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FROM THE GENOESE TO THE PEROTS: THE GENOESE COMMUNITY IN BYZANTINE/OTTOMAN CONSTANTINOPLE (14th–15th c.)

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Abstract

This article focuses on the presence of the Genoese in the Eastern Mediterranean, their settlement in Constantinople and their diplomatic and commercial relations with the Byzantines and the Ottomans in the context of the changes and transformations that occurred during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Establishing a semi-autonomous rule in Pera/Constantinople during the late Byzantine period, the Genoese became important settlers of the imperial city connecting it with the Black Sea and the Mediterranean through their trading networks and colonies. Although the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453 changed the status of the Genoese community, most of the Genoese families continued to stay in this city and adapted themselves to the newly emerging conditions. This article will dwell on the experiences of the Genoese under the Byzantine and Ottoman rules and examine how they handled co-existing with a society of differing faith, language and culture. It will also discuss how the Genoese sought to keep their commercial interests and maintain their order in the vibrant and cosmopolitan setting of Ottoman Constantinople.

Keywords: *The Genoese, Pera, trade, adaptation, Byzantine Empire, Ottoman Empire*

Öz

Bu makale, on dördüncü ve on beşinci yüzyıllarda meydana gelen değişim ve dönüşümler bağlamında Cenevizlilerin Doğu Akdeniz'deki varlığına, Konstantinopolis'teki yerleşimlerine, Bizanslılarla ve Osmanlılarla kurdukları diplomatik ve ticari ilişkilere odaklanmaktadır. Geç Bizans döneminde Pera'da yarı özerk bir yönetim kuran Cenevizliler, ticaret ağları ve kolonileriyle imparatorluk başkentini Karadeniz'e ve Akdeniz'e bağlayarak şehrin önemli sakinlerinden oldular. Konstantinopolis'in 1453'te Osmanlılar tarafından fethedilmesi Ceneviz topluluğunun statüsünü değiştirmiş olsa da Cenevizli ailelerin bir kısmı şehirde kalmaya devam etmiş ve yeni koşullara uyum sağlamışlardı. Bu makale, Cenevizlilerin Bizans ve Osmanlı idaresi altındaki deneyimleri üzerinde duracak ve farklı inanç, dil ve kültüre sahip bir toplumla nasıl bir arada yaşadıklarını inceleyecektir. Aynı zamanda Cenevizlilerin Osmanlı dönemi İstanbul şehrinin hareketli ve

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kozmopolit ortamında kendi ticari çıkarlarını ve düzenlerini nasıl korumaya çalıştıklarını tartışacaktır.
Keywords: *Cenevizliler, Pera, ticaret, uyum, Bizans İmparatorluğu, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*

Giriş

Among the Italian communities residing in the Ottoman capital, the case of the Genoese was the most peculiar. Unlike the Venetian and Florentine merchants who remained citizens of their respective states and stayed in the Ottoman lands on temporary basis, after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, the Genoese of Pera became subjects of the sultan and constituted the core of the Latin-rite inhabitants of the empire, known as the "Perots." Tracing the story of the Genoese from the Byzantine period to the Ottoman times provides important insights regarding the strategies of survival for foreign merchant communities under imperial rules. In this article I will briefly discuss the formation of Genoese community under Byzantine rule, placing emphasis on the settlement, status and activities of Genoese merchants in order to determine whether there was continuity or, rather, a break with the arrival of the Ottomans in Constantinople. In relation to this, I will discuss the early contacts of the Genoese with the Ottomans before 1453 and focus on the relations of the Genoese community in Constantinople with the new conquerors of the city. This look at the post-conquest period traces the main motives and new conditions that shaped the relations of this community with the Ottoman state.

An Italian presence in the Eastern Mediterranean dates back to the late eleventh century, when by means of the crusades the Genoese, Pisans, and Venetians were able to establish themselves in some Levantine ports such as Acre and Tyre, and thereby achieved direct access to Eastern goods and raw materials.[1] In tandem with their expansion into Levantine markets, these maritime states also extended their commercial activities into the Byzantine Empire, particularly the imperial capital Constantinople, obtaining trading concessions from Byzantine emperors.[2] Through their trade bases in the East and their advanced technology in navigation, shipbuilding, and armaments, Genoa and Venice in particular became active forces in Mediterranean trade, connecting the economy of Europe with that of the Levant. From that period until the mid-fifteenth century, the struggle and competition for supremacy in the Mediterranean was between those two states. Indeed, each became the other's toughest opponent, and the strong rivalry between them made it difficult to take concerted action in their relations with the Byzantine and Islamic Empires. In Abu-Lughod's words, "[T]hey [the Genoese and the Venetians] spent as much energy fighting one another as they did conquer the East."[3]

It was this rivalry that significantly shaped and determined the relations of these states with another emerging power in the Eastern Mediterranean, i.e., the Ottomans. In the traditional historiography, the dominant view is that with the rise of the Ottomans, the

[1] Abulafia 2000, pp. 1-20.
[2] Balard 1991, pp. 261-276.
[3] Abu-Lughod 1989, p. 103.

Italians' trade in the Eastern Mediterranean was interrupted.[4] A close analysis of the period, however, presents a far more complex and nuanced picture of interstate relations with a constant shifting of alliances shaped by commercial and political interests.[5] Both the Genoese and Venetians established diplomatic contacts with the Anatolian principalities, the Byzantines, and the Ottomans so as to maintain their trade interests and territorial possessions in the region. These relations continued after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, when Sultan Mehmed II not only renewed the privileges formerly given to the Genoese and Venetian merchant communities by the Byzantine emperors, but invited Florentine merchants to ply their trade in the Ottoman territories and granted concessions and guarantees of protection to them as well. Thus, the competition among the Genoese, Venetians, and Florentines to control key trade networks as well as to acquire access to raw materials and products of the East gave rise to closer diplomatic, political and commercial contacts with the Ottomans in the late fifteenth century.

