffic by 1630. Baghdad, Aleppo and Cairo were no longer the transit centers for east–west international trade. Venice, which owed its wealth and power to this trade, acknowledged its commercial loss in 1628. The report of the five Savii, dated March 31, 1628, put it this way: “In the past the Levant trade was the basic foundation of this [Venice’s] market, and this market furnished
spices to all of Germany, but now the English and Flemish are providing [them]."

**Silk prices at Bursa, 1467–1646**

Obviously, the price of raw silk at the Bursa market was determined primarily by the volume of supplies from Iran. The Ottoman–Iranian war periods of 1578–90, 1603–12, 1615–18 and 1624–39 created a shortage of supplies and sharp price fluctuations (Tables 1:49 and 50).

The unusual shifts in 1603, 1622 and 1637 must have resulted from hostilities on the eastern front. Venetian reports from Aleppo indicated a shortage of supplies because of the war situation. In sum, three periods can be identified, 1470–1580 with an average price of 70 akça per livre, that of 1580–97 with 200 akça and that of 1597–1639 with 320 akça (Table 1:51). But the real increase in adjusted prices in view of the inflation in silver akça against gold should be interpreted as resulting both from the rapidly growing Western demand and a decrease in imports from Iran.

**Taxes**

The state treasury received large amounts of revenue from taxation on the raw silk trade. According to a law dated 1570, for every 30 livre or about 9.6 kg of raw silk there was a tax of 104 akça shared equally by the seller and buyer. It was computed at the rate of 1.5 or 2 akça per livre. In addition, a brokerage tax was levied at the rate of one gold piece (60 akça) per load, and also 6 gurus (240 akça) as yasabiyeye for one load of raw silk (one load is then accepted as equal to 550 livre). This was altogether about 2,200 akça. By 1589 a new tax called kassabiyeye, levied at the rate of one akça for every hundred akça-worth of raw silk, was added. Since a load of raw silk sold for an average of 38,500 akça, the taxation altogether corresponded to about 6.7 percent of the total value by 1589. Before the raw silk arrived at the Ottoman customs, various taxes were levied in the Iranian territory under the Akkoyunlus in the late fifteenth century, amounting to 234 akça. A customs duty had to be paid by non-Muslim foreigners. Ottoman subjects, Muslims and non-Muslim, did not pay duty. Around 1500 the rate for non-Muslim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Composite index of a livre of silk in akça</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Composite index of a livre of silk in akça</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1467</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1578</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1478</td>
<td>67–68</td>
<td>1580</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1488</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1581</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1494</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>1582</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1501</td>
<td>60–70</td>
<td>1584</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1513</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1588</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1539</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1597</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1541</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1603</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1548</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1607</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1551</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1617</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1556</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1622</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1569</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1630</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1570</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1634</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1571</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1637</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1572</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1639</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1573</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1646</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bursa court records; Çizakça (1980).

**Table 1:50. (a) Prices of various kinds of raw silk, 1482–83 (in akça)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Price range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Astarbadi</td>
<td>Crimson</td>
<td>90–100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilani</td>
<td>Heft-renk</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilan</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>70–80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilis</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1:50. (b) Prices of raw silk at Bursa during the embargo, 1519 (in akça)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind</th>
<th>Price range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tilani</td>
<td>93–100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenar (inferior quality)</td>
<td>49–77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiakki</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>73–80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripoli</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bursa Court Records.

**Table 1:51. Average prices and price increases in raw silk, 1557–1639 (per livre in akça)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Average price</th>
<th>One gold piece</th>
<th>Real increase in adjusted prices (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1557–80</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1580–1608</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1608–39</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>120–250</td>
<td>116–200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One livre equals 100 dirhem or 320.7 gr.
Source: based on Çizakça (1980).
foreigners (Italians) was 5 percent ad valorem. But because the exemption was misused by the Ottoman Jews and Christian subjects for the exports of foreigners, the sultan ordered them to pay customs duty in 1521.\textsuperscript{16}

NOTES

7 Lopez (1952a), p. 73.
8 Clavijo (1943), p. 112.
16 Heyd (1936), II, pp. 189, 177.
20 Schützberger (1879), p. 34.
22 Foss (1979), pp. 146–47.
24 Heyd (1936), p. 239.
25 La Brocquière (1892), pp. 86–87, 102.
26 Heyd (1936), II, pp. 278–85.
28 Heers (1961), p. 34.
30 İnalçık (1965a), p. 53.
31 Dalsar (1960), p. 274; İnalçık (1960a), document no. 32.
34 İnalçık (1979a), pp. 74–110.
35 Sadeeddin (1863), II, p. 276.
36 Feridun (1888), I, p. 425.
37 Sadeeddin (1863), II, p. 275.
39 İbid., document no. 273.
40 İbid., document no. 83.
41 Heyd (1936), II, p. 507.
42 Contarini (1873), p. 151.
45 Heyd (1936), II, p. 296; around 1420 Venice used to purchase yearly as many as 8,000 pieces of cloth, largely to export to the Levant, Luzzatto cited by Sella (1968), p. 111.
46 La Brocquière (1892), p. 82.
50 İbid., pp. 63–66.
52 İbid., pp. 46, 114, in August 1501 cholera broke out and the plague caused 25,000 deaths, gravely affecting the Florentine business in Turkey.
54 Sella (1968), p. 111.
55 İbid., pp. 109, 112, 115.
56 Richards (1932), p. 147.
57 Sella (1968), p. 112.
58 İbid., p. 114.
59 İbid., p. 113.
60 Richards (1932), p. 147.
61 İbid., p. 182.
62 İbid., pp. 99, 143.
63 İbid., p. 171.
64 İbid., p. 155.
65 İbid., pp. 152–53.
67 For Marini’s inventory, see Richards (1932), pp. 185–201.
68 İbid., p. 172.
70 İbid., p. 184.
71 İbid., p. 55.
73 İnalçık (1966c), document no. 1.
74 İbid., document no. 29.
75 İbid., document nos. 37, 41.
76 Richards (1932), p. 44.
77 İbid., p. 45.
78 Richards (1932), pp. 102, 104, 112, 169, 262.
80 Mâzandarâni (1952), pp. 99b, 133b.
81 Richards (1932), p. 81.
82 İbid., p. 110.
83 İbid., pp. 85, 120.
84 İbid., p. 146.
Bursa and the silk trade

129 Transport costs by camel amounted to 40 gurms, or about 26 gold ducats; when various dues paid en route are added, the costs rose to 122 gurms; the customs duty at Izmir was 46 gurms; one gurm equaled two-thirds of one gold ducat, cf. Steensgaard (1972), p. 34.

130 Steensgaard (1972), pp. 323–33.

131 CSP: Venice XII, document no. 352.


134 Anheger and Inalcik (1956), nos. 31, 32.


85 Ibid., pp. 67, 158, 163.
86 Ibid., pp. 105, 130, 140, 158, 263.
87 Hoshino (1984), pp. 48, 52.
88 Ibid., p. 51.
90 Richards (1932), pp. 82, 108.
91 Ibid., p. 117.
92 Ibid., p. 168.
93 Ibid., p. 127; Inalcik (1953b), pp. 51–57.
94 Richards (1932), pp. 131, 161.
95 Ibid., pp. 68, 85, 71, 75, 77.
96 Ibid., p. 226.
97 Ibid., pp. 61, 78, 104, 138.
98 Ibid., pp. 99, 168.
99 Ibid., p. 135.
100 Ibid., pp. 138, 153.
102 Richards (1932), pp. 24, 70, 150–51.
104 Richards (1932), pp. 56, 97.
105 Ibid., p. 104.
106 Ibid., p. 163.
107 Inalcik (1973a), p. 36.
120 Steensgaard (1972), p. 162. However, he concluded that it could be half the estimate; actually estimates vary between 4,000 and 7,500 bales a year. One bale weighed, Steensgaard states, 280 lb or 90 kg; a horseload consisted of two bales weighing 550 lb, or 165 kg, cf. Dalsar (1960), p. 289; Inalcik (1984), pp. 132–135.
122 Steensgaard (1972), pp. 175–83.
123 Ibid., p. 178.
124 Goffman (1982), pp. 50–76.
126 Masson (1896), I, p. 421.
Bursa and the silk trade

Transport costs by camel amounted to 40 gurus, or about 26 gold ducats; when various dues paid en route are added, the costs rose to 122 gurus; the customs duty at Izmir was 46 gurus; one gurus, equaled two-thirds of one gold ducat, cf. Steensgaard (1972), p. 34.

139 Steensgaard (1972), pp. 323–33.
131 CSP: Venice XII, document no. 352.
134 Anhegger and Inalcik (1956), nos. 31, 32.

83 Ibid., pp. 67, 158, 163.
86 Ibid., pp. 105, 130, 140, 158, 263.
87 Hoshino (1984), pp. 48, 52.
88 Ibid., p. 51.
89 Inalcik (1960b), pp. 11–39.
90 Richards (1932), pp. 82, 108.
91 Ibid., p. 117.
92 Ibid., p. 168.
93 Ibid., p. 127; Inalcik (1953a), pp. 51–57.
95 Ibid., pp. 68, 83, 71, 75, 77.
96 Ibid., p. 226.
97 Ibid., pp. 61, 78, 104, 138.
98 Ibid., pp. 99, 168.
99 Ibid., p. 135.
100 Ibid., pp. 138, 153.
102 Richards (1932), pp. 24, 70, 150–51.
104 Richards (1932), pp. 56, 97.
105 Ibid., p. 104.
106 Ibid., p. 163.
107 Inalcik (1973a), p. 36.
109 Braudel (1972), 1, p. 557.
120 Steensgaard (1972), p. 162. However, he concluded that it could be half the estimate; actually estimates vary between 4,000 and 7,500 bales a year. One bale weighed, Steensgaard states, 320 lb or 90 kg; a horse load consisted of two bales weighing 450 lb, or 165 kg, cf. Dalsar (1960), p. 289; Inalcik (1984), pp. 132–35.
122 Steensgaard (1972), pp. 175–83.
123 Ibid., p. 178.
124 Goffman (1982), pp. 50–76.
126 Masson (1896), 1, p. 421.
Dubrovnik and the Balkans

Table 152. Population of the principal cities in Anatolia and the Balkans, 1520–30 (households)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Christians</th>
<th>Jews</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>9,517</td>
<td>5,162</td>
<td>1,647</td>
<td>16,326  (in 1478)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursa</td>
<td>6,165</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>6,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrianople (Edirne)</td>
<td>3,138</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>4,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angora</td>
<td>2,399</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athens</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2,285</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokat</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>701</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konya</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sivas</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>750</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarajevo</td>
<td>1,024</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monastir</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skopje</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>238</td>
<td></td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salonica</td>
<td>1,229</td>
<td>989</td>
<td>2,645</td>
<td>4,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serres</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trikala</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larissa</td>
<td>693</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td>768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicopolis</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>775</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Non-taxable population is not included.

while Ragusan merchants were active in the Levant trade importing pepper. It was as a result of this intense commercial activity with Italy that Italian gold and silver coins, ducats and grosli replaced the Byzantine perpera in Dubrovnik and the rest of the Balkans in this period. It was first in the western Anatolian ports belonging to the Turcoman Aydin principality that Dubrovnik came in contact with the Turks. Big Ragusan ships by the mid-fourteenth century visited these ports to carry bulky goods, such as grain. Their relations with the Ottoman Turks apparently started as soon as the Ottomans began to invade the eastern Balkans where Ragusans were already active under the trade privileges granted by the Bulgarian Czars.

Under the Ottomans, the Ragusan trade pattern did not change essentially as far as the export of foodstuffs and raw materials to the then highly industrialized Italy was concerned. The important change, however, came about when the Ottomans implemented a strict prohibition of silver export to Italy.

Dubrovnik is integrated into the Ottoman economy

Dubrovnik's recognition of Ottoman suzerainty is typical of the experience of other Balkan states. In the period 1386–91, powerful Ottoman
frontier begs conquered and settled upper Macedonia with Škûp (Skopje) as their base and in northern Albania at Croia (Kruje), which were Dubrovnik's immediate areas of activity. In its conflicts with Serbian and Bosnian rulers or with the Venetians, Dubrovnik found support from the Ottoman frontier begs. The city's government sent envoys to Kavala (Kephallia) Sahin, the Ottoman beg in Albania, when he attacked Bosnia in 1386. Later, Pašajžiç of Škûp made an agreement with them and encouraged trade through reduced customs rates. Albanian wheat and trade interests in Macedonia were of vital importance to the republic. In 1413–21, a period of prosperity began for Dubrovnik when the Ottomans favored Ragusan merchants in the trade of Western products and Serbian silver.

Dubrovnik's export of silver became one of the most important issues between Italy, Hungary and the Ottomans from the 1380s. First, Murad I forced the Serbian Prince Lazare to deliver a certain amount of silver as an annual tribute in 1386. In the first half of the fifteenth century, Srebrenica's annual silver production reached 5 tons and Novobrdovo's 9 tons. In 1436 the Ottoman sultan had prevented the Serbs from exporting the silver produced at Trepcë to Ragusa, requiring them to bring it to his own mint instead. Mehmed the Conqueror's first campaign after the conquest of Constantinople aimed at establishing his full control over the silver-producing areas in upper Serbia, and the principal mining area at Novobrdovo in particular.

In the period of the consolidation of Ottoman rule in Albania and Epirus following the conquest of Salonica from the Venetians in 1430, Dubrovnik became increasingly dependent for its trade, as well as in regional politics, on the Ottomans. In 1433 in its conflict with the Bosnian king over the Konevli valley, Dubrovnik asked for Ottoman support, which became the occasion for the city's official recognition of the sultan's suzerainty. The Ragusan embassy then promised to pay a yearly tribute of 500 ducats to the sultan, and a charter was granted by Murad II permitting Ragusan merchants freedom of trade all over his dominions and guarantees of peace and protection for their city. Thus, through this document, an existing relationship was extended and formalized. Starting from the 1440s, Ragusan merchants served the Ottoman government as tax-farmers of customs and mines not only in Bosnia and other adjacent lands but also in Bulgaria. The capital which they accumulated through trade thus found a means of investment in Ottoman mining industries and finances. Summarizing the economic consequences of the unification of the Balkan lands under the Ottoman Empire, Constantin Jireček says:

"The commerce of Ragusa took an unequivocal upswing . . . [and] due to the Turkish conquest, the many existing borders and customs of the numerous small states were eliminated. In the region a powerful and unified empire with low tariffs was formed." Now the routes, Jireček notes, were safer and Ragusan merchants extended their activities as far as the Black Sea.

As realistic businessmen, Dubrovnik merchants remained loyal to the Ottomans in order to guarantee their trade in the Balkans and to have protection against their ambitious neighbors, the Bosnian rulers. In 1441, with the renewal of the Ottoman charter, freedom of trade was guaranteed with various immunities.

Since 1358 Dubrovnik had been under Hungarian suzerainty, and the Hungarian kings wanted the Ragusans always to remember this, even when the state of affairs forced the republic to recognize, at the same time, Ottoman overlordship. Caught in a difficult position between Hungary, which was pressing with the Papacy for the republic to join their crusading activities, and Mehmed the Conqueror, who threatened to arrest Ragusan merchants in his empire and attack the city, Dubrovnik finally decided to renew its allegiance to the sultan in 1458. In return for paying a token amount of 1,500 ducats as yearly tribute, it obtained a sworn charter which included all previously granted privileges and immunities. Interestingly enough, the Ragusans then asked the sultan to send orders to his vassal states of Bosnia and Serbia allowing Ragusan merchants to enjoy free passage and trade in their territories.

This submission was the beginning of a new era for the merchant republic, which had become fully integrated into the economy of the empire. Before long the Conqueror annexed Serbia (1459) and Bosnia (1463) to his empire. Then, in 1467, following territorial extensions, the sultan asked for an increase in the Ragusan tribute to 5,000 ducats (Dubrovnik was paying before the Ottomans a tribute of 2,500 perperi or about 1,250 ducats to the king of Bosnia). The Ragusans were earning 25,000 ducats annually from the export to Bosnia and Herzegovina of their salt. The higher tribute "was amply compensated by the commercial benefits" to Dubrovnik. In fact, Dubrovnik was in a privileged position under Ottoman protection, and paid a reduced rate of customs duty. Also under Ottoman protection, Venice, the uncompromising enemy of the city, was neutralized.

Although, according to the Islamic Hanafite school of law, Ragusans were not supposed to be the sultan's reaya, or subjects under the direct rule of the sultan, they were still called and treated as much. Dubrovnik's
autonomy was guaranteed and respected through a specific type of charter given by the sultan under oath. It maintained its own government without any interference; it appointed consuls in Ottoman territory and foreign countries, received envoys and established diplomatic relations with them, and minted its own coinage (dinars or grossi). The sultan guaranteed full protection for Dubrovnik as an integral part of the empire against enemies from outside and his own officials’ abuses. Foreign countries recognized the sultan’s sovereignty and the protection of the republic.

Since the republic enjoyed full autonomy, no Muslim officer was allowed to enter the city. However, two Ottoman officers had residences there and represented the Ottoman governors of Bosnia and Herzegovina in levying the specific dues.¹⁶

As far as customs dues were concerned, Ottoman policy was in general favorable towards Ragusa to encourage its trade, particularly in its imports of woolen cloth. According to the general regulations, non-Muslim Ottoman subjects were to pay more than Muslims and less than foreign non-Muslims. But occasionally the Ottomans asked the Ragusans to pay them a higher rate of 5 percent, as was applied to foreigners, on the assumption that Ragusans imported goods belonging to foreigners. From time to time the sultan had to issue orders to protect Ragusan merchants from various extra dues that the local authorities attempted to extract.¹⁷ In 1472, against the extortions of the local authorities, the sultan issued a general order to the judges in Rumeli saying that, as tribute-paying subjects, the Ragusans should be protected as other non-Muslim Ottoman subjects. Violations against the order were to be punished by capital punishment. Then, the sultan’s increase in the customs due to 5 percent, and his attempt to control all of the imports and exports of the republic at the new nearby customs station of Ledeniće, led to a crisis.¹⁸

Upon the promise of payment of an additional 2,500 ducats the sultan gave up the customs at Ledeniće (Table 1:53).³⁴

Although during the period 1440-70 Dubrovnik lost its highly lucrative trade to the West in silver exports from Bosnian and Serbian mines, the city compensated its loss by extending its trade throughout the Balkans under Ottoman protection and gained a monopoly in the export of such bulky goods as hides, leather, wool and wax to Italy. For Dubrovnik, “the tribute the city paid for these advantages proved a most profitable investment.”¹⁹

The special privileges and low-rate customs dues for the Ragusans resulted in the growth of Ragusan trade and gave them almost a monopoly in the face of their Italian competitors in the Balkan trade.²⁰

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tribute (in ducats)</th>
<th>Customs duty (percent ad valorem)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1458</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1460</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1471</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1472</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1473</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1476</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1478</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1480</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1481</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1525</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>5 at İstanbul 3 at Bursa and Edirne 2 in Rumeli</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bojić (1952), pp. 188–205, 222.

In 1530 they benefited from the lowest customs rate of 2 percent, while Muslims still had to pay 3 and foreigners 5 percent. However, in İstanbul and at Aegean ports, Ragusans could not compete with Venetians for the simple reason that the latter reached these ports by sea and transportation costs for bulky goods were much lower than for the caravan route.

Under Mehmed II, problems arising from Ottoman infringement upon the outlying territory of the republic or upon the salt trade caused long disputes with the Ottoman authorities. Bayezid II, being more favorable to Dubrovnik, returned some territories occupied under his predecessor.²¹ Because of the Ottoman monopoly on salt, which was applied everywhere as an important source of revenue, the Porte tried to impose restrictions upon the sale of Dubrovnik’s salt to protect the production of Nova. Since the salt trade was also an important source of revenue for Dubrovnik, the dispute dragged on for a long time until an agreement was reached in 1485. Perhaps the most effective means which the Ragusans could use against the abuses of the local officials, or for obtaining favors from the sultan, was the threat of abandoning trade in the Ottoman lands. Such a move would have directly affected Ottoman finances.

The sultan’s charter was not always respected by Ottoman privateers (levendi) who were based in Nova and Avlona and attacked Ragusan ships from time to time. The sultan sent orders to return the men and property which they captured, which was obviously an unsatisfactory solution. In the upper Adriatic, the Uskoks were the Christian counterpart of the Ottoman privateers. Uskok attacks seriously threatened traffic on the Adriatic, particularly in the seventeenth century.²²
The development of Balkan trade in the sixteenth century

There is a consensus that it was in the sixteenth century that the Balkans witnessed an unprecedented economic development and this was also the period of the greatest economic activity for Dubrovnik (Table 1:54).

Since Dubrovnik was used as a neutral transit center during the Ottoman–Venetian Wars, the great increases in the periods 1538–41 and 1570–72 should be considered unusual: an average revenue of 23,000 gold ducats should be taken as normal. On the basis of such customs revenues, Tadić calculated that the total volume of annual imports and exports through Dubrovnik amounted to between 400,000 and 500,000 gold ducats, of which a quarter was imports from the Ottoman lands. But in 1571, the year of the Ottoman invasion of Cyprus, imports from the west soared to 2,500,000 gold ducats, and exports from Ottoman dominions came to about 230,000 gold ducats. The actual figures must be higher since the merchants invested part of their profits in Italian banks to avoid paying duty in Dubrovnik: at the turn of the century the money thus invested amounted to 700,000 ducats.

Dubrovnik continued to be a vital link for traffic between the Ottoman dominions and Italy. Ragusan merchants, like many Ottoman merchants, avoided the Venetian dyke and concentrated their activities at Ancona, which became a rival of Venice in the Ottoman cloth trade with Europe. Anconian and Florentine merchants chose the caravan route beginning at Dubrovnik for their travel to Edirne and Istanbul. The bulk of imports by the Balkans consisted largely of woolen cloth, which Ragusan merchants bought at Venice and Ancona (Table 1:55).

Out of this total, 890 pieces went to Istanbul, 587 to Adrianople, and 213 to Rhodes. Kersey, the cheapest variety of imported woolen cloth, was distributed in far greater amounts in Balkan towns and villages, in particular in Serbia and Bulgaria, while the most expensive varieties, soprmani, largi of Florence and scarlatti, were destined for major Ottoman cities. It must be added that Jews, Greeks, and Bosnian and Turkish Muslims became quite active in the woolen cloth trade in the sixteenth century. Jews who settled in Dubrovnik at this time took over the greater part of the woolen cloth transit trade there before they moved to Split and Venice in the late sixteenth century. As a result of the growing importance of this cloth trade in the Balkans, Dubrovnik itself had doubled its own cloth industries since 1420. The city’s transit trade in woolen cloth, nevertheless, declined when “new” ports on the Adriatic coast began to attract Bosnian and Jewish merchants. The trade activity of these new Ottoman and Venetian ports increased then, especially after the opening of Split in 1590.

In order to compensate for its loss in transit trade, the republic increased its carrying trade. By developing its merchant fleet from the mid-sixteenth century, Dubrovnik became one of the leading merchant marine powers in the world by 1580. The tonnage of the Ragusan merchant marine rose from 20,000 carri in 1550 to 35,000 in the 1560s (one carro equals 20 hectoliters of wheat), with a total value of 700,000 gold ducats. We learn that by 1580, “Dubrovnik had the third largest fleet of big ocean-going vessels” in the world.

Next to salt, the most important export items from the Balkans which passed through Dubrovnik were animal skins, either raw or processed.
Buffalo and ox hides came from Serbia. Sheepskins and wool were exported by Ragusan merchants in great quantities from an area in the eastern Balkans stretching from Thrace to Dobruja, a region settled by the Yörüks, Turkoman pastoralists from Anatolia. Varna and Tekirdağ (Rodosto) were the principal ports for the export of these goods. In the interior, raw skins were sent to towns like Filibe, Sofia, Silistre and Rusçuk, where they were treated and stored for export. Leather industries flourished in Edirne and in Bulgarian towns, and fine colored cordovan was a specialty item included in exports to Italy. Ragusan merchants purchased the wheat of western Anatolia at the ports of Foça, İzmir, Ephesus and Pat lia and carried this not only to their home port of Dubrovnik but also to İstanbul. Volos and Patras were other ports from which Ragusan ships regularly loaded wheat.

When the Ottomans supported Venice’s rivals, Dubrovnik and Ancona, and actively protected Ottoman subjects – Bosnians and Jews – the Republic of Saint Mark failed to maintain its full control in the Adriatic. It appears that with their naval base at Avlona, the Ottomans challenged Venetian naval and commercial supremacy on that sea in the sixteenth century.

Being an integral part of the Ottoman imperial system on the one hand and having close relations with Italy, Spain and England on the other, Dubrovnik played a vital role as middleman between the empire and Europe. In addition to its economic role for the Balkans, the republic of Dubrovnik became, like Galata, a window on Europe for the Ottoman Empire. It was the principal center of intelligence for the Ottomans on European political developments and on anti-Ottoman plans. It was also through Dubrovnik that some vital Western technolo- gies were transferred to the Ottomans. Gun making, the most important of all in this respect, was introduced into the Balkans through Dubrovnik first in the 1390s, and the technology was subsequently borrowed by the Ottomans as early as the last decade of the fourteenth century. Moreover, on several occasions during the sixteenth century, Ragusan shipbuilding experts were called to the Ottoman dockyards in Avlona and Gallipoli. Ragusans were known as the best and perhaps the most ingenious specialists in ship building. Finally, all the novel business practices then found in Italy, such as the collegantia type of company, bills of exchange and the various banking procedures, were adopted by Ragusan merchants. We do not know whether such practices were adopted by Ottoman subjects. Ottomans had allowed business disputes between Ragusan merchants to be settled by the Ragusan authorities, but cases involving an Ottoman subject and a Ragusan had to be referred to an Ottoman kadi. Particularly important cases were referred to the imperial council in İstanbul.

**THE RISE OF BOSNIA**

Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular benefited, like Dubrovnik, from the growing traffic between Italy and the western Balkans during the sixteenth century. The Albanian port city of Avlona rose to importance as a naval base and a transit center in the period. Albania supplied Dubrovnik with wheat and salt; salt imported from Albania was then exported to Bosnia and Serbia. The spectacular rise of Sarajevo is the most important development in the region in the sixteenth century as a whole.

It was in 1429, under the pressure of the frontier beg, Ishak, that the Bosnian king Tvrtko II recognized Ottoman suzerainty, and Turks soon settled the plain of Hódjidje or Saray-Ovasi. A small town in 1462, Sarajevo grew to become the capital of the Ottoman sub-province of Bosnia when the kingdom of Bosnia was conquered in 1463. From a military outpost on the frontier, Sarajevo’s importance increased in the period 1520–40, when Ottoman control expanded towards the Adriatic. With further conquests toward the Adriatic Sea, the Ottomans finally created the beglerbegilık of Bosnia which included Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as parts of Slavonia and Dalmatia (1580); then Banjaluka, a city closer to the Venetian Dalmatia, was made the capital city of the new province.

By this time Sarajevo had become the main commercial center of all the western Balkans with a population estimated at 40,000. Its transit trade flourished, since it was the principal terminus of the busy caravan route linking Bursa, İstanbul and Edirne with the Adriatic ports. The burgeoning trade along this route through the Balkans had also led to the rise of Foça and Novibazar as important trading links between the emporium of Sarajevo and the East. Merchants from Belgrade, Sofia, Uskub and other centers in the hinterland now frequented Sarajevo. This commercial expansion gave rise in the city to a native burgher class of various religions. The construction of the two bedestans to warehouse luxury goods from the East is the most significant sign of Sarajevo’s economic importance. Since 1500 the merchants of Bosnia, mostly from Sarajevo, Gorazda and Olovo, competed successfully with the Ragusans not only in the trade of oriental goods, but also in the export trade from
the Balkans. The efforts of the Ottoman frontier begs in the fifteenth century and the Ottoman policy of favoring Ottoman subjects, without a doubt played a major role in this spectacular development. Prior to Ottoman rule, Bosnian merchants were systematically barred by Dubrovnik from participating in the transit trade; but the Ottoman government actively protected Bosnian and Turkish merchants in the Adriatic trade, and they further ventured to settle in Ancona and Venice. Already, the Grand Vizier Rüstem (1544–53) intervened on behalf of Muslim merchants in Venice. They had finally succeeded in having their own magnificent fondaco dei Turchi in Venice by 1621.

Following the conclusion of peace in 1573, Ottoman–Venetian trade through the Dalmatian ports experienced significant growth, and Bosnian Muslim merchants were particularly active in this trade. In the previous period, commerce in the Dalmatian ports, including Zadar (Zara), Sibenik (Sibenico) and Split (Spalato), was insignificant; trade was limited to some export to Venice of local products, principally figs, hides, fish, wines and horses. But during the last two decades of the century, traffic in these ports witnessed brisk development. In 1590, with Ottoman cooperation, Venice made Split a major transit port for its trade with Ottoman lands. Its connection with this port further enhanced Sarajevo’s commercial importance and proved to be a blow to Dubrovnik’s Balkan trade.

The example of the Bosnian merchant Hoca Tahsin illustrates the importance of business in which Bosnian merchants were engaged at this time. In 1591 Tahsin went to Fregistan (Venice or Ancona) with a huge amount of capital, 2 million akça (or 16,000 gold ducats), to buy woolen cloth. On his way back he died at Dubrovnik, leaving behind 138 bolts of woolen cloth, including expensive scarlet.

Bosnian merchants appeared as competitors of the Ragusans in the internal Balkan trade also. By the end of the sixteenth century, they had replaced the Ragusans in Serbia in such trade centers as Belgrade, Prokuplje and Novibazaar. In the mid-seventeenth century Sarajevo almost completely replaced Dubrovnik in the export of skins and wax.

**Jews in the Adriatic Sea**

Under the protection of the Ottoman government, Jews promoted their trade in Venice throughout the sixteenth century. Ottoman-protected Sephardic Jews settled in the Adriatic ports during this period, 1492–1520, and emerged as the most active partners and rivals of Dubrovnik in the Adriatic trade. Avlona was one of the important port cities where Jews, expelled from Spain in 1492, from Portugal in 1497 and from Italy in 1510–11, were settled by the Ottoman government. Earlier the Jewish population of the city had been deported, along with Jews from other Balkan towns, to Istanbul by Mehmet II in 1454 and 1455. Under Bayezid II the Sephardics from Spain were welcomed into the Ottoman territories and settled by the government in the towns and ports such as Salonica and Avlona with the purpose of enhancing further the economic prosperity of the place. They constituted one-third of the population of Avlona, with 527 households by 1520. Jewish immigrants included not only Sephardic Jews expelled from the Iberian peninsula but also Jews settled in southern Italy, making the port of Avlona the third city of the empire after Salonica and Istanbul, in terms of Jewish residents. Among the three communities of the city of Avlona, the Jews appear to have had a dominant position over Christians and had a “great freedom of action” as the court records demonstrate.

Since the time of Mehmet II, the Ottoman government had taken measures to make this port a naval base to challenge Venetian supremacy on the Adriatic Sea, and used it also in its plans to invade Apulia. As was true with other frontier towns, such as Skopje, Sofia, Smederevo and Sarajevo, Avlona developed from a military base into a major commercial city. The Jews of Avlona were principally engaged in long-distance trade. They dominated the city’s trade with Venice as attested by Venetian insurance documents. In the register of insurance covering the years 1592–1609, there were sixteen Jews of Avlona resident in Venice. Being the principal trade partners of the merchants of Avlona, Dubrovnik and Venice maintained their consuls at Avlona. Ancona and Apulia were also important trade zones for the merchants of this port. In the sea traffic, ships belonging to Muslims and non-Muslims of Avlona were employed, as attested again in the court records.

By the 1580s, the port competed with Dubrovnik and had established traffic with Istanbul, Bursa and the Danubian basin, as well as close connections with Dubrovnik, Venice, Ancona and Florence. The principal exports from the port included wheat and skins and hides, destined for Dubrovnik and Venice. Also exported to Venice and Galata was pitch, which gave rise to an important export trade through Avlona, as pitch was an indispensable material in ship building. The pitch was produced in the surrounding areas and stored in a public storehouse. Its trade was controlled by state monopoly. Jewish merchants bought silk cocoons for export, which were bred in large quantities in the villages around Avlona. As in other Ottoman commercial centers, in Avlona
also there were many Jews who specialized in the textile trade. They
too held a dominant position in credit operations: among their debtors
were merchants, shopkeepers, villagers, mostly Ottoman Christian and
Jewish subjects, and an occasional Muslim.
Avlona’s role in the Adriatic trade declined in favor of new ports
closer to Venice. Many Jews moved to Dubrovnik during the Ottoman–
Venetian war of 1570–73, when woollen cloth imports from Venice shifted
to this neutral port. Meanwhile, the Ottomans departed and settled a
large number of Sephardic Jews in Nova (Hercegovina) when it was recon-
quered in 1570. Many Ottoman Jews, chiefly those engaged in the cloth
trade, settled in Venice or moved to Split (Spalato) in the last decades of
the sixteenth century. The massive Jewish emigrations from Avlona to
northern Adriatic ports appears to have started in the 1530s and became
precipitous after 1573; 212 Jews were found in the Ottoman tax registers
of 1583, but only 50 in the same registers in 1597.