I. The Genoese in the Byzantine Capital

Among the Italian states, Venice was the first to obtain trade privileges in the Byzantine Empire, doing so in 1082.[6] In return for Venetian support against Norman and Turkish attacks, Emperor Alexios I (r. 1081-1118) granted extensive privileges and tax exemptions to the Venetian merchants. They were also given a quarter in Constantinople on the shore of the Golden Horn, in which they had a church of their own.[7] These privileges helped the Venetians increase their profits and strengthen their position in the imperial capital. In order to counterbalance their increasing influence, the succeeding emperors also granted privileges to Pisa and Genoa, Venice's rivals, in the second half of the twelfth century. Emperor Manuel Comnenus (r. 1143-1180) conferred upon the merchants of these states privileges similar to the ones enjoyed by the Venetians.[8] These concessions were called *chrysobulls* or Golden Bulls, which were essentially *praecepta* rather than *pacta*. In other words, they were a grant of favors by the Byzantine emperors to the Italian states rather than a bilateral contract.[9] This was the prevailing practice, especially when the Byzantine Empire was at the peak of its power. However, the weaker the empire became over time, the less authority and control it had over the foreign merchant communities and their trading outposts within its domains. This could be seen most notably in the case of the Genoese, who eventually established semi-autonomous rule in Pera/Constantinople and autonomous rule in Chios.

In contrast what was to the case in Islamic cities, there was no *fondaco* or *pandocheion* in Byzantium; rather, the European merchant communities were given a

[4] Heyd 1886, pp. 257-313. In fact, he discusses the issue in the last section under the heading of "décadence."
[5] Some of the studies written in this vein: Zachariadou 1983; Turan 1990; Necipoğlu 2009.
[6] Lane 1973, p. 29.
[7] Brown 1920, p. 71; Jacoby 2005, pp. 154-170. For a more recent study on this: Ağır 2009.
[8] Millas 2006, p. 17; Day 1978, pp. 398-405; Lopez 1978, p. 351.
[9] Brown 1920, p. 69.

"small territorial enclave (*embolo*)" to accommodate both temporary visitors and permanent settlers.[10] These *embolos* consisted of houses, warehouses, churches of the Latin rite, baths and other amenities necessary for foreign merchant communities.[11] Moreover, there was relative freedom of movement. The Italians were not confined to their own quarters in the city; they were able to reside in other neighborhoods as well.[12] These privileges had a direct influence on the Italian presence in Constantinople. More and more Italians came to the city either permanently, as settlers, or temporarily for trade purposes.[13]

In the Byzantine Empire there were three different groups of Italian merchants. The first group was the *mercatores*, visiting merchants who left the Byzantine ports as soon as they finished their business. The second group was composed of "traders and merchants who stay in the empire temporarily, though this may amount to anything up to a decade" (like Ottoman *müstemins*), and the third group consisted of the *habitatores burgenses*, who were permanent settlers in the Byzantine cities and ports.[14] Because of the privileges and concessions granted by the emperor, the presence of Italian merchant communities aroused frustration and a sense of rivalry in the local merchants of Constantinople. Throughout the twelfth century, there was constant conflict and competition not only among the Italians themselves but also between the Italians and the Greeks.[15] This situation continued until the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204, when the Venetians replaced both their Greek and Italian rivals.

Upon the Latin conquest, the balance of power among the Italians changed significantly, and the Venetians established dominance over the trade routes by excluding their rivals. However, this dominance did not last long. With the recapture of the imperial city by Michael VIII Palaiologos in 1261, the situation changed in favor of the Genoese. In return for the support they gave to the Byzantine emperor against the Latin forces, the Genoese were granted extensive concessions, including access to the Black Sea, in the Treaty of Nympheon.[16] Moreover, they were given a district in Constantinople, Pera, located on the northern shore of the Golden Horn opposite the main city. The Genoese settlement in Pera was mainly in the New and Old Loggias, where they had their churches; the *Magnifica Communita di Pera*, a council composed of twenty-four members, was responsible for the organization of and order in the colony.[17] In 1304, the colony's status

[10] Constable 2003, p. 150.
[11] Calabi and Keene 2007, p. 320; Robbert 1995, p. 47.
[12] Constable 2003, p. 153.
[13] Abulafia 2001, p. 294.
[14] Maltezou 1995, pp. 233-241; Balard, Laiou and Otten-Froux 1987; Jacoby 1988, pp. 245-284.
[15] Lopez 1978, pp. 349-51.
[16] Balard 1978. Balard's voluminous work is valuable in terms of providing a careful examination of Genoese trade bases in the Eastern Mediterranean —Pera, Chios, and Caffa— during the Byzantine period. The two volumes explore the establishment of the colonies, and their administration and institutions, ethnic composition, and social and economic activities.
[17] Millas 2006, p. 20; Mitler 1979, p. 73.

as "*imperium in imperio*" was confirmed.[18] From this time onward, the Genoese community established semi-autonomous rule in Pera, which was fortified with walls. The *podestá*, a leading official and governor, was responsible for ensuring that the statutes of Genoa were applied and observed in Pera.[19]

The Venetians, on the other hand, though negatively affected by the outcome of the events in 1261, did not withdraw from trading in the Byzantine domains. Byzantine emperors soon granted privileges to them as well in order to prevent the Genoese from acting arbitrarily. For instance, the position of *bailo* was first established in Constantinople around 1265, soon after the city was retaken by the Byzantine emperor.[20] Moreover, in 1277 the Venetians got back their trade base on the southern shore of Golden Horn. It is not clear whether they were able to maintain the pre-1261 boundaries of the *locus Venetorum*, but they resided in the same area.[21] Thus, while the Genoese settled in Pera on the northern shore of Golden Horn, the Venetians resided on the opposite, southern shore; this settlement pattern remained the same until the early sixteenth century.[22]

By the second half of the fourteenth century, the Byzantines had almost lost control of the Black and Aegean Seas, where the merchant fleets of the Genoese and Venetians emerged as the dominant rival powers. The Genoese established many trade bases on the Black Sea: Samastro (Amasra), Finogonya (Kefken), Sinope (Sinop), Amisos (Samsun), Vatiza (Fatsa), Trebizond (Trabzon), Caffa (Kefe), Cembalo (Balaklava), and Soldaia (Suğdak).[23] In Caffa, the Genoese established a self-governing colony, which served as the Black Sea headquarters of the Genoese merchants from 1270 on.[24] Another important Genoese trade base was the island of Chios in the Aegean Sea. In 1261, when Emperor Michael VIII granted concessions to the Genoese merchants in Pera, he also allowed them to maintain a consul in Chios. In 1304, the Genoese brothers Benedetto and Manuele Zaccaria seized the island. They had already been controlling the alum mines in Phocaea in return for an annual tribute to the Byzantine Emperor since 1267. Alum was used as an "essential mordant" in the textile dying process and was thus

[18] Mitler 1973, p. 73; Pistarino 1990, p. 131. According to Pistarino, it was in 1352, during the reign of John VI Kantakouzenos, that Pera became "un vero e proprio Stato entro lo Stato."

[19] These were legal regulations concerning the civil, commercial, and administrative organization of the community. Sauli 1831, pp. 83-85; Promis 1852; Belgrano, 1877-84, pp. 105-109.

[20] Pedani 2009, pp. 72-73; Coco and Manzonetto 1985, p. 14; Concina 1997, p. 73.

[21] Ağır 2009. She makes a detailed examination of this issue with the help of contemporary Venetian and Byzantine sources as well as later Ottoman documents.

[22] From the early twelfth century onward, Pisans were also actively operating in Constantinople and other Levantine ports. However, after 1261 they became less dominant in comparison to the Venetians and Genoese. For the privileges and activities of Pisan merchants in Constantinople and the Levant, see Müller 1879.

[23] Turan 1990, pp. 46-54.

[24] Notarial documents provide valuable details concerning the organization of this Genoese colony and its settlers. Most of these documents have been edited by various historians. Bratianu 1927; Bratianu 1929; Balbi–Raiteri 1973; Airaldi 1974, pp. 11-110.

indispensable to the textile industry in Europe.[25] It was also widely used in the leather industry.[26] Thus, it became an important source of wealth for the Genoese during the medieval period. In order to protect the alum trade route through Chios from the attacks of the Turkish pirates, and also benefiting from the weakness of the Byzantine Emperor, the Zaccaria brothers took control of the island. They thereby obtained a monopoly of the mastic trade in Chios, in addition to alum mines in Phocaea. Benedetto Zaccaria held the island in return for tribute to the Byzantine emperor. In the following years, however, the succeeding members of the family declared their own sovereignty over the island, disregarding the imperial authority. Upon this, Byzantine Emperor Andronicus III sent his troops to Chios and with the support of the local Greek population and Venetian ships brought the island under his control in 1329. Yet, Chios was both strategically and commercially far too important for the Genoese to give up. Taking advantage of the struggles over the throne that were going on in the Byzantine court, the Genoese again seized the island in 1346.[27] It remained in their hands until it passed to Ottoman control in 1566.

Both Genoa and Venice derived their wealth from the exchange of goods between Europe and the East. These maritime states aimed to establish commercial hegemony through their long-distance trade and colonies all over the Mediterranean. By the fourteenth century, Genoa had established a "seaborne commercial empire" with colonies around the Black Sea, on the Aegean, in Cyprus, and in the Iberian Peninsula as well as in England and Flanders.[28] There was, however, an ongoing competitive war with the Venetians for control of the same markets. The increasing overlap of Genoese trading interests with those of the Venetians and the struggle to monopolize the transport of commodities between Eastern and Western markets led to rivalry and constant clashes among the merchants of these two states. By the 1350s there was already conflict between the two maritime states in the Aegean over their interests there; eventually the Venetians designated the Dalmatian coast and the Ionian islands as their trade zone, while the Genoese dominated the eastern part of the Aegean, giving them easy access to Constantinople and the Eastern Mediterranean.[29]

Moreover, after the War of Chioggio (1378-1381), which was considered to be the "climax of the struggle," both maritime states defined their trading areas in the East more explicitly in order to avoid any more conflict. While the Venetians focused primarily on the spice routes and their trading activities in Alexandria and Beirut, the Genoese concentrated on their interests in Constantinople and Asia Minor.[30] However, unlike Venice, which established its dominance over the Levantine trade,[31] Genoa could not

[25] Horden and Purcell 2000, p. 361.
[26] It was an important material used for the tanning of the leather. Nenci 1982, pp. 184-185.
[27] Miller 1911, pp. 42-55; Argenti 1958, pp. 54-105; Balard 1989, p. 161; Pistarino 1990, pp. 128-131; Lopez 1996, pp. 222-223.
[28] Kirk 2005, p. 9.
[29] Balard 1989, pp. 160-161.
[30] Lane 1973, pp. 189-201; Abulafia 2001, p. 378.
[31] Ashtor 1974, pp. 5-53; Shaw 2012, p. 222; Fusaro 2015, p. 28.

recover its strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean after this financially draining war. The instability in Genoa resulting from factional conflicts and foreign domination over the city had a significant impact on its colonies in the *Oltremare*. According to the dominant view in the historiography, from the fourteenth century onward the mother city became loosely connected with its colonies in the East. The Genoese of Pera and other Genoese possessions took the initiative in relations with other powers and pursued their own interests, sometimes even at the expense of Genoa itself.[32]

In this respect, Genoa's experience was quite different from that of its rival Venice. In contrast to Venice's state-backed expansion, in which the colonies were governed firmly from the center, Genoa did not have tight control over its trade outposts.[33] Instead, Genoese merchants in the colonies established a self-governing rule. Chios provides a good example in this sense. From 1346 to 1566, the island was controlled by a group of families under the name of Giustiniani, which was a political and social union of people coming from different families but united under a single name.[34] Similarly, the Genoese Gattilusio family ruled over Lesbos and some other islands in the northern Aegean through their close contacts with the Byzantine ruling family.[35]

According to Fernandez-Armesto, an important characteristic of the Genoese was their "hermit crab character," which enabled them to easily "adapt to every economic environment and political climate."[36] It would seem that for the Genoese in the Eastern Mediterranean, this was not just a matter of character but also a strategy for survival. For instance, in the case of the Genoese of Pera, it can be argued that the flexibility and versatility of the members of the Genoese community in the face of changing conditions, and their prioritization of individual interests over all else, caused them to adopt a pragmatic approach in their relations with the Byzantines, Latin powers, and the Ottomans.[37]