On the heels of the Ottoman–Venetian peace of 1573, an enterprising
Jewish merchant, Daniel Rodrigez, proposed developing Split into a
free port by improving its facilities and abolishing or reducing customs
dues. Venice was hesitant; then Ottoman Jews approached Dubrovnik
and obtained a privileged tariff for a time. In the end, with the support
of Ottoman Jews residing in Venice and the active involvement of the
pasha of Bosnia, the Venetian Senate finally decided to go ahead with
Rodriguez’s plan. On June 20, 1590, it was decided that Split would
become a free port, that customs dues on the imports from Ottoman
dominions through Split to Venice would be reduced by half, and that
dues on the export of soap, rice and some other goods would be totally
abolished. Ottoman Jews who arrived in Venice would not be subject to
any resident tax and could settle in the old Jewish quarter. Rodriguez’s
plan can be seen as part of the Jewish attempt to organize an international
trading complex under Ottoman auspices. Venetian–Ottoman trade
based mainly on the export of wax, moroccos, timber, silk, mohair
and hides from the Ottoman lands rapidly flourished. From 1590 onward
Split, superseding Dubrovnik and Avlona in Ottoman trade with Venice,
assumed “a very important role” in the overall Venetian commerce.

At the turn of the seventeenth century a more serious challenge to
Venetian control of the Adriatic appeared when the superior English,
Dutch and French ships forced their way into the sea to trade at Fiume
and Trieste, then under the Habsburgs. The French were already compet-
ing in the purchase of wheat at Cattaro and in Albania, thus threatening
the wheat supplies of Venice.

Dubrovnik and the Balkans

After receiving full capitulation rights, from the 1580s English kersyes
were imported directly by English merchants. In 1621 the Venetian senate
forbade the purchase of Western cloth by Ragusans at Venice.

NOTES

1 On the development of the Balkan cities, see Todorov (1983); Kiel (1983),
p. 274–349; Mehan (1938).
3 Jireček (1899), p. 147.
5 Bojić (1952), pp. 1–61.
6 Ibid., p. 29.
7 Neschi (1951), p. 58.
9 Jireček (1899), p. 58.
10 Bojić (1952), pp. 315–23.
12 The sustaining of parity already in the period 1391–1410 between the Ottoman
silver coin akça and the Ragusan gros can be interpreted as another
indication of economic dependence.

The value of one Venetian gold ducat in terms of Ottoman
and Ragusan silver coins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Ottoman akça</th>
<th>Ragusan gros</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1351–60</td>
<td>24–16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1391–1400</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30 (1388)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1411–20</td>
<td>30–36</td>
<td>35–36 (1431)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1431–40</td>
<td>36–42</td>
<td>39–40 (1444)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1461–70</td>
<td>39–41</td>
<td>42–43 (1460)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


15 İnalcık (1991a), pp. 17–31; the text in TV, XII.
16 Evişa Celebi (1896–1938), VI, pp. 448–49.
18 Ibid., p. 200.
20 Ibid., pp. 223–46.
22 For the Uskok depredations in the first half of the sixteenth century, see
Gökbulğin (1964), pp. 1–2, 6–7, document no. 83; on the Uskoks in the second
half of the same century see Tenenti (1967), Ch. 1.
24 Krekić (1972), p. 56.
THE BLACK SEA AND EASTERN EUROPE

THE GENOEESE COLONIES AND THE OTTOMANS

In the existing literature, the history of the Italian mercantile republics in the Levant is interpreted by Western scholarship exclusively from the viewpoint of Italian interests and is based solely on the evidence available in the archives of the Italian city-states. Everything affecting these states adversely is viewed in a negative light and little attention is paid to the conditions in the Levant and the motivations of the Ottomans. In the following pages, for the sake of a balanced view, we shall focus on the other side of the story.

From antiquity the Black Sea region and the Aegean had formed a closely knit economic entity. With its coastal outlets in Moldavia and the Crimea, the sparsely inhabited northern Black Sea land produced and exported huge quantities of grain, meat, fish and other animal products. Conversely, the densely populated southern Black Sea and the Aegean depended on these foodstuffs for its survival. In exchange, the latter exported wine, olive oil and dried fruit and also to the steppe chiefs and rulers, luxury goods such as textiles, jewelry and drugs. The Byzantine political and economic control of the Black Sea–Aegean entity had collapsed by 1204. During the thirteenth century, while Venice became supreme in the western Aegean and Istanbul, its rival, Genoa, conquered the eastern Aegean – Mytilene, Chios, the two Foça – and built a colonial empire in the Black Sea. They made Pera (Galata) its hub, facing the imperial city across the Golden Horn. Later on in rebuiding the unity of the Black Sea and Aegae regions under his rule, Mehmed II doubtless received tacit acquiescence from the Greeks, Armenians, Bulgars and Tatars. When the sultan destroyed the Latin colonies or compromised with them to buy time, many felt that he had restored the old Byzantine

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imperial tradition for the benefit of the indigenous peoples. The Genoese were confronted everywhere with the problem of sovereignty: in the Crimea by the Genghis Khanids, in Pera and Chios by the Byzantine emperor, and in Trabzon by the Comneni. Initially, the Genoese requested from the local ruler a small area outside or some distance from the main city to use exclusively for commercial purposes. For security they preferred islands such as Chios, Licostomo or peninsulas such as Amastris. In the beginning, these would be small fortified settlements, mainly of the Genoese factors. Over time, proving their usefulness to the local ruler in securing necessary imports and growing customs revenues, they obtained authorization to fortify the settlement.

The Genoese trade centers attracted indigenous people as well as the Armenians and Jews who played the role of middlemen. Their settlement expanded into new districts around the original Genoese contrada quarters. The Genoese found, time and again, opportunities to surround the expanded city with new walls. In many cases, the new Genoese entities thrived to such an extent that they superseded the main city as a commercial center. We have, for example, the Genoese of Pera superseding the Greeks of Constantinople and the success of Caffa over the Tatar Muslim city of Salgat.¹

The Byzantine Empire, which lost all of its overseas territories to the Italian city-states, became economically dependent on them and had to give them full exemption from tariffs and a free run in the region in return for grain supplies for Constantinople.² Not only were the profits from the spectacular commercial expansion of the trans-continental trade in the thirteenth century monopolized by the Latins, but also the foodstuffs and the raw materials, notably wheat, salt, hides, wool, salted fish and meat were taken from the Black Sea to the hungry communes of Italy.

Indigenous peoples were now either exploited as serfs, parikoz, in the countryside by their Catholic Latin feudal masters or were made dependent on Italian merchants for the supplies of foodstuffs in the cities. This led to hatred of the Latins and was the cause of rebellions, such as the terrible insurrections of Cretan Greeks against the Venetians. The Italian colonial states exploited even the desperate struggle of the Greeks against the invaders in Asia Minor and the Balkans to strengthen their own political and economic control. When the Greek populace in Byzantium suffered from a shortage of wheat, they accused, often with justification, the Latin merchants of grain speculation and of diversion from Istanbul of Black Sea supplies. In general, it was the upper-class Byzantines and businessmen that cooperated with the Latins while common people, led by the Orthodox clergy, sought relief in other ways. Many wealthy Greeks, who were to serve the Ottomans after the conquest as tax-farmers or palace merchants, lived not in Constantinople itself but rather in prosperous Pera from Genoese times.³

The general policy of the Ottomans toward the Genoese colonies was the same from the beginning: to abolish sovereignty rights over the territories which originally belonged to the pre-Ottoman states, to pull down fortifications and to deal with the colonies according to Islamic rules regarding non-Muslim subjects or foreigners under capitulatory amnesty. This policy is evident when the Venetians failed, under Murad I, to obtain an area in Ottoman Scutari, just opposite Genoese Pera, to settle a colony.⁴ Ottomans were careful not to repeat the mistake of the earlier weaker governments, and did not allow Italian maritime states to gain territorial sovereignty or erect fortifications in the areas where they were permitted to settle trade colonies.

Mehmed II required complete control of the resources of the Black Sea region for the reconstruction and development of his new capital city, which he had taken over in ruins in 1453. Under the Ottomans, the spectacular growth of the imperial capital of Istanbul became possible only owing to the cheaply supplied wheat, meat, and salt of the northern Black Sea. Without these inexpensive supplies, Istanbul could not have been the most populous city of Europe in the sixteenth century. When the construction of the fortress on the Bosphorus was completed in August 1452, Sultan Mehmed II named it Strait-cutter. Its main purpose was to intercept Black Sea provisions destined for Constantinople which he planned to besiege the following spring. He then declared that every ship passing the fortress had to stop for inspection. On November 25, 1452, a Venetian vessel carrying grain to Constantinople disregarded the order and was sunk by a volley from the castle.⁵ After the conquest of Constantinople, the straits were put under strict control to establish complete Ottoman domination of traffic between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Every ship leaving Istanbul or coming from the Black Sea had to stop at the castles on the Bosphorus to be inspected for smuggled wares and runaway slaves by the commander of the fortress. Ships were not permitted to proceed without his license. Mehmed the Conqueror, inspired by the idea of reviving the Eastern Roman Empire under his scepter, was determined to restore the imperial political and economic control of the Aegean and the Black Sea; thus he preferred the titles 'the sultan of the two
lands” (Asia Minor and the Balkans) and “the khakan of the two seas” (the Aegean and the Black Sea).

Facing the imperial city, Genoese Pera, on the other side of the Golden Horn, had overshadowed the Byzantine Constantinople in trade and prosperity. Pera surrendered to the Conqueror on June 1, 1453, and recovered its prosperity after a few years of decline resulting from the flight of the Genoese merchants. Many of these merchants soon returned under the guarantees of the capitulations, and many of the Genoese residents of Pera accepted Ottoman citizenship, as most of the Greek, Armenian and Jewish Perans had done already.8 Abolishing its autonomous status under the Byzantine state, the sultan nevertheless took measures to enhance its economy and make it the principal port for Istanbul’s commerce with Europe. As the Genoese notarial records of Pera from 1453 to 1490 demonstrate,8 the Genoese continued their commercial activities as if nothing had changed. What had changed was that the Ottomans now had complete political control of the place and integrated it into their own imperial economy. Before the end of the century Pera became more prosperous and populated than ever with the establishment of new Muslim quarters and market-places.9 In a survey made in 1477 the population composition of Pera was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Orthodox</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europeans</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenians</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,521</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In its further growth, Pera benefited considerably from the fact that the naval base and shipyard at Kasimpasa, a district adjoining Pera, had developed into the principal ship-building and naval center of the empire in the sixteenth century.10 With its cosmopolitan population and lifestyle, Pera became the major port-city for European trade with the empire. Ottomans built various new storehouses and a bedesten or covered market halls to store and trade in precious goods. Over time, European embassies and merchants settling there reinforced the cosmopolitan and European character of the city. Thus, Galata became one of the major places not only for commercial but also for intercultural influence between the continent and the Ottoman Empire. Expanding on the hillside into the Beyoglu district, Ottoman Galata attained a Muslim majority in its population toward the end of the sixteenth century.

The importation of large quantities of silk, cotton, and hemp manufactures from Anatolia to the northern Black Sea ports of Caffa, Akkerman and Kilia, and the export to Istanbul from the same locations of animal and agricultural stuffs, constitutes an important aspect of the north–south trade in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This large market for Anatolian manufactures undoubtedly became one of the basic factors in the development of textile industries in Anatolia. From Tokat, Corum, Merzifon, Kastamonu, Bursa, Konya and Ayasofya, hemp; from Tosya and Ankara, mohair; and from Trebizond, silk. In other words, Asia Minor had become an “industrialized” region in the empire before the Western and Russian manufactures competed with Turkish and Indian textiles in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Until then Anatolian cotton textiles, prints of Tokat, bogasi of Tokat, Amasya and Kastamonu and great quantities of coarse cotton fabrics supplied the vast market in the Crimea and the steppe area, from the northern and western Caucasus to Dobruja in the Balkans. Low prices and traditional taste among the Muslim population of the region guaranteed the market for the Anatolian industries. While coarse cotton cloth such as kirbas, bes, and aslar, imported in bulk, were used for a variety of domestic costumes and furniture, caftans and dresses were made of fine bogasi.

The Crimean khanate and the Genoese

In the wake of his conquest of Constantinople and Pera, and in establishing control over the waterways between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, Mehmed II demanded that all of the Genoese colonies in the Black Sea area recognize his suzerain authority. On condition that a tributary was paid to the sultan, they were left free to continue their regional and interregional trade. Caffa was the center of this commercial network. The port city was first established by the Genoese around 1266 as a small settlement dependent on the great Golden Horde city of Salgir or the city of Krim, but later it became the main emporium for Black Sea trade. The great khans of the Golden Horde always considered Caffa territorially a part of their empire. In fact, a high Tatar official, the tudun, represented the khan in Caffa and collected certain taxes in the name of his master. He also exercised jurisdiction over the large Tatar city population and the surrounding countryside where they were dominant.

This remunerative post was held by the beg of the Crimean Shirin clan, who was the head of the tribal aristocracy and the most powerful man in the khanate. The Genoese exploited the ever-present conflict
between the khan and the Shirin Beg, who tried to keep the khan under his influence and control. During the khanship of Haci Giray Khan (1433–66), disputes over the tribute and Genoese interference in the khanate’s internal affairs produced grave conflicts. Haci Giray sought cooperation with the Ottoman sultan against the Genoese. To regain the economic independence of the khanate, Haci Giray attempted to make Inkerman the center of trade with the Ottoman Empire and Kerch the center for the Caucasus. Moreover, he wanted to create a merchant navy and end the Genoese role of middleman in regional trade. The Genoese admitted that these measures had begun to affect Caffa’s prosperity. At his death, the struggle for power among the sons of Haci Giray and the Genoese resulted in the Ottoman occupation of the Genoese Crimean possessions in 1475. Eminek, the head of the Shirin clan, played a key role in cooperating with the sultan, who seized this opportunity to capture Caffa; then, by appointing Mengli Giray Khan with the support of Eminek, the sultan succeeded in making the khanate a vassal of his empire.

**CAFFA–KIEV–MUSCOVY**

Desertion of the “Tatar route” is believed to date from Timur’s invasion in 1395 when he deliberately destroyed the Golden Horde cities of Saray on the Volga river and Azov on the mouth of the Don. However, despite this blow and the subsequent internecine struggle on the Kipchak steppe, the oriental caravan trade, coupled with pilgrimages, kept the route from Khwarezm or Azerbaijan to the lower Volga and to Azov active until the 1520s. There are hints that in the fifteenth century oriental goods still reached Novgorod, Sweden and Denmark through Kiev. Malowist believes that Kiev had lost its importance as an international emporium for oriental goods by this time mainly because of unsettled conditions on the steppe following Timur’s invasion.

Before the “Moldavian route” from Akkerman to Lwow was firmly established, Lwow traditionally received so-called “oriental goods” —costly silk cloths and spices — through the so-called “Tatar or Mongol route,” from Caffa or Azov through the Ukrainian steppe, the Dogan (or Tavan) pass on the Dnieper, Kiev and Kaminiec. In the fifteenth century, large caravans, usually numbering one thousand people, spent over two weeks on the dangerous route from Kiev to Caffa. Merchants from Moscow joined this route at Kiev. In the second half of the fifteenth century, the Ottomans still received northern goods through this route, including furs, walrus tusks, and quicksilver as enumerated in the Ottoman customs regulations. To Muscovy in particular and also to other lands the Ottomans exported silk cloth through this route.

In the fifteenth century, some incidents mentioned in contemporaneous sources constitute our only source on the traffic along the route of Caffa–Kiev–Muscovy. In the 1470s, a serious conflict broke out between the Genoese of Caffa and Prince Ivan III of Muscovy. The Caffa merchants, including eight Italians and two Greeks, were robbed on their return trip from Muscovy. When Muscovy denied any responsibility for the robbery, the Genoese authorities confiscated, for indemnification, the goods in the storehouses of the Muscovite merchants at Caffa and sold them. The dispute was still unresolved when the Ottomans occupied Caffa in 1475. The Caffa–Muscovy trade apparently experienced similar incidents and also complaints were heard of malpractices by Ottoman customs agents. Incidentally, the Italian architects who were invited to Moscow to build the famous onion-domed cathedral of St. Basil also used the Caffa route.

As the fifteenth century progressed, Lwow became the center of the “Rus”/Ruthenian trade and the emporium of oriental goods for the Baltic countries. In King Casimir’s trade privileges, dated 1472, which were granted to the merchants of Lwow, imports included such oriental goods as pepper, ginger, cloves, brocades, satins, dimi cloth and rice. In fact, it was the Genoese Caffan merchants who brought them either from Alexandria or from closer and more convenient Ottoman trade centers such as Bursa, İstanbul and Pera. It was Caffan merchants, Italians, Armenians, Jews and Tatars, who took these goods to Lwow and over time many settled there. In Poland, the king’s charter gave the trade monopoly in oriental goods to the citizens of Lwow, thus prohibiting merchants coming from the east to trade in the country. Apparently, the Caffan merchants were engaged in smuggling. The merchants importing spices and silk cloth from Ottoman dominions bought in Lwow the woolen cloth made in Poland, Silesia and Bohemia as well as furs and beeswax. Lwow was the emporium for oriental goods from where they were taken by Europeans to Flanders and the Baltic countries. Even the Swedish elite then wore exquisite Bursa brocades.

Thus, prior to the fifteenth century, Caffan merchants monopolized the south–north trade between Caffa and Lwow because, as Malowist points out, the merchants of Lwow had not accumulated enough capital to venture so far afield. But later, when the Akkerman–Lwow route supplanted the Caffa–Lwow route, the merchants of Lwow became more
active in oriental trade. The Ottoman sultans granted the Poles privileges of free trade in the Ottoman dominions as early as Mehmed I; Bursa court records from the late fifteenth century contain evidence of their presence in that city. Muslim merchants, Turks, Tatars and Syrians appear in the thriving market of Lwow particularly after 1454, when the Moldavian ports of Akkerman and Kilia were granted trade privileges by Mehmed II and the Moldavian route for oriental goods became the main avenue of trade between the south and the north (see below, pp. 291-93).

In sum, in the fifteenth century, the general trend even before the fall of Caffa in 1475 was that the Genoese were losing their control of the oriental trade in the northern countries and were being replaced by Ottoman subjects, mostly Armenians, Greeks, Jews and Moldavians, and the old Tata route of Caffa or Azov–Kiev–Lwow was overshadowed by the Moldavian route between Akkerman and Lwow. As for the southern section of the south–north trade over the routes Bursa–Istanbul–Caffa or Akkerman by sea and overland by Edirne–Kilia–Akkerman, Muslim merchants – mostly Anatolian and Rumelian Turks – outnumbered the others. Although the Genoese of Pera, mostly subjects of the sultan, as well as those from Chios continued to use these routes, their activities were now drastically reduced.

Traffic was active between Caffa and “Rus,” which in Ottoman documents apparently stands for Ruthenia and/or for Muscovy. The important political and economic interests between the Ottoman Empire and the grand duchy of Muscovy led to a rapprochement between Ivan III and Bayezid II, beginning in 1492. The Ottoman sultan acting as the suzerain of the Crimean khan Mengli Giray supported him against attacks from the khan of the Golden Horde, which was in an alliance with Poland–Lithuania. Mengli Giray maintained cooperation with Muscovy against their common enemies and worked towards the establishment of friendly relations between Istanbul and Moscow. Because it was desirable to import precious brocades from Bursa as well as other exotic goods, the Russian ruler tried to elicit commercial privileges from the sultan and sent, through the good offices of the khan, an ambassador to Istanbul in 1495.

Apparently since Mehmed II's time merchants from Muscovy were engaged in trade in the Ottoman territories; and settled in the Ottoman ports of Azov and Caffa. Already in 1492 in the wake of an attempt by the Golden Horde to invade the Crimea, Ivan III's envoys contacted Ottoman officials in Azov and Caffa to establish friendly relations with the sultan; and they received an encouraging answer. Not enjoying the protection of a capitulation, these merchants met with difficulties and finally had to abandon the ports. In his letter of August 31, 1492, Ivan III repeated his desire to establish friendly relations and asked for immunity for Russian merchants and envoys. Giving guarantees for the properties left by deceased Russian merchants on Ottoman territory, which was one of the main points made by the grand duke in his letter, the sultan encouraged him to send an ambassador to the Porte. The duke of Lithuania and the khan of the Golden Horde did not permit the Ottoman ambassador to pass through the territories under their control, thereby demonstrating their disapproval of the Ottoman–Muscovite rapprochement. Eventually, in 1495, the grand duke sent his ambassador Pleshcheyev to the sultan, as usual with the Crimean khan's mediation. The Muscovite ruler gave strict instructions to his ambassador to avoid any behavior which might be interpreted as his master's allegiance to the sultan. However, ignorant of Ottoman protocol, Pleshcheyev followed too strictly his master's instructions in Istanbul. His aloofness was interpreted as an insult to the sultan and caused the Porte to decide not to reciprocate the Muscovite embassy, leaving relations with Muscovy to the care of the Ottoman authorities in the Crimea. In 1499, a ship loaded with commercial goods took Russian merchants and the ambassador Golokhovstov to Istanbul. At this juncture Polish–Ottoman relations deteriorated. From John Albert's invasion of Moldavia in 1497 hostilities broke out between Poland and the Ottoman Empire and the large forces under Bali Beg invaded Poland in 1498. Mengli Giray urged the sultan to support the Crimean–Muscovite bloc against Poland–Lithuania. This time the Russian ambassador obtained what his master anxiously desired. The sultan, considering Muscovy a friendly country, granted to Russian merchants, in an imperial letter, guarantees of free trade in the Ottoman territories. This can be considered as the first capitulation granted to Russia. Ivan III then badly needed Crimean–Ottoman cooperation against Poland. In the following years, Russian–Ottoman trade appears to have grown. The grand duke's revenue from this trade reached the substantial sum of twenty thousand roubles in 1501, although Russian merchants continued to complain about unjust treatment and even conspiracy on the part of the Ottoman officials in Caffa.

After 1512, when the Crimean–Muscovite cooperation ended and Crimean raids against Russia began, Russian commercial relations with the Crimea and Caffa must have suffered. However, Selim I favorably received Ivan's ambassador to Istanbul and sent his own ambassador to
Muscovy with guarantees of friendship. For Muscovy and İstanbül, Poland–Lithuania was always a common enemy and Selim I needed peace in the west in order to carry out his plans in the east. The Ottomans eventually took a hostile attitude towards Muscovy when Sahib Giray Khan (1532–51) convinced Suleyman I of Muscovy’s plans against Kazan and Astrakhan.

Caffa

Caffa continued to be an important transit center between the south and the north for regional trade in the Black Sea into the sixteenth century. According to an Ottoman survey made in 1520, there were about 2,783 Muslim and Christian households in the city (see Table 1:56). The civil population had a Christian, mostly Armenian, majority which formed about 60 percent of the total population. Ottoman military and religious groups made up about 7 percent of the population. If we accept the coefficient of five persons per household, the entire population of the city of Caffa was about 19,000 or an average of 48 persons per quarter.

A customs register of Caffa covering the period 1487–92 is a precious document informing us of the busy traffic of the port of Caffa under the

Table 1:56. The population of Caffa, c. 1520

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communities</th>
<th>Subject to taxation</th>
<th>Exempt from taxation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim households</td>
<td>760</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim unmarried men</td>
<td>169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian households</td>
<td>2,013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian unmarried men</td>
<td>103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian households</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dependent on widows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors at theological</td>
<td>391</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seminars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kadis</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religious men</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax collectors</td>
<td>114</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People dependent on the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimean khan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea captains</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrison</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,436</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: There were 39 quarters in the city.
Source: Ottoman survey of c. 1520; see Veinstein (1980).

Table 1:57. Exports via Caffa from the northern regions to İstanbül, c. 1470

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Merchandise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crimea, the steppe area to the north of the Black Sea</td>
<td>Wheat, flour, honey, clarified butter, cheese, tallow, fish, caviar, hides and skins, leather, salt, slaves, horse harnesses, bows and arrows, Sturgeon, cod, caviar, honey and slaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azov, Circassia</td>
<td>Raw silk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Woolen cloth, iron tools (knives, shovels, axes), walrus tusks, quicksilver, flax, precious furs and slaves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Anhegger and İnalçık (1956).

Ottomans. From Caffa came foodstuffs and raw materials to the Ottoman capital city from a vast area stretching from the Crimea and the steppe area between Dnieper and Astrakhan as well as from Muscovy, Kazan, Circassia and Georgia. Caffa was also a transit center for a large variety of manufactured and natural goods imported from İstanbül, Asia Minor, the Aegean and Europe. The large quantities of basic foodstuffs such as wheat, animal products, salted fish, honey, beeswax, hides and skins, as well as slaves, constituted the bulk of the exports from the north. Meanwhile, cotton and hemp textiles came from Asia Minor, silks from Bursa, woolen cloth from Europe, alum and copper from northern Anatolia and raisins, figs, and olive oil from the Aegean. Also, spices from India, and sugar and dyes arrived at Caffa and were re-exported to the lands north of the Black Sea (Tables 1:57 and 1:58).

Wheat was grown by Tatars in the Crimea and in the steppe area to the north of the peninsula and was exported from Caffa by sea, providing an important part of İstanbül’s wheat supplies (there were 150 shipsloads by the mid-eighteenth century). The large İstanbül consumer market encouraged the pastoral nomads of the steppe to become engaged in cultivation along with animal husbandry. Members of the Crimean tribal nobility turned part of their steppe pasturelands into cultivated land and settled on them slaves captured in raids in Poland, Russia and Circassia as a part of the agricultural labor force. In the period 1596–1610, when Célabi bands ruined the agriculture in Anatolia, the southern coasts of the Black Sea depended on Crimean wheat production. Kerch at the Strait of Azov competed as another major transit center with Caffa for the exports of wheat, hides, fats, hemp, honey, salt, and slaves to the Ottoman ports on the southern Black Sea coast. Kerch exported also its own production of large sturgeon to these ports in exchange for wine.
Table 1:58. Goods arriving at Caffa, 1487–90

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Merchandise</th>
<th>Coming from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cotton goods</td>
<td>Iran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslin</td>
<td>Istanbul, Ankara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton yarn</td>
<td>Northern and central Anatolian towns (in large quantities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse cotton cloth</td>
<td>Ankara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bergama, Bursa, Istanbul, Konya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quilts</td>
<td>Kastamonu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverlets</td>
<td>Sinop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattress sheets</td>
<td>Konya, Ankara, Bursa, Istanbul, Yazd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handkerchiefs</td>
<td>Bursa, Istanbul, Yazd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linings</td>
<td>Merzifon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turbans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aprons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silks and satins</td>
<td>Amasya, Aleppo, Yazd, Bursa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caffans of brocade</td>
<td>Amasya, Kastamonu, Istanbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of velvets</td>
<td>Amasya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satin</td>
<td>Bursa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of taffetas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk aprons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linen</td>
<td>Uşak, Ankara, Kerc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse cloth of flax</td>
<td>Canik, Denizli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth of flax</td>
<td>Istanbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian tents</td>
<td>the steppe area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolen cloth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hides and skins</td>
<td>Nişãde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cow hides</td>
<td>Kastamonu, Ankara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse hides</td>
<td>Shamakhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo hides</td>
<td>Shamakhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep skins</td>
<td>Kastamonu, Sinop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marten skins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox skins</td>
<td>Azov (in large quantities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep skins</td>
<td>Azov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A variety of leather (Morocco)</td>
<td>Taman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft leather</td>
<td>Azov, Taman, Sinop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal products</td>
<td>Trabzon, Istanbul, Karaman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caviar</td>
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<td>Cheese</td>
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<td>Clarified butter</td>
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<td>Honey</td>
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<td>Metals</td>
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<td>Iron</td>
<td>Sinop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copper</td>
<td>Sinop, Küre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caladrons</td>
<td>Küre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tin</td>
<td>Istanbul (originally England)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edafik knives</td>
<td>Istanbul (originally Syria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swords</td>
<td>Konya, Beyşehir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>Crimean Khanate (in large quantities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spices and dyes</td>
<td>Merzifon, Ankara, Bursa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red dye</td>
<td>Istanbul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pepper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigo</td>
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<td>Incense</td>
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Source: İnalçık (1992b).

and textiles and other southern products. A regular passage service by transport ships was available at the strait.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, one of the principal imports to the Ottoman south from the Russian Empire was precious furs.30 Trade in precious furs was a monopoly under the Muscovite government so the Ottoman sultans sent merchants attached to the imperial palace with substantial amounts of gold to Muscovy and asked the czar for favorable treatment. In 1551 one of these imperial merchants went with 10,000 gold pieces to Moscow. In Moscow, merchants from the Middle East were also permitted to purchase slaves, but in a limited number. Goods from Western Europe, including tin and textiles, were also available in Moscow. Judging from the value of the wares seized by Nogays or Cossacks on the steppe, which varied between 40,000 to 70,000 gold pieces, the Ottoman caravans from Caffa or Azov to Moscow must have been quite large.

The slave trade

Taxes on slaves and customs duties at the Crimean ports constituted the most important source of revenue for the Ottoman treasury, amounting to 1,310,000 akça or c. 21,000 gold ducats in 1520.31 In the years 1577–78 the revenues from the slave tax for fourteen months were estimated at 29 percent of the total revenue of the Ottoman possessions in the Crimea. The slave tax alone increased from 620,000 in 1520 to 650,000
The Black Sea and Eastern Europe

The earliest evidence of commercial traffic between Lwow and Akkerman via Moldavia dates from the fourteenth century. The Genoese were interested in establishing trade relations with the lower part of the Moldavian principality in 1386. (This area was then ruled by a Christian Tatar prince, Dimitri.) The merchants of Lwow obtained commercial privileges there in 1409, and the Genoese opened their first factory at Akkerman two years later. Oriental goods, pepper, silk and silk cloth, as well as Greek wine, now were imported at Akkerman via the Crimea by the Genoese of Pera. Already in this period, the “Rus,” as well as

year alone. The price of an average slave varied from 20 to 40 gold ducats during that period. This corresponded to the maintenance expenses of a poor adult for a period of two or three years. Calculations based on Russian sources provide the figure of 100,000 captives in the years 1607–17 and 26,840 in the period 1632–45. From Circassia alone there were reportedly 50,000 captives taken in Sahib Giray’s campaign in 1539. It can safely be said that the annual slave population imported only from these two sources, Poland–Muscovy and Circassia, amounted to over 10,000 in the period 1500–1650.

The other important provenance of slaves was Egypt. According to a customs register from the port of Antalya dated 1539, of the large variety of imports from Egypt via Antalya by sea, black slaves, both male and female, constituted the bulk of the traffic. Many ships carried slaves exclusively. The slave merchant Seydi Ali, for instance, brought eighteen black slaves from Egypt in one expedition. Black slaves imported via Antalya went to Anatolian cities, in particular to Konya and Bursa. From Antalya, white slaves were shipped to Syria and Egypt, though in much smaller number than black slaves.

The Ottoman state, like all pre-industrial societies, relied on human energy for all kinds of enterprises, and these, in turn, depended on a regular and sustained flow of slaves. Slave labor provided manpower not only for an imperial army and navy but also for colossal construction works and transportation. However, even in these areas, except for the extended households of the elite, servile labor declined over time for various reasons. From the seventeenth century onward, the centralized power of the sultan grew weaker and the wars, consequently, were not as successful as before. At the same time the tracking of fugitive slaves became difficult, causing slave prices to soar dramatically.

THE BURSA–ISTANBUL–AKKERMAN–LWOW ROUTE

in 1329. Customs duties at Caffa were 4.2 percent ad valorem on imports and exports by sea. The slave tax was apparently higher and was calculated at the rate of 236 akça or about 4 gold ducats per head. In larger Ottoman cities the market price of a slave fluctuated between 25 and 50 gold pieces in the second half of the fifteenth century. Slaves in Islamic countries, in Ottoman society in particular, were indispensable. They were employed not only in domestic service but also in military and economic areas. In earlier centuries slaves were extensively used as agricultural labor on the reclaimed lands of the military elite. Settled as peasant families, endowed slaves retained their servile status for centuries. In other cases they mostly became integrated into the large mass of the reaya, the free peasantry. Even the urban craftsmen employed slave labor, organized under the Islamic system of limited service contracts. Under this system the slave was allowed to work independently and to retain his earnings so that he would be capable of ransoming himself after a period determined in the contract. This institution as well as Islam’s encouragement of manumission as a meritorious, charitable act resulted in a constant erosion of the slave population in Ottoman society. The manufacture of heavy brocades was a labor-intensive specialized type of work; hence, such industries in Bursa as well as in Italy relied heavily on slave labor. Venetians and Genoese regularly bought slaves in the Levant for the slave markets in Italy and in Arab countries and also for agricultural labor in their Levantine colonies. It was a blow to the Genoese Black Sea trade when Mehmed II established strict control over the export of slaves in 1453.

Clearly, not only the state but also various segments of the economy in the Ottoman Empire depended on slavery. This demand gave rise to a very lively slave market in such urban centers as Istanbul and Bursa, and served as a strong incentive for the raiding and enslavement activities of the Ottoman frontier forces during the first three centuries; captives always brought a good price in the main slave markets. But after the mid-sixteenth century the Ottomans met up with stiff resistance on the western borderlands at a time when there was a growing demand for slaves on the Ottoman market. Thus, the Crimean Tatars became the principal suppliers of slaves and were involved in extensive slave raids into Poland, Russia and Circassia. In fact the slave trade became the main source of support for the Crimean economy. An unsuccessful Crimean raid entailed an economic crisis in the land. Enslavement raids into Russia and Poland intensified in the period 1514–1654. On the basis of the tax revenue figures of 1578, 17,302 slaves were imported into Caffa in that
Poles, Germans, Armenians, Jews and Tatars, were quite active on the "Moldavian route," but the Armenians, who obtained the privilege of trade for all Ruthenia in 1402, were predominant in this trade and throughout the fifteenth century kept this position. The leader of the caravan on the route Akkerman–Lwow was always an Armenian.