II. Early Diplomatic Contacts with the Ottomans

From the fourteenth century onward, the westward advance of the Ottoman rulers marked the beginning of a significant political change in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Ottomans entered the Balkans for the first time in 1354. Although the defeat of Sultan Bayezid I by Timur, founder of the Timurid Empire, at the Battle of Ankara in 1402 slowed down the process of expansion, this interregnum period (1402-1413) did not last long; the Ottomans soon regained their strength and continued their advances in Anatolia,

[32] Kelly 1999, p. 148; Epstein 1996, pp. 254-270; Fernández-Armesto 1987, pp. 99-105; Lopez 1996, p. 251; Kirk 2005, p. 10.
[33] Fusaro 2015, p. 64.
[34] Pistarino 1995.
[35] Luttrell 1989, p. 154.
[36] Fernández-Armesto 1987, p. 96; p. 106.
[37] This can best be seen through the individual stories of the leading Genoese families in Pera and other colonies. For instance, I have in another study examined the Draperio and Spinola families in Pera, focusing on their relations and networks with the Byzantine and Ottoman authorities during the fifteenth century and exploring the continuities and changes they experienced after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. Mercan 2016, pp. 42-54.

the Balkans, and Greece.[38] During this period, they became according to the circumstances at various times an ally or a foe of the Genoese or the Venetians, who struggled to maintain their trade bases both against each other and in the face of Ottoman advances.

Diplomatic contacts between the Genoese and the Ottomans dated back to the mid-fourteenth century. The earliest treaty was presumably made in 1351-52 between Sultan Orhan (r. 1324-1362) and the Genoese authorities. Filippo Demerode was sent to the Ottoman sultan as one of the Genoese ambassadors for these negotiations. The choice of Demerode as an ambassador was not a random one; indeed, he was a close friend and servant of the sultan, and was conducting trade in Pera on his behalf.[39] For instance, in 1356, upon the request of the sultan, the Genoese government ordered the *podestà* of Pera to grant tax exemptions to the servants of the Ottoman sultan, including Filippo Demerode.[40] The Demerode were not a noble family rooted in Genoa; rather, they were defined as a "colonial family," which had established itself as politically and economically influential in Pera without having solid ties in the mother city.[41] In this respect, they were similar to Draperio family, whose members participated in diplomatic negotiations with the Ottomans either as ambassadors or witnesses from the time of Sultan Murad I. To give an example, Giovanni Draperio was among the witnesses to the treaty of 1387, while his brother Iane Draperio, a merchant active in the grain trade, was sent as an ambassador of the Genoese colony to Sultan Bayezid I in 1389.[42] Thus, the close contacts of members of the Demerode and Draperio families with the Ottoman rulers made them instrumental in the diplomatic relations of the colony with the Ottoman state.

To go back to the treaty of 1351-52, unfortunately a copy of this agreement is not available to us[43]; however, the capitulations it granted were renewed in the treaty of 1387 signed between Sultan Murad I (r. 1362-1389) and the Genoese.[44] Giovanni Demerode, Filippo's brother, was also present at the signing of this convention. Just like his brother, he had personal relations with Sultan Murad I and traded in Pera on his behalf.[45] Kate Fleet, who has examined the relations between the Ottoman state and the Genoese merchants in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, argues that commercial interests were the main motive for the close Ottoman-Genoese relations during this period.[46] This is indeed evident in the articles of 1387 treaty, which stipulated that Genoese merchants would come and trade freely in the Ottoman lands, and would benefit from special arrangements when trading in the Ottoman territories. In return, there would be favorable

[38] Greene 2003, p. 211.

[39] In the letter sent to Sultan Orhan from Genoa, Filippo Demerode and Bonifacio de Sauli were defined as "servioi e amixi vostri." Belgrano 1877-84, pp. 125-126: doc. XVII (21 March 1356).

[40] Belgrano 1877-84, pp. 126-127: doc. XVIII (21 March 1356); Fleet 1993, p. 23.

[41] Balard 2001, pp. 304-311.

[42] Balard et al. 1987, doc. 66; Belgrano 1877-84, doc. XXX.

[43] The peace agreement between the Genoese and the Byzantine emperor John VI in the same year confirms this treaty. Belgrano 1877-84, p. 124, doc. XVI (6 May 1352).

[44] For a detailed examination of this treaty, see Fleet 1993, pp. 13-33.

[45] Fleet 1993, pp. 23-24; Belgrano 1877-84, pp. 146-149, doc. XXX (8 June 1387).

[46] Fleet 1999, pp. 4-12.

treatment concerning taxation for Ottoman merchants conducting trade in the Genoese colony, and they would be exempt from taxation on goods bought and sold in Pera.

In fact, the favorable relations between the Genoese of Pera and the Ottoman state were not confined to the economic sphere; the two parties also provided each other political and military support against their enemies. In the case of the 1351 treaty, the Ottomans supported the Genoese with troops in their defense of Pera against allied Venetian–Byzantine attacks. In return, the Genoese provided safe passage to the Ottomans in the straits to bring people and troops from Anatolia to the Balkans.[47] This kind of alliance between the two continued in the following years as well. However, there was a constant shifting of alliances depending on the political and economic interests in play at any given time. In 1384 Sultan Murad I sent an envoy to Venice to propose an alliance against the Genoese, and a four-year trade contract was signed.[48] As already discussed, in 1387 a trade agreement was also made between the Ottoman administration and the Genoese. In 1388, the Genoese of Pera joined a "holy league," coming to an agreement with the king of Cyprus, Francesco Gattilusio of Lesbos, the rulers of Mytilene, the Knights of Rhodes, and the *Maona* of Chios to fight against the Ottomans.[49] However, a year later, in 1389 after the battle of Kosovo, a peace treaty was made between the new sultan, Bayezid I (r. 1389-1402), and the Genoese, which confirmed all former agreements made with the previous sultans.[50] As can be seen from these examples, there were constant interactions between the Ottomans and the Italian states, characterized not only by military conflicts and confrontations in the name of a *gaza*/crusade ethos but also by frequent diplomatic and commercial exchanges.