Ottoman interest in taking control of the south-north trade dates back to the turn of the fifteenth century when the lower Danubian ports and Akkerman emerged as the main outlets of this trade. The Ottomans under Mehmed I attempted to capture Kilia and Akkerman in 1420. They had acquired a key position in the lower Danube by capturing Giurgiu (Yergöüş) on the left bank of the Danube in 1419. In the same period Hungarians, realizing its great importance, also tried to get control of the lower Danube. Interestingly enough, in 1428 Ulugh Muhammad, khan of the Golden Horde, proposed to Murad II that they should act in concert to eliminate "the Vlach infidels" occupying the land between their territories. Crimean khans would continue this policy of cooperation in later periods.

Thus, during the fifteenth century, Kilia, the gateway of the traffic between the Black Sea and east-central Europe via the Danube and Transylvania, became one of the most important issues of contention between Hungary and the Ottomans. As long as the Ottomans could maintain their suzerainty over Wallachia they could control Kilia.

In 1428, the Moldavians occupied Kilia, profiting from the Ottoman campaign against the Wallachian Vovode Dan II, thus blocking Hungarian access to the Black Sea. When John Hunyadi, in 1448, forced Moldavia to return Kilia to his vassal, the Wallachian vovode, and installed a Hungarian garrison, the Ottomans renewed their attack on the city. Interestingly, this time an Ottoman fleet participated in the operations. At this time, attracted by growing commercial and fiscal interests, Hungary, the Ottoman state and Poland, as well as the local rulers and the Genoese, were all involved in a complex network of relations.

Wallachia and Moldavia, as buffer states, pursued a carefully calculated policy among the great powers. Since the early fifteenth century, Moldavian voevodes also came into conflict with the Genoese over their monopoly of trade. In the fifteenth century, Akkerman served as one of the Genoese centers of trade in the Black Sea alongside Caffa and Azov. To break the Genoese monopoly of overseas trade, the voevodes gave commercial privileges to the Venetians. The Senate decided to send the Black Sea muda (convoy) to visit Akkerman. But commerce there did not prove practical and the plan was abandoned.

The Black Sea and Eastern Europe

The Moldavian voievode favored the Armenians and the Vlachs. Finally, in 1453, the Vovode Petru, taking advantage of the Ottoman occupation of Pera, seized the Genoese fortress of Lerici on the mouth of the Dnieper. In general, this active policy of favoring native merchants was largely responsible for the rise of the "Moldavian route" and the development of the regional trade in the Black Sea at the expense of the Genoese colonies.

Legal documents from the city of Lwow show that Bursa was the chief emporium from which oriental goods flowed along the so-called Moldavian route. Genoese merchants from Pera and Caffa, merchants from Akkerman and Suceava, the capital of Moldavia, and even from Lwow took oriental goods directly from Bursa. Although the Armenians and the Genoese of Pera appear to have kept a dominant position in this traffic, Vlachs and merchants of Lwow also visited Pera and Bursa to purchase these goods. In 1449, for instance, a merchant of Lwow by the name of Johannes Simicfal visited Bursa and bought pepper worth 4,000 gold ducats. He represented Petru Manu, a Moldavian merchant of Suceava who had given him goods to be sold at Akkerman. Obviously bulky native products were sold at Akkerman for shipment to Istanbul or Chios, and the cash was used to buy oriental goods on the Bursa market. This example appears to illustrate the usual pattern of this trade.

On the other hand, Muslim merchants from Bursa and Syria traded in Lwow. A certain "Bubek of Damasco" and his companion "Haczachmeh" (Haci Ahmed) were mentioned as doing business in Lwow in connection with the Genoese Barnabas of Galata. So, it is no surprise that the trade privilege of King Ladias, dated July 6, 1444, included Muslims (Besslereni, Saraceni, Pagani) among the merchants allowed to make wholesale transactions at Lwow. Besides Muslims, Greeks, Armenians, Tatars, Jews and Italians are mentioned in the same document. It appears that the Genoese of Pera were in the forefront of merchants who bought pepper, silk and silk cloth in Bursa, and Pera had become the main emporium of such goods for merchants coming from Caffa, Lwow, Akkerman and Kilia. The Bursa court records of the 1480s, mentioning a number of "Frenk" (Italian) merchants doing business in Bursa, confirm the situation. Of course, there were Genoese merchants who took oriental goods further, to the northern Black Sea ports, but as early as the mid-fifteenth century they appear to have been losing ground to the "natives." Now, it was mostly the Armenians and the Germans of Lwow who took oriental goods from Pera to Akkerman and Lwow.
Armenian settlers in the Crimea and in the mercantile centers of Moldavia, Wallachia and Poland appear to have played a central role in this period. As immigrants from eastern Anatolia and the Crimea, these Armenians spoke Turkish and many of them bore Turkish names, and felt at home under the Ottomans. We encounter them frequently as merchants in the court records of Bursa, Galata and Caffa. Serving Moldavian princes as merchants, advisors and mercenaries, they played a key role in the establishment of the Moldavian route during the fifteenth century.

At any rate, this was the beginning of the policy to eliminate Italian control of the Black Sea, one that gained full momentum with the Ottoman dominance of the region in the second half of the fifteenth century. The Ottoman customs registers of the period 1480–1500 show complete domination by the “native” merchants: Muslim Turks, Armenians, Greeks and Jews, now all Ottoman subjects. It must be noted, however, that the Genoese retained their lead in the long-distance trade of the region in exporting wheat, salted fish, caviar, beeswax, hides and slaves.

One may distinguish three categories of goods in this trade in the Lwow documents of 1441–48. The bulk of the trade consisted of the natural products of the Akkerman–Kilia–Moldavia area: wheat, fish, caviar, cattle, hides and beeswax. The second category included the “oriental goods,” which were chiefly pepper, silk cloth of Bursa, Aegean wine, cotton and carpets. Bursa’s precious brocades particularly were appreciated by the princes and the elite as luxury fabrics. The Moldavian tribute to the king of Poland included this precious cloth.

The third category of goods consisted of fine woolen cloth from Flanders, England, Florence, Silesia (Gorlitz) and Poland, and articles made of metal from Central Europe and southern Germany. These constituted the main imports highly valued by the Ottomans.

While the imports to Lwow from Bursa passed mainly through the hands of the Armenians, the exports of Western origin were controlled by the Lwow merchants. It is interesting to add that transactions frequently were made on credit, and barter exchange was also mentioned.

The intensification of commercial relations between the Ottoman lands and Moldavia, Wallachia and Poland was marked by the growing use of Ottoman coins, the akça as well as “Turkish gold pieces” together with Venetian and Hungarian gold coins. The earliest reference to Ottoman gold coins in Moldavia (ducats, turhës) — evidently Ottoman imitations of Venetian ducats — occurs in 1431. In Lwow, Ottoman gold coins had quite a large circulation.

In 1453, the Moldavian voivode made a monetary reform designed to adjust the Moldavian coin to the Ottoman akça. The Wallachian voivode attempted a similar reform in 1452, abandoning the Hungarian system. In both cases, the real objective was to make the currency acceptable in Ottoman markets. After the capture of Constantinople and Pera, the traffic from the south had come under full Ottoman control.

Import and export trade between the south and the north was absolutely dependent on this traffic through Kilia and Akkerman, and the economic survival of Moldavia depended on coming to terms with the sultan. For his part, the sultan must have seen the importance of this traffic for Bursa and the feeding and prosperity of his new capital, Istanbul. An agreement for tribute was signed by Petru Aron, evidently following the Ottoman naval attack on Akkerman in 1454. The privilege that Mehmed II granted to the merchants of Akkerman in 1456 actually was the necessary link in Ottoman–Polish trade. It stated: “Merchants of Akkerman in his [Petru’s] territory may come in ships and trade by making transactions and purchases in Edirne, Bursa and Istanbul; [I vow] that my men, beggs, subashis, sipahis or others will not cause any harm to their persons and wares."

Under Stephen the Great (1457–1504), it appears that economic–fiscal considerations were mostly responsible for the changing relations between Moldavia, the Ottomans and Poland. Stephen’s immediate economic interests with the Ottoman Empire and Poland dictated conciliatory relations with both suzerains during the period 1460–70. This policy secured the growth of trade with the Ottoman Empire. His recognition of full freedom of transit trade for the merchants of Lwow in 1460 actually completed both Mehmed II’s grant of freedom of trade to Petru Aron and the Polish–Ottoman trade agreement of 1460. Stephen earned from this traffic a good annual income from customs revenues. On the frontier, Wallachian or Turkish merchants were to pay “two Turkish gold pieces” per cart for valuable loads of pepper and woolens.

In 1465, Voivode Stephen, seizing Kilia and combining it with his hold on Akkerman, came into full control of the traffic between east-central Europe and the Black Sea on the one hand and that between the Ottoman south and Poland on the other. Apparently, the Wallachian crisis of 1458–62, which involved Moldavia, Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, had an economic basis. The Wallachian-Brașov route (see below, pp. 295–99) competed with the Moldavian route, and Kilia, then a Wallachian port, played a key part in this trade.
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Wallachian merchants had almost a monopoly of the international trade on the Danube between east-central Europe and the Ottoman Empire and attempted to divert traffic from the Lwow-Akerman route to their own territory. In his trade privilege of 1439, Vlad Dracul had promised free circulation not only in Wallachia but also in the “Turkish territories.” Then the Wallachian voivode, Vlad the Impaler (1448, 1456-62, 1466), wanted a larger share of the benefits of the trade and he sought to protect the interests of Wallachian merchants. Supported by the Hungarians, he rebelled against his suzerain, the sultan, defeating an Ottoman force in 1458. Later, in 1461-62, when the sultan was away on the Trabzon campaign, he seized Giurgiu, the Ottoman bridgehead on the left bank of the Danube, and plundered and burned a number of Ottoman ports on the river. But the delicate position of Wallachia between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, that manifested itself in a double vassaldom from 1394, was resolved in favor of the Ottomans by Mehmed II’s campaign of 1462.

In the summer of 1462, Mehmed II took revenge by burning down Buzia, the principal port of Wallachian-Hungarian trade, and using the Ottoman navy and Moldavian forces to attack Kilia, which was defended by a Hungarian garrison. The sultan placed Radu III (1462-74) on the Wallachian throne, and he proved to be a loyal vassal of the Ottomans. Thus, the sultan strengthened the Ottoman position and commercial interests on the lower Danubian basin against Hungarian penetration and rivalry. As noted earlier, three years later, the Moldavian voivode seized Kilia to establish his full control of this trade. Apparently, the Ottomans accepted the new situation, since Stephen appeared to be a faithful vassal and guaranteed the commercial interests of Ottoman subjects. An intermediary between the continental spice–silk route through Bursa and the Ottoman Danubian ports on the one side and the Hungarian Brașov-Nagyrad route on the other had made double dependency on the Ottomans and Hungary a necessity for Wallachia.

From 1473 the good relations of the Moldavian voivode with the sultan deteriorated, because now Mehmet II wanted to establish his full control over the outlets of the south–north trade including Akkerman, Caffa in the east, Kilia and the Danubian ports in the west. He conquered Caffa and other Genoese colonies in the northern Black Sea in 1475.

Following the Ottoman conquest of Kilia and Akkerman in 1484, a state of open war existed between the Ottomans on the one hand and Moldavia and Poland on the other. Stephen of Moldavia, who had become a Polish vassal, resisted Ottoman pressure. But he finally realized that his survival depended on coming to terms with the Ottomans and renewing his vassalage to the sultan. Despite temporary peace agreements, Poland never lost interest in controlling Moldavia and the Black Sea coast from the Dniester to the Dnieper, an area which Lithuania had claimed since Grand Duke Vytaut had temporarily occupied it at the turn of the fifteenth century. The ambitious plans of King John-Albert (1492–1501) of Poland to control the Moldavian route and the ports of Kilia and Akkerman led Stephen to cooperate more closely with the Ottomans. John-Albert suffered a crushing defeat in Moldavia in 1497. The next year, Stephen joined forces with the Ottoman frontier troops under the sanjak beg of Silistre, Bali Beg, in a devastating raid into Polish territory.

Later on, under Süleyman I, among the conditions of Ottoman peace and friendship with Poland, as listed in the correspondence, was always the security of trade routes for the Ottoman merchants between Akkerman and Lwow. One of the Polish complaints was that the merchants from the Ottoman Empire, mostly Armenians and Greeks, avoided the usual itinerary and customs stations and traveled through uninhabited areas. There was a constant concern for security on the Moldavian route throughout the sixteenth century.

Actually, the struggle involved not only the Akkerman–Lwow route but also a larger area including the steppe region between the Dobruja and the Crimean Khanate. There, the Cossacks on Poland’s frontier zone and the Tatars of the Akkerman–Dobruja steppe were engaged in a fierce struggle for the control of the steppe region. This would bring the Ottoman and Polish states into a long series of conflicts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

**Kilia and Akkerman**

By 1484, the Ottomans had established full control of the three most important ports of the northern Black Sea, namely Caffa, Akkerman and Kilia, which flourished as emporiums for trade between Eastern Europe and their rapidly growing capital on the Bosphorus. Earlier we witnessed the important role of Caffa for Eastern Europe. For trade from the ports of Akkerman and Kilia under the Ottomans, the Ottoman customs registers for the years 1495–1504 constitute a major source. According to this source, ships made a circuit visiting successively Istanbul, Sinop, Caffa, Akkerman and Kilia and back to Istanbul. In this period sea captains trafficking between Caffa, Akkerman, Kilia on the
northern Black Sea and Trabzon, Sinop, Samsun and Istanbul on the southern coasts were mostly Greeks and Turks, all Ottoman subjects (for example Greek Kosta of Trabzon, Papas of Trabzon, Yani Cherno of Misirvi, Turk Ali of Gallipoli, and Menteşe of Samsun). Genoese merchants from Galata or Chios were visiting in these ports but almost no Genoese captain is recorded for this period (Lucian Frenk, apparently a Genoese merchant, for example, purchased 15 casks of fish at Kilia in 1496).

Ships from Istanbul brought to Kilia Aegean products, such as raisins, figs, hazelnuts, walnuts, cotton, rice and wine. On their return they took from Kilia sturgeon and codfish pickled in brine, and caviar, which were the principal exports to Istanbul and to Italian colonies in the Aegean and Italy. Livestock merchants settled in Akkerman were mostly Turkish butchers or merchants. They regularly sent by sea large numbers of sheep and cattle to Istanbul. Hides for the Genoese of Chios made up the bulk of the exports from Caffa, Akkerman and Kilia until the island was occupied by the Ottomans in 1366. Between March 16 and June 12, 1496, from Kilia alone these merchants exported over 3,200 cow hides, with a value of about 85,000 akça. Also large quantities of morina or codfish, salt and tallow were exported from Moldavia by way of Akkerman and Kilia. Kilia also became one of the main transit ports for slaves captured in the north. The guards from the fortresses of Özü and Akkerman were heavily engaged in the slave trade.

A report by the tax-farmer of the port of Kilia, dated 1505, indicates the importance of wine exports from the Aegean to Poland and Muscovy.

The fish caught and exported from the port of Kilia [he stated] were, for the most part, sold to the ships bringing wine from the lands under Venetian control. They brought wine but it was not sold at Kilia. After paying the customs duties, they passed on in transit to Poland and Muscovy. In those countries the wine was exchanged for native products which once again were taxed at the time of their passage through Kilia. Thus, a substantial revenue for the Ottoman fisc was realized from this traffic. But now, since the wine ships no longer come to this port, the revenue from customs and the sale of the fish, which was estimated at three hundred thousand akça a year, is lost.

Evidently, in the light of this report, the Ottomans permitted the Venetians to bring to Kilia wine from Crete until the last decade of the sixteenth century. Wine came to Kilia also from Ottoman lands through the Danubian ports of Vidin and Silistre, or the eastern Bulgarian ports of Varna and Misirvi, as well as from Trabzon. Quality wine of Monemvasia, as it was in great demand in Galata, Samsun and Sinop, could be found at Kilia. No noticeable change can be detected in the pattern of trade between the south and the north through Kilia in the period 1470 to 1570. In the entire period, basic exports from the steppe area in the north included grain, meat, fish, hides and skins, horses and slaves and imports such as dried fruit, wine and cotton goods arrived then from Asia Minor and the Aegean.

The customs registers of Akkerman give documentary evidence of the central importance of the port for the international trade between the south and the north by the first decade of the sixteenth century (Table 157). According to the records of 1507–8, a great number of Moldavian merchants visited Akkerman while non-Muslim Ottomans, as well as Muslim Tatars and Turks, formed the majority of traders there. The busy traffic between Akkerman and Özü was carried on with smaller vessels, but large ships were engaged in the traffic with Istanbul, Trabzon and other Black Sea ports. In the period September 8, 1507 to February 3, 1508, the customs revenue for five months amounted to 23,785 akça, market dues to 498, port taxes to 6,803 and dues paid for wine to 3,050. Starting in October traffic slowed considerably, as indicated by the monthly tax revenues. In January only 75 akça was paid at customs.

SHEPHERDS AND COSSACKS

As seen earlier, threatened by the alliance of the Golden Horde and the Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth, the Crimean Khanate under Mengli Giray pursued a policy of complete cooperation with the Ottomans and placed Polish lands under constant pressure with continual raids while, at the same time, seeking to strengthen the Crimean hold on the steppe between the Dnieper and Dniester.

Also, as a result of large-scale sheep and cattle exports to Istanbul and taxation involved in this activity, the use of pastures in Moldavia and the steppe north of Akkerman and the mouth of the Dnieper became a critical issue between the Ottoman government and Moldavia and Poland. With the growing demand for sheep and cattle for Istanbul, more and more people became engaged in the business. This demand caused merchants of Kilia and Akkerman to take territories in Moldavia and the steppe between the Lower Dniester and the Lower Dnieper to use as pasturelands for their herds. The people involved in sheep and cattle breeding and trade were Tatars and Turks from Kilia, Akkerman, Özü and Dobruja. In 1539, in his letter to the Polish king, Sultan Süleyman admitted that "Each year, herds of sheep coming from Kilia and Akkerman cross over the river Dniester and go into your [Polish] country. Along
Table 159. Customs duties and other dues at Akkerman according to the regulation of 1484

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Customs duty or fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizens of Akkerman, percent ad valorem (in Ottoman akçe)</td>
<td>1 market due for each keyfi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise in transit from &quot;Rus&quot; to the Black Sea and back</td>
<td>2 percent customs dues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep either from inside or outside the fortress is sold</td>
<td>1 by seller for each two;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle sold by outsiders</td>
<td>5.5 buyer and seller to akçe per 100 akçe value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle sold between inhabitants</td>
<td>2.5 buyer and seller equally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses</td>
<td>1.5 buyer and seller equally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth (low cost) from &quot;Rus&quot; sold at bazar</td>
<td>7.5 for each 100 zira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mares</td>
<td>6.0 zira</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


By the mid-sixteenth century, Cossack raids into Ottoman territory on the western side of the Dniester river, to capture sheep, cattle and shepherds, became routine as more and more herds belonging to the Nogay Tatars, the Kazaks of Akkerman and the Tatars of Dobruja were crossing the border and grazing along the Dnieper river. In 1564, a temporary agreement was reached between the Polish and Ottoman governments to avoid conflicts. Since the Tatars were under the Crimean khan’s authority, the sultan in 1564 sent an imperial order to the khan to remove them through persuasion. On the other hand, shepherds from the Akkerman area were to be controlled and the number of sheep and cattle were to be registered on the frontier so that the pasture tax could be collected. But none of these measures helped reduce tension in the area. The fundamental issue was whether the rich soil of the Ukrainian steppe would be a pastureland exploited by Tatar herds to feed the Ottoman capital city or a settlement zone for the Slavic or Moldavian peasants.

**THE BURSA-BRAȘOV ROUTE**

Since the publication of Wilhelm Heyd’s work on the Levantine trade, historians have believed that the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople was a deadly blow to the traffic in oriental goods between the Levant and east-central Europe via the Black Sea, or the Danube-Wallachia.
More recently R. Lopez and M. Malowist accepted this theory. However, it is shown that during the period 1400–1520, despite political rivalry and frequent confrontations, the Ottoman territories established quite active commercial relations with east-central Europe and southern Germany. Through their outposts on the Danube—principally Brașa, Silistre, Rusek, and Nicopolis, Vidin and Smederevo—and beyond the Danube through the vassal principality of Wallachia, quite an active trade developed, based mainly on the exchange of woolen cloth and metals from Europe and silk and cotton cloth and spices from the Ottoman lands. This trade route, the main transit center of which was Brașov on the Wallachian–Transylvania border, competed successfully with the Venice–east-central Europe traffic for the Levantine trade (see Table 1:60). This new trade route coincided with the rise of Bursa and Edirne in the last decades of the fourteenth century as international emporiums of “oriental goods”—silk and cotton textiles and spices. We have seen that the Genoese of Peria and Caffa then were purchasing “oriental goods” in Bursa, a closer and more secure market than Trabzon and Tabriz. Then, Ottoman expansion from the fourteenth century on made it possible for Ottoman subjects to bring these goods directly by caravan from Edirne to the Danubian ports.

Hungarian historian Z. Pach has recently examined this question, asking whether or not the Danube route constituted a major channel for oriental goods, whether it indeed followed the Danube or the Saxon towns of Transylvania, and what impact in general the Ottoman conquest had on this trade route. Focusing on sources of the fifteenth century, mostly grants of privileges of commerce to the merchants of Brașov, Pach demonstrated that this city was the main transit center for traffic in oriental goods from the Black Sea and the Danube. Brașa was the main port on the Danube for the Black Sea trade before Kilia replaced it in importance. However, a commercial privilege granted by the Bulgarian Czar Stratimir (1371–93) at Vidin to the merchants of Brașov, suggests that a land route also existed to the south. The Danubian ports visited by Saxon and Wallachian merchants were Drustor (Silistre), Giurgiu, and Nicopolis.

In fact, by securing the cooperation of the Genoese, through a Danubian–Black Sea route, the Hungarian kings, Louis of Anjou (1342–82) and Sigismund of Luxembourg (1387–1437) already had endeavored to receive oriental goods—mainly silk, silk cloth, a kind of fine cotton textile called bogasi, and spices—directly and more cheaply from Pera.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Export and transit goods</th>
<th>Import of natural goods from Wallachia and Moldavia</th>
<th>Transit of oriental goods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1484–85</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1501</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1502</td>
<td>85,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1503</td>
<td>167,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1504</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1505</td>
<td>95,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1506</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1507–8</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1515</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1516</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1517</td>
<td>33,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1520–22</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1532–33</td>
<td>82,000</td>
<td>26,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1534</td>
<td>82,000</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>29,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1546 (Incompl.)</td>
<td>74,000</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1547</td>
<td>67,000</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>26,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1548 (Incompl.)</td>
<td>56,000</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>33,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1549</td>
<td>76,000</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>33,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1550</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>31,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1551 (Incompl.)</td>
<td>48,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>33,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1552–3</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1554</td>
<td>82,000</td>
<td>23,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>27,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1556</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Thus, Hungarians were able to deprive the Venetians, their rivals in Dalmatia, of the benefits of the Levantine trade in their region. It is clear, therefore, that the long struggle between the Hungarians and the Ottomans for control of the Lower Danube basin (Wallachia and northern Bulgaria) in the period 1366–1428 had a significant economic and commercial dimension.

At the turn of the fifteenth century, the goods in transit to the south from the north still included Western fine woolen cloth of southern Germany and Silesia and iron tools, particularly knives of Styria. Already in the Transylvanian Charter of 1412, among the articles brought by Muslims (Saracenosi) were pepper and fine spices as well as "bombasio" (bogani), saffron, cotton and mohair. Bogani and saffron were typical Anatolian export products. Interestingly, Turkish carpets appear to have
been a valuable import item in Brașov, since the wealthy burghers of that mercantile city appear to have invested a great deal in these precious objects of art from the Orient, and, later on, donated them to the cathedral in their city. Today, the Brașov collection of early Turkish carpets is one of the richest in the world.67

The fine woolen cloth imported from the West to Brașov (valued at 613,045 akça in 1503) and re-exported through Wallachia to the Ottoman lands included that manufactured in the Low Countries (Bruges, Maastricht, Mecheln), Germany (Aachen, Breslau, Freiberg, Cologne, Nürnberg, Werden, Speyer, Zwickau, Linde, Lauenberg), Italy (Verona, Bergamo) and Czech towns (Jihlava, Kutna-Hora, Zhorolec), Poland (Lwow) and Transylvania.68 Of these imports, 43.9 percent went to Wallachia, 7.7 percent to Moldavia and 48.4 percent to Transylvania. A special item, knives of Styria, Graz and Nürnberg, which became an object of spectacular trade between the Ottoman Empire and Austria, is of particular interest. The imports through Brașov were already mentioned in a charter given by Vovyode Mircea to the merchants of that city in 1413.69 According to the customs register of Brașov, 70 2,400,000 knives valued at 1,457,820 akça were imported in 1503 and the greater part were re-exported to the Ottoman lands. Famous as “Wallachian knives” (еflak-bizaği), because the Ottoman merchants bought them from Wallachians, they were inexpensive and very popular throughout the empire. In 1485, a merchant from Bursa, engaged in commerce between Bursa and Egypt, had 11,400 of them in his stock.71 The merchants of Brașov participated in commercial traffic beyond the Danube to Ottoman territory, as attested as early as 1413.72

In 1429, when peace with the Ottomans was reestablished, the Wallachian Vovyode Dan II (1420-31) informed the Brașov merchants that they could resume their commercial activities “as far as the sea,” that is, the Black Sea. The vovyode of Wallachia twice collected a customs duty of 3 percent – once on the passage of merchandise taken to the other side of the Danube and the other when merchants brought back other goods.

In the privilege granted by the same vovyode in 1431, the ports of call for commercial exchange are identified as Silistre, Giurgiu and Nicopolis. To this list Brașa should be added as the chief port for oriental goods during this period. On the other hand, Ottoman merchants visited the fairs and other places in Wallachia and “were almost as numerous as the Wallachian [merchants] there.” The Wallachian vovyode in 1476 informed Brașov merchants of the arrival of “a Turkish merchant with a great quantity of fine merchandise.”73 But in general, oriental goods were exchanged with imports via Brașov by the Wallachian and Moldavian merchants at ports on the Danube and the Black Sea. While Brașov’s role as a transit center developed, certain export industries also developed in the city, such as those for woolen cloth, dresses, vehicle frames, horse equipment, furniture and hardware. The fact that goods at the Brașov customs were valued in Ottoman akça already at the turn of the fifteenth century is illustrative of its close economic dependency on the Ottoman market to the south. Larger sums were computed in Hungarian florins, which equaled 50 akça throughout the first half of the sixteenth century.74 The Ottoman akça had a higher circulation value there as compared to the home market.

The gradual increase of Wallachian merchants among the merchants of Brașov in the trade of oriental goods must be related to the growing dependence of Wallachia on the Ottoman sultan and the impact of the Ottoman conquest on the Black Sea basin.

By 1503, oriental goods at Brașov customs included (aside from pepper and other spices) cotton, copper and raisins, which were all Anatolian products. Ottoman Muslim merchants at the Danubian ports of Wallachia were called in the documents “Sarracenos,” a common name for Muslims. Evidently, these Sarracenos were mostly Turkish merchants who, following the Ottoman annexation of Danubian Bulgaria in 1393, extended their activities to the shores of the river. In the late fourteenth century, no Muslim merchant is mentioned in the lists. One century later, Ottoman customs registers mention them in Brăila, Hirsova, Ruşu, Silistre, Nicopolis and Vidin with the same commodities.75

The import merchants at Sibiu (Nagyszeben) may all have been Wallachians, while at Brașov those who imported 80 percent of the spices were Wallachians, Transylvanians and Moldavians. It can be concluded that spices imported into Hungary must have come first in caravans via Bursa and Edirne to the western Danubian ports and were bought there by Wallachians, while Transylvanians and Moldavians joined them, buying the shipments at the eastern ports. The Moldavian share in this trade, however, is quite insignificant.

The Bursa-Hungary pepper route

Wallachian transit trade appears to have realized big profits from the exchange of the woolen cloth of Central Europe for oriental goods,
pepper in particular. It appears that after, as well as before, the Portuguese arrival in India, the Ottoman Empire was quite well supplied with spices, so that the needs of the internal market were met and the surplus was re-exported to the northern Black Sea and the Danubian regions. Actually there were two spice routes to east-central Europe, Venice-Pozsony and Bursa-Brașov. Pepper imports via Venice-Pozsony to Hungary in the fiscal year 1457–58 equaled only 166 quintals or 98 metric quintals, with a value estimated at the custom house of 2,833 florins (in another estimate 5,004 florins), while yearly imports from the East, i.e., Ottoman territories, were much larger, amounting to about 463 metric quintals (at Brașov one quintal equaled about 56 kg). Imports from the East were large and far exceeded local demand in supplying the markets of Transylvania and Hungary. According to the Sibiu customs register of 1500, two Vlach merchants from Curtea de Argeș came to that city six times and bought altogether about 105 quintals of pepper and paid 4,120.5 florins for it. Pach estimated the then annual import at 825 quintals of pepper with a value of 36,000 gold florins in these two transit centers combined. This was, Pach added, an enormous amount when compared to the imports to Pozsony via Venice in 1457–58. However, the price of the imports through Venice proved to be only 30 gold florins a quintal but those arriving in Transylvanian cities cost 43.6 florins per quintal. Actually, pepper fell about 50 percent on the Venetian wholesale market between the 1420s and the 1440s and until the end of the century remained at 40 to 50 ducats per cargo (120 kg), which was well below the prices common during the first decades of the century. Surplus pepper imported from the East to Transylvania was re-exported to the fair of Nagyvarad. Changing hands there, carts loaded with high-valued oriental goods proceeded to the cities further west in Hungary, where Saxon merchants of Brașov and Kassa (Kaschau) monopolized this long-distance trade. Also, by 1500, merchants of Kassa exchanged cloth with wine imported by the merchants of Brașov. The cloth purchases involved big investments. In one case, the transaction amounted to 8,709 florins.

The bulk of spice imports consisted of pepper, ginger and incense, followed far behind by cloves. Expensive spices such as saffron, cinnamon and nutmeg were imported in negligible amounts (see Table 1:61).

As indicated above, from the end of the fourteenth century and perhaps even earlier the principal emporium of oriental goods was Bursa, and spices arrived at the Danubian ports from there. It is a well-established fact that by 1500 the spice trade was big business in Bursa and was controlled by Turkish and Jewish merchants on the one side and the importing Arabs of Aleppo and Damascus on the other.

The Middle Eastern nations were the beneficiary and chief agents of the international spice commerce. The change brought about by Ottoman expansion in the period 1400–1500 meant that the Genoese lost control of this trade to Ottoman subjects, as well as the slave trade which was the other source of their fortune. The prices of Bursa and Adrianople were almost doubled at Transylvanian customs. Profits made through the Venice-Pozsony route appear to be less than the eastern route. One should keep in mind, however, that various factors, including transportation costs, different measurements, volume and place of origin make all our comparisons tentative. In this connection a comparison should be made between the privileged trader system of Central and Eastern European states, where trade monopolies in oriental goods were reserved to certain cities and groups of merchants, in contrast to more liberal Ottoman policies.

In Brașov, beginning with the end of the fourteenth century, the total annual value of exports and transit goods peaked in 1503 and 1504, and fluctuated between 70,000 and 80,000 florins in the first half of the sixteenth century (see Table 1:60). The fall in exports derived from the development of substitute industries in Wallachia and Moldavia. Wars between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans sometimes even blocked transit goods moving from Central Europe toward the Ottoman Empire.
The sudden decline in the market in the years 1529 and 1530 was due to the attacks on Austria by the Ottomans and their Wallachian and Moldavian vassals. The imports of oriental goods were unusually high in 1503, amounting in value to 85,000 gold pieces. This high traffic may have been due to the Ottoman–Venetian War. During war years, Central Europe received the bulk of its supplies of oriental goods through Brașov instead of Venice, whereupon this trade sharply fell below normal levels. But during the Ottoman–Habsburg War of 1529–30, the average volume of trade at Brașov remained at around 33,000 florins a year. Exports from Brașov and transit goods from Europe to the Romanian and Ottoman territories averaged 10,000 florins, in the same period. It should be noted that direct export or transit trade from Brașov to the Ottoman cities appears to have been limited, since most of these goods were taken by the Moldavian and Wallachian merchants to be re-exported to Ottoman lands. Wallachian merchants included Armenians, Greeks and Jews along with Vlachs. As in the case of the Ottoman Empire, big merchants, whose average investment was about 1,410 florins at the beginning of the sixteenth century, were almost exclusively engaged in the wholesale trade of oriental and Western goods. Their clients were merchants of small investment, retailers or members of the ruling class or wealthy burghers who were interested in fine Western woolen cloth or the silk cloth of Bursa.

In the first half of the sixteenth century, Brașov lost its former significance both as international emporium and as a trade center within Romanian lands. In the period of economic decline the average investment of a great merchant in an enterprise drastically fell from about 1,450 florins to 641 florins, while there was a concomitant shrinkage in the import and export trade in luxury goods.

Competition among the “Levantine merchants,” Greeks, Jews, Armenians and Turks, was sharp during the second half of the sixteenth century. “With the support of the Turks,” read the Ottoman government, “these Levantine merchants specialized in the commerce in oriental goods, and being free from all kinds of corporate regulations, violated the rights of transit and storage of the merchants of Brașov, and, finally, they extended their trading all over Transylvania.” The efforts of Brașov merchants and the measures taken by the municipalities to protect the trade monopoly all failed. By the end of the sixteenth century, Greeks in Brașov, along with Transylvanian merchants, Vlachs, Armenians and Turks, Arabs, Italians and Poles, were trading as well. Voivodes of Wallachia and Moldavia supported their subjects in breaking the Brașov's trade monopoly. Its annual fair, held since 1364, gave foreign merchants the opportunity to exchange their merchandise freely. In 1554, about one thousand merchants visited Brașov, mostly from Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, the century-old trade pattern with Poland did not change much. Poland imported wine, hides, cattle, fish and salt from the south, which were destined for the fairs of Hotin, Jaroslav, Lwow, and Krakau, and Poland exported woolen cloth, now mainly of English manufacture but also from the Netherlands, the Rheinland and Italy. Part of this export was met by the textile industries which had been organized by the Italians in Sibiu during the sixteenth century. Thus, besides Western transit goods, the native industries of Transylvania, Poland and Habsburg Hungary and its hereditary lands provided manufactures for the Ottoman market. Western merchants also used the Lwow–Moldavia–Istanbul route in the last decades of the sixteenth and first decades of the seventeenth century (see below, pp. 364–72).