Especially when the Ottoman state began to dominate key trading networks and became one of the competitors for commercial hegemony, Ottoman sultans did not hesitate to benefit from the strategic advantages of this situation. To give an example, by the end of the fourteenth century the Ottomans had taken control of a large part of western Anatolia after conquering the emirates of Menteşe and Aydın. This area was important in terms of grain production, and grain was in great demand by Italian merchants to feed their cities and colonies. Already in the time of the Turkish emirates, various commercial treaties had been made with the Venetians and the Genoese concerning the grain trade. When the region passed to Ottoman control, Ottoman rulers used the export of grain "for their own political and financial gains."[51] They benefited from it financially by determining the price of grain and the rate of tax upon it. Moreover, control of grain exports enabled the Ottoman rulers to secure the necessary support from the Genoese or the Venetians against their opponents.

Another example in this respect would be the control of alum mines in Anatolia. The extraction and export of alum had been under the control of Genoese families since the thirteenth century. When the Ottomans became dominant in the region, they farmed

[47] Uzunçarşılı 1995, p. 233; İnalcık 1989, p. 231.
[48] Fabris 1992, p. 159.
[49] Belgrano 1888, pp. 359-371: doc. VIII (November-December, 1388)
[50] For a transcription of this treaty, see Fleet 1999, pp. 157-158: doc. 2.
[51] Fleet 1997, p. 290.

out alum mining and trade to the Genoese in return for an annual tribute. From the time of Mehmed I (r. 1413-1421), members of Genoese families in Phocaea were appointed as tax farmers for the alum mines. The assignment of the tax farming of these mines to the Genoese not only ensured "a fixed and guaranteed income"[52] for the Ottoman rulers, but also secured the former's collaboration and support on certain political occasions. In the early fifteenth century, the Genoese *podestà* of New Phocaea, Giovanni Adorno, son of Giorgio Adorno (the ex-doge of Genoa), was appointed as tax–farmer of the alum mines by Mehmed I, for which he paid the sultan 20,000 gold coins annually. Due to financial difficulties stemming from the Genoese–Catalan war, Adorno was not able to pay the tribute to the new sultan Murad II (r. 1421-1444; 1446-1451) on a regular basis. He therefore found an alternate way of paying his debts. According to the Byzantine historian Doukas, who for a time worked as Adorno's secretary, the Genoese tax farmer decided to solve the problem through diplomatic means. Referring to "the deep friendship and intimacy he had enjoyed with his father Mehmed," Adorno offered his ships to Murad II to be used for the latter's campaign against his uncle Düzme Mustafa, a pretender to the Ottoman throne:

> As your faithful servant, I am eager to offer you my assistance by transporting you from East to West in my triremes and warships. I can provide you with better service than any other person. Only command me and your instructions will speedily be carried out.[53]

The sultan was quite pleased with this offer and asked Adorno to send one of his trusted servants to talk about the details of his plan. Collaborative relations continued after Adorno's death in 1421. He was replaced by another Genoese, Percivalle Pallavicino, a friend of Murad II, as tax farmer of the alum mines in Phocaea. Pallavicino also provided ships for the service of Sultan Murad II in his struggle against the governors of Smyrna and Ipsili.[54] Similar cooperation occurred during the Crusade of Varna in 1444. Despite the impediments the Venetians created to prevent Murad II, who was at the time in Manisa, from passing through the Dardanelles and the Bosporus to Rumelia, the Genoese helped the sultan cross to Edirne (Adrianople) so that he could fight against the crusaders in Varna.[55] Francesco Draperio seems to have played an important role in this, as he visited Murad II at his court more than once during the time of the conflict.[56] It was presumably in return for this support that Draperio was able to gain the sultan's favor and hence the privilege of tax farming the alum mines in Phocaea.

In short, the Genoese collaborated with the Ottomans from the outset on many occasions with the intention of maintaining their commercial outposts and interests. Meanwhile, the Ottomans supported the Genoese presence in the Eastern Mediterranean at the expense of the Venetians and others, and secured the cooperation of the Genoese

[52] Fleet 2004, p. 121.
[53] Doukas 1975, pp. 150-151; Fleet 1999, p. 91.
[54] Doukas 1975, p. 168.
[55] Fabris 1992, p. 181; Theunissen 1998, pp. 121-122. Also see İnalcık 1987, pp. 1-67.
[56] Ancona 2003, Letter 8; Letter 37.

in return for "economic profits and naval assistance" until the takeover of Pera in 1453.[57] One particular aspect of these relations was that personal relationships between the leading Genoese families and the Ottoman sultans played an important role in promoting the political alliances and economic cooperation between the Ottoman state and the Genoese colonies. The Genoese acted as merchants, tax farmers, informants, and diplomats, with sometimes conflicting allegiances to their mother city and the Ottomans.

III. The Genoese of Pera and the Ottoman Sultan

With the conquest of Constantinople on May 29, 1453, the Genoese colony of Pera came under Ottoman control. However, Pera did not suffer the same fate as the rest of Constantinople, since Mehmed II did not besiege or conquer it; rather, the Genoese nobles surrendered it in return for certain privileges. According to Doukas, a month before the conquest of Constantinople, the Genoese of Pera sent ambassadors to Sultan Mehmed II in Edirne, "declaring their genuine friendship with him and renewing past treaties."[58] While the sultan confirmed his feelings of friendship toward the Genoese, he also warned them not to give support to the Byzantines in their defense of the city. The ambassadors gave him their promise; yet, during the siege, the Genoese of Pera allied with both sides. On the one hand, the ex-podestà of Pera, Angelo Giovanni Lomellino, wrote in a mournful letter to his brother that they had tried to help defend the city using mercenaries from Chios and Genoa, and that he himself had done whatever was possible, as the loss of Constantinople would be the loss of Pera.[59] Moreover, Giovanni Giustiniani-Longo, from a noble Genoese family, was appointed as the general commander of the Byzantine army and stood next to Emperor Constantine in the defense of the city. On the other hand, some Genoese provided support to the Ottoman troops. Doukas in his chronicle gives a vivid account of the situation, stating that the Genoese were fighting in both camps throughout the conquest.[60] Niccolò Barbaro, a Venetian eyewitness, also noted that the Genoese acted as spies for the Ottomans to gain the favor of the sultan: "Enemies of the Christian faith, the Genoese, committed this betrayal of the Christians to show themselves friendly to the Turkish sultan."[61]