East-central European commerce gave rise to quite a complex network of trade routes in the areas surrounding the Ottoman-controlled lands in upper Hungary, Slovakia, Silesia and Poland. “During the Turkish domination in the Karpathian basin, the trade relations of Transylvania with Silesia and the neighboring German lands were stronger than those with Austria and upper Germany.”

During the sixteenth century the Ottoman government intervened to protect Serbian merchants in Austria. The treaty concluded at Zsitva-Tökök in 1606 granted for the first time a formal recognition of the freedom of trade between Austria and the Ottoman Empire and guaranteed the security of the merchants. The freedom of commerce was granted to the merchants of the Holy Roman Empire and all the countries under the Habsburgs including Austria, Hungary, Flanders and Spain. Merchants coming to Ottoman territory were required to carry the emperor’s patent and to pay customs duty at the rate of 3 percent ad valorem on imported and exported goods alike. In addition, they paid a 2 percent fee to the emperor’s agent or consul. Once the customs duty was paid, no additional duties could be exacted in any other place. The emperor’s agent or consul was required to attend to any problems arising among the merchants in accordance with Austrian law. Legal cases involving a sum of more than 4,000 akça were brought before the sultan’s divan. And when a merchant died, the emperor’s agent or consul took his properties into custody and Ottoman agents were not to interfere.
Thus, the treaty of 1606 provided the basic capitulation privileges for merchants from the territories under Habsburg control. In 1617, Sultan Ahmed I granted full capitulations and in 1666, following the peace treaty of Vasvar (1664), the emperor attributed great importance to the renewal of the capitulations. Now, the Austrian government, eager to emulate Western mercantile economies, attempted to play a more active role in the Levant trade and to set up the first Austrian Levant company.

During the two decades following the Habsburg capitulations of 1666, the expansion of trade with the Ottoman south triggered the settlement of Serbian, Armenian and Greek communities in commercial centers such as Eperjes, Buda, Pozsony (Pressburg), Vienna, Prag, Breslau and Leipzig, which grew into real merchant colonies in the eighteenth century.

**HUNGARY: THE NEW FRONTIER**

A stronghold on the Danube built under the Serbian ruler George Branković (1427–59), Smederevo became the most important Ottoman center for military operations and trade following the annexation of the despotate in 1459. The **sancak** of Smederevo, which corresponded to the old Serbian despotate, faced Hungary, and until the conquest of Belgrade in 1521 its governor held a special place among the other begms of Rumel. In addition to his regular income, the commander of Smederevo collected dues for himself from the traffic of goods and boats operating between Hungary and the Ottoman lands. The Hungarian kingdom, then including Transylvania, Slovakia, Slavonia, Croatia and the Banat, exported mainly woolen cloth, metals, cattle and horses to the Ottoman Empire. Smederevo was the main port of entry.

There, commercial dues consisted of three categories: customs dues, market dues, and transit dues. Customs duty on goods imported from Hungary amounted to 8 percent ad valorem, 5 percent going to the commander, and 3 percent to the treasury.

After their crushing victory at Mohács (1526), the Ottomans appear to have intended to maintain Hungary as a vassal state beyond the Danube, under Janos Zapolya (1526–41), in the same manner as they had Wallachia or Moldavia. But circumstances – the minority of King Zapolya’s successor and Habsburg claims on the Hungarian heritage – compelled the Ottomans to take the central plains under their direct control and organize them as a frontier province (beglerbegilik) in the period 1541–66. In addition to the central Hungarian plains, the new province included Sirem (Szerem) between the Drava and Sava rivers as well as the sancak of Smederevo on the right bank of the Danube.

Under Ottoman rule, Buda’s position changed from capital of a powerful central European kingdom to a frontier city of a Middle Eastern empire. From 1526 on, Transylvania (Erdel) became a tributary country, thereby enjoying the protection of the Ottoman state. As such, it appears to have continued its role as an intermediary in trade between the Ottoman Empire and east-central Europe.91

Ottoman rule brought to Hungarian society a radical disruption, because the Ottomans abolished the royal Hungarian administrative and legal system and applied Ottoman laws.92 Hungarians had to go to Ottoman courts for their legal affairs except for those situations directly under religious law. Since the Ottomans had to construct a large network of fortified places and maintain numerous garrisons, the government was obliged to supplement local revenues with large sums from the central imperial treasury. On the other hand, there occurred striking increases, in some cases as much as fourfold, in revenue collection in Hungary between 1552 and 1580. These monies allowed the government to pay the garrisons from surpluses in local revenue.93

As frontier territory, the Hungarian lands became the scene of almost constant warfare between the Ottoman and Habsburg empires for 150 years and large areas near the frontier reverted, it is argued, to pasturlands or swamps. Booty became an important source of livelihood. Under the circumstances both Ottoman and Austrian governments agreed that small-scale raiding should not be considered a cause for breaking the peace.

In frontier fortresses, in addition to the regular salaried soldiery, there was a large group of volunteers who lived exclusively on booty. These volunteers were unemployed youths, mostly landless peasants, who came to the frontier areas to make their livelihood by joining the raids, and they expected to obtain a salaried appointment as regular guards whenever there was a vacancy through dismissal or death.94

In the course of the sixteenth century, the Muslim Ottomans apparently established only small communities, which were mostly settled in towns. Nowhere in Hungary was the Ottomanization and Islamization process so complete as in western Anatolia or the eastern Balkans. The extent to which a Hungarian town came under Ottoman influence was determined by the size of the military–administrative personnel settled there. Only in the large administrative centers, such as Buda, Pest, Sege- din (Szeged), and Istolni-Belgrade, did community life come under the
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During the two decades following the Habsburg capitulations of 1666, the expansion of trade with the Ottoman south triggered the settlement of Serbian, Armenian and Greek communities in commercial centers such as Eperjes, Buda, Pozsony (Pressburg), Vienna, Prag, Breslau and Leipzig, which grew into real merchant colonies in the eighteenth century.  

HUNGARY: THE NEW FRONTIER

A stronghold on the Danube built under the Serbian ruler George Branković (1427–59), Smederevo became the most important Ottoman center for military operations and trade following the annexation of the despotate in 1459. The sanjak of Smederevo, which corresponded to the old Serbian despotate, faced Hungary, and until the conquest of Belgrade in 1521 its governor held a special place among the other begs of Rumelii.

In addition to his regular income, the commander of Smederevo collected dues for himself from the traffic of goods and boats operating between Hungary and the Ottoman lands. The Hungarian kingdom, then including Transylvania, Slovakia, Slavonia, Croatia and the Banat, exported mainly woolen cloth, metals, cattle and horses to the Ottoman Empire. Smederevo was the main port of entry.

There, commercial dues consisted of three categories: customs dues, market dues, and transit dues. Customs duty on goods imported from Hungary amounted to 8 percent ad valorem, 5 percent going to the commander, and 3 percent to the treasury.

After their crushing victory at Mohács (1526), the Ottomans appear to have intended to maintain Hungary as a vassal state beyond the Danube, under János Zápolya (1526–41), in the same manner as they had Wallachia or Moldavia. But circumstances – the minority of King Zápolya’s successor and Habsburg claims on the Hungarian heritage – compelled the Ottomans to take the central plains under their direct control and organize them as a frontier province (beglerbegilik) in the period 1541–66. In addition to the central Hungarian plains, the new province included Sirem (Szerem) between the Drava and Sava rivers as well as the sanjak of Smederevo on the right bank of the Danube.

Under Ottoman rule, Buda’s position changed from capital of a powerful central European kingdom to a frontier city of a Middle Eastern empire. From 1526 on, Transylvania (Erdel) became a tributary country, thereby enjoying the protection of the Ottoman state. As such, it appears to have continued its role as an intermediary in trade between the Ottoman Empire and east-central Europe.

Ottoman rule brought to Hungarian society a radical disruption, because the Ottomans abolished the royal Hungarian administrative and legal system and applied Ottoman laws. Hungarians had to go to Ottoman courts for their legal affairs except for those situations directly under religious law. Since the Ottomans had to construct a large network of fortified places and maintain numerous garrisons, the government was obliged to supplement local revenues with large sums from the central imperial treasury. On the other hand, there occurred striking increases, in some cases as much as fourfold, in revenue collection in Hungary between 1552 and 1580. These monies allowed the government to pay the garrisons from surpluses in local revenue.

As frontier territory, the Hungarian lands became the scene of almost constant warfare between the Ottoman and Habsburg empires for 150 years and large areas near the frontier reverted, it is argued, to pasturage or swamps. Booty became an important source of livelihood. Under the circumstances both Ottoman and Austrian governments agreed that small-scale raiding should not be considered a cause for breaking the peace.

In frontier fortresses, in addition to the regular salaried soldiery, there was a large group of volunteers who lived exclusively on booty. These volunteers were unemployed youths, mostly landless peasants, who came to the frontier areas to make their livelihood by joining the raids, and they expected to obtain a salaried appointment as regular guards whenever there was a vacancy through dismissal or death.

In the course of the sixteenth century, the Muslim Ottomans apparently established only small communities, which were mostly settled in towns. Nowhere in Hungary was the Ottomanization and Islamization process as complete as in western Anatolia or the eastern Balkans. The extent to which a Hungarian town came under Ottoman influence was determined by the size of the military-administrative personnel settled there. Only in the large administrative centers, such as Buda, Pest, Sege- din (Szeged), and Istolni-Belgrade, did community life come under the
direct influence of Ottoman culture. While the Turkish military and administrative personnel settled in the fortresses, the varos, the outside quarters, preserved its autonomous communal life and even the pre-Ottoman Hungarian municipal institutions survived. However, the responsibilities and authority of a Hungarian biro or quarter headman were very different from those of his pre-Ottoman peer, some of them even enjoying an Ottoman timar. In general, because of the Bosniak origin of most Ottoman soldiers in Hungary, the Bosniak version of Ottoman-Islamic culture was more visible than in other areas.

Strategic conditions were responsible for economic-urban developments in certain provincial centers, such as Istolni-Belgrado and Solnok, while on the Danube the ports of Estergom, Vác and Kuvín grew in importance. Old Hungarian fairs continued to be held in Buda, as before. Buda, Varadin, Kopan, Simintorna, Istolni-Belgrado, Sombor, Sytina, and Varat were strongly Ottomanized towns whose physical structure changed with the construction of mosques, religious colleges and schools, hospices for the traveller and the destitute, bathhouses for men and women, dervish convents, public water fountains and kiosks and mansions for dignitaries and notables which contained private baths. For security reasons the Christian-Hungarian population in many fortified cities was transferred to varos. The varos also included poor Muslim districts protected by outer walls. In some fortified cities the Christian population was exempted from extraordinary tax levies in return for repairing the defenses. Such a policy must also have been thought to ensure the loyalty of the native Christian population.

In the countryside each Hungarian village was put under a Hungarian biro, elected from among themselves and representing the village community. The biro collected taxes in the village and delivered them to the Ottoman authorities and was responsible for making arrangements for the implementation of government orders. As for the timar-holding Muslim sipahi, they lived mostly in the fortified cities as guards or in a nearby town. In the countryside, the Ottoman impact on peasant life became profound mainly because the Ottoman government, abolishing the privileges of the Hungarian nobility through the application of the gift-bane and the timar system, established its own system of landholding and taxation.

In Hungary, as in other frontier areas, members of the soldiery, the Janissaries or azebs from the fortress garrisons who had an entrepreneurial spirit were active in trade, specializing in goods which their fellow soldiers could not find in local markets. Some of them over time became merchants with large investments in luxury goods. Even dignitaries in high positions, including pashas, invested their extra income in inter-regional commerce. But the law-maker stipulated that military men engaged in trade could not evade paying customs duties on their transactions.

In order to meet the needs and demands of the soldiery, new crafts were introduced, particularly in the clothing, metalwork, and leather industries. Later, the French would invite Hungarian experts to convey to them the secrets of fine Turkish leather goods.

As time went by, cultural interaction between the rulers and the ruled became pronounced, particularly in towns, conversions to Islam increased, and Turkish crafts and arts were imitated. As in the turn enlarging close and more intensive economic relations between Hungary and the Ottoman Balkans and Anatolia. Ottoman frontier culture (serhadi) in lifestyle, language and clothing with a strong Bosnian flavor was transplanted into Hungary. Bosnian soldiery and settlement were particularly strong in the southern Hungarian towns and there Serbo-Croatian became the prevalent language.

The slave trade flourished in this frontier province. In Evliya we have a vivid description, after a raid into enemy territory in 1666, of how the booty and slaves were sold in Kanija, the principal stronghold at the Ottoman-Austrian frontier. The raiding party entered the city which was in a jubilant mood and each soldier was offered hospitality by the townsfolk in their houses, while the slaves were placed in dungeons. The next morning the slaves and the booty were taken for sale to the main bazaar. The slaves, their clothing, swords and possessions were sold in an auction which lasted five days. Slaves were sold for between 200 and 1,000 gold coins. Ten of the fifty slaves were surrendered to the pasha in payment for the imperial one-fifth share (pendik). After everything was sold, the booty money amounted to 18,160 gold coins. The raiders' losses as well as the fees of the two guides were paid out of this sum and 40 gurms for the poor, 10 gurms for the two gate-keepers of the fortress and other expenses for the sheep sacrificed for the dead soldiers, and the care of the wounded. Afterwards, everybody came together in the mosque of Sultan Mehmed III and the shares were distributed among 1,490 raiders (gazi). Evliya obtained four extra shares, two for his two faithful servants and two for his services as scribe in drawing up the roll call of the raiders and the distribution. The mosque employees were not forgotten and received five gold pieces. Evliya recited the verse of
The Black Sea and Eastern Europe

Table 162. Total textile imports at the ports of Buda and Pest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>1571</th>
<th>1573</th>
<th>1580</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woolens (woolen cloth)</td>
<td>33 denk</td>
<td>51 denk</td>
<td>over 32 denk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gauze (ale)</td>
<td>12 denk</td>
<td>13 denk</td>
<td>over 2 denk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt (ale)</td>
<td>over 89 denk</td>
<td>over 10 denk</td>
<td>31 (?) denk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kebe (cloaks)</td>
<td>24 denk</td>
<td>50 denk</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ake (cloaks)</td>
<td>over 25 denk</td>
<td>4 denk</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kebe of Yahbolu</td>
<td>3 (?)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kebe of Tarnovo</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohair</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1 denk</td>
<td>44 deste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpets (bali, kilim)</td>
<td>over 3 denk</td>
<td>900 pieces</td>
<td>44 deste</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cotton goods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>1571</th>
<th>1573</th>
<th>1580</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>43 denk</td>
<td>11 denk</td>
<td>3 denk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerbs</td>
<td>over 56 denk</td>
<td>over 22 denk</td>
<td>11 denk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton thread</td>
<td>23 denk</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1 denk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bags</td>
<td>17 denk</td>
<td>83 denk</td>
<td>over 32 denk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslin (dalbend)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>15 (?)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flax</td>
<td>45 denk</td>
<td>54 denk</td>
<td>over 39 denk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barumchik</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>44 deste</td>
<td>44 deste</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fekete and Káldy-Nagy (1962); Barkan (1943).

Habsburg territories. Evidently the bulk of the imports into Buda and Pest met the needs of Ottoman military personnel and small Muslim settlements.

Vác was the main transit center for Hungary’s trade with Austria. The carts leaving Vác with rock salt or empty in early spring, returned laden with wares from the West — in particular woolen cloth from Breslau, Nürnberg, Languedoc and other Western cloth manufacturing centers (see Table 1:63). Transylvanian salt, an important item of export to Austria, was transported by boats on the rivers Maros and Tisza to the port at Tibel, where it was stored.

Large-scale imports from Austria consisted, in addition to woolen cloth, of a special cap called astarbal worn by Hungarians, or knives which were taken further into the Balkans and Anatolia. The Londra and Ldrina cloth mentioned in the registers was rather an imitation of English woolen cloth made in Languedoc. Popular iskarlat and karziya (karazia) types also were imported through Vác.

Livestock breeding and export was important to the Hungarian economy long before the Ottomans appeared. In the sixteenth century, about 50–60 percent of Hungarian commerce with Western countries consisted of livestock, 30 percent in textiles.

It has been argued that the Ottoman occupation of Hungary, by causing a sharp decline in cattle exports to Germany and Italy, was responsible for a substantial increase in meat prices and thus hurt the general economy.
Table 1:63. Textile imports from Habsburg territories and taxation at Estergon and Buda (in akças)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Woolen cloth</th>
<th>Imports 1571</th>
<th>Imports 1573</th>
<th>Imports 1580</th>
<th>Customs duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One bale of iskeralat (100 şehle)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One bale of iskeralat (80 şehle)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grane</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>12 per dhira’</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dami</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>25 per pastav</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ling (Lintz?), Despulm</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>50 per pastav</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuga</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>500 per denk</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linen of Ling (Lintz)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>250 per denk</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Londura</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>150 per koçi</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braslaw (of Breslau)</td>
<td>1,109 pastav</td>
<td>713 pastav</td>
<td>2 denk</td>
<td>150 per denk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kariya</td>
<td>112 pastav</td>
<td>313 pastav</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iğler (of Iglau?)</td>
<td>915 pastav</td>
<td>128 pastav</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norimberg (Nürnberg)</td>
<td>217 pastav</td>
<td>25 pastav</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiskö</td>
<td>669 pastav</td>
<td>10 pastav</td>
<td>165(?)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astarhel sivveg (a kind of cap)</td>
<td>159,321</td>
<td>78,000 pieces</td>
<td>333–50 füçi</td>
<td>25 per 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worn by Hungarians</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 100 şehle = 50 endaze (dhira’) = 39 meters; 1 denk = half a horseload; 1 pastav = one bale.
Source: Fekete and Káldy-Nagy (1962); Barkan (1943).

The economy of those countries. But recent studies have shown that this hypothesis stemmed from a misinterpretation of the sources. In fact, cattle exports continued under the Ottomans, as before, as one of the main sources of Hungary’s revenue. According to the Ottoman customs records of Vác, just over 100,000 head of cattle were exported to Austria between June 1560 and April 1562, and from this the Ottoman state obtained 1,177,377 akças, or about 20,000 gold pieces, as customs duties. In 1580, 75,000 oxen were exported to Vienna and, in 1584, 9,000 head of cattle were sent to Zara for the Italian market. An estimated 80,000 oxen were exported yearly to Vienna and Germany. Incidentally, the exported oxen were not just for meat consumption but also for plowing.

It has also been argued that, as a result of the tax collectors’ oppression, the peasant population abandoned their lands, which were then converted into pasture. But the argument can be reversed: it actually was the European offer of higher prices for cattle exports that caused the expansion of animal husbandry at the expense of agriculture. We now know that the generalization claiming that whole villages were abandoned and agricultural economy was ruined under Ottoman rule is misleading. At least in certain areas, village lands were abandoned by peasants who settled in other areas and established new villages. Desertion of villages in fact was a general phenomenon under medieval conditions of agriculture and landholding, as witnessed in the Byzantine and Ottoman empires.

Imports from Austria also included knives, copper and tin. In particular, cheap Austrian knives, very popular in the Ottoman lands constituted, along with woolen cloth and sivveg caps, the principal imports from the West (see Table 1:64). In the “great city” of Sopron, Evliya found a large number (3,000?) of shops engaged in the production of knives and other iron implements as well as a large group of manufacturers making woolen cloth and paper products destined for the Ottoman market.

Table 1:64. Total imports of metal goods at the ports of Buda and Pest, and taxation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metal goods</th>
<th>1571</th>
<th>1573</th>
<th>1580</th>
<th>Customs duty of 1,000 pieces 25 akças; if low quality, 12 akças</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knives (biçak)</td>
<td>346,750 pieces</td>
<td>274,250 pieces</td>
<td>1,500 pieces and 36 füçi</td>
<td>115 füçi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swords</td>
<td>300 pieces</td>
<td>6 denk</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseshoes</td>
<td>76 denk</td>
<td>146 denk</td>
<td>22 denk</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes
1. This is easily visible in Heyd’s classic work (1936); now see Ashtor (1983), but the latter concentrates on Egypt and Syria for the period 1300–1500.
5. Thürl (1958), I nos. 423, 461.
11. İnalçık (1965e), pp. 43–45.
12. İnalçık (1944), pp. 185–229.
The Black Sea and Eastern Europe

1 Inalcik (1996), index: Greeks, Armenians, Tatars.
5 Ibid., p. 62.
6 Kratitz (1921), document no. 1, pp. 44–45.
9 Inalcik (1979a), pp. 91–92.
10 According to Beldiceanu (1973), p. 174 note 1, “Rus” here stands for “la Russie Rouge” and the merchant of “Rus” for “les marchands de Lemberg [Lwow].” Beldiceanu’s translation, pp. 173–76, contains several errors due to mistranslation or misinterpretation. Kepçe is obviously a copy mistake for keyçe; one Akkerman keyçe equals 84.5 kg. The passage “if he unloads his wares” (p. 147) is correctly rendered in the other versions: “if he does not unload his wares” (p. 417); also in Topkapi MS Revan no. 1935, 123b, and no. 1936, 132a. Bez is an inexpensive kind of cloth, usually of cotton, linen or hemp, while expensive silk and woolen cloth is called kumaş, pt. akbışçe.
12 BBA, Mühimme Defteri: V, p. 28.
13 Heyd (1936), the first edition of the work, titled Geschichte des Levanthandels, appeared in 1879.
17 See Schmitzler (1933).
18 Manolescu (1960) and (1965).
21 Inalcik (1960b).
22 Manolescu (1960), p. 209. The Ottoman quintal of 44 akba became the standard measure used by the merchants of Brašov.
24 One Hungarian florin was valued officially at 58 akça in Istanbul around 1500, Manolescu (1960), p. 179.
28 In 1438 the price went down as low as 17 gold florins a quintal.
29 Lane (1973), p. 288.
31 Inalcik (1960b), pp. 131–43.
32 See Table 2 in Manolescu (1960), p. 220.
33 Ibid., pp. 217–18.
13

THE INDIA TRADE

SHIFTS IN SPICE TRADE ROUTES BEFORE 1500

As seen earlier, under the Pax Mongolica in the period 1260–1345 the major trade routes from Asia to the Mediterranean, with the caravans of spice and silk from India, China and Iran, shifted north to the Black Sea ports – Tana (Azov), Soldajio and later to Caffa or, via Sultaniya or Tabriz to the Anatolian ports of Trabzon, Samsun, Ayas (Laz), Antalya and Ephesus. The shift was highlighted by the fierce struggle between the Arab Middle East under the Mamluks and the Mongols in Iran who took control of Iraq and the Gulf, and attempted to establish a monopoly on the trading of Indian spices, precious stones, Bahrain pearls, and Chinese porcelain, silk, musk and rhubarb. Tabriz became the crossroads of international trade routes, overshadowing Cairo and Baghdad, as the most important international trade center between East and West. In Tabriz as well as in the Anatolian ports mentioned above, Genoese and Venetian merchant communities settled and carried on an active trade of domestic products as well as Asian goods, in particular spices and silk. Western merchants could now load at Tana bales of Indian spices, arriving there via India – Urgenc, Astrakhan or Saray, in exchange for European woolen cloth (see Table 1.65).

Our sources do not yield enough information to illustrate the situation in the second half of the fourteenth century. But it is known that in the wake of the outbreak of anti-Latin popular uprisings and the hostile attitude of the Mongol rulers in Tabriz, Almaligh and the Golden Horde in the years 1338–43, the Latin merchants, renewing trade privileges with the Egyptian Mamluks, returned to Alexandria and Beirut for Asian goods (Catalans in 1341, Genoese and Venetians in 1345). Most recently Bautier has argued that the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I's policy of driving
Table 1:65. Prices of spices and European woolen cloth, mid-fourteenth century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Woolen cloth</th>
<th>Price per bale of cloth (in florins)</th>
<th>Spice</th>
<th>Price of 1 bale of pepper (c. 91 kg) (in florins)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brussels</td>
<td>400–500</td>
<td>Pepper</td>
<td>75–85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalons or Louviers</td>
<td>150–250</td>
<td>Girofle</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauvais</td>
<td>110–60</td>
<td>Ginger</td>
<td>35–45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadis de Perigian</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Cannelle</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languedoc coarse woolen cloth</td>
<td>50–60</td>
<td>Sugar (box)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw silk</td>
<td>300–400</td>
<td>Saffron</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indigo</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


the Venetians out of their strongholds on the coasts of the Balkan peninsula and then Timur's invasion of Anatolia and his anti-Latin policy (capture of İzmir, 1402), caused an eclipse of Asian trade through Asia Minor, and the Tabriz–Trabzon route was cut off.

But actually, during this period, Ottomans and Venetians, though politically clashing, maintained regular trade relations, since Venice vitally needed local products and, in particular, wheat from the region. After Timur's departure from Anatolia, Venetian traffic made a rapid recovery following the favorable treaty concluded in 1403 between Venice and Byzantium on the one hand and Venice and Ottoman Sultan Süleyman the other.

The Venetian convoy (muda) of 1404 could again load in Trabzon quite a rich cargo: 20 tons of pepper, 20 tons of indigo, 7 tons of cannelle, 4 tons of ginger and also a cargo of raw silk (31 tons) and pearls from the Gulf. On its way to Venice, the muda also picked up from the depots of Modon 42 tons of pepper which had arrived from Beirut and Alexandria. The Genoese ships, in contrast, loaded in Trabzon mostly Anatolian products, alum, beeswax, cheese and leather. Their pepper cargo consisted of only one ton. It should, however, be noted that now the spices available in the Black Sea ports were insignificant when compared to the massive Venetian purchases in Alexandria and Beirut. Spices, arriving via Tur–Cairo to Alexandria or via Jida–Mecca–Damascus to Beirut and bought by the Latins amounted to an average 600 or 700 tons annually during the period. Venice dominated the spice trade there with its share of 500 tons. In other words, the southern route of Asian trade had fully recovered by this time while the northern routes terminating

at Trabzon, Tana and Caffa lost their former significance. It was the shift of the spice trade again to the south that prepared the way for Ottoman Bursa to become a new market for Indian–Arabian goods as well as Iranian silk.

As discussed earlier, in the fifteenth century, or perhaps even earlier, Bursa became the emporium of Iranian and Indian goods for İstanbul and for a greater part of Southern and Eastern Europe. Historians of the spice trade have completely ignored the fact that the Latin merchants of Pera were able to exploit this new spice market in Bursa.

Shipments of Indian spices to Jidda were undertaken by merchants who joined the pilgrimage caravan at Mecca, which brought them to Damascus. A group from the great Mecca caravan of 3,000 camels as witnessed by La Brocquière arrived in Bursa after a journey of about fifty days via Aleppo, Konya, Akşehir and Kü tahya. In Akşehir he came across twenty-five Arabs in a caravanserai.

In Bursa spices brought by the Damascus caravan were delivered to Genoese merchants from Pera. Later in 1470 Benedetto Dei, a Florentine agent in Pera, could claim that his countrymen could get sufficient amounts of spices in Bursa in exchange for woolen cloth. The duties from the imported pepper, gunlac and saffron in Bursa were 100,000 akça (or 2,000 gold ducats) in 1487. They rose to 135,000 akça subsequently.

In the fifteenth century, the sea route of Alexandria–Antalya was also used for the import of Indian goods to Ottoman Turkey. After the sack of Antalya by the Venetians in 1472, the quantity of spices available at this Ottoman port made a strong impression on its pillagers. At that time, Bursa merchants were active on this route. One striking example is a partnership of two merchants, Hayreddin and his freed slave, Haci Koço. They invested the huge sum of 545,500 akça or 11,000 gold ducats in the export of lumber, wood, iron, leather, furs and pitch by sea, and such valuable goods as Bursa cloth and saffron by land to Egypt. They imported from Egypt spices and Syrian soap. The Antalya customs regulation of 1477 confirms that cloth, raw silk, mohair, iron tools, wood and lumber were the principal export items and that spices, sugar and indigo were the principal import items. A detailed journal of customs dated 1560 from the same port shows that spices and dyes were still imported to Antalya but in rather small quantities compared with the large amounts of rice, linen and sugar imports. From Tripoli in Syria soap, cotton and olive oil were shipped in quite large quantities to Antalya. But wood and lumber exported from Antalya, Alaiye and Finike
The India trade

overshadowed all other traffic with Egypt. The wood export, going back to the earlier centuries, was derived from the permanent dependence of Arab lands devoid of forests on forest products of the Anatolian Taurus range. The Ottoman state made this lucrative traffic a state monopoly which brought an annual revenue of 3,000 gold ducats in 1477. For the Turcoman tribes on the mountain range from Maras to Teke the production of lumber and charcoal formed one of the principal economic activities. The group of tribes engaged in this activity were known as agaq-eri (woodmen) or tabtaq (lumbermen). In any case, Antalya lost its importance in the international trade of Indian spices in the sixteenth century when in 1522 the Ottomans conquered Rhodes and established a safe, direct sea route between Istanbul and the Egyptian ports of Alexandria and Damietta. But the main avenue of precious Indian goods was always the caravan route of Damascus–Bursa, and Bursa remained the emporium of these goods for Turkey and an important part for South-eastern and Eastern Europe.

THE PORTUGUESE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THE OTTOMAN STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF THE RED SEA

After Vasco da Gama’s arrival in India the first spice cargo arrived in Lisbon in 1501. In order to take complete control of the traffic in the Indian Ocean, Portuguese naval operations proceeded at a bewildering speed. The beneficiaries of the world spice trade, Egypt and Venice, reacted immediately in the face of the collapse of their centuries-old monopoly of this trade. Already in 1502, Venice sent an ambassador to Cairo and warned the Mamluk sultan of the disastrous consequences of the Portuguese success. The sultan requested that the Malabar rulers close their markets to the Portuguese. The rulers of Calicut and Gujerat sided with the Muslims against the Portuguese. These two territories were the traditional centers for the Muslim spice merchants in India. Soon after, in the winter of 1503, the Portuguese penetrated the Red Sea, which alarmed Cairo. The Mamluk sultan, however, began to take serious measures against the Portuguese only when he suffered a substantial fall in customs revenues. The Mamluk fleet under the command of the emir Hüseyin, a Turcoman with about 1,500 Rumi (Turkish) mercenaries, surprised the Portuguese at Chaul near Cochin in 1508, but were routed when the Portuguese counter-attacked in 1509. On this occasion, the rulers of Calicut and Gujerat cooperated again with the Mamluks. The defeat resulted not only in securing Portuguese control of the Indian
Ocean, but also laid the groundwork for the fall of the Mamluks, since now the Islamic world, including the Mamluk sultans themselves, realized that the only power capable of carrying on the crucial struggle was the Ottoman state. Mecca and Medina were now threatened by a Portuguese invasion.

In 1510, the Mamluk sultan, Kansu al-Gawri, asked Bayezid II to send materials and experts to build a fleet at Suez. The Ottomans sent thirty shiploads of lumber, cannons, and other materials. But the convoy was intercepted and destroyed by the Hospitallers of Rhodes, apparently at Portuguese request. The Ottomans, without accepting compensation, moved in new convoys of arms, powder, materials and experts to Egypt in the following years. An Ottoman captain Mehemet of Suez reported, "I am sent here by our [Ottoman] sultan to prepare the necessary materials to build ships intended to eliminate those Frenks [Portuguese] who appeared on the side of India... Before me the sultan's captains, Hamid and Hasan, have been sent [for the same purpose]." Portuguese intelligence informed Lisbon of these preparations.

The Portuguese squadrons, cruising along the coast of Malabar, were trying to cut off the traffic by sinking, burning, and capturing the Indian and Muslim ships destined for the Red Sea. Apart from a complete blockade, they needed, in addition to their naval base on the island of Sokotra, to control the Bab al-Mandab strait and Aden, which had been the terminus for Indian spice ships. In fact, during all this time Mehemet had been receiving shipments of spices from India. In 1513, the Portuguese seizure and fortification of the island of Kamaran as a base in the Red Sea created a critical situation for the Mamluks. The struggle now involved not only the Mamluks and the Ottomans but also their rivals, the Safavids. Because of the Portuguese successes, new alignments were taking shape in the whole area. The shah of Iran established friendly relations with the Portuguese, who sent him firearms, and rumors spread that the shah planned to attack Aleppo in 1515.

While the Mamluk sultan tried to attack Yemen and Aden to Egypt, Albuquerque, the Portuguese admiral and governor, made an unsuccessful attack in 1513 to seize Aden.

Sending fleets into the Red Sea from 1503, and almost every year after 1513, the Portuguese were determined to establish their control by setting up strongholds at strategic points along the coasts for the purpose of blockading Indian trade. The immediate goal was to destroy the fleet which the Mamluks and later the Ottomans were maintaining at their Suez naval base. Unless destroyed, this fleet remained a constant threat to the Portuguese domination of the Indian Ocean. Control of the Red Sea was the most efficient way to stop Indian trade with Egypt and Syria, since Arab and Indian merchant ships could easily slip through the Portuguese cruising squadrons on the high seas. In the end, by conquering Yemen and Suakin, and taking control of Aden, Shihir and the Abyssinian coast below the Bab al-Mandab, the Ottomans foiled a major strategic plan of the Portuguese to intercept Indian trade with the Middle East.

Actually, Ottoman soldiery and seamen had been in the forefront of the struggle against the Portuguese since 1359 or 1510. Apparently the Ottoman government permitted volunteers, mostly mercenaries and freebooters of Turcoman origin, to go and serve the Mamluk sultan. Some of these Anatolian adventurer-soldiers, equipped with muskets and known as Rumis among the Arabs and Indians, played a prominent role in Yemen and elsewhere from this time on. These Ottoman soldiers, deserting their leaders, spread from Yemen to the Gulf and India, entering the services of the local rulers. Having the skill of making and using firearms, they were much in demand as efficient professional soldiers to be used against the Portuguese. In 1513 Alfonso de Albuquerque wrote to the king that unless the Rumis were eliminated there would be no security for the Portuguese in the region. Later, in 1538, when the Ottoman army was fighting against the Portuguese at Diu, some of the Ottoman soldiers entered the service of Mahmod, sultan of Gujarat, who promised a salary ten times higher than they received under the Ottoman sultan. By 1525 Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire in India, had retained in his service two Ottoman gun founders, whom he treated with special favor. In short, Ottomans, being familiar with European warfare, were welcome everywhere from Central Asia to India and Sumatra.

The new Mamluk fleet, nineteen ships altogether, was built with the aid of the Ottoman sultan. They left Suez under the Ottoman captain Selman on September 30, 1515. The fighting men on board numbered 3,000, 1,300 of whom consisted of Turkish soldiery—Janissaries, levends and Turcoman mercenaries from Anatolia.

Selman planned to attack and drive away the Portuguese from the Indian Ocean, but unexpected complications delayed him in realizing the plan. First, the construction of a fortress on the island of Kamaran took too long, and the Mamluk commander failed in taking Yemen and Aden (September 17, 1516), which showed a staunch resistance to the combined fleet. Indian rulers awaited in vain the arrival of the Mamluk fleet. In the meantime Selman received the news that the Ottoman army had routed
with the sultan of Gujerat for common action against the Portuguese.²⁸ Always through his governor in Jidda, Selim I informed the Gujerati ruler, Muzaffer Shah, that he had conquered all of the Arab countries including Yemen and Suakin, and had decided to drive the Portuguese out of India. To this end, he had ordered the construction of a powerful fleet at Suez in addition to the Mamluk fleet waiting at Jidda. The Gujerati sultan responded in a most favorable fashion, while his governor in Diu called the Ottoman sultan a pillar of all Islam and all Muslims in the world. This correspondence leaves no doubt that Selim had taken up the Portuguese problem immediately after his victory at Ridadjya (January 1517).²⁹

At the same time, Ottoman mercenaries and Mamluk forces at Yemen, previously sent there by the Mamluk sultan, recognized the Ottoman sultan, thus bringing Yemen under Ottoman sovereignty. However, the rebellion of Ahmed Pasha in Egypt in 1524 made Ottoman control of Egypt and Arabia critical. The situation required the Grand Vizier Ibrahim to visit Egypt in 1525 to restore Ottoman sovereignty and order in the newly conquered lands. Upon his order, the Ottoman fleet left Suez for Yemen and Aden to establish control against the Portuguese.

In his report to Ibrahim Pasha from Yemen, dated June 2, 1525,²⁵ Selman Reis tells us that because of the arrival of the Ottoman fleet (altogether eighteen ships with 299 cannons) the Portuguese were discouraged and retreated, and that, with this fleet, it was possible to seize all the Portuguese forts and fortresses on the coasts of the Indian Ocean. Selman’s report of 1525 is the key to understanding the Ottoman evaluation and subsequent strategy and operations in the broad defense line from Abyssinia to Hadramawt.

Selman wanted first to guarantee Ottoman control on the Red Sea by taking the principal ports facing the Bab al-Mandab strait. These ports, he noted, brought in large revenues from trade with India. He mentioned, in particular, that annually fifty or sixty ships arrived at the port of Aden bringing in customs revenues of 200,000 gold pieces; Suakin, on the African coast of the Red Sea, had also become prosperous, since Indian merchants had left Jidda for that port because of the heavy customs exactions in Jidda. The Ottoman admiral was well-informed of the strategic and economic issues which arose as a result of Portuguese operations in the region. He noted, in particular, the consequences of the Portuguese monopoly of the spice trade, saying that all kinds of spices coming from the islands of south Asia were now under Portuguese control and “all these spices go directly to Portugal. Before they seized these

Mamluk forces at Marj Dabuk and that the Egyptian sultan had fallen in the battle (August 24, 1516). Now the struggle against the Portuguese would be taken up directly by the Ottoman sultan.

In the wake of the Ottoman occupation of Egypt, Captain Selman and his Rumi soldiers entered the direct service of the Ottoman sultan. Back with the fleet at Jidda, Selman was an ardent advocate of a naval expedition against the Portuguese.

Upon the conquest of the Mamluk sultanate in 1516–17, Selim I assumed the task of protecting Islam and its vital interests, which were being jeopardized by the Portuguese in Arabia and the Indian Ocean. His assumption of the title of “Servitor of Mecca and Medina,” previously borne by the Mamluk sultan and implying primacy among Muslim rulers, carried with it the duty to keep open the pilgrimage and trade routes for all Muslims in the world. Now that the Portuguese were attacking pilgrim and merchant ships on the Indian Ocean and even threatening to occupy and bring sacrilege to the sacred cities of Islam, the Ottoman sultan had to take action without delay. The prosperity of the newly conquered lands, and the protection of substantial customs revenues from the Indian trade depended on the security of the traffic with India. Also, to accomplish what the Mamluk sultan had been unable to do would help consolidate the Ottomans’ position in the Arab world. Hard-pressed by the Portuguese in his homeland, the shairif of Mecca, Abu’l Barakat (1497–1525), hastened to recognize Ottoman suzerainty (February 1517) and to put to death the Mamluk governor.²⁵ Two days after this execution, a powerful Portuguese fleet under the command of Soares entered the port of Jidda. Failing to capture the city, he retreated under the guns of Selman. Anticipating the Portuguese occupation of Mecca, the shairif had made preparations to flee to the hills.²⁶ Now that the heart of the Islamic world was saved, Selim I took measures to fight the enemy on the Indian Ocean, while Venice was closely watching Ottoman initiatives.²⁷ The sultan appointed a governor to Hejaz who resided at Jidda (September 1517). He represented the sultan’s authority in the region, keeping the shairif under supervision. In future this situation would lead to frequent conflicts between the Ottoman governor and the shairif. One of the main issues would be the customs revenue of Jidda from the Indian trade, which was estimated at 90,000 gold pieces annually. The sultan ordered that the receipts would be shared equally between the Ottoman treasury and that of the shairif, but the latter claimed all of it. Upon instructions from the sultan, the Ottoman governor of Jidda, Kasim Shirvani, opened without delay negotiations
places, the customs duties from the spice trade amounted to a large percent of the revenue of Egypt."

In the first place, he recommended thwarting Portuguese plans to control the traffic on the Red Sea. The key importance of the island of Dahlak, where the Portuguese had plans to build a fort, was emphasized. If the Portuguese were to establish a naval base on the island, he said, "No ships can go out of the Bab al-Mandab because ships coming from India and going there have definitely to stop and pass through this gate."

On a broader strategic plan he saw the necessity of establishing Ottoman control of Yemen, Aden and Abyssinia. He also proposed the conquest of the fertile inland country between Suakin and the Nile and the important city of Abbara, a center for the gold and ivory trade from Sudan and Abyssinia. Reference was also made to the Holy War activities of Muslims in the area, who might cooperate with the Ottomans.

Selman stressed also that the African coast in the Indian Ocean controlling the Bab al-Mandab, with the ports of Zeila and Berbera should be taken under Ottoman control. He noted that Muslims in the area were forced to give tribute to the Christian Abyssinian ruler. Already by 1525 the Ottomans were supporting Muslims in the region north and east of Abyssinia in order to establish their control in the area, but meanwhile the Portuguese were welcomed by Christian Abyssinians.

In the second stage of operations in his plan, Selman dealt with the elimination of the Portuguese from the Indian Ocean. The information the admiral was able to obtain convinced him that this was not a difficult task, since he said that the Portuguese were scattered in forts guarded by small garrisons at great distances from each other, and altogether their forces consisted of only 2,000 men. He added that the native population on the Malabar coast was hostile to the Portuguese.

One particular point should be noted in Selman's plan. He always placed a special emphasis on the revenues to be derived for the sultan's treasury from the proposed conquests. Speaking of the conquest of Yemen, he noted that it was a vast and rich land which presently was without a master and was exploited only by a few Arab chiefs. Its conquest, he asserted, would be easy and would make five good-sized Ottoman sancaks. On the other hand, thanks to the Indian trade and exports of red dye to India, Yemen could provide immense revenues in gold to the Ottoman treasury. He also noted the rich customs revenues from the Indian trade at Aden, Suakin and Egypt. The fact that he was exclusively interested in revenue for the sultan's treasury must have been

the typical Ottoman attitude – a basic difference between the patrimonial mentality of the Ottomans and the new mercantilistic policy of the West.

OTTOMANS IN ADEN AND INDIA

After Selman's death, his nephew Mustafa, who succeeded him in controlling Yemen, challenged the Portuguese in Aden (1530–31), and he went to the defence of Diu in Gujerat which was besieged by a powerful Portuguese fleet under the viceroy Nuno da Cunha. Artillery brought in by Mustafa proved to be the decisive factor in the retreat of the Portuguese (February 1531). Thus, already at this time, the cooperation of Muslim Gujerat with the Ottoman forces provided a check to Portuguese expansion. However, before long the Portuguese made an agreement with Bahadur Shah, sultan of Gujerat, who recently had been defeated by the Mughal emperor Humayun. But the Portuguese, deceiving Bahadur, had built a strong fortress facing the city of Diu. Now once again threatened by the Portuguese, Bahadur Shah turned to the Ottomans. It was these developments which resulted in Istanbul deciding to undertake the famous sea expedition under Süleyman Pasha, governor of Egypt, in 1538. Since 1517 the Ottomans had believed that, with Gujerat's cooperation, it would be possible to shift the struggle against the Portuguese from the Red Sea to India itself.

Süleyman, an influential eunuch and former head of the sultan's palace, was appointed governor of Egypt in 1525. He implemented the centralist policy of the Porte in Egypt and its dependencies. Like the Mamluk sultans before him, he was also responsible for the Red Sea, Hejaz, Nubia and Yemen, and the Ottoman policy on the Indian Ocean. He insisted that a powerful fleet should be constructed at Suez, but the imperial court of Istanbul did not give priority to it until 1530. It appears that by that time the Portuguese control of the Red Sea traffic had become tighter than ever. Venetians could not find supplies of spices in Egypt in that year. In 1530, the Portuguese attempted to take Diu which, along with Surat, formed one of the main supply centers for Egypt's trade with India. The Portuguese took Gogala, a stronghold near Diu also called Bender-i Türk. The Ottoman government now gave priority to the struggle against the Portuguese and sent Süleyman the necessary funds. A strong fleet of about 80 vessels, including 17 galleys and 2 galleons, was built at Suez and the digging of a canal between the Nile river and Suez was started (1531–32). But the capture of Coron in the Morea by
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posed a serious threat to Portuguese domination in India. But after this costly and unsuccessful initiative against the Portuguese, no Ottoman initiative in India would be taken in the following years.

The Portuguese authorities in India and Lisbon, however, were alarmed by the news that the Ottomans were preparing a new expedition. In 1540, the Portuguese retaliated by sending a fleet into the Red Sea, massacred the garrison in Suakin, destroyed Kusayr and attempted to take Suez.\textsuperscript{29}

Just before Süleyman Pasha's expedition of 1538, the Portuguese had made a peace overture. The conditions each side put forth at that time are interesting as they indicate each power's principal interests. While the sultan insisted on 5,000 kantars (250 tons) of pepper in return for 5,000 mudd (c. 2,500 tons) of wheat, the Portuguese demanded the dismantling of the Ottoman navy at Suez and free access to the Red Sea.\textsuperscript{30}

In 1541, negotiations continued in the wake of the Portuguese attack of 1540. The sultan asked the Portuguese not to send any ships into the Red Sea to the ports of Zabid, Jidda and Suakin, but was ready to receive their merchant ships in Aden. The Portuguese were obviously aware that the sultan had to concentrate his forces in the Mediterranean against Charles V and the Venetians. However, Süleyman Pasha, now a vizier in the imperial council, was favored by the sultan. In the following years, the activities of Ottoman galleys in the Indian Ocean increased. Renewed Portuguese initiatives for peace might have been interpreted as a sign of their concern in the face of Ottoman power, which reached its peak with the annexation of Hungary in 1541. In addition, since the creation of the Ottoman province of Basra in 1546 and the construction of a new naval base there, the Portuguese must have been concerned more than ever for the future of Hormuz and their empire in the Indian Ocean.

**OTTOMAN-GUJERAT-ATJEH COOPERATION**

To explain the arrival of large quantities of spices in the Mediterranean ports, or the so-called revival of the spice trade in the Mediterranean, in the period following the Ottoman naval defeat in the Gulf in 1554, emphasis is placed on the general deterioration of the administration and control of the Portuguese Empire in the Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{31} However, interest has recently been shifted to the continuing Ottoman attempts to gain advantage of the energetic struggle of the sultanate of Atjeh in Sumatra.\textsuperscript{32}

The first coalition against the Portuguese between Gujerat, Atjeh and the Ottomans apparently came into existence in connection with
Süleyman Pasha's plans against the Portuguese. Prior to the 1538 expedition, the first Atjehnese pepper shipments to the Red Sea had arrived around 1530, and there is a reference to a treaty which gave the Ottomans a "customs house" and a factory at the port of Pasai, at the heart of the pepper-growing region in Sumatra.\footnote{According to Portuguese sources, the sultan of Atjeh, Alaeddin, received an Ottoman contingent of 300 men, evidently equipped with firearms. The Ottoman soldiers played a major role to help him in extending his domain, and enabled him to attack the Portuguese in the Malacca Straits (September 1537).} With the ambition of becoming the major supplier of pepper, Alaeddin extended pepper plantations in Sumatra and continued to send large pepper shipments to the Red Sea. In his attack against the Portuguese at Malacca later, in 1547, a detachment of Turks was again mentioned among his troops. The peak of the "Muslim counter-crusade," as Reid put it,\footnote{As Reid put it, during the Portuguese came about later, in the 1560s.} Ottoman archival evidence demonstrates that there was indeed an alliance between these two powerful Muslim states, and an attempt at full cooperation in the period 1560–80. Thanks to their big carracks, which were equipped with powerful artillery, the Portuguese dominated the Indian Ocean. But they were repulsed on the Red Sea and in the Gulf by the Ottomans and at Sumatra by the rising seaborne empire of Atjeh. The other Muslim state of Gujarat must be mentioned as the vital link between Atjehnese and the Ottomans in trade and diplomacy. Determined to eliminate Portuguese control and their monopoly, these three Muslim states in cooperation must be taken into account in explaining the Portuguese failure to establish complete control of the traffic between the Ottoman dominions and the East. This cooperation found a strong expression in the Islamic ideology of Holy War. In supporting Islamic states in the Indian Ocean, the Ottoman sultan Süleyman declared that he was the protector of all Muslims in the world and of the pilgrimage routes.\footnote{The Ottoman–Atjehnese diplomatic exchanges shed light on developments in the period 1560–80. In a letter dated January 1566, the sultan of Atjeh informed the Ottoman sultan that he himself as well as the Muslims of the Maldive Islands and the Muslim rulers of India recognized him as their suzerain and protector; and to this end they mentioned his name in the Friday prayers (buhtbe). If the Ottoman sultan would send his fleet into the Indian Ocean, the Atjehnese sultan said, they could join him in a coalition against the Portuguese. While he underlined the Ottoman caliph's duty of Holy War and the opening of the pilgrimage routes to Muslims, he also added that innumerable riches could be gained in jewels, gold and silver in the area currently exploited by the "infidels." But the sultan of Atjeh pointed out the recent worsening conditions of their traffic in the Red Sea since the Portuguese took control of all the passages to the Maldive Islands in 1563. He added that previously, under the Muslim ruler of the islands, the traffic was safe. Indian and Atjehnese ships were mostly able to slip through the Portuguese cruisers in the Indian Ocean in order to reach Aden and the Red Sea.} In the Atjehnese sultan's letter, special reference is made to the sinking of a big Atjehnese ship laden with spices. In fact, in 1561 a large ship bound for the Red Sea carried for the Ottoman sultan a rich cargo of jewels and gold worth 200,000 cruzados. Portuguese sources\footnote{In 1561, a large ship bound for the Red Sea carried for the Ottoman sultan a rich cargo of jewels and gold worth 200,000 cruzados. Portuguese sources confirm that the Portuguese were intercepting Atjehnese ships at the Maldive passages or off the coast of the Hadramawt. Later, they planned to blockade Atjehnese ports in order to ruin their maritime trade and ultimately conquer their land. These worsening conditions resulted in the sultan of Atjeh's decision to send an ambassador to Istanbul and to request immediate Ottoman aid. The Ottoman sultan responded by dispatching an envoy with eight gunners to Atjeh. The sultan of Atjeh had asked in particular for experts and architects to build fortresses and warships as well as cannon. The non-Muslim rulers of Ceylon and Calicut, he said, fighting against the Portuguese, were ready to cooperate if an Ottoman fleet arrived. The Ottoman government showed a keen interest in the situation. A fleet of fifteen galleys and two barjas was prepared at Suez to sail under the captain of the Ottoman fleet at Alexandria, Kurdoğlu Hızır, in 1567. A group of eight gun-makers were among the soldiers on the ships. In return for their military aid, the Ottomans asked the Atjehnese to send cargoes of spices to be loaded on the barjas. In September 1567 imperial orders were issued to the beglerbegis of Egypt and Yemen to permit the merchants of the Atjehnese sultan to buy and export strategic goods, including copper, weapons and horses. In addition to the carpenters, blacksmiths, shield makers, designers and other artisans were assigned by the Ottoman sultan. The Atjehnese were allowed to hire Ottoman soldiers in Egypt who would like to go to the Indies of their own free will. But when news arrived in the winter of disorders in Yemen, the departure of the fleet was postponed. "Only two ships carrying 500 Turks, including gun-founders, gunners and engineers, together with a number of heavy bronze guns and other war material, reached Atjeh in 1567." Turkish experts cast cannons for the sultan of Atjeh for his major naval campaign in order to expel the Portuguese from Malacca.}
in 1568. This expedition and the subsequent attacks on Malacca in the 1570s failed. Apparently the news of Sultan Alaeddin's reverses had reached the Ottoman capital.

In this period, the Ottoman government, headed by the great statesman Sokollu Mehmed, was interested in global issues and in making a reality of Suleyman's claim to be the protector of all Muslims in the world. In addition to the decision to send a fleet against the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean in 1568–69, an expedition was prepared and executed to expel the Muscovites from Kazan and Astrakhan in order to reopen the Khwarezm–Crimea route for the merchants and Muslim pilgrims of Central Asia. The rulers of the Central Asian Khanates sent ambassadors and requested aid against the Muscovites and Iranians. At this time the Ottomans ambitiously planned to use their main fleet in the Indian Ocean and the Caspian Sea. In 1568, in order to use the Mediterranean fleet against the Portuguese, they conceived the scheme of digging a waterway between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. One year later they started to dig a canal between the rivers Don and Volga to expel the Muscovites from Kazan and Astrakhan and descend on the Caspian to encircle Iran. Thus, the Indian Ocean and the Volga basin began to be given serious attention in the new Ottoman world politics, while the struggle of vital importance in Central Europe against the Holy Roman Empire and in the Mediterranean against Spain and Venice continued. When Selim II came to the throne in 1566, Sokollu's rivals had their chance to challenge him, saying that he was exhausting the state's resources in useless adventures. In 1570, the invasion of Cyprus planned by his rival Mustafa, tutor of the sultan, indicated a radical change in Ottoman world politics. Now the Volga and the Indian Ocean began to be considered too far for the empire to take an interest there.

It was at this time when Spain, Venice and the Papacy joined forces in a Holy League and inflicted a disastrous defeat on the Ottomans at Lepanto in 1571. Selim II's promise to the sultan of Atjeh was never fulfilled, and, following the death of the Atjehnese Sultan Husayn (1571–79), his country was torn apart by civil war.

Thus, Ottoman efforts against the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean, encouraged this time by the rise of Atjehnese power and alliance, ended in a complete failure militarily. The spice trade, however, continued to flourish, since by the end of the century the Portuguese had given up their efforts to cut off the traffic between Atjeh and the Red Sea. Then, with the arrival of the Dutch in the Indian Ocean and as a result of Ottoman involvement in the long struggle in Iran and Central Europe (1578–1606), conditions of world politics and commerce radically changed.

Diplomatic exchanges, to be sure, continued between the Atjehnese and the Ottomans. In a letter written c. 1574, Selim II took pains to explain the delay in the departure of the Ottoman fleet because of the rebellion in Yemen, the Cyprus campaign and the struggle for Tunis. He emphatically confirmed his decision about sending aid. In the 1580s, Ottoman support of Atjeh still haunted the Portuguese. In 1585 a Portuguese report asserted that the Atjehnese were receiving large bronze cannons from the Turks, and vast quantities of spices, gold and jewels had arrived in the Red Sea from Atjeh.

As a last episode in the Ottoman and Portuguese rivalry in the Indian Ocean, the naval expeditions of Mir Ali Bey in 1585 and 1586 to East Africa should be told here. Declaring that he was the vanguard of a large Turkish fleet, Mir Ali, exploiting the anti-Portuguese feelings of the native rulers, succeeded in establishing Ottoman suzerainty on the East African coast from Mogadishu down to Mombasa. The ruler of Mombasa declared himself a vassal of the Ottoman sultan. The Portuguese admitted that the Ottomans now had the upper hand on the African coast facing India and had the capacity to cut their communications with Portugal. Although a Portuguese counter-attack by their fleet based in India in the following year re-established Portuguese control in East Africa, Mir Ali came back with a squadron of five ships in 1588 and found a Portuguese fleet waiting to attack his small force; however, he was not eliminated by the Portuguese, but rather by an African tribe, the Zimba. He saved his own life by taking refuge on board a Portuguese ship.

**OTTOMANS IN THE YEMEN**

During the sixteenth century, the Ottomans were unable to pursue a forward policy in the Indian Ocean primarily because of recurrent rebellions and the loss of control in Yemen.

The governor of Egypt, with the naval base at Suez under his command, was given the main responsibility to organize the struggle against the Portuguese and to maintain trade with India. But the defence of the entrance to the Red Sea and the new far-flung Ottoman acquisitions along the Arabian coast on the Indian Ocean called for a strong and unified command in the region. It was precisely to this end that Yemen and Aden were merged to create a powerful beglerbeglik in 1539. Although Hejaz under the Ottomans had gained a favorable position in
The age-old competition with Aden and Yemen to attract the Indian spice ships and become the center of distribution, Aden, after the conquest in 1538, kept its position as the emporium of Indian spices for Arab merchants. Starting with Süleyman Pasha’s organizing of the beglerbegilik of Yemen in 1539, the Ottomans attempted to introduce their own imperial centralist regime by establishing tight control over the autonomous local dynasties. The beglerbegi, a servant of the Ottoman sultan from Istanbul, was given, as in Egypt and Baghdad, vast authority to organize the country as a typical Ottoman province. By constructing new fortresses at strategic points or taking control of older ones from the hands of the local dynasties, the Ottoman governors simply followed the normal Ottoman methods of establishing the sultan’s centralist rule. One example was the conquest of the Habb fortress in 1562 near the Zaydi domain. But constructing and keeping these places garrisoned required considerable financial resources. Also, governors often ignored the delicate balances of power in these feudal societies as they implemented standard Ottoman methods of control.

As was the case in most of the Arab lands under the Ottomans, Ottoman methods of centralization, with the gradual undermining of the local dynasties’ feudal position, met with strong resistance in the newly created province of Yemen. Yemeni society was extremely compartmentalized into Zaydis, Ismaïlis, tribal chiefs and ulema families. In the beginning, the Ottomans made compromises with each of these groups to establish control over the province. In spite of this policy, they planned eventually to abolish feudal privileges; over time the indigenous families were to be either totally assimilated by the Ottoman ruling elite or replaced by the sultan’s küls, the loyal servants trained in the sultan’s palace. But as the local communal leaders of Yemen were all Muslims they could not be eliminated as they might have been in a conquered Christian land. In particular, the Yemenite communal organizations, including sects and tribes, were too strong to undergo such a transformation.

Taxation to meet the expenses of this type of centralist government was often coupled with the autocratic methods of the Ottoman governor. This situation caused widespread discontent not only among feudal dynasties but also among the populace and the tribal population, who soon made common cause with their old masters against the Ottomans. Moreover, the initial tax exemptions granted to the semi-autonomous communities were abolished.

Not properly informed about this remote province, the Ottoman central government expected that, enriched by the Indian trade as was Egypt,

Yemen–Aden should meet all its administrative and military expenses and even send surplus revenue to the sultan. So the province was given financial autonomy with the responsibility of making its own budget. The beglerbegi’s salary, amounting to over one million akça, had to be raised from local sources. Such a big salary for a beglerbegi was intended to enable him to organize strong military retainers who would be powerful enough to stand against local lords and enemies on the frontier. As was true in the sharifate of Mecca, here too the indigenous ruling families now had to share the sources of revenue with the Ottoman government or its agents. To aggravate matters further, Yemen apparently was suffering from a chronic shortage of silver and could not meet the huge salaries of the newly established Ottoman commanders and soldierly. Hence the abrupt debasement of the osmani akça and speculation in silver became another significant factor in the spread of discontent among the masses.

It might be for the same reason that governors’ salaries were paid in part in spices, which they converted to cash by selling the spices in Jidda and Mecca. They enjoyed exemption from customs dues. The state obtained spices either by levying customs in kind or making purchases at fixed low prices at the port of arrival in Yemen or Aden. Even ordinary soldiers began to exchange their military equipment for spices in the hope of making big profits. The monetary instability caused widespread discontent among the merchants, soldierly and the populace at large. Considering all these conditions, it is not difficult to see why rebellion, especially in the highlands, where feudal lords and tribes were supreme, became endemic. The most powerful of these local leaders, the Zaydi Imam al-Mutahhar, autonomous in the southern highlands, had recognized the Ottoman sultan’s suzerainty in 1552. Thereafter, during the period 1552–60, the province was effectively put under Ottoman rule under the governor-general Özdemir Pasha, who garrisoned the main cities, built new fortresses and rendered secure the main routes. But his successor Mahmud Pasha (1560–65), disregarding the delicate balance of power in Yemen, hastened to advance a program of centralization. He apparently used his authority unscrupulously and tactlessly, alienating all the dynasties and special groups, causing them to forget the rivalries among themselves and to band together against the Ottomans.

It is interesting to note that al-Mutahhar’s rebellion followed the increase of the “token” annual tribute from one kise (40,000 akça) to eight kise. The rebellion started with the murder of the Ottoman tax collector by the populace in al-Mutahhar’s territory. Despite the fact that
According to the balance sheet in the Ottoman archives of the Yemen province, dated 1600, it was only under normal conditions that a surplus was available to be sent to Istanbul. In the fiscal year 1599-1600, the local revenue amounted to 16 million para or 390,000 gold pieces, with a deficit of 1 million para (one para equals 1.5 akça, or 41 para one Ottoman gold piece in 1600). During the long governorship of Sinan Pasha (1574-1602), the province was divided into three districts: Zabid, Ta'izz and San'a. The beglerbegi's seat was then San'a.

By the end of the sixteenth century Yemen came under the close control of the government of Egypt. In order to establish Ottoman control, sancak begis had to come with their troops from Egypt to join the other sancak begis of Yemen. Interestingly enough, nine of the sancak begis in Yemen belonged to native feudal families, including three members of al-Mutahhar's family, who had assisted the Ottoman army in previous military operations. In other words, Ottoman masters always wisely shared tax revenue levied from the people with the native lords. The deficit of the provincial budget was met with a subvention from the treasury of Egypt.

In order to keep Yemen under control, the Ottomans maintained 38 fortresses in the country. The garrisons were paid about two million para annually in 1600. Most of the soldiery in the fortresses appear to have been transferred from Cairo. In such important fortresses as Ta'izz, Sa'dah and Zabid, Janissary companies were present. There was a sea captain also stationed at Mocha who had under his command soldiers from Suez.

As will be evident from Table 1:66, about one-third of the province's revenue came from customs duties and other dues levied at the ports. Mocha was clearly the main commercial center by 1600. Aden, bringing about 700,000 para, was the next most important port, while Hudaydah, Luhayyah and Jizan were used apparently for local traffic. The madder, or red dye root of Yemen, was indispensable for the dyeing industry of Gujarat and constituted one of the principal items of Yemenite export to India.

**THE PORTUGUESE-OTTOMAN STRUGGLE IN THE GULF**

The Ottomans were apparently interested in the Gulf area by the 1520s. Invading Hormuz, the gateway to the Gulf, in 1509, the Portuguese had an aggressive plan to take the entire region under their control, including
The India trade

Ottoman action in the Indian Ocean through the Red Sea was also intensified in the same period.

Occupied by Ottoman forces under Ayas on December 26, 1546, Basra was made the seat of an Ottoman governor-general with extensive powers in 1547. By 1550 Al-Katif was made a base as the seat of a sancak beği. In the same year, the Portuguese promptly reacted by demolishing the fortress of Al-Katif and threatening Basra. The important naval base constructed soon after the conquest of Basra was a constant worry to the Portuguese.

In 1552 the creation of the beglerbegilik of Al-Hasa, along with Al-Katif, provided a further Ottoman advance and a threat to the Portuguese. In 1552, by sending the Suez fleet under Piri Reis (25 ships with 800 soldiers) and attempting to capture Hormuz, the Ottoman government made a final effort to banish the Portuguese from the Gulf. It ended in complete failure, and naval operations the following year demonstrated Portuguese naval superiority. In 1556 the Portuguese attempted to capture Basra, without success. Then Bahrain became the main focus of the Portuguese-Ottoman conflict in the Gulf. The Portuguese had indirect control of Bahrain and their fleet was ready to protect it against the Ottomans, while the latter used their new base at Al-Hasa with the intention of annexing this strategically and economically important island to the province of Al-Hasa. As well as being a thoroughfare for the vital trade of Basra with India, Bahrain was also the center of an important pearl industry.

The creation of the beglerbegilik of Al-Hasa in 1552 was primarily designed to protect Basra’s trade with India, since the Portuguese were making raids on the coasts and shipping in the Gulf. Following the disastrous outcome of the beglerbegi of Al-Hasa’s attempt to invade Bahrain in 1558, the Portuguese squadron based in Hormuz controlled all traffic in the Gulf. They raided Al-Katif in 1552, 1559 and 1573. During the raid of 1573, which came after the crushing Ottoman defeat at Lepanto, the Portuguese captured twelve galleys and two galleons together with a number of Muslim merchants.

In 1567 it was reported that an Ottoman fleet of forty galleys sailed to Sumatra, and the year after the Ottomans made further naval preparations to capture Bahrain. But in that year the rebellion in Yemen curbed all such plans. Braudel suggests that, beginning in 1570, the pendulum swung in favor of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. Now the Ottomans had to concentrate all their forces on the Mediterranean front in their crucial struggle against the Holy League.

Later on, the Ottomans made new preparations at Al-Hasa to take Bahrain, but in general they remained defensive, especially when in 1578

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Table 1:66. Revenue from the ports of Yemen, 1600

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Port</th>
<th>Revenue in para</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aden</td>
<td>702,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mocha</td>
<td>3,596,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sall-Kamaran</td>
<td>44,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hudaydah</td>
<td>229,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jizan</td>
<td>106,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shhir and Hadramaut</td>
<td>56,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luhayyash island of Peresan</td>
<td>147,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hud</td>
<td>199,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,872,901</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1 para = 1,5 akça or 41 para = 1 gold piece

Bahrain, Al-Hasa and Basra. Safavid control of lower Iraq being nominal at this time, the Portuguese exploited the disputes among native Arab lords in the area and attempted to establish control of Basra in 1529. It appears that by 1534 the Ottomans were well aware of Portuguese plans and the threat to the Gulf and to Basra.

Before Süleyman I’s campaign of 1534 into Iraq, the Arabs of the region tried to resist the Portuguese and their firearms, and appealed to the Ottoman sultan for aid. The anti-Portuguese party at Hormuz, for example, called on Süleyman repeatedly in 1526, 1528 and 1529. By that time, the Rumis, Turkish mercenaries equipped with firearms, appeared in the service of local Arab rulers, including those of Bahrain and lower Iraq.

The Ottoman advance toward the Gulf took twenty years, the first stage of which was the conquest of Baghdad from the Safavids in 1534. The lord of Basra and other Arab sheikhs of lower Iraq immediately recognized Ottoman sovereignty. Later, as was the case in Yemen and Aden, local Arab rulers were reluctant to give up their rule as the Ottomans tried to establish direct control of the region. They found the Portuguese to be useful in balancing power in the region to protect their trading revenue. In 1545 the Porte conceived of an ambitious plan against the Portuguese. The governor-general of Baghdad, Ayas Pasha, was ordered to conquer Basra and Hormuz and open the route to India. Since Basra was much nearer to the Portuguese headquarters in India, the news caused alarm in Lisbon. By that time, the Ottomans had signed an armistice with the Habsburgs (1545) in Central Europe and had decided to concentrate their energies towards the east and the south.
a new war against Iran started. For the Ottoman defensive attitude in the Gulf, financial difficulties in particular should be remembered. In 1558, 200,000 gold pieces had to be transferred from Egypt to Basra just to construct a fleet. Local resources were strained to maintain garrisons placed at the newly built fortresses and to meet the beglerbegi's huge salary of 900,000 akça. In addition to financial difficulties, the Arab chieftains, and in particular those of the paramount tribe of Bani Khalid, rebelled, making Ottoman rule quite unstable in the province.