In any case, witnessing the conquest of the imperial city, many Genoese began to flee Pera in panic despite the agreement they had made with the sultan. Seeing this, Zaganos Pasha, Mehmed II's vizier, quickly went to Pera and assured the Genoese that they would receive treaties with terms better than those in their previous treaties with the (Byzantine) emperors and Ottoman sultans. Upon this promise, those residents remaining in Pera, together with the *podestà*, surrendered the keys of their city to the sultan and obtained an *ahidname*, which guaranteed protection for themselves and their property as

[57] İnalcık 1994, pp. 193-194.
[58] Doukas 1975, p. 212.
[59] Melville-Jones 1972, p. 132: Letter from Angelo Giovanni Lomellino, ex-podestà of Pera, to his brother, 23 June 1453.
[60] Doukas 1975, p. 217.
[61] Barbaro 1969, pp. 41-42.

well as commercial privileges for both themselves and the merchants of Genoa.[62] This pledge or agreement was in a way a renewal of the privileges that the Genoese community had possessed during the Byzantine period. Under the terms of this agreement, the Genoese were allowed to live under Ottoman rule; they were given protection and the right to follow their own laws and religious practices. In this sense, it granted the Genoese community a right of autonomy with respect to internal matters, even if Pera passed under the administration of an Ottoman judge (*kadı*). Although they could apply their own laws when dealing with internal affairs, in matters concerning the Ottomans or other non-Muslims they were subject to Islamic law. The *Magnifica Comunità di Pera* continued to take care of the needs of the Genoese community, and the churches and religious organizations of Pera came under its control; however, the *podestà* was now deprived of his title. Genoese merchants who were citizens of Genoa and resided in the city on a temporary basis for trade purposes had to pay only customs duties, and the sultan also promised to provide security for them.[63]

It is hard to make an exact claim concerning the number of Genoese who remained in Pera immediately after the conquest. The Ottoman survey of Galata (Pera)[64] from 1455, which was prepared for taxation purposes (more specifically, to identify the non-Muslim *zimmi* population subject to the poll-tax and look at the houses in Galata to determine their rent), provides a list of residents and dwellings in Galata. As the document is incomplete, only the survey results for the central and eastern parts of Galata are available to us.[65] Looking at these results, İnalcık concluded that in 1455 there were still a remarkable number of Italians residing in Pera (60% of the pre-conquest population) and that obviously some of those who had fled to Chios and other places during the conquest

[62] Doukas 1975, p. 230.

[63] The original *ahidname*, which was in Greek, is preserved in the British Museum. For the Italian translation of the *ahidname*, *Archivio Stato di Genoa* (hereafter ASG), Archivio Segreto (hereafter AS) 2774 D "Capitolatione fatta dall'Impero Sultan Mehmet con li Perotti (857)"; the Ottoman Turkish version of the text is in Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, *MS fonds turcs ancien* 130. This *ahidname* was subsequently renewed in 1613, 1617, 1624, and 1652. An original copy of the Turkish ahidname granted by Sultan Ahmed I in 1613 is preserved in the Genoa State Archive, AS 2737 D fol. 41. Concerning the various versions of this *ahidname* and commentary on it: D'Alessio 1940, pp. 161-175; D'Alessio 1979, pp. 103-118; Şakiroğlu 1983, pp. 211-232; İnalcık 1998, pp. 275-376. A recent study indicates that there is also an original Turkish version of the *ahidname* in the Galata court records: Galata Şer'iye Sicilleri, n. 17. S. 190/1. Bulunur, 2009, pp. 59-85.

[64] Pera (meaning "the opposite side" in Greek) was the name generally used by the Genoese; the Ottomans called it Galata. There are different ideas concerning the origin of the word Galata. Some argue that it comes from the Greek word *gala* (milk), as the place was once a pasture, while others suggest that it derives from calata (a Genoese term for "staircase") in reference to the famous stepped streets of the district. For details: Mitler 1979, p. 71. Although over time Pera and Galata came to refer to two different districts— Galata became the area from the shore to the tower and Pera was the upper part of the hill— during the Byzantine era and the early period of the Ottoman Empire, no such differentiation was made: both words referred to the same place.

[65] İnalcık 1998, pp. 289-297. The same author also recently published the original document along with a translation: İnalcık 2012.

had returned to Pera when they heard that Mehmed II would restore their houses and property to them.[66] After almost two centuries of existence, Pera was the birthplace and home of most of the Genoese who lived there. Moreover, Genoa was at the time rife with internal quarrels, and for many residents of Pera returning to the mother city did not appear a better option. They therefore remained, agreeing to become subjects of the sultan. The notarial documents from 1453 to 1490 give the impression that the Genoese community seems to have adapted itself to the changes and continued to play a part in the life of Ottoman Galata without much disruption.[67]

It was mutual economic interests that determined the character of Ottoman–Genoese relations during the post-conquest period.[68] Mehmed II wanted to repopulate his new capital and revive its economy; with this intention in view, he renewed the privileges granted to the Genoese. The Genoese community followed a similarly pragmatic approach in its relations with the Ottoman court. It is important to emphasize the fact that the entire negotiation process was conducted by the Genoese of Pera rather than representatives sent from Genoa. The *ahidname* granted by Mehmed II regulated the status and rights of the Genoese in connection with their becoming subjects of the sultan and trading in Ottoman lands; it included no reference to the government of Genoa. (The Genoese of Chios and Mytilene likewise sent ambassadors to negotiate agreements.) Therefore, it can be said that the Genoese presence in the Ottoman capital was an individual initiative of the Genoese inhabitants of Pera rather than a state-backed endeavor.

In 1455 there was in fact a diplomatic effort made by the doge of Genoa, Pietro di Campofregoso, who sent representatives to negotiate with the sultan. He seems to have been urged on the advice of ex-podestà Angelo Giovanni Lomellino, who suggested that a proper diplomatic legate be immediately sent to Istanbul "to discuss everything that applies to our places of business."[69] Luciano Spinola and Baldassarre Maruffo were thus sent as ambassadors of Genoa to the Ottoman court. We do not have much information about the negotiation process; however, the detailed instructions given to the representatives indicate that their main aim was to persuade the sultan to hand Pera over to Genoese control. To this end, the ambassadors were to make contact with Francesco Draperio, who enjoyed the favor of the sultan and was familiar with the rules of conduct at the Ottoman court. They were to rely on his mediation and also take care to highlight the friendship and support the Genoese had historically given to the Ottoman sultans. The ambassadors should then draw particular attention to the present situation in Pera, where the walls had been demolished, and request the sultan to make good the losses the Genoese community had suffered, ensure that the walls were repaired, and turn over the

[66] İnalcık 1998, pp. 292-297; Fleet 1999, p. 126.

[67] Pistarino 1986, pp. 63-85. For the edition of the notarial documents of Pera in the fifteenth century, see Roccatagliata 1982a; 1999, pp. 101-160. Besides Pera, she also edited a selection of notarial documents from Mitilene (1454-1460) and Chios. Roccatagliata, 1982b; 1982c.

[68] Fleet 1999, p. 126.

[69] Melville-Jones 1972, p. 134: Letter of Angelo Giovanni Lomellino, ex-Podestà of Pera to his brother, 23 June 1453.

administration of Pera to the Genoese so that their merchants could safely import commodities and engage in trade.[70] However, this was a futile effort. The sultan did not agree to rebuild the walls and return control of the district to the Genoese, as this would mean confirmation of Genoese territorial sovereignty there.[71] However, in order to facilitate trade activities and economic development, bazaars, inns, and *bedestan*s (covered markets) were constructed both in Istanbul and in Galata. The *bedestan* of Galata, constructed during the reign of Mehmed II, functioned as a commercial link "between the domestic sector and the warehouses of Galata."[72] It was built in Perşembepazarı, at the heart of the Genoese quarter.

Apart from the failed attempt of 1455, Genoa undertook no other diplomatic initiatives concerning its colonies; in fact, it had little say in developments going on in the Eastern Mediterranean. In 1453 Caffa and other trade bases on the Black Sea were given over to the control of Bank of St. George.[73] Different from Venice, where the government was consolidated under the control of great merchant families promoting a state-supported trade, Genoa was "a city of feuds and factions" where the nobility consisted of urban merchants and rural nobility "whose interests were split between commerce and traditional feudal estates."[74] These divisions most frequently resulted in conflicts of interests and civil war among the rival noble families. Already in 1430s the Spanish traveler Pero Tafur regarded Genoa as a nation very powerful at sea; but at the same time noted this crucial internal weakness, observing that "had it not been for the great dissensions which the people have had amongst themselves, their dominion would have extended throughout the world."[75]

During the fifteenth century Genoa engaged in constant domestic political crises, rapid changes in the *signoria*, and external interventions, which consequently left Genoese merchants in the Eastern Mediterranean to their own fate. Braudel pointed out that within the forty years from 1413 to 1453, Genoa underwent fourteen revolutions and following that, suffered two invasions; the first of these at the hands of the French in 1458, five years after the conquest of Constantinople, and the second by the Sforza of

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[70] Belgrano 1877-84, pp. 261-270, doc. CLIV (11 March 1454): "Istruzioni della Signoria di Genova a Luciano Spinola e Baldassarre Maruffo, che si spediscono ambasciatori a Maometto." Some of the walls that had been built around the district during the Byzantine period were apparently demolished by the Ottoman authorities soon after the conquest for security reasons. İnalcık 1998, pp. 281-282.

[71] İnalcık 1994, p. 273; Millas 2006, p. 26; Eyice 1979, pp. 63-64.

[72] Işın 1996, p. 69.

[73] Babinger 1978, p. 119. In Babinger's view, the Bank of St George was an institution whose importance was akin to that of the East India Company. In return for loans to the state, the bank was assigned the right to collect duties and *gabelle*. In addition, it also took over control of the Republic's colonies and territorial possessions as guarantees for further loans. When the Genoese administration had difficulty in paying its debts, it had to sell its possessions to the Bank of St. George, which was described by Machiavelli as a state within a state with its own administrative organization, ships and financial powers.

[74] Kelly 1999, pp. 135-141.

[75] Tafur 1926, p. 28.

Milan in 1464.[76] For this reason, unlike in the case of Venice, there was no state to establish diplomatic representation in the Ottoman capital and protect the interests of Genoese merchants. As for the colonies on the Black Sea, they gradually dwindled in number and all were finally lost. It was only in 1528 that Genoa restored itself under the leadership of Andrea Doria, and with the support of the Spanish Empire. By this time, however, it had lost all its colonies in the Eastern Mediterranean except Chios. And Chios was under the control of the *Maona*, who maintained almost autonomous rule over the island, independent of the mother city.[77]

The chaotic situation in Genoa paved the way for the Ottomans to take over the Genoese colonies of Pera (1453), Phocaea (1455), and Caffa (1475) without much resistance. After the Ottoman conquest, the structure of trade, which involved the exchange of finished products for raw materials, remained the same. However, these commodities and raw materials were mainly used for provisioning the imperial city, whose population increased significantly during this period.[78] Moreover, the Italian monopoly over the Black Sea was broken by the increasing presence of Greek, Muslim, Jewish, and Armenian merchants.[79] Along with the Genoese colonies, Sultan Mehmed II also took over Venetian trade bases between the years 1459 and 1475, thus bringing the entire Black Sea region under Ottoman control. However, the Italians were not completely shut out of trade in this area. Although loss of the trade bases on the Black Sea did indeed negatively affect Genoese trade interests, there exist sources—for instance, the Ottoman customs registers for the years 1486-89—indicating that Italian merchants, including the Genoese, still continued to trade on the Black Sea as both merchants and ship owners, and that, contrary to what most historians had until recently assumed to be the case, the Black Sea was open to them until the end of sixteenth century.[80]

As the evidence related to the trading activities of the Genoese merchants during the post-conquest period is scattered among many sources, it is difficult to determine their position in the Ottoman market. However, it can be argued that those Genoese who remained in the Ottoman realm and became Ottoman subjects not only continued their commercial activities but did so in a more advantageous way. As subjects of the sultan, the Genoese of Pera received protection and benefited from lower customs duties. In the early 1480s the customs duty for non-Muslims (*müstemin*s) and non-tributaries was 4 per cent, while tributaries, including the Genoese, paid only 2 per cent.[81] In return, by virtue of their wealth, expertise, and commercial networks, the Genoese merchants could meet the immediate needs of the expanding Ottoman state. At least until the arrival of the (Sephardic) Jewish merchants in 1492, the Genoese subjects of the sultan seem to have

[76] Braudel 1972, vol. I, p. 339.
[77] The *Maona* refers to an association of merchants who collected revenues from the island on behalf of Genoa and in return paid an annual tribute to Genoa. Basso 2007, pp. 315-324.
[78] İnalcık 1994, p. 181.
[79] Veinstein 1986, pp. 223-226.
[80] İnalcık 1996, pp. 109-10; Veinstein 1986, p. 229.
[81] İnalcık 1998, p. 288; Fleet 1999, p. 131.

acted as intermediaries between the Italian and Ottoman markets through their knowledge of the languages and practices of both sides in this commercial relationship. For instance, according to the report of the Ottoman secret agent Barak Reis, who was sent on a mission to Genoa and France,[82] quite a number of Genoese merchants who were subjects of the sultan were residing in Genoa and conducting trade in textiles between Genoa and Istanbul. Barak Reis came across ten or fifteen such individuals in a tavern in Genoa, and these merchants, who had known him since his childhood, told him that they had come to buy "Janissary felt and other cloth" to sell in Istanbul. Among them was a man known as Frenk Iskender, who provided Barak Reis with clothing and money for his expenses and also hosted him in his home, where the Ottoman agent stayed for a month.[83] It can be thus seen that along with the Florentines, who were exporting a substantial amount of woolen cloth for the Ottoman army, the Genoese subjects of the sultan also dealt in this trade.

In fact, from the 1450s onward a significant transformation took place in Genoa's woolen cloth industry and trade. Previously, the Genoese had exported woolen cloth of English, Lombard, or Tuscan origin to the Levant market. However, during the second half of the fifteenth century, they began to export their own woolens not only to nearby

[82] His mission had to do with tracing and, if possible, capturing or even assassinating Prince Cem, a pretender to the Ottoman throne, who was taken hostage by the Knights of Rhodes and sent to France. The story actually goes back to 1481, when Sultan Mehmed II died suddenly and his sons Bayezid and Cem clashed over the throne. With the support of the Janissaries and a number of statesmen, Bayezid rushed to Istanbul and was proclaimed sultan. Meanwhile Cem, who also had quite a large number of supporters, gathered his troops and marched toward Bursa, which city recognized him as sultan. Taking encouragement from this, Cem proposed to his brother that they settle the conflict peacefully by the dividing the empire into two: the European portion would go to Bayezid, while Cem would rule the Anatolian lands. However, this offer was rejected by Bayezid, who sent his armies against his brother and defeated him. Upon this, Cem and his supporters fled first to Konya and from there to Egypt, to seek refuge in the Mamluk Empire. With the help of the Mamluks, he attempted to besiege Konya but was not successful. Eventually he had to flee to Rhodes, where he was taken hostage by the Knights of Rhodes. From this time onward, he would become a pawn used by the European powers in their diplomatic relations with Sultan Bayezid. In order to eliminate the possibility of Cem attacking the Ottoman Empire with the support of the Knights of Rhodes, Bayezid sent an ambassador to Pierre d'Aubusson, the grand master of the Order, offering him 45,000 ducats per year, in return for which the grand master would guarantee that Cem would not pose a threat to Bayezid. In the meantime, for safety reasons the Knights sent the Ottoman prince to France, where he was kept as a prisoner under the watch of the Duke of Savoy. Cem remained there for six years. In 1488 he was handed over to the pope, becoming his captive. When Charles VIII of France invaded Rome, he took Cem with him to Naples, and soon after that, in 1495, the Ottoman prince died there in the custody of Charles VIII's army. During Prince Cem's captivity in Europe, the Ottoman administration sent various ambassadors, secret agents, and spies to learn the prince's whereabouts and, if possible, capture him. Barak Reis was one of those agents. For more details, see Uzunçarşılı 1995, vol. II, pp. 163-170; Ertaylan 1951, pp. 183-204; İnalcık 2004, pp. 66-88; Isom-Verhaaren 2011, pp. 82-113.

[83] This fascinating four-page report by the Ottoman secret agent is preserved in Topkapı Palace Archive D. 10589. It has been transcribed and published by Turan 1962, pp. 539-55; for an English translation of and commentary on this report, see Ménage 1965, pp. 112-132.

regions but also to the Ottoman market. The Genoese woolens were of mediocre quality, and therefore their prices were far lower than those of Lombard or English woolens.[84] Besides producing mid-range quality woolens, the Genoese also manufactured high-quality cloth, imitating the English and Florentine fabrics. As early as 1458 a remarkable portion of Genoese woolens were sent to Chios and Bursa as "counterfeits" of Florentine woolens. With these high-quality imitations, the Genoese appear to have been in competition with the Florentines in the Ottoman textile market. Referring to an account book of Genoese notary Antonio Gallo, Heers shows that from 1491 to 1494 Gallo sent a significant quantity of Genoese woolens produced in the Florentine style (*more florentianum*) to Chios. Moreover, muslins, i.e., light fabrics made of wool, cotton, linen, or hemp, were very much favored in the Ottoman market and valued at a price twice that of other Genoese textiles.[85] Looking at this evidence, one can argue that the opportunities in the Ottoman market seem to have encouraged the Genoese to develop their woolen cloth industry by diversifying the quality of their products, from low to high. In order to penetrate