Some scholars argue that the Persian Gulf traffic with India gained importance at the expense of the Red Sea traffic under Ottoman control. First, the Portuguese appear to have contributed to the expansion of Indian trade via the Gulf. Being in control of Hormuz since 1509 and the entrance to the Gulf, they encouraged, for political and economic reasons, the traffic between Indian ports and Iraq, which was then under Safavid control. Starting in 1514, the Portuguese supplied the Safavids with Indian goods and firearms to be used against the Ottomans. Godinho places emphasis on the price factor by indicating that higher prices offered in the Levant attracted the Portuguese spice trade into the Gulf. In fact, since the Portuguese in Hormuz controlled the Indian trade with Iran and the Ottoman Empire, it was in their interest to use this route at the expense of the Red Sea, which was under Ottoman control. For the Asian trade, Hormuz played a similar role to that of Lisbon for Europe. In 1551, Hormuz was described as an international emporium of Asian trade for "the merchants from Arabia, Mesopotamia, Venice, Mecca, small and great Tataria and Iran." In return for a huge tribute (60,000 Egyptian gold) paid to the Portuguese, Muslims of Hormuz were permitted to traffic in the whole Indian Ocean, with the exception of the Red Sea. On the other hand, it is argued that by the mid-sixteenth century Portuguese difficulties, particularly the insufficient supply of bullion to buy spices and also the involvement of Portuguese officers in smuggling at Hormuz, further contributed to the expansion of Indian trade in the Gulf. It appears that as a result of the growing importance of the Gulf traffic at the expense of the Red Sea, a busy caravan route from Basra channelled Indian goods, chiefly spices, indigo and fine cottons to Aleppo, which experienced an unprecedented commercial expansion during the second half of the sixteenth century. An Indian merchant colony settled in Aleppo. The Basra-Aleppo caravan route appears to have always been a major supply channel of Indian goods for Ottoman lands. Even in an early Portuguese report dated 1510, a shortage of spices in the Ottoman lands was noted when a caravan of 2,000 camels

on this route was attacked and plundered. Indian goods made their way to Aleppo and then to Bursa, as confirmed by late fifteenth-century Bursa court documents.

Following the Ottoman failure at Hormuz in the 1550s, a modus vivendi appears to have been reached between the Ottomans and the Portuguese in the region, as witnessed by a marked expansion in the trade with India through the Gulf. Hormuz under the Portuguese experienced an unprecedented commercial expansion exactly at this time, doubling the tax revenue from the Indian trade. The prosperity continued until the fall of Hormuz in 1622. By then, 20 to 30 ships were arriving at Hormuz from India every year. Another explanation for Portuguese leniency must be that they imported a great quantity of horses from the Arabian desert through Basra. On the other hand, sea traffic between Gujarat and the Gulf was always shorter and safer for ships sailing along the Iranian coastline.

The Basra-Baghdad-Ana-Hit-Aleppo caravan route appears to have seen considerable activity already in the first half of the sixteenth century, while a direct route via Al-Kusayr, Karbela, Kubays and Kusur al-Ihvan also crossed the desert to reach Aleppo. This route was preferred when Iranians threatened Baghdad. At times when the desert route became dangerous because of Bedouin attacks, a safer route was followed up the river on rafts to Birecik (Al-Bira) or Mosul. Normally, Bedouins played a central role also on this route. The organization of the caravans and security in the desert totally depended on the tribal chieftains of the Syrian desert. It took three days for a caravan to go from Birecik to Aleppo. Caravans going in the opposite direction loaded the cargoes on barges on the Euphrates at Birecik. At Falluja, one or two days away from Baghdad, the cargoes were again loaded on caravans. In 1583 John Eldred observed that ships from Hormuz arrived at Basra every month, "laden with all sorts of Indian merchandise such as spices, drugs, indigo and Calicut cloth." Eldred journeyed to Aleppo, joining a caravan of 4,000 camels, "laden with spices and other rich merchandises." We have a detailed description of such a caravan in an Ottoman archival document dated 1610. Out of 120 merchants in the caravan ten were definitely Muslim Indians with cargoes of indigo dye, Indian cloth and perfumes. Merchants from Baghdad and Iran formed the majority, carrying indigo and Lahore fabrics. "Franks" (Italians) were five in number, including their consul, and had a great variety of goods. Obviously, Western merchants ventured to join the caravans between Aleppo and Basra in order to maximize their profit. In 1583 there is mention of four Venetian
merchants who carried twenty bales of cloves, long pepper, cinnamon, musk and ostrich feathers from Basra to Aleppo. The Venetian shift from the Damascus market to Aleppo in the mid-sixteenth century must be related to the growing importance of the Persian Gulf–Aleppo caravan route, not only for Iranian silk but also for Indian spices. The Aleppo market, however, showed instability when the Ottomans were at war with Iran (1548–55), or with the Portuguese in the Gulf (1560–63). It is suggested that the establishment of Ottoman control over the Syrian desert made possible the development of the Gulf–Aleppo traffic and Aleppo's emergence as an emporium for Iranian silk as well as for the Indian spices and textiles for Europeans. This was also due to the direct and more complete integration of the region into the south–north trade route developing during that period. Ottoman subjects, Armenians and Turks, as well as Venetians were present in Hormuz, the bustling center of the Indian–Gulf trade under Portuguese control. Interestingly enough, many Portuguese renegades joined the Ottomans and provided valuable knowledge.

THE REVIVAL OF THE SPICE TRADE VIA THE MIDDLE EAST

Spices were not only needed for culinary use but were also essential ingredients of a great variety of medicines. The spice dealers in the bazaar were among the most respectable of the shopkeepers. In addition to pepper, the most frequently cited spices in the Ottoman archival documents are ginger, cloves, cinnamon, rosemary, coconut, gum benzoin and incense. Next to the spices, cotton goods and dyes, in particular indigo, appear to have been the most important items of import. The use of spices became widespread in Europe first among the members of the feudal class, particularly after the establishment of the crusader states in the Middle East. As prosperous cities arose, the use of oriental spices spread in the West. Since spices were high in value and weighed little, the spice trade became the most important branch of the long-distance trade between East and West.

European imports of spices included, in addition to those coming from South Asia through the Indian Ocean, the indigenous products of the Middle East. Perhaps the most important one of the latter category was alum, extensively used as a dye fixer in dyeing textiles. Until 1462, when alum beds were discovered at Tolfa in Italy, European textile industries depended on the import of alum from Turkey (Table 1:67).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of production</th>
<th>Amount in kantar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kūbānha</td>
<td>1,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surhān</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tēke (Hamīd)</td>
<td>1,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedos (Gediz)</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaīye and Manavgat</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Faroqi (1979b).

The Genoese held the monopoly of alum export from Turkey in the fifteenth century. In 1547, the Venetians had the monopoly for 1.5 million akçe or 25,000 gold ducats for three years. Ṣebīn-Karahan in eastern Anatolia was also an important production center. A great quantity of its prime quality alum had been exported to Europe since the Middle Ages.

Picking up where the studies of H.O. Lybyer, F. Lane, R. Lopez and F. Braudel left off, recent studies have brought forth more evidence against the theory of the complete diversion of the spice trade from the Ottoman-controlled Middle East to the Atlantic in the wake of the discovery of the Cape route to the Indian Ocean.

V.M. Godinho argued that the spice trade through the Mediterranean had suffered setbacks even prior to the Portuguese discoveries. The wars between the Mamluks and the Ottomans (1485–91), and the Ottomans and Venetians (1499–1503) as well as internal disorders in Cairo, G.-V. Magalhães points out, had disastrous effects on the spice and silk trade. Consequently the public debt in Venice went from 1,600,000 in 1495 to 2,800,000 million ducats in 1508.

However, after 1501 the impact of the Portuguese discovery of the Cape route accounts for the long-term decline. Venice lost its northern markets. The spices purchased by Venetians at Alexandria and Beirut fell from 6,830 colli in 1496 to 1,720 in 1502 (see Table 1:68). In the years 1504–15, there were almost no Venetian purchases in Alexandria and only 3,234 colli in Beirut. The first news of the Portuguese embargo and the attack on Muslim ships engaged in the spice trade at Calicut caused the pepper price to rise from 75 to 95 ducats per colli in Venice.²⁹

In 1502 pepper was sold at 19 ducats per Ottoman kantar (see Weights and Measures) in Edirne and Bursa, and 24 ducats in Florence. In 1501, when Vasco da Gama was already back with spices in Lisbon, the price
Bartering helped to maximize profits in this trade. A Venetian colony as large as 4,000 families was involved in this trade. Consequently Venice took a hostile attitude toward the new trade route, banning spice imports from Lisbon or imposing a high tariff. On the other hand, Venice supplied with oriental goods a vast area of Europe including Italy, Germany and Central Europe. All this constituted a complex traditional economic pattern that Venice was reluctant to alter to compete with the new Atlantic system under Portuguese monopoly. This situation helped to provide economic coherence to the eastern and western Mediterranean during the sixteenth century until it began to break down through Western interference at the turn of the century.

The reason that half of the South Asian spice supplies passed through Ottoman dominions in the sixteenth century was because Eastern Europe, Ottoman Asia and the Balkans constituted a vast market, and the Portuguese themselves came to terms with the Ottomans in order to engage in contraband or even official trade through Hormuz. Geographic and economic considerations, transport costs in particular, resulted in the establishment of a separate zone for spice on a line east of Vienna and Italy. Even French Provence came into the purview of this eastern zone, since Marseilles obtained large supplies of spices from Alexandria and Tripoli in order to compete with Venice. Other competitors in the zone were Dubrovnik for the German trade and the western Balkans, and Bursa and Lvov, linked up via Moldavia to Eastern Europe.

During the years 1501–12, quite large supplies of spices must have reached the Levant. During this period, the Genoese, French and Ragusans took advantage of the break-up of Venice’s monopoly of the spice trade. In addition, there is evidence that in these years a sizable portion of the spices arriving in Egypt and Syria took the south–north overland route. The spice supplies reaching Bursa and Istanbul were exported overland to the Balkans, toward the Adriatic Sea and to east-central Europe and Lwow.

Venice, though shocked and alarmed, did not go so far as to openly oppose the Ottoman takeover of Egypt and Syria in 1517. Now the ports of Beirut, Tripoli and Alexandria, from which Venice obtained its spice shipments, were under Ottoman control. In 1527, pepper imported in large quantities reached the level of the fifteenth century although other, more valuable spices, retained their high prices, three times higher than in the fifteenth century. The Levantine trade of Venice fully recovered toward the mid-sixteenth century, and there was remarkable progress in
Table 1:69. The price of pepper in Cairo, 1496–1531 (in gold ducats per collo)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>collo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1496</td>
<td>66-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1497</td>
<td>74-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1503</td>
<td>90-102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1520</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1524</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1531</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1539</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1 collo = 3 Egyptian kantar or 133 kg. Source: Godinho (1915).

the last three decades of the century when Aleppo and Tripoli acquired large supplies of spices coming via the Persian Gulf (Table 1:69). “Political reunification,” Magalhães points out, “of the Middle East under Turkish power has a lot to do with that development although the formation of this colossus entailed harsh blows to the Venetian prosperity when connections with Alexandria and Beirut were so fundamentally responsible for its trade before the Turkish take over of these two ports.”

Venice was well aware of the central role the Ottomans could play in reviving the India–Red Sea route. After the conclusion of peace with the Ottoman Empire in 1503, Venice recognized the fact that it was the Ottomans who were the only power capable of maintaining the route against the Portuguese. The peace treaty of 1503 renewed, at the same time, all the capitulatory guarantees for Venetian trade. Under the circumstances the Venetian Senate decided to pursue a more subtle, even submissive, policy toward the Ottomans.

**MORE EVIDENCE FOR THE REVIVAL OF THE**
**SPICE TRADE**

Throughout the sixteenth century the spice trade was still the most important branch of international trade. Along with precious textiles, raw silk and precious stones, spice was big business in terms of capital investment and large profit margins. The “capitalist spirit,” Hermann Kellenbenz pointed out, “found in the commerce of pepper one of its most important fields of activities.” To a great extent this is also true for

the Islamic world. According to the Bursa court records of 1480–1550, the wealthiest merchants were those involved in the spice trade, and, next to silk, the largest capital investments were made in the spice trade. In 1500, for example, an Aleppan merchant, Hacı Abu Bakr, imported to Bursa a large supply of ginger with a value of 200,000 akça (4,000 gold coins), just when Vasco da Gama was loading his ships with the same product in India.

Since navigation was hazardous for big ships in the northern Red Sea, Jidda was the terminus of the ships from India. Every year in May or November small sailing vessels or large galleys left Jidda for Tur (Tor) from where the caravans took precious cargoes to Cairo. The Ottoman historian Ali speaks of twenty ships from India arriving at Jidda every year. The figure is confirmed by Portuguese sources that give the number of ships as sixteen to eighteen prior to 1570. As against 90,000 in the early sixteenth century, annual customs revenues in Mecca were estimated at 150,000 gold ducats in 1587. Customs duties taken from goods arriving by sea at the port of Jidda were shared half and half by the Ottoman treasury and the shari‘i of Mecca. The spice trade through Cairo and Syria was the main avenue by means of which the Ottomans drained gold and silver specie from Europe. An important part of the spice cargoes arriving at Jidda took the land route Mecca–Damascus–Aleppo and from thence to Bursa. At Damascus customs fees of seven gold pieces were collected on each camelload of about 250 kg of spices and cloth coming from Mecca. If these were sold to the “Frankish party,” nineteen gold pieces were assessed, of which nine were to be paid by the Franks.

Venetian ships transported to the Levant copper bars and woolen cloth, silk cloth, kerseys, caps, coral, amber, various trinkets, paper and coins. When returning, the ships brought back spices, including pepper, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, frankincense and gum arabic, as well as sugar, sandalwood and other more exotic goods.

Also from Dubrovnik and Avlona, both under Ottoman control, shipments of spices found their way not to Venice but to the international fairs of central Italy, Lanzan and Recanati. Toward 1524 Greek, Turkish and Iranian (Azeri) merchants were present at these fairs. What is surprising is that in those fairs we also find English merchants exchanging their woolen cloth with oriental merchandise.

We have seen earlier that, as a result of the Ottoman–Attehne alliance against the Portuguese, large shipments of pepper had been arriving via the Red Sea since the 1430s. However, the Portuguese, well informed through their spies in Cairo, date “the marked revival of the Red Sea
spice trade" and their concern about it from 1545. The period 1554-67 witnessed an expansion in the Atjeh–Red Sea spice trade, which must have been due to the renewal of Atjehnese–Ottoman cooperation. The sultan of Atjeh sent to the Red Sea unusually large cargoes of spices in order to encourage the Ottomans to send a fleet into the Indian Ocean and to pay back the sultan for military aid. When in 1569 vast quantities of pepper arrived in the Ottoman ports, the price of pepper dropped in Flanders. Now more and more Ottoman ships appeared in the Indian Ocean as far away as Sumatra. The Portuguese failed to intercept the Atjehnese ships, which were reinforced with guns and Turkish soldiers. When they attacked them, they had to put up a fierce battle to overcome them. Many Atjehnese ships succeeded in reaching their destination of Al-Mukha (Mocha), Jidda, Suez or Tur in the Red Sea. In 1565 a Venetian source reported the arrival in Jidda of five Sumatran ships and twenty ships from various ports in India. The following year five ships from Atjeh brought a total of some 24,000 kantars of pepper. Thus, the trade route of Atjeh–Red Sea or Atjeh–Gujerat–Basra became the most important commercial artery of Asian trade from the middle of the sixteenth century.

The volume of Ottoman–Atjehnese commerce must have been quite significant. By 1585, the annual income of the Atjehnese ruler from trade with the Red Sea was calculated at three or four million gold ducats a year. The merchandise included 30–40,000 quintals of pepper, ginger, benzoin and cinnamon as well as gold, camphor, sandalwood, sulphur and silk. Now it was Gujerati ships which carried Atjehnese goods to the Red Sea. In the 1590s Atjehnese pepper arriving in the Red Sea was "much more than the Portuguese were taking around the Cape of Good Hope to Lisbon." 109

An interesting episode connected with this development is the migration of Turks as mercenaries and merchants into the South Asian world. Along with the Ottoman government’s attempt to replace the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean and the spread of Ottoman soldiers as mercenaries (Rumis), the active traffic gave rise also to Turkish merchant colonies in the area from Gujerat to Atjeh. Common Islamic law and facilities provided by kadi courts in all Islamic lands, or Islamic internationalism, appears to have been no less a factor in the close commercial relations of these countries; it in turn contributed to the spread of Islam in South Asia. Quite a large group of Rumis merchants, 400 in number, had settled in Diu (Gujerat). 110 By 1600, there was a Muslim Indian colony in Aleppo. In the sixteenth century in Calicut, the center of the spice trade in Malabar, there was a community of Turks with its own head merchant along with other foreign Muslim traders. 111 Muslim merchants of Malabar, upon their eviction by the Portuguese from India, took sanctuary in Sumatra and deflected part of the pepper and other valuable spices from the island via Aden to Cairo and Damascus.

In 1596, from the Javanese town of Bantam, "many Turkish and Arab merchants" set sail on board a Dutch ship to return home to Istanbul. 112 It was reported that the chief agent of the Ottoman sultan had his headquarters on the island of Atjeh with a capital of one million in gold coins to buy valuable spices. Ottomans had obtained a trading post at Pasai in Sumatra as early as about 1540.

TWO EMPORIA OF THE SPICE TRADE: TRIPOLI AND BASSRA

Tripoli became the principal outlet of the spice trade from Damascus, while Alexandria had the same function for spice exports from Cairo. By 1583 Tripoli was mentioned as the port most frequented by Christian merchants. 113 One important reason why European trade shifted to Tripoli in the second half of the sixteenth century was that initially the ship tax for foreign ships was lower there. 114 Then a new regulation was issued in 1571: European ships anchoring at the port of Tripoli were to pay 614 akçe for big vessels, 200 for middle-sized, and 25 for small-sized vessels at the time of departure. Interestingly enough, this regulation was arranged unanimously, after a long correspondence, by Ottoman customs agents and European merchants together and then approved and made law by the sultan. By 1571 the ports of Latakia, Cebel, Banya and Antartus were dependencies of the port of Tripoli, comprising a customs zone on this part of the Syrian coast. Tripoli became one of the main ports for the import of European textiles, woolens or silks, minerals, tin and steel, and the export of spices, Lebanese raw silk and cotton. As mentioned in the Ottoman regulations of the mid-sixteenth century, ships visiting Tripoli were from Venice, France, Chios or Cyprus. Before the Ottoman conquest in 1570, Cyprus was the principal transit center for European merchants who did not have capitulation guarantees for trade within the Ottoman dominions (see Tables 1:70 and 1:71).

Goods from Iran and Syria arriving at the Tripoli market by caravan were subject to the scales tax. The scales tax corresponded to the marketplace due and was light compared with customs duties. Many Europeans,
however, are said to have finished their transactions in Damascus or Aleppo.

Two percent customs duty had to be paid for all goods loaded on ships at Tripoli destined for Ottoman and other Muslim countries. Since abundant supplies of olive oil and potash were available in Syria, Tripoli and other Syrian towns had a very active soap industry and exported large quantities of soap to Istanbul and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. Two gold pieces for each box of soap were paid as customs duty. While there were four state-owned soap factories in Tripoli before 1571, they shut down apparently as a result of competition from private soap factories. In the Tripoli regulation, special reference is made to the corals of Tunisia. In fact, when the merchants of Marseilles obtained the rights to coral fishing off Tunis, they took most of the coral to Tripoli and Alexandria in exchange for spices. Spices from Tripoli competed with those imported from Lisbon to the French market. Some of these French imports found their way as far afield as Rouen and England. Even at Antwerp, which was the European emporium of spices under Spanish control, Levant spices arriving regularly competed with those coming from Lisbon. When the English were granted capitulation privileges in 1580, they imported large quantities of oriental goods, mainly from Tripoli. The Ottomans permitted them to buy cotton and cotton yarn in Tripoli, which were as a rule among the goods prohibited for export. In May of 1609 an English ship from Syria had a cargo worth about 150,000 crowns in silk, indigo, gallnuts and cotton goods.

According to a Venetian report of 1593, Tripoli enjoyed a kind of autonomy and European merchants had to pay extra protection money to the local Arab emir, Fahreddin Ma'ın, then acting as the Ottoman tax-farmer and governor. This is mentioned as the principal cause of the shift of European trade, at least partly, from Tripoli to Sidon and Iknederun (Alexandretta) in the last decade of the sixteenth century.

For a reliable source for the Gulf traffic and regional economy of the Ottomans we have the two Ottoman customs and market dues regulations of Basra, dated 1551 and 1575, which evidently originated from previous regulations going back to Safavid or even earlier times. Transit goods of Indian and Iranian origin as well as regional products are listed in these documents (see Table 1:72).
Hormuz owed its large annual income to the trade with Basra. The Estado da Índia's annual revenue in Hormuz was the highest compared to that of the other Portuguese port cities. The Dutch agent Visrich reported that 54 ships arrived at Hormuz with a variety of cotton cloth, including calicoes and precious linens, and brought various kinds of spices, drugs and dyestuffs. The annual Portuguese customs revenue was estimated to be between 250 and 500 thousand cruzados. The Ottoman regulations reveal that there were indeed official arrangements between themselves and the Portuguese authorities at Hormuz. A Portuguese “fatur” (feitor, factor) represented the “kapitan” (capitão) of Hormuz at Basra, who himself visited Basra every three years. Purchases made for him, principally horses and textiles, were not subject to taxation. His exports of horses enjoyed the same exemption at Bahrain. In fact, the most important export to India was Arab horses, while silver, mostly coming from Ottoman-controlled centers, overshadowed all exports. The amount of silver annually taken by the Portuguese from the Gulf as a whole is estimated at two million cruzados in the 1590s.

In this period Basra appears to have been also the principal center of trade for Iran, not only for the exchange of native products but also for Indian goods. By capturing Hormuz (1622) and shifting trade to Bandar-Abbas, Shah Abbas would bring a total change in this pattern of trade (Table 1.73).

Iranians in general came to the landing called Sif in Basra, which was the popular local port with depots for grain and vegetables. Caravans from Lucistan and Shiraz as well as from the landings of Daurak, Bandar and Abu-Shihr arrived regularly at Sif. There seems to have been quite an active traffic between these ports and Basra by sea and on the Karun river, passing through Huwayza, Dizbul, Shushtar and Wasit.

Many Iranian merchants visited the island of Hormuz. As mentioned above in relation to the caravan of 1610, Iranian merchants used the Basra route to import Indian goods.

The great variety of goods — silk and cotton textiles as well as foodstuffs and raw materials — imported to Basra denotes the significance of Iranian trade for the region. Perhaps some of the valuable silks from Iran were re-exported to India.

Almost all ships from Djezayir/Jaza’ir and Baghdad brought native products but big caravans from Baghdad, Damascus and Aleppo carried goods of international traffic. We have mentioned the importance of the export of horses which came from Al-Hasa and Baghdad. In addition to red dye, henna, dates, ginnah and buffalo hides made up the bulk of

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**Table 1.72. Imports from India to Basra, 1551, 1575**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spices</th>
<th>Dyes</th>
<th>Textiles</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pepper and other</td>
<td>Indigo</td>
<td>Fine muslins for</td>
<td>Steel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spices (chiefly</td>
<td></td>
<td>bayrami cloth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cinnamon, nutmeg,</td>
<td>Gumlac</td>
<td></td>
<td>Iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ginger)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>Other cotton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fabrics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

exports. Along with the export of horses, fabrics or cloaks of camel wool, and goods passing in transit, such as Syrian soap and the red-dye of Yemen, the Arabian peninsula appears to have had an important share in Basra’s international and regional trade. Arab felt was famous and the object of an active trade at Basra. *Maslah*, a large cloak of camel wool, and smaller cloaks called *busht* were apparently in great demand.

In the caravan transportation through the deserts separating Basra from Syria and the Hejaz, Bedouins of the Arabian desert played a major role. Interestingly enough, some goods of Indian origin, such as indigo and cloth, came to Basra, via Najd and Al-Hasa, from Mecca. The Djezayer islands of lower Iraq, provided goods for local consumption such as rice, dates, fish and mats. Other important ports in lower Iraq included Zakyya, where ships from India arrived and sheep from Iran passed in transit; and Kurnah, which merchant ships trafficking between Basra and Baghdad visited. Here, they charged a passage toll of 80 *akça* per ship.

Goods of local production, namely fine muslins from Bahrain and coarse cotton textiles woven in Basra and Al-Katif, indicate that there existed quite an active handicraft production for local consumption as well as export in this area in the sixteenth century. Substantial increases in tax revenues between 1551 and 1575 give the impression of a growing prosperity for these local industries. Part of the imported indigo dye was used locally for textile manufacture. The revenue of the large dye-house of Basra amounted to 262,001 *akça* in 1551. Apparently, imported Indian raw cotton spun and turned into cotton yarn in the region came to Basra to be dyed.

Because of extraordinary defense expenditures, the government did not expect to receive a surplus revenue from Basra. On the contrary, it had to send an appropriation to support the local budget. After driving the Ottomans out of the silk-producing provinces in Azerbaijan in the last decade of the century, Shah Abbas planned to reconquer Iraq and to deprive the Ottoman Empire of this economic lifeline. Furthermore, by capturing Aleppo, as the Ilkhanids of Iran had attempted in the thirteenth century, he planned to take direct control of the entire Indian trade with Europe. To this end he had already established his control over Hormuz (1622) and Kandehar (1623), emporium of the Indian caravan trade in Asia. He captured Baghdad in January of 1624 and his governor-general of Shiraz attempted to take Basra at the same time. Isolated from the Ottoman bases in the north in the wake of the fall of Baghdad, and facing the actual independence of the local lord Afrasiyab in lower Iraq, the pasha of Basra made an alliance with the Portuguese for the safety and economic future of the city. In the meantime, following the Iranian occupation of Hormuz, the Portuguese succeeded in replacing Hormuz with Muscat as the center of their trade with Basra. Portuguese ships began to arrive in Basra after 1623, which illustrated a renewed prosperity in the following years. Indian goods brought to Basra by the Portuguese were now conveyed to Aleppo through a direct route across the desert, entirely avoiding Baghdad. In reaction to this, the Iranians gave commercial privileges to the English at Bandar-Abbas and at Kung to the Portuguese (1630) and tried to bring this trade under their monopoly. Both places rapidly developed, with Bandar-Abbas becoming one of the great port cities of Asia during this period. The Portuguese, however, showed greater interest in the old route to Basra which led directly to the Syrian ports. The Ottomans after a long struggle finally succeeded in reconquering Baghdad in 1638. This marked the end of an epoch with the definitive hegemony of the English and Dutch over the Indian Ocean as well as the Gulf. Now, Iranians in the Gulf as well as Ottomans in Basra continued to receive Indian goods, mostly cotton goods and indigo, through the English and Dutch East India Companies.

In the new epoch, the Ottoman and Iranian position in the world economy was dwarfed by the tremendous expansion of the Atlantic economy and the substitution of Western staples by colonial production—sugar, tobacco, coffee and cotton. In the new era, the cotton trade began to overshadow that of silk as a result of the new widespread fashion in
the West, as in the Ottoman Empire, for cotton fabrics; cotton industries expanded in the West. Because of these developments, the old pattern of the Indian–Levant trade as the principal artery for world exchange underwent a complete structural change during the period 1620–60. The Ottoman Empire, like Venice, its principal partner, was the chief loser.

During the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire struggled to protect its middleman role in the world trade of spices and silk between India, Indonesia and Iran, on the one hand, and Europe on the other. We have seen that the transit trade of Iran’s silk became increasingly important in world trade as silk industries developed in the West. Fernand Braudel, who for the first time helped us understand the Ottoman role in the world trade, concentrates on spices, wheat and bullion, leaving out another vital commodity in international trade, namely cotton and cotton goods. This oversight may be justified for sixteenth-century Europe. But imports of Indian textiles had a very important place in the Middle East traffic with India, perhaps more important than spices in terms of the drain of bullion from the region in the sixteenth century, and apparently even earlier.\(^{125}\) In the early sixteenth century, when the Portuguese attempted to blockade the Red Sea, Egypt complained in particular of the scarcity of Indian textiles. Mention was made of fine Indian muslins from which turbans were made. By the same date, Cambay’s cotton fabrics were exported all over the world, including Iran, Syria, North Africa and Turkey.\(^{126}\) In the same century, the production and export of Indian cotton fabrics to the Middle East and Europe reached unprecedented levels.\(^{127}\) Cheap Indian calicoes were in great demand by the masses, while the very expensive fine turban muslins were an indispensable luxury item for the elite. In 1623, the Dutch agent Visnich mentions eight ships arriving from India at Hormuz loaded with white and colored fabrics, three with calicoes and coarse baftas.\(^{128}\)

By 1670, an English East India Company officer confessed that through the India–Basra route merchants from the Middle East “carried off five times as many calicoes as the English and the Dutch.”\(^{129}\) The import of Indian textiles through the Red Sea route appears to have been no less important throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Cairo was, like Basra, an entrepôt for Indian fabrics.

In 1647, in the important centers of Ottoman cotton industries, native dealers took their complaints to the imperial council against the Armenians of Iran who brought and sold Eastern cotton fabrics.\(^{130}\) Armenians were particularly active in the Indian textile trade during this period. An invasion of Indian fabrics was so alarming that even an official annalist of the empire, Naima,\(^{131}\) complained of the drain of bullion from the empire, saying, “so much cash treasury goes for Indian merchandise that … the world’s wealth accumulates in India.” The East India Companies of the English and Dutch were engaged now in the massive trade of cotton goods in their imports to Basra and Gombroon. Soon Ottoman weavers began to produce imitations of Indian fabrics in such industrial centers as Bursa and Aleppo. When, following the Middle East Indian cottons, fine muslins as well as cheap and attractive calicoes invaded Western European markets, riots broke out among the wool and flax industries against the import and use of cottons. In panic the French and English governments introduced restrictions on the import of Indian fabrics. In fact, in Europe too, this trade overshadowed the spice trade in the period 1650–1750.

**Germans and the spice trade**

Already during the sixteenth century, individual German merchants were establishing direct trade relations with Ottoman lands.\(^{132}\) Although Venice prohibited German merchants in the fondaco dei Tedeschi from cooperating with the Venetians in maritime ventures, there were exceptions. An early example is a merchant of Augsburg, Jacob Rehlinger, who had established trade relations with Istanbul in luxury goods in 1530. During the Venetian–Ottoman War of 1537–40, the firms of Augsburg attempted to get spices for the German market from Dubrovnik, where shipments from Alexandria had shifted from Venice. In 1559, the Fuggers sent one of their agents to Alexandria and bought spices worth 10,000 cruzados. The cargo loaded on a Ragusan ship arrived at Dubrovnik, and from there it sailed on to Fiume, which belonged to the emperor. The following year, the agent came to Alexandria with a larger sum. The possibility of a German shift to the Levant route alarmed Portugal.\(^{133}\) Along with the Fuggers, the German firm of Ulstetter also had agents in Cairo and Alexandria.

Especially during times when Venice was at war with the Ottomans, the Germans either attempted to get supplies of oriental goods from the Levant through Venice’s rivals – Genoa, Trieste, Marseilles and Dubrovnik – or to penetrate the Levantine markets directly. It was possible for non-Muslims from the Abode of War without capitulatory guarantees to trade under the protection of those nations with capitulations. During the war of 1570–73, when Ottoman–French trade relations showed an unprecedented expansion, the German businessman, Melchior Manlich,
The India trade

from the Levant to Germany. But the year 1569, when the Ottomans decided to attack Venetian Cyprus, was the real turning point.

In 1570, in his grand project for a spice trade monopoly for Europe, Konrad Rott of Augsburg estimated the total European demand for spices at 28,000 quintals, which was distributed among various regions as follows: 135

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England, Scotland and Ireland</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany, Poland, Baltic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>countries, Bohemia, Austria,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silesia and Hungary</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Melchior Manlich’s attempt proved to be a failure, German commercial houses became involved more than ever in cooperating with Lisbon. The big companies of Augsburg, the Welsers and the Fuggers, chose Spanish-Portuguese cooperation – thus shifting from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic – for large-scale pepper imports to Europe. Their representative, Ferdinand Cron, settling in Goa in 1587, established a prosperous business there at a time when the Dutch arrived to challenge the Portuguese monopoly. 136

The Welsers and Fuggers, who had lent large sums to Philip II, participated in the contracts made by the Spanish king for the import and distribution of 30,000 quintals of pepper in Europe in 1586 and 1591. In 1586 the annual amount was estimated at 30,000 quintals in the contract made by Philip II with G.B. Rovelasc. 137 While countries supplied by Venice or the Levant were always the largest markets, now the pepper shipments arrived principally at the ports of Hamburg, Lübeck and Amsterdam from Lisbon. What is surprising is that a portion of the pepper arriving in the northern ports found its way to Leghorn and Venice to compete with supplies from the Levant. 138

Bought for 35 cruzados per quintal in India, pepper cost 16 cruzados (or gold ducats) at the Casa da India at Lisbon about 1586. Having a monopoly in the spice trade, the king added his share so that it was sold to the European merchants at 37 cruzados and in times of shortage as high as 60 cruzados. 139 After 1600 a new period began with the powerful intervention of the English and Dutch into the spice trade. After the
defeat of the Spanish armada in 1588, English privateers intensified their attacks against Spanish-Portuguese ships and spice shipments to Lisbon sharply declined. The Dutch and the English soon began to compete against the Portuguese in supplying spices taken directly from India. Lisbon tried to fight back against the intruders by offering more favorable conditions in the payment of its pepper to the ports of Hansa. In Lisbon, the pepper price then dropped from the average of 36 cruzados to 20 per quintal.

In the short period between 1591 and 1600, Portugal, in cooperation with the German Hansa, under the control of the Spanish king since 1580, made a final effort to protect its monopoly on Indian trade against the Dutch and English.

On the other hand, the competition from the Levant in supplying the European markets through Venice, Dubrovnik, Marseilles and Messina continued to be quite serious. As evidence from the years 1591–92 demonstrates, supplies of pepper from the Levant substantially influenced prices in Venice and Central Europe. The Fuggers had special agents in Venice in order to get regular information about the market conditions there and on spice supplies arriving in the Ottoman ports. The Fuggers planned to raise the price on the news from Venice that the Ottoman fleet was cruising to intercept shipments from the Levant. But in February of 1593 news came of the arrival of 30,000 quintals of pepper through the Red Sea, exactly the same amount expected through the Atlantic route to Lisbon. Then the Spanish king had difficulty in finding good customers for the pepper arriving in the Casa da India. Because of its rivalry with the Habsburgs in the Mediterranean and Central Europe, the Ottoman Empire encouraged and cooperated with the English and Dutch in the first stage of their struggle in the Levant which resulted in the collapse of the Venetian monopoly of the spice trade.

Steensgaard argues that the East India Companies of Western nations brought in a structural change in this trade against the traditional “peddling trade” and they were responsible for the eclipse of the Levant as a competitor in Asian trade in the first decades of the seventeenth century. There is consensus that the final blow to the Levant spice trade came about 1625 when the Dutch and English firmly established their domination in the Indian Ocean and also established a strict monopoly over the Atlantic route. Due to the Dutch East India Company’s monopoly, the scarcity of spice supplies in Alexandria was referred to in Venetian reports there in the 1610s. It should be remembered that a substantial part of the pepper and other precious spices came to the Indian ports from Indonesia to be trafficked to the Red Sea and the Gulf. Now this source had come completely under Dutch control. It should be added that the Ottomans lost control once more of Yemen following the revolt in the 1620s.

But, when we speak of the decline of Ottoman transit trade, there is always a risk in making generalizations on the basis of reports coming from one individual source for one specific period and one specific commodity. While spices ceased to come through the Red Sea as a result of the Dutch monopoly, the customs revenue from the growing trade in silk and in Mocha coffee appears to have substantially compensated for the loss and, while Iranian silk supplies from Iran decreased in Aleppo, they increased in İzmir. On the other hand, although the spice trade was abandoned in the Levant, Indian trade in cotton goods and dyes always flourished.

In the face of better quality and cheaper products coming from Dutch and English industries, the Ottoman economy completely lost its competitiveness in terms of price and quality in such commodities as woolen cloth (including mohair industries), steel production, and mining, particularly in silver production. Also, cheaper production of sugar from the plantations in the Canaries and Brazil eliminated the Ottoman sugar refineries in Cyprus and Egypt. As a result of the Ottoman open-door policy under the capitulatory regime, no systematic policy was introduced to protect and improve native industries. Ottoman economic decline experienced also by other Mediterranean economies, namely Italian and Spanish, was a fact already by 1630. In the Ottoman case it appears to be chiefly the result of the obsolescence of a medieval traditionalist system in the face of a modern capitalist system. The Ottoman economy also became a market for so-called colonial goods in the subsequent era. One of the first colonial goods imported by English merchants into Turkey was tobacco, around 1600. It soon became a widely consumed commodity in Turkey. In the seventeenth century, the rapidly growing commerce in colonial goods dwarfed the Levant trade.

NOTES

2 Ibid., pp. 295–301.
5 Ibid., pp. 297.
The India trade

58 Blackburn (1979), p. 133.
63 Steensgaard (1972), p. 185.
66 For Rashid's letter, see ibid., p. 115 note 11.
67 For the letter, see ibid., p. 116.
70 Özbaran (1972), pp. 60-62.

The pearl trade had a significant place in the Ottoman economy. The elite preferred investment in pearls because of the facility it offered in hoarding and moving large sums. For the same reason, Iranian importers of raw silk invested their cash at Bursa in pearls, since they were not permitted to take silver and gold outside the Ottoman dominions.

72 Braudel (1972), I, pp. 534-36.
73 Ibid., p. 554.
75 Godinho (1969), pp. 710-17; Lane (1940), p. 584.
79 Durante Catanho to the king, see Melzig (1943), pp. 77-78.
84 Hakluuyt (1847-1940), I, pp. 176-77.
85 Sahillioglu (1968), pp. 63-70.
87 Lane (1940), p. 584.
89 Braudel (1972), I, pp. 564-65.
90 For a complete list of spices, see Godinho (1969), pp. 777-96.
91 Faroqui (1979b); Heyd (1936), II, pp. 165-71.
92 Godinho (1935), pp. 283-86.
93 Ibid., pp. 284-87.
95 Godinho (1931), I, pp. 354-59.
96 Braudel (1973), I, pp. 358-60; Sella (1968), pp. 88-105.
98 Godinho (1933), p. 295.
It is difficult to arrive at exact figures on pepper imports since the measures vary widely. A Venetian collo in the pepper trade was accepted as about three kantars corresponding to 1,110 English lb, but actually it varied between 968 and 1,212 English lb, see Lane (1940), p. 383 note 8. A regular Ottoman kantar equaled 56.4 kg. In Tripoli or Syria a load of pepper varied between 260 and 322 lb, see Braudel (1973), i, p. 563. One quintal equaled 100 lb in Lisbon, Hanseatic ports and England but the Lisbon lb was heavier. Pepper was sold in bags, coili, in the northern ports.

Ibid., p. 298.
99 Kellenbenz (1956), p. 27.
100 Inalcık (1960b), p. 133-35.
102 Braudel (1972), i, p. 555.
103 Ibid., p. 564.
104 Barkan (1943), p. 221.
107 Ibid., p. 421.
108 Ibid., pp. 423-27.
109 Ibid., p. 427.
112 Van Leur (1955), pp. 195, 162. "There came such a multitude of Javanese, and other nations as Turks, Chinese, Bengali, Arabs, Gujarati." It is to be noted that Turks are mentioned separately from other Muslim nations, Arabs and Gujarati. Our source, writing in 1596, says: "Many Turks and Arab merchants came on board [the Dutch ships]." One of them was "Kojah [Hoca] Rayoan" from Istanbul who had visited Venice.

Hakluyt (1847-1940), II, p. 268 cited by Braudel (1973), i, p. 564.
114 Barkan (1943), p. 211.
118 CSP, Venice XII, document no. 497.
119 Steensgaard (1970), p. 177; on the struggle between the local and Arab chieftains and the Ottoman administration for tax-farms, particularly on silk and cotton, see Inalcık (1992).
120 Mantran (1967), pp. 124-44.
121 Steensgaard (1972), p. 199.
122 Ibid., p. 88.
123 Ibid., p. 198.
124 Ibid., p. 199.
126 Varthema (1865), p. 151.
It is difficult to arrive at exact figures on pepper imports since the measures vary widely. A Venetian collo in the pepper trade was accepted as about three kantars corresponding to 1,120 English lb, but actually it varied between 968 and 1,222 English lb, see Lane (1940), p. 583 note 8. A regular Ottoman kantar equaled 65.4 kg. In Tripoli or Syria a load of pepper varied between 260 and 522 lb, see Braudel (1973), i, p. 563. One quintal equaled 100 lb in Lisbon, Hanseatic ports and England but the Lisbon lb was heavier. Pepper was sold in bags, colli, in the northern ports.


Barkan (1943), p. 221.


Ibid., p. 427.


Van Leur (1955), pp. 195, 162. "There came such a multitude of Javanese, and other nations as Turks, Chinese, Bengali, Arabs, Gujarati." It is to be noted that Turks are mentioned separately from other Muslim nations, Arabs and Gujarati. Our source, writing in 1596, says: "Many Turks and Arab merchants came on board [the Dutch ships]." One of them was "Kojah [Hoca] Rayovan" from İstanbul who had visited Venice.


Barkan (1943), p. 211.


CSP: Venice XII, document no. 497.

Steensgaard (1970), p. 177; on the struggle between the local and Arab chieftains and the Ottoman administration for tax-farms, particularly on silk and cotton, see Inalçık (1992).


Steensgaard (1972), p. 199.

Ibid., p. 88.

Ibid., p. 198.

Ibid., p. 199.


Varthema (1863), p. 151.


Steensgaard (1972), p. 197.
from an underdeveloped country to an industrial one, ready to expand in world markets.

In the period 1552–70, we are told of an eclipse of English shipping in this trade. It was maintained that the English then preferred the Antwerp market, which was easily accessible and abundantly supplied with oriental goods. However, even after 1552 English merchants in trade with the Levant had not completely ceased their activity. There is evidence that English merchants were importing spices from the Levant in Venetian and French ships in the years 1560–80 and that Italian merchants continued with business in London in the goods they imported from the Levant. Their imports included spices, dyes, silk, alum and cotton. Italians bought and exported chiefly English kerseyes. In the 1560s and 1570s, Armenian merchants from Iran were purchasing English cloth, mainly kerseyes, in Tripoli of Syria and Aleppo. After an eclipse of twenty years, English ships reappeared in full strength in the Mediterranean in 1573. This change came about because of Venetian inability to carry on the former traffic between England and the Levant during the Ottoman–Venetian War of 1570–73 and hence they employed the ships of the neutral English.

The English sought capitulations, which had become a necessity in order to continue trade with Ottoman Turkey after the establishment of direct Ottoman rule over Chios in 1566. Until then Chios had served as the main transit center for English imports and exports. In the seventeenth century, the English, having gained a capitulation, made Izmir on the mainland their principal trade center in the Levant, replacing Chios. Thus, Izmir assumed the role of the most accessible outlet for trade with Asia Minor and Iran. By the 1570s, both the Mediterranean and the Antwerp–Lwow routes came under the control of Philip II of Spain, the champion of a Catholic crusade against northern Protestantism and Ottoman Islam. In fact, Lepanto (1571) and the fall of Antwerp (1572) were turning points ushering in a new age in the history of relations between the northern countries and the Ottoman Empire. Antwerp, the emporium of oriental goods and the transit center for English cloth exports to Europe and Asia, was ruined as a result of Spanish repression against the rebels in the Low Countries in 1576. A few years earlier, France fell under reactionary Catholic leadership as a result of the massacre on St. Bartholomew’s Day in 1572. Then, Philip II became the master of all Portuguese colonies by annexing Portugal in 1580. Under these circumstances, a resurgence of English merchants in the Levant took place under totally new political circumstances.
It was no mere coincidence that the Ottoman sultan was interested in extending capitulations to Western countries in 1569 exactly when he was preparing the invasion of Cyprus, then held by Venice. France was the first Western nation to obtain the same comprehensive capitulations as the Venetians. Ottoman interest in approaching the West became a vital policy following the disaster of Lepanto in 1571, when the Venetian-Spanish-papal coalition became a threat to the very existence of the Ottoman Empire. Also, in order to obtain vital materials such as English tin, steel and lead as well as to give a fatal blow to the Venetian economy, the Porte was anxious to establish direct trade relations with the northerners. Incidentally, it should be remembered that the Ottoman government was kept well informed of major political developments in the West through the French, the Ragusans and Marrano Jews. The Ottomans also must have been aware that the mortal struggle of the Spanish navy against the English and the Dutch prevented it from being a major threat to the Ottomans in the Mediterranean. This situation created a de facto cooperation between Ottomans and northerners. When the latter reentered the Mediterranean in the 1580s, English pirates were allowed to use Ottoman ports in North Africa, Albania and Morea as bases and markets for the spoils they were taking from Catholic states. Some English privateers even joined the Algerian-Turkish corsairs and guided them in their activities in the Atlantic.

Venetian galleys in the Mediterranean became an easy target of the English bretoni, which were heavily armed with bronze and iron guns. The Ottomans also appreciated the naval superiority and potential of the newcomers against Venice and her allies. The invasion of the sea by northern ships from the Atlantic marked a turning point in the history of the Mediterranean, with an impact on every dimension of the economic life of the region. In the first phase of the rapprochement, both the English and the Ottoman governments seem primarily to have been interested in political-military advantages against the Spanish hegemony. The course of events makes it clear why England sought the sultan's favor in the 1570s. The ruin of Antwerp and the Spanish annexation of Portugal and its colonial empire blocked England from world shipping lanes, which would bring about economic collapse since England could not export its woolen cloth, the basis of its industries and commerce. Also, England herself was under the threat of a Spanish invasion. Under these circumstances, Elizabeth I (1558–1603) was left no choice but to turn to the only great power capable of checking Philip II's plans of world domination, the Ottoman Empire, as Italian states in the sixteenth and then Francis I in the first half of the sixteenth century had done. Before the defeat of the Spanish armada in 1588, "the only course open to her was an alliance with the Turk," and the political motive "was present from the start in the reopening of connections with Turkey." In the 1580s Spain was anxiously following the negotiations between Elizabeth and the sultan.

Already in a 1572 letter to the king of France, Selim II offered the assistance of the Ottoman fleet against Spain and suggested a concerted attack by France, England and the princes of the Low Countries. In 1575 the sultan gave safe conduct to William Harborne, the first English ambassador to the Ottoman state. Contemporary official correspondence testifies that in the period 1579–88 Elizabeth I always hoped that the sultan would send a powerful armada against Philip II of Spain to foil his plans against England, and the sultan reiterated his intention to this end. In Istanbul a group of statesmen urged the sultan to end the ruinous war against Iran and to prepare an armada against Spain. Since the 1550s the Ottomans regarded all Protestant nations in the West as natural allies under the general term "Lutherans" (Elizabeth was called "the Lutheran queen"), fighting against the Pope and the "idolaters." In fact, the Ottoman threat caused Philip II to leave part of his naval forces in the Mediterranean in order to protect the Spanish coasts. The sultan promised the queen that he would send a fleet of 300 ships against Spain. But then, in Istanbul, the party supporting the war against the Habsburgs in Central Europe got the upper hand and the naval campaign against Spain was abandoned.

The safe conduct that Suleyman I at Aleppo gave to the Englishman, Anthony Jenkinson, in 1553, permitted him to visit "the Ottoman ports to load and unload goods wherever he wished and trade throughout the empire." But this privilege was given to his person under the protection of a capitulary Western nation. Such individual safe conducts, which were quite a widespread practice, cannot be interpreted as a blanket capitulation.

The English traded under the French banner for protection until they obtained their first capitulation. Actually, the English move for
rapprochement began as a trade “venture” of three London merchants with the full support of the queen’s government in 1579, and which found a ready response in the Ottoman capital. The first ambassador, William Harborne, supported by the queen’s government, was a merchant, organizing this “venture” in cooperation with Edward Osborne and Richard Staper, the founders of the Levant Company. Harborne brought to Istanbul quite a sizable amount of merchandise, consisting of tin, lead, and English cloth, and immediately engaged in business activities. In his letter to the queen, dated March 1579, the sultan granted all English merchants a permit to trade in Ottoman territory under his protection as “the French, Venetians, and Poles have come and traded in safety and security.” Upon Harborne’s petition to the grand vizier, the sultan at the same time granted a personal safe conduct for trade to William Harborne and his associates. But actually the first capitulations were granted to the English nation only when the queen formally promised her “faithful friendship and gratitude” and asked for it in her letter to the sultan dated October 25, 1579. All this was in conformity with the Islamic–Ottoman procedure of issuing a capitulation. The arduous negotiations were complicated by intrigues by the French, who wanted to keep the English under the French banner in their trade in the Levant; and by Venice, which did not want to lose its profitable role of middleman in the English–Ottoman trade. In the end, the Ottoman sultan granted full capitulatory privileges to the English nation in May 1580. They are essentially modeled on the French capitulations of 1569 and gave the English in the Ottoman Empire “legal status equal with the French.” With a reduced customs duty of 3 percent instead of 5 percent paid by other nations, the English became the most favored nation in the empire. The French would obtain the low rate of 3 percent only with the renewal of capitulations in 1673. However, according to Ottoman regulations, different rates were applied depending on the port in question (see above, pp. 195–204) so that, from the beginning, disputes arose between local Ottoman agents and the English. In September 1581, the Turkey company was founded by queen’s charter and under the capitulation guarantees English merchants enthusiastically began their trade venture in Turkey. In January 1592, the groups of merchants trading under the names of Venice Company and Turkey Company were united in the Levant Company under a new charter. The Levant Company now monopolized English trade in the eastern Mediterranean, including Ottoman and Venetian possessions. English consulates were set up in Aleppo (1580), Alexandria (Egypt) (1583), Patras (1589), and Izmir (1611). At other important commercial centers, such as Athens, Salonica and Acre, English merchants were under the protection of French consuls.

It is interesting to note that in 1579 Harborne employed the two traditional routes to import his wares through which English goods used to reach the Levant markets, namely the northern route via Germany, Poland and Moldavia and the Mediterranean route terminating in Chios. Harborne himself travelled via Hamburg to Lwow, where he obtained from the Polish king, Stephen Bathory, a proclamation promising protection to the English merchants. The document stated that “the English merchants used to trade” in Poland. Since Bathory had made peace with the Porte in 1577 and had Ottoman support against his enemies, the English apparently hoped to channel their wares overland through this route because Spain might hinder them in the Mediterranean. Harborne joined the Turkish caravan at Lwow in the company of the Ottoman agents who had concluded the peace treaty with the king. The usual caravan route went through Kamenets (Kaminiec)–Khotin–Stefanesti–Iași–Tecuci and over into Wallachia to the Danube, then through Silistre–Provdjia–Kirkiklise to Istanbul. Harborne exchanged his wares in Istanbul for angora camelot and the like. Later, in March 1579, a ship loaded with cloth arrived for him at Chios. On his return the ship was to take home a cargo of Malmsey wine valued at 3,000 ducats at Crete, paid in cash. This was to become an established pattern of English trade in the Levant: the exchange of woolen cloth, tin, and lead for raw silk and the subsequent purchase of wine and currants at the Greek islands under Venetian rule.

Rising English mercantilism dreamed of reaching the Orient, the El Dorado believed the source of all wealth in the East. What was actually of prime importance for England was to market the products of its expanding woolen cloth industries. The Ottoman Empire itself was an important market and through Galata and Bursa a significant part of the imported cloth was channeled to Iran and other Asian countries. As soon as they had their first capitulation in 1580, English merchants appeared in the Aegean with their cargoes of cloth, lead and tin to exchange with Levantine products, currants and wine in particular. Crucial improvements and developments in the English woolen cloth industries coincided with the establishment of direct English trade with the Ottoman market. Prior to the capitulations of 1580, the chief English exports to the Levant were kerseys, lead and tin. “The lead and tin supplied much of the Turkish war needs.” Kaziya (kersey) or “Londra” cloths referred to in
The Ottoman sources\textsuperscript{21} consisted of cheap coarse woolen cloth, the so-called shortcloth. In addition to the immigration of Flemish skilled artisans, the direct import of Eastern dyestuffs from the Levant after the grant of capitulations in 1580 is recognized as one of the crucial factors in releasing English woolen industries from their dependence on Flemings and Italian middlemen for the dyeing and finishing of their white cloth.\textsuperscript{22} Then, by making dyed broadcloth instead of kerseys, English industries took the place of Venice in the woolen cloth trade in the Levant. In 1598, the Levant Company first exported 750 broadcloths together with 18,031 kerseys;\textsuperscript{23} over time, broadcloths totally replaced kerseys in the chief Levantine markets of Istanbul, Izmir and Aleppo. The yearly average broadcloth export to the Levant was estimated at 3,000 (see Table 1:74).

English cloth sold for less because of Britain’s cheaper native wool and low wages; and the English managed to keep their cloth prices stable while their competitors suffered from steadily rising prices.\textsuperscript{24} English exports also included key strategic goods such as powder, arms, tin and steel,\textsuperscript{25} which were badly needed by the Ottomans. Next to woolen imports, English tin was a strategic metal for making bronze guns and for tinning the copper utensils commonly used in Turkey. As a Protestant country, England did not obey the Pope’s ban on the export of tin and lead to the Ottoman Empire.

Imports from the Levant included chiefly goods which can be classified in four categories according to their origins: (1) Anatolian goods, namely cotton, cotton yarn, carpets, gallnuts; (2) Iranian goods, mainly raw silk; (3) products of the Greek islands mostly under Venetian control, namely currants, wine, and olive oil; (4) Indian or Indonesian products, mainly spices, drugs and dyes. It is interesting to note that already in the 1570s English imports to the Ottoman Empire included items of American origin, such as dye wood.\textsuperscript{26}

As typical examples, Table 1:75 gives a list of imports in five ships returning home from the Levant in 1584.\textsuperscript{27} The total value of the goods was officially estimated at c. 16,600 gold ducats.

The first Ottoman merchants arrived in London in 1580 to make purchases for the sultan: they were an Armenian by the name of Garabet, Nikole, apparently a Greek, and Ahmed.\textsuperscript{28}

Between the first English capitulations of 1580 and the founding of the East India Company in 1600, the Levant Company became the most important and only successful English overseas venture. A Venetian report tells us that the annual turnover of the London merchants in the Levant by 1604 was at least 250,000 crowns a year.\textsuperscript{29} The company claimed to have extended its sphere of activity to India through the Levant in order to fulfill the ultimate English goal of reaching India, after

### Table 1:74. English export of kerseys and broadcloths to the Levant (in pastav)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Kerseys</th>
<th>Broadcloths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>18,031</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1606</td>
<td>10,149</td>
<td>2,776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1621</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>2,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: One bolt called pastav had usually 50 zira or 34 m. Meanwhile the Ottoman customs registers of Hungary attest to the consumption of ingiz and karzysz wooden cloth even in this distant province of the empire.

### Table 1:75. English imports from the Levant, 1588 (in lb)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raisins (of Damascus)</td>
<td>10,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>49,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurneg</td>
<td>34,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigo</td>
<td>104,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galls</td>
<td>8,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepper</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anisred</td>
<td>2,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinamon</td>
<td>10,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But of cinamon</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloves</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salamonic</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mantine</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various spices</td>
<td>27,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pistachio</td>
<td>9133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw silk</td>
<td>86,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Comon yarn               | 15,840    |
- Flax                      | 700       |
- Cotton cloth              | 11,590    |
- Turkish carpets           | 13        |
- Spenger                   | 1 bag     |
- China                     | 1 box     |
- Mirrors                   | 1 box     |

For weaving fustians, making quilts and candle-wicks

Francis Drake’s arrival in the Moluccas in 1580 and John Newberry’s voyage through Ottoman lands to the Persian Gulf in 1581 and India in 1583.

On the other hand, in 1589, a group of London merchants were attempting to reach India directly by sea through the Cape of Good Hope and the expedition reached the East Indies in 1592. This proved to be another turning point for the Levant trade.

In conclusion, in the period of 1580–1600, thanks to the Ottoman capitulations, the Levant was the principal trade region for the English. It can safely be said that English mercantilism-capitalism owed much of its initial development to the Levant market. High-quality and cheap raw silk of Iran was now abundantly available in Aleppo and Izmir, thus giving an impetus to English silk manufacturing which became one of the thriving industries in the late seventeenth century. This was a replication of what had happened to Italy and France previously in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In this period, the English competed with Venice in the transit trade, supplying Italian silk industries through Leghorn. Silk thereafter became the basis of Ottoman-English trade despite periodic crises when the silk caravans from Iran did not arrive. The English interest in imported Persian silk grew considerably later on (Table 1:76). In order to buy it cheaper, they tried to establish direct traffic through Trabzon with Iran. The news alarmed Venice, the principal purchaser of Persian silk in Syria, a fear that Armenian and Georgian silk merchants shared. Aware of the intrigues of the Sherley brothers with the shah, the Ottoman government forbade the English project.

**THE DUTCH**

As earlier explained, the Ottomans were in trade relations through Genoese Chios and Polish Lvov with the Low Countries already by the fifteenth century.

In the beginnings of Ottoman-Dutch relations Joseph Nasi, also known as Don Juan Miquez, played a decisive role. He was active in the Antwerp banking house of Mendes before he came to settle in Istanbul, where he was employed by Süleyman I and Selim II. In 1569 the prince of Orange, William I, sent a secret envoy to Nasi seeking Ottoman support in the Dutch revolt against Philip II. Nasi had become the chief advisor on Western affairs to the Ottoman government, hence his great influence with the sultan. French resident ambassadors in Istanbul also informed the Porte about the Dutch revolt and their need for support. There was even talk of a Dutch alliance with the Ottomans. In a letter to the “Lutherans” in Flanders and other Spanish provinces, the sultan promised to send troops to their aid at a time to be determined by them. Although there apparently could be no real desire for actual cooperation with the “infidel” Turks, the Dutch, like the Italians and French before them, came to employ, under desperate conditions, the threat of the sultan’s power against Spain. But it is certain that, hoping to find natural allies to fight the Habsburgs in the newly rising nations in the West, the Ottomans had a definite policy to encourage them, and the granting of capitulations was part of this policy.

The presence of the Dutch in the Levant trade existed as early as the 1570s. Taking advantage of the individual grant of “amnesty” provision in Islamic Law, Antwerp merchants joined the Galata foreign merchant community in that period. The first voyage of a Dutch merchant ship from Holland to the Levant occurred in 1589. The Dutch first participated in the Levant trade under the protection of the French, who had the right to take non-capitulatory nations under their protection to trade in Ottoman territories. Also, the English, who had their capitulations in 1580, and apparently also the Marranos, who had a strong base in the Ottoman capital, helped the Dutch in entering the Levant trade. The Dutch, following the French and English, appear to have concentrated their efforts initially on the Aleppo market, which was an emporium for Indian spices and Iranian silk. Dutch merchants even then had a local representative of their own known as a “consul.” Later, they chose to trade in the Ottoman dominions under the English flag. Because of the problems created by Anglo-French competition, and with the rapid growth of Dutch trade in the Levant, the Dutch government decided to take steps which led to the establishment of their own capitulations. Somewhat unenthusiastic at first and concerned not to appear as if they were betraying the common cause of the crusade still lingering in Western Christendom, the Dutch authorities later followed a more realistic course in establishing friendly relations with the Porte as hostility against the common enemy Spain rose in the period 1604-9. From the beginning,
the Ottoman grand admiral, Halil Pasha, who was responsible for the naval interests of the empire in the Mediterranean, played a decisive role in establishing friendly relations between the Dutch Republic and the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, against the Catholic frontier in the Mediterranean, the Ottomans took the initiative in establishing an agreement with this Protestant country, which had a powerful navy. On the other hand, Dutch merchants in the Levant wanted a resident ambassador of their own in Istanbul and a chief consul in Syria. Finally, the Dutch government sent an extraordinary ambassador, Cornelius Haga, to Istanbul in 1612. Since a truce was signed with Spain in 1609, Holland’s main interest was now commercial. In Istanbul, Haga met with the opposition of the French, Venetian and English resident ambassadors. But, in the end, the Ottoman state, impressed by Dutch naval power, favored the grant of capitulations. In his audience with the sultan, Haga stressed the forty years of Dutch struggle against Spain and the resolution not to submit to the Pope’s authority and “idolatry.” Ottoman-Dutch negotiations spread the rumor that the Dutch alliance would provide the Ottomans with a modern fleet or war materials from the West. Ottomans already were getting iron guns and superior quality powder from England.

It is also interesting to note that in a secret report that the rival nations submitted to the sultan against the Dutch, the Dutch as a political and military power were minimized and the claim was made that Dutch exports of spices, cloth and olive oil could damage the Ottoman economy. Their woolen cloth, they said, was inferior in quality and “would result in a loss to the Salonica and Edirne cloth industries.” Also, it was claimed that the Dutch were taking gold and silver out of the empire and that Dutch pirates created insecurity for Ottoman traffic in the Mediterranean.

By such claims one may see to what particular economic matters the Ottomans were then sensitive. In his efforts to speak for the Dutch, Halil Pasha found in the Jews from Antwerp and in the Morisco Arab colony of Galata, both enemies of Catholic Spain, active supporters. The Dutch Republic was finally granted capitulations on July 6, 1612, modelled on those given to the French and English.

This was not a “treaty” but, as with other capitulations, it was an “amnesty” (aman) granted for the Dutch to trade in Ottoman territories. Reciprocity and political advantages for the Ottomans are implied in the introductory section by the explicit expression declaring that the Dutch would abide by a relationship of “sincere friendship and loyalty” toward the sultan. On the other hand, the sultan solemnly promised (articles 6 and 53) that capitulatory guarantees were above the law. Those Ottoman subjects who resisted their application or violated them were declared rebels against the sultan and punishable as such.

The instrument granted the Dutch all capitulatory privileges and guaranties; all rights included in the French and English capitulations applied to the Dutch. Although Western historians in general are not comfortable about the Western political-military cooperation with the Muslim empire, such points are quite explicit in the Dutch-Ottoman relations.

In a special provision (article 51), Dutch ships fighting against the ships of the non-captulatory nations were allowed to use Ottoman ports and to replenish their supplies. Article 21 made it clear that corsair ships from Algiers remained entitled, as formerly, to provide themselves with munitions and materials in Dutch ports.

On the other hand, guarantees against corsair acts show how concerned Western nations had become about increased privateering in this period. The sultan vowed that any Dutch, enslaved by the corsairs of Algiers, would be freed and their property returned in its entirety. If hostility arose between them because of the non-compliance of the corsairs, this situation would not invalidate the present capitulatory guarantees (article 17). The Dutch capitulations provided the most extensive privileges and guarantees and enabled Dutch merchants to develop their trade in the Levant. The Dutch were granted a 3 percent rate of customs duty instead of the 5 percent paid by the Venetians and French. Dutch merchants, like the French, were permitted the favor to export from Ottoman lands non-strategic goods such as cotton, cotton yarn, leather and beeswax (article 3). As for the most important trade items, reference is made to silk from Aleppo and other places, and to Dutch imports of lead, tin, iron and steel (articles 43 and 46).

The Porte’s regulations on precious metals, as formulated in the capitulations granted to the English (1583) and the Dutch (1612), stipulated that no duty was to be levied on coined gold and silver. These coins were not to be converted to Ottoman coins in the local mints (article 1) and orders were sent to the provincial authorities to this effect. Such measures served Ottoman finances and economy in general, since exactly at this time the empire was suffering from a dearth of precious metals. But, on the other hand, it will be seen that this policy would finally result in a financial and economic upheaval in the empire with the invasion of the Ottoman market by counterfeit coins imported chiefly by the Dutch. The Dutch were permitted to bring in and take out goods by sea to the Black Sea ports, including Trabzon and Caffa, and by land to Azov and
Muscovy, and Dutch ships coming from Damietta and Alexandria could carry goods to Istanbul or other places belonging to the Muslims. These clauses were evidently favored by the Ottomans in order to profit from Dutch shipping and contribute to the feeding of Istanbul from the two most important areas, Egypt and the northern Black Sea.

CORSAIRS

In the years 1580-90, Tenenti points out, the struggle in the Mediterranean for hegemony degenerated into sheer sea robbery with its profound social and economic consequences. Whether it was fought for religious ideology, national economic interests, or simple theft, the end result was the ruin of the old Mediterranean naval powers of Venice, Spain and the Ottoman Empire. It had been demonstrated that piracy was not a monopoly of the Muslim sea gazi, but rather a universal Mediterranean phenomenon. Spanish, French, Dutch, Italian and English seamen and even merchants were all involved in corsair activities in the Mediterranean during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Having lost their naval power, the Ottomans proved to be ineffective in the struggle against this Western piracy. English pirates intensified their activities along all the main routes from the Levant to Venice. The route Alexandria/Beirut-Crete yielded particularly rich spoils (in 1605 the capture of the ship Videla with a cargo of spices yielded 150,000 crowns). In the 1590s, the question of how to cope with this situation became a major concern for the Ottoman and Venetian governments.

The advent of the invincible English bretoni upset the whole naval balance of power in the Mediterranean. Now the rival Mediterranean states attempted to use the new master of the sea for their own advantage. English cooperation with the enemies of the empire created concern in Istanbul for the safety of their sea traffic, particularly between Istanbul and Egypt. In one instance, the grand duke of Tuscany, using ships made in England, had captured an Ottoman ship carrying the sultan's "Egyptian treasure." This situation resulted in the sultan's sending an envoy to England to voice complaints in 1607. Interestingly, the envoy Çavuş Mustafa also asked the king to permit the export of powder and arms to Turkey. At this time, the Ottoman nightmare was the cooperation of Venetian and English naval forces in the Mediterranean. It was feared that there might be a crusade under the Pope and Spanish king, who had English ships under the command of Anthony Sherley, a

friend and ally of Shah Abbas. The esteem of the English was growing in Istanbul and was no doubt responsible for the grant of further commercial privileges. Venice was alarmed over the news that England was going to reinforce the projected "Turkish armada" with a large fleet of galleons.

Generally speaking, the northerners' piracy in the Mediterranean ruined Venetian trade in the Levant: "They attacked every ship that they met on their voyages." In 1603 there were twenty English pirate vessels at Tunis. The year 1604 was a turning point, when English piracy was actually organized in Ottoman North Africa. The pirate fleet of the famous Englishman, John Ward, included many Turks in its crew. The local authorities at the Ottoman bases of Avlona and Patras shared in the spoils. In fact, these ports owed their economic prosperity as much to the regular traffic as to the sale of spoils from piracy.

By 1620, Venetian shipping in the Levant was totally eclipsed by that of Western nations. By that time, in "the great traffic in corn from Ottoman Greece to Italy, English ships replaced the Venetians. Generally speaking, in the development of the English carrying trade the Levant appears to have given the first impetus." Dutch and English ships being large and strong and capable of defending themselves with powerful gunnery were preferred and employed in Ottoman navigation between Egypt and Istanbul. The English had settled in Lehnagh, a free port since 1593, which was to become the chief transit center for their Levant traffic in the seventeenth century. While in shipping and the cloth trade the English predominated in the northern ports of the empire, namely in Istanbul, Izmir and Aleppo, the French retained their primacy in southern Syria and Egypt.

While the English and Dutch ruined Venetian shipping in the Levant, they, at the same time, obtained privileges from the sultan to settle their consuls and factors in the Levant in place of the Venetians. An interesting development was the export of currants from Greece. The Ottoman Patras and the Morea owed their prosperity to the English—Venetian rivalry. Because of restrictions on leaving the Venetian island of Zante, the great exporter of currants, the English went to settle in Ottoman Patras and increased their purchase of Morean currants. In 1602 Patras, with its consul, became an entrepôt for English trade in Greece. This development alarmed Venice, because the English currant trade with Zante supplied an annual sum of 30,000 ducats to Venice; and now the English began to buy olive oil, which had previously come through Venice, directly from the Ottoman ports of Modon and Coron.
NOTES

2 Wood (1935).
6 Dobb (1961), pp. 147–220.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., pp. 400–5; Braudel (1972), I, pp. 621–24.
11 For the so-called first capitulations in 1536, see p. 194.
12 Lewis (1973), pp. 140–44.
13 Braudel (1972), I, p. 625.
14 Skilliter (1977), p. 27.
17 Another reason was the difficulty in finding the necessary funds.
19 Ibid., pp. 9–22.
20 Ibid., p. 37.
21 Ibid., document no. 5.
22 The letter was published for the first time by Uzunçarşı (1949), p. 615, then reproduced by Skilliter (1977), document no. vi.
24 Skilliter (1977), document no. 10.
25 For the full text, see Skilliter (1977), document no. xiv and its analysis, pp. 98–103.
29 Ibid., p. 66.
33 Willan (1935).
35 CSP: Venice XII, document no. 860, dated 1610.
39 Tenenti (1967), p. 79.
41 CSP: Venice XII, document nos. 886 and 908.
42 Ibid., document no. 140.
44 Ibid., p. 8.
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WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

These apply primarily to the period 1300–1600

urdab, see irdabb

Arn of mason or architect = 0.758 m.

for textiles, see endaze

of chashw (bazaar) = 8 rub = 16 gireh = 0.680 m. or 68.579 cm.

bolla, ballya (silk, Genoa) = 300 libbra = 90 kg.

bar (Albania) = 120 okka = 153.916 kg.

borda = a cup (of butter, oil) = 10 men = 8.3 kg.

baril = a cask up to 20 medre (see below)

(for wine, Genoa) = 78 kg.

barre = 6 kile (Istanbul) = 153.953 kg.

batman (standard) = 72 lidre = 7,200 dirhem = 23.094 kg.

(Asia Minor, 19th cent.) = 7.694 kg.

(Adana, 19th cent.) = 4.848 kg.

(for silk, Mosul) = 800 dirhem = 2.566 kg.

(Mosul, 19th cent.) = 9.236 kg.

(Urfa, 19th cent.) = 2.309 kg.

(Bursa, 15th cent.) = 15–16 okka = 19.245–20.528 kg.

(Erzincan) 12 nigi = 1920 dirhem = 6.158 kg.

bott (large cask, Genoa) = 500 libbra = c.159 kg.

brasse (Epirus, for wood) = 1,862 okka = 2,388.946 kg.

camel-load = 200–300 kg.

canatello (Genoa) = 2 or 2.5 baril = c. 300 liter

carro (wheat) = 20 hectoliters

cantoutso (Preveza) = 150 dirhem = 481 g.

collo = 2.5 kantar = 141.122 kg.; see also qewal

cap (Van) = 36–45 okka = 46–57 kg.

(Malatya) = 12 standard kile = 307.680 kg.
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

These apply primarily to the period 1300–1600

ardabb, see Ḣrdabb
arşun of mason or architect = 0.758 m.
for textiles, see endaze
of charşw (bazaar) = 8 rub' = 16 gireh = 0.680 m. or 68.579 cm.

bella, ballya (silk, Genoa) = 300 libbra = 90 kg.
bar (Albania) = 120 okka = 153.936 kg.
bardak = a cup (of butter, oil) = 10 mjen = 8.3 kg.
bairil = a cask up to 20 medre (see below)
(for wine, Genoa) = 78 kg.
bam = 6 kile (Istanbul) = 153.953 kg.
bastan (standard) = 22 lidre = 7,200 dirhem = 23.094 kg.
(Asia Minor, 19th cent.) = 7.694 kg.
(Adana, 19th cent.) = 4.848 kg.
(for silk, Mosul) = 800 dirhem = 2.366 kg.
(Mosul, 19th cent.) = 9.236 kg.
(Urfa, 19th cent.) = 2.309 kg.
(Bursa, 15th cent.) = 15–16 okka = 19.245–20.528 kg.
(Erzincan) 12 núgi = 1920 dirhem = 6.158 kg.
botte (large cask, Genoa) = 500 libbra = c.159 kg.
braise (Epirus, for wood) = 1,862 okka = 2,388.946 kg.
camel-load = 200–300 kg.
caratello (Genoa) = 2 or 2.5 baril = c. 300 liter
carro (wheat) = 20 hectoliters
cartouso (Preveza) = 150 dirhem = 481 g.
cillo = 2.5 kantar = 141.122 kg.; see also cóval
cip (Van) = 36–45 okka = 46–57 kg.
(Malatya) = 12 standard kile = 307.680 kg.
Weights and measures

çaryek (iron) = 0.25 mənn = 750 g.
(for silk) = 0.25 lidre
(Bursa, 1500) = 22.5 lidre = 8.661 kg.
çaryek = 0.25 arsun = 17 cm.
çeki (standard) = 4 kantar = 225.798 kg.
(for wood) = 193 okka = 250 kg.
(Ayvalık, 19th cent. = 100 okka = 128.29 kg.
(Salonica, 19th cent.) = 135–40 okka = 173–79 kg.
(Izmir, 19th cent.) = 180 okka = 230.896 kg.
(for mohair, 19th cent.) = 4,564 kg.
(for opium, 19th cent.) = 763 g.
(for gold and silver) = 100 dirhem = 320 g., cf. lidre
(Crimea, 18th cent.) = 150 dirhem = 480 g.
çevirmek = 0.25 kabal
çift = a pair (of shoes, oxen, etc.)
çiftlik (of raïy yet) = a farm for one peasant household, varying between 60 and 150 dönüm
(Bursa) = a plot of land of 12 mudduk
= a plot of land for 2.5 or 4 mudd of seed
çile, a bundle, hank or skein; one bundle of ten in a pastav
çit = a big basket (of fruits)
çubuk, see dönüm
çwoal = 2 kantar = 112.898 kg.
(of hazelnuts) = 2.1 kile = 74 cu. decimeter
(of rice) = 18 kile = 46.184 kg.

dang, see dirhem
denk or deng = 50 top = 20 çile = 2 pastav; a horseload
deste = a bunch of 10 or 12
dirhem (Ottoman standard) = 16 kizat = 64 dang = 3.207 g.
(Byzantine and early Islam) = 3.125 g.
(Shatra or canonical) = 3.125 g.
(in the Cairo copper measure) = 3.0898 g.
(Dimishki) = 3.086 g.
(Tabriz, in coinage down to 1700) = 3.072 g.
dizi = a string (of figs)
donkey-load = 60–80 kg.
dönüm (standard) = 4 evlek = 10 nishan = 100 çubuk = 1,600 sq. arsun = 919.30 sq.m.
(Rеспубliсan period) = 1000 sq.m.
endaze = 0.650 m.
enrek, literally land for one man’s work, term used in particular to measure vineyard, ricefield or garden; or a plot of land for cultivation of rice seed of 50 okka or 2.5 dönüm of surface
evlek or evleg = division of a field for one day’s work with oxen
(grain) = 10 kile = 12.829 kg.

for measuring vineyard or garden = 0.25 of a dönüm (c. 400 sq. arsun or 254.8 sq.m.

fardello (silk, Genoa) = 252 libbra = 79.821 kg.; see also yük
farsah = 7,500 arsun = 5,685 m.
fas (standard, Akkerman, 1500) = 2 siha = 8 kantar = 226.596 kg.
(caviar, Akkerman, 1500) = 52 medre = 225.798 kg.
(wine, honey, etc.) = 40 medre = 89.810 kg.
= 2 katatt = 4 batil

gaz or gez = 68.58 cm.
gaz-i ihsâ = 95 cm.
givâr or garâr = 50 okka = 64.150 kg.
gâdî, see kalbâr.

gârâr, see givâr
himi, see yük
horseload = 150–200 kg.
hisâqa (large) = 24 kabal
(small) = 12 kabal

irdab (grain, Egypt) = its size varied between 90 and 198 liters
ıdil (silk, Bursa, 15th cent.) = 176 lidre = 68 kg.

kabal (grain, Serbia) = 65.664 kg.
(grain, Serbia) = 140 or 144 okka = 180–185 kg.
(minerals, Serbia) = 19 okka, 135 dirhem = 24.894 kg.
kabran (rice) = 10 kile = 128.294 kg.
kadeh = 0.25 of the standard kile.
kâbul or galbur = one-sixteenth of a kile = 1.604 kg.
kantar (Ottoman standard) = 100 lodra = 17,600 dirhem = 44 okka = 56.449 kg.
(Arab lands) = 100 ratel = 45 kg.
(Anatolia, 19th cent.) = 180 okka = 230.922 kg.
(Syria, 19th cent.) = 100 okka = 242.400 kg.
(Mardin, 19th cent.) = 210 okka = 307.896 kg.
(Alep, 19th cent.) = 250 okka = 320.725 kg.
(Genoa) = 100 rottole = 47.600 kg.

kapa = one-sixty-fourth of a kabal
kara (dates, Bastra) = 2,000 okka = 2,565.9 kg
karataç (Erzurum) = 1 okka 100 dirhem = 1,603 kg.
katâil = a cask between 20 and 40 medre
= 18 Genoese libbra
karta (Albania) = 80 okka = 102.640 kg.
kepâri (Greek), see kantar
kéfe, see kile
kübi, see kabal
Weights and measures

klēs (Byzantine argiriki litra) = 333-333 g.
(Byzantine logariki litra) = 322.320 or 319 g.
(Epirus) = 427 g.
bdra = 176 dirhem = 0.564 kg.
lukna (grain, Smederovo) = 140 or 144 okka = 186.320 or 191.851 kg.
(Braničevo) = 72 okka = 93.360 kg.
(Serbia) = 4 Edirne kilo = 92.372 kg.
luknića (Serbia) = 0.5 lukna
lukno, see lukna

māna (Pahlavi), see mām
mām (standard, Iran and Asia Minor) = 260 dirhem = 833 g.
(heavy) = 12 okka = 15.388 kg.
(light) = 6 okka = 7.694 kg.
(Tabriz) = c. 3 kg.
(Diyarbekir) = 580 dirhem = 1.860 kg.
(Harpūt) = 1800 dirhem = 5.773 kg.
(Egypt) = 812.5 g.
(Syria) = 819 g.
(Seljukid) = 977 g.
mām-šābī = 2 mām = c. 6 kg.
mēdre (caviar, Akkerman 1500) = 4.349 kg.
(copper) = 5750 dirhem = 18.442 kg.
(wine) = 8 or 9 okka = 10 or 11.5 kg.
(wine, Euboea) = 40 kuze = 55 okka = 70.561 kg.
(Serbia) = 10 pintē = 4 okka = 5.131 kg.
metrās (wine, Genoa) = 2 baril = 156 kg.
mīgiāl (medieval Islam) = 4.233 g.
(Ottoman, standard) = 1.5 dirhem = 24 kīrat = 4.81 g.
mīzāne (from It. mezzane) = 0.5 karatil
moggio (wheat, Venice) = 4 stao = 333.2 liter
mōdios (Byzantine, Gallipoli) = 583.170 liter
moz (Albania) = 160 okka = 205.280 kg.
mudd (standard) = 20 kilo = 1000 kāse = 100,000 habbe = 513.160 kg.
mudluk = a piece of land for one mudd of seed, or one-sixth, one-ninth or one-twelfth of a giftlik according to the fertility of soil
muzur (salt, Salonica, 1478) = 45 okka = 57.726 kg.
(rice, Silistre) = 150 okka = 192.420 kg.
(Albania, 1583) = 32 okka = 41.049 kg.
(salt, Anchialos) = 90 okka = 115.452 kg.

Nāgi = one-twelfth of a batman (silk)
(standard) = 72 mītē = 346.392 g.
(Mardin, Ergani, 1516) = 200 dirhem = 641.4 g.
(silk, Erzincan, 1576) = 160 dirhem = 513.120 g.

okka (standard) = 4 rati rūmī = 400 dirhem = 1.281945 kg.
Weights and measures

(heavy, Mesopotamia) = 3,210 kg.
(Egypt, Jeddah, 19th cent.) = 1,050 kg.
(Albania) = 1,412 kg.
onghon (Epirus) = 11 dirhem = 35.277 g.
onki (Serbia) = 6 miskal = 28.863 g.

pad-mán (Pahlavi), see batman
pastez (standard) = 10 kilo = 50 arsun = 32.500 m.
(Akkerman, 1500) = 21 arsun = 13,650 m.
połowóć = 0.5 kabal
pulknice (grain, Serbia) = 12 okka = 15,393 kg.

quintal (standard) = 80 okka = 102,616 kg.
(goods from Europe) = 78 okka = 100,066 kg.
(goods from England) = 39 okka = 50,033 kg.

rafl (standard) = 12 ükviya = 333.6 g.
(Istanbul, 18th cent.) = 876 dirhem = 2.809 kg.
(Jeddah, 19th cent.) = 113 dirhem = 360 g.
(Mesopotamia, 19th cent.) = 1 okka = 1.283 g.
(Syria, 19th cent.) = 133 dirhem = 442.7 g.
(Sivas) = 140 dirhem = 4,618 g.
(Ahlat and Nisibin, 11th cent.) = 119 dirhem = 963.1 g.
(standard, lidre/lira in Arab lands) = 12 ükviya = 337.55 g.
(Andalusia) = 453.3 g.
(spices, North Africa, 11-12 cent.) = 140 dirhem = 437.5 g.
(silk, Aleppo, 17th cent.) = 700 dirhem = 2,217 g.
(Syria) = 600 dirhem = 1,850 g.
rafl fololi (spices, Egypt) = 144 dirhem = 450 g.
rafl kevir (Egypt) = 160 dirhem = 500 g.
rafl rúmi (Anatolia) = 100 dirhem = 320.7 g.
rafl zähiri (Syria) = 480 dirhem = 1,500 g.
rottolo or rotolo (lt.), see rafi
rub' = one-eighth of an arsun of chashbu = 0.085 m.

sanduk or sandik = a wooden container of various sizes, 220 okka for figs, 60 okka for opium
a container of 88 okka at Akkerman, 1500
sape or sari (salt, clarified butter, Crimea) = 16 keylçe = 410.416 kg.
shibta or shibsa (minerals, Serbia) = 120 verkçe = 1,133.280 kg.
shinik = 0.5 kile, also 0.25 kile
sibaf = a large bowl (of cheese)
(Akkerman, 1500) = 4 kantar = 225.796 kg.
= 0.5 kantar = 22 okka = 28.224 kg.
sikla (Epirus, wine) = 50 or 60 okka
som (silver, Golden Horde) = 5 oz.
somar = 12 Istanbul kilo = 307.966 kg.
some (Iran, 15th cent.) = 155.615 kg.

staio (grain, Venice) = 83.3 liter
ster (Morea) = 110.802 kg.

tágár (heavy) = 1560 okka = 2000 kg.
(Mosul) = 200 okka = 256 kg.
(Crimea) = 150 okka = 192.420 kg.
(Epirus) = 20 okka = 25 kg.
(Iran) = 100 main = 83.4 kg.
tak = piece (fabric, turban)
tay (bale, bundle) = 700 pieces (of coarse cotton cloth)
tembelid = half a horeseload = 300 lidre = 96.210 kg.
ton (Caffa, 1490) = 50-55 arsun = 32.50 to 35.75 m.
top = 20 arsun = 13 m.
= 50 arsun = 32.5 m.
(silk tafta) = 100 arsun = 65 m.
(silk vate) = 120 arsun = 78 m.
(velvet) = 15 arsun = 9.75 m.
(cotton cloth) = 13 arsun = 8.45 m.
tulum (Akkerman) = 1 or 1.5 kantar
turra see çeile

ükviya = 27.8 g.
(Arab Caliphate) = 72 miskal = 346.392 g.
(Seljukid) = 100 dirhem = 320.7 g.
(Syria, 19th cent.) = 66.5 dirhem = 213 g.
(Maghreb, 19th cent.) = 10 dirhem = 32 g.; see also rafi and unge
unge (silver, from Greek angia or Latin uncia) = 6 miskal = 9 dirhem = 28.865 g.

varil see haril and fuçi
vukisya see okka
verkçe see shibta
vezne (standard) = 120 dirhem = 384.84 g.
= 30 lidre = 360 dirhem = 11.545 kg.
= 72 lidre = 21.09 kg = 7,200 dirhem
(Baghdad) = 78 okka = 100.066 kg.
(Mosul) = 10 okka = 12.82 kg.

vezniye see vezne
vukisyye see okka

yükk (silk, Bursa) = 405 lidre = 155.86 kg.
(silk, Erzincan) = 10 batman = 61.574 kg.
(mining, Serbia) = 4 kile = 102.616 kg.
(silk, Mardin) = 8 bogço = 3 batman = 126.4 okka = 162.179 kg.
= 1 kabal (cf. lukna)
(minerals, Serbia) = 4 kabal = 99.576 kg.
(Albania) = 120 okka = 153.936 kg.

zira see arsun
BIBLIOGRAPHY


GLOSSARY

These terms apply primarily to the period 1300–1600. They are listed here without transliteration as found in the text, and then in their original form in the transliteration alphabet used in Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd edition. Terms whose meaning is clear in the text or are to be found in an English dictionary are not included.

ABBREVIATIONS

A Arabic  P Persian
G Greek  S Slavonic
It Italian  Sp Spanish
L Latin  T Turkish

abdname (P. 'ahdnāma): A written pledge under oath by the sultan granting a privilege, immunities or authority to a community, ruler or person.

akça or akçe (T): Ottoman silver coin, see volume 2, part V.

askeri (A. 'askari): (1) Literally "of the military class"; (2) All those groups belonging to the military or religious elite with complete tax exemption; a non-Muslim, when granted such a status by a royal diploma also becomes an askeri.

avnız (A. 'awārīd): Extraordinary levies or services introduced by the state on emergency situations, mostly to support the navy; a certain number of households of reṭaya is registered as avnız tax units (hane).

azeb (A. 'azab): (1) An unmarried young man; (2) An auxiliary footman recruited for the imperial army, whose expenses were met by the local people under the avnız system; (3) Fighting man in the navy.

bacc (P. bādji): Market or transit dues taken on goods for sale per container.

barka or barça (Old Venetian:barca): Large ships with a capacity of 600 × 8 tons, equipped with guns.

bushina (Sl): A peasant family farm in the Balkans corresponding to the Ottoman rásiyet çiftlik. The Ottomans retained the Slavic term with groups whose pre-Ottoman status and services were maintained.
bâyêt al-mal (A. bayât al-mâl): (1) The public treasury; (2) An inheritance without heir, hence belonging to the public treasury.

bedestan or bedesten (T. from P. bezâzîstan): Synonym of kâysariyya, or Roman basilica, a covered strong stone building in the center of a bazaar, where imports such as precious textiles, jewelry and arms are stored and sold; the leading merchants have shops, and trust money is preserved in a bedestan.

beg or bey (T.): (1) Ruler in central Asian Turkish states and in the early Ottoman centuries; (2) Commander; (3) Title of the governor-commander of a sancak, or of a ziamet.

beglerbegi or beylerbeyi (T.): Synonym of mîrîmîn: it designates the governor-general of a beglerbeglik.

beglerbeglik (T.): Synonym of eyalet or vilâyet; all these terms stand for the Ottoman province, the largest administrative unit under a beglerbegi.

berat (A. berâh): A sultanic diploma bearing his official seal, tugra; also called mansûrî.

bogası or bohassı (T.): A fine cotton textile manufactured in large quantities in Hamid-eli and exported to the Balkans, the Crimea, Hungary and other European countries.

Boz-Ulus (T.): Turcoman tribal confederation in eastern Anatolia.

cebeli (T.): A fully armed retainer of a timar, ziamet or hass. holder.

Celali (T.): Mostly seyban and sarucu mercenary bands, which turned into bandit gangs when unemployed; they infested Anatolia during the period 1596-1610.

cihâd (A. djihâd): Islamic Holy War.

çizye (A. dżizya): Islamic poll-tax imposed upon a non-Muslim male adult, originally at the rate of 12, 24 or 48 dirhem of silver according to his means; the three categories are: working poor man, those of medium income and the well-to-do in the tax registers; however, the Ottomans mostly levied the tax per household uniformly, at the rate of one gold, or its equivalent in silver akça.

cift-hane system: Under this system the state organized rural society and economy by appropriating grain-producing land and distributing it under the tapu system to peasant families (hane). Each family in theory in possession of a pair of oxen was given a farm (ciftlik) sufficient to sustain the family and to meet its tax obligations. This was the basic fiscal unit which the state endeavored to maintain. Families with less than half a cift or ciftlik, or unmarried peasants, were separately categorized as bennak and mücûred (or kara), and subjected to lower rates of cift-tax.

ciftlik (T.): (1) Land workable by a pair (cift) of oxen, or a farm in which the fields make up a unit workable with a pair of oxen by a peasant family within the cift-hane system; (2) A big farm consisting of several râyyet ciftlik under the control of an absentee landlord; (3) Any plantation-like agricultural exploitation.

cift-tax (T.): A tax under the cift-hane system, assessing a peasant’s labor capacity in combination with the land in his possession.

devirme (T.): Levy of boys from Christian rural population for services at the palace or the divisions of the standing army at the Porte; also see kul.
Glossary

icaratayn (A. idjaratayn): The "dual" lease system in which the tenant of a vakf property paid, first, an immediate substantial amount to dispose of the property and then a second monthly rent; under the system the renter enjoyed extensive possession rights on the property.
imam (A. imâm): (1) Prayer leader; (2) A successor of the Prophet, Caliph; (3) The chief of a Muslim state.
imaret (A. imârât): Soup kitchens attached to vakf complexes.
irsalat or irsalıyeye (A. irsâlat, irsalîyya): (1) Goods destined for the consumption of military units, or shipments belonging to the state; (2) Revenue in cash sent to the central treasury from the surplus of a province.
ispence (originally Sl. jupaniča): Poll-tax paid to feudal lord in pre-Ottoman Serbia; continued under the Ottomans as a customary tax, it is mostly included in timar revenue.
istimâlet (A. istimâlât): Literally to make someone inclined to accept; an Ottoman term for winning over the population in conquered lands or enemy territory.
kapan (A. kabban): (1) A large public weighing device; (2) Caravanserai or mart in which such a device is placed to weigh goods and collect dues.
kaza (A. kâda): (1) Jurisdiction of a kadi; (2) An administrative unit corresponding to the kadi's jurisdiction in a province.
Kara-Ulus (T): A Kurdish tribal confederation in eastern Anatolia.
keshbida (P. katkhûda): (1) A steward; (2) The head or member of the governing body of a military, professional or social group, elected by the group and certified by the local kadi or the sultan.
kilsç (T): (1) A sword; (2) Registered timar unit, not to be divided and assigned in parts.
kirbas (Sanskrit karpassa): A coarse cotton cloth manufactured in various regions in Asia Minor and exported to the Balkans and Black Sea countries in great quantities.
keslak (T): Winter pastureland.
Kizilbaş (T): (1) Literally "red-head," it designated Turcoman soldiers in Anatolian emirates who wore red caps; (2) A member of the sect in central and eastern Anatolia, mostly of Turcoman origin, following heterodox beliefs, often rebellious against the centralist and orthodox Sunni policy of the Ottoman state.
kul (T): (1) A slave; (2) A tax-paying subject of the state (cf. reaya); (3) Kuls (plural) designate the sultan's servants and soldiers at the Porte.
kulluk (T): (1) The state of a slave; (2) Labor service, or its monetary compensation, which an Ottoman subject owes to the state (cf. gift-tax); (3) Special services and dues a peasant with state-owned land had to give to the state or timar-holder (cf. gift resmi).
levend (P. lowand): Privateers who joined the Ottoman navy with their ships when their services were needed.
liva (A. livâ): see sancak
makta (A. macta): A lump sum agreed upon for payment of rent or taxes.
malikane (P. malikâne): Belonging to a landlord.
martolos: A pre-Ottoman group of militia maintained by the Ottomans, mostly serving on the frontier for raids and intelligence in the neighboring country.

Glossary

mas'hab (A): A large cloak of camel wool made in Arabia.
mevât (A. mawat): Legal term for "dead" land; a "dead" land is either one abandoned and left uncultivated for a long time or wastelands such as deserts, forests or marshes.
meezâra (A. meeza): (1) A field under cultivation; (2) A large farm with no permanent settlement; it may be originally a deserted village or land reclaimed by a nearby village.
millet (A. mille): A community, the religious autonomous organization of which is formally recognized by the Islamic state; millets in the Ottoman Empire obtained their own charters in the reform period in the 1860s, which extended their autonomous status and gave their organization a formal secular character.
miri (P. mîrî): Belonging to the ruler or to the state.
muf (A. mu'dif): Exempt from taxation.
mudâraba (A. mudâraba): Corresponding to the Western commenda, mudaraba is a contract between a person providing capital and a caravan trader; they shared the profit equally.
mukhtasib (A. muhâtasib): An inspector helping the kadi of a town to see that the Muslims' conduct in their public lives and transactions conformed to the prescriptions of Islamic Law; he was particularly active in the bazaar area, inspecting weights and measures, prices and the quality of goods.
mukataa (A. mukatâa): (1) A renting contract, tax-farm; (2) The rent itself; (3) A source of revenue estimated and entered into the registers of the finance department as a separate unit.
mukataa (T): State-owned land leased under the mukataa system.
mukas (A. mûkas): (1) Customs or excise duty; (2) All kinds of small dues and taxes outside those approved by Islamic Law.
mulk (A. mâlik): Freehold ownership as opposed to state ownership; see mîri.
müstелlem (A. musallâm): (1) Exempt from taxation; (2) A group of militia of reaya origin, enjoying various tax exemptions in return for military service.
musbe'a (A. musba): (1) Collective ownership; (2) Communal land.
mukar (P. mûrk): The maximal price list on necessities, periodically established by the local kadi.
imanço (T): A member of the imperial council responsible for the chancery, checking all diplomas and putting the imperial seal (nîshân) on them; responsible in particular for the administration of mîrî land and the timar system.
mitâl (A. mâtal): (1) Food served to a guest; (2) A tax, mostly in kind, imposed upon the fiscal units of households for provisioning the army or navy, see also avârân.
omâ (T): (1) Hearth; (2) The unit of households in military organizations such as yasa or sovîшек; (3) Corps or the whole body of a military organization such as Yeniçeri Ocâği.
ortaklık (T): Sharecropping; as opposed to reaya in possession of land under the tarak system, a sharecropper cultivates land belonging to another person who as a rule supplies means of production and sometimes also shelter, and shares the product equally; an ortakçul kul is a slave working for his owner on the same basis.
Glossary

paroikoi (G): A dependent peasant, serf; in Turkish texts parıkoz, in Italian parìci.
puhkeş (P. pûhkeş): A gift presented to a superior as a symbol of recognition of his authority and protection.
poliçe (It. polizia): A letter of credit.
pronat (G): Provincial military elite in the Byzantine Empire, enjoying a prebend in return for military or administrative service, as in the Ottoman timar system.
raiyet (A. ra‘iyâ): See reaya.
rakaba (A. rákâba): (1) Eminent domain; (2) proprietas nuda; (3) State ownership (of land); see also mirlı.
reeya (A. ra‘âyâ): All those groups, Muslim or non-Muslim, outside the askeri elite, engaged in economic activities and thus subject to taxes.
rihab (A. rákâb): See rakaba.
salgun (T): See svrระหว.
sancak (T): A sub-province; administrative unit under a sancak-begi (beyni); a beglerbegilik is divided into several sancaks.
sekban (P. sağban): (1) Literally a keeper of hounds; (2) In the Janissary army: divisions originally of the keepers of the sultan's hounds, who were incorporated into the corps of Janissaries under Mehmed II; (3) A particular mercenary organization, equipped with muskets, organized as companies of 50 to 100 under a Janissary officer; in the sources, usually mentioned together with a similar group called saruca.
serbestiyet (P. sarbastiyyet): (1) Freedom, full immunity; (2) Full immunity from government control in oækf and temlik lands.
Shi‘i (A. shî‘î): As opponents of the Sunni, the Shi‘i follow the shî‘a, claiming that the legitimate imamate or the religio-political leadership belonged after the death of Muhammad to ‘Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, and to his descendants. In general, Shi‘is believe that with the Shi‘i Imam divine revelation and mediation between God and His creatures continues, and until the day of the Mahdi, or the hidden Imam, reappears the maward, as spokesmen of the hidden Imam, have supreme religio-political authority over the Islamic community. In Iran, with the accession of the Safavids in 1501, such a regime was believed to be achieved. This gave the old rivalry between the Ottoman state and Iran a religio-ideological character as a fight between Sunnis and Shi‘is. The rivalry became particularly fierce when the Safavids were supported by the Kizilbash Turcomans of Asia Minor throughout the sixteenth century.
simana (L. censari): The head of brokers in a bazaar.
sipahi (P. sipâhî): (1) A mounted soldier; (2) A member of the noble class; (3) A member of the cavalry divisions at the Porte; (4) The lowest rank in the provincial timarlıot (see timar) army.
sipahi-oglanlar (T): The top division among the six salaried cavalry divisions at the Porte.
subaşı (T): (1) Commander, originally a compound of sî, soldier and bash, head; (4) In the Ottoman provincial administration it designates a commander in the timarlıot army above sipahi and below sancak-begi; (3) An agent appointed by a governor to take care of the collection of his revenues and other responsibilities; see voyvod and ziamet.
Sunni (A. sunnî) or ahl al-sunnah: Those Muslims who refrain from deviating from the Sunna, or the dogma and practice as established by the Prophet, the companions (âshab) and the traditions of the community. Sunnis consider Shi‘is as heretics deviating from the Sunna. Turkish states, including the Ottoman state, made Sunnism a state policy, which entailed serious social and political consequences and brought the government into a fierce struggle with the Turcoman Kizilbash sect in Asia Minor in the sixteenth century.
surün (T): (1) A term for the Ottoman method of relocation or forcibly deporting and settling population from one region to another; (2) An individual subjected to this operation.
siha (A. tâhâ): See millet.
tange: See bac.
Tanzimat (A. Tanzimât): (1) Reforms; (2) Radical Ottoman westernizing reforms introduced in the period 1839–76.
tapu (T): (1) An act of homage; (2) Permanent patrilineal lease of state-owned land to a peasant family head in return for his pledge to cultivate it continuously and meet all the obligations in tax or services; (3) The title deed certifying tapu rights.
tapulu (T): A state-owned farm leased to a peasant family head under the special conditions of the tapu system.
tasarruf (A. tasarruf): (1) Free disposal; (2) The exercise of actual possession rights on state-owned land.
temlik (A. tâmilik): Sultan's grant to a member of the elite of state-owned land as freehold property with complete tax immunity and autonomy.
timar (P. timâr): (1) Any kind of care; (2) A prebend acquired through a sultanic diploma, consisting as a rule of state taxes in return for regular military service, the amount of which conventionally was below 20,000 akça: also see sipahi, hass and ziamet.
ulûfe (A. ‘ulûfa): Salary in cash paid, as a rule, to the military.
ummata (A. ummiyat): The Muslim community as a whole.
urfî or orfi (A. ‘urfî): (1) Customary; (2) Based on the sultan's command; (3) State taxes mostly based on pre-Ottoman dues confirmed by the sultan, as in the term rusum-i urfîyya or takalîf-i urfîyya.
ulûmanı (A. ‘ulûmânî): (1) Of the Ottoman sultan; (2) The Ottoman silver coin akça or akççe, as called in Arab lands.
Glossary

vakf (Ar. wakf, plural awkāf): Synonym of hūds, namely a pious foundation or an endowed thing, as a rule real estate, but sometimes also an amount of cash, which "while retaining its substance yields a usufruct and of which the owner has surrendered his power of disposal with the stipulation that the yield is used for permitted good purposes" (Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, p. 624).

vāda (Ar. wāda'): (1) Legal control; (2) A master's legal rights on the inheritance of a manumitted slave.

vekil (Ar. wakīl): (1) An agent; (2) A proxy.

voyynk or voyynq (Sl. soynik, warrior, soldier): A pre-Ottoman milita from the peasant population of Slavic states in the Balkans, maintained by the Ottomans.

voyvoda or voyvode (Sl.): (1) Slavic title for prince, used in particular for the rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia; (2) A military agent appointed by a governor to take care of the collection of his revenues in the kada area; the title subbas is sometimes used instead.

yasak yeye (T.): Fee for Janissary in charge of enforcing law.

yayta (T.): (1) Footman; (2) Peasant militia organized in ocaq.

Yörük: A bureaucratic name for Turcoman pastoralist nomads when they came in the territories controlled by the Ottomans, mostly in western Anatolia and the eastern Balkans.

yurt (T.): An area reserved for a pastoralist nomadic group with summer and winter pasturelands.

Ziāmet (Ar. ziāma): (1) Military leadership; (2) A prebend bestowed by a sultanic diploma to the commander of timarāt sipahis in a district, conventionally from 20,000 to 100,000 akṣa; synonym of subbaslik.

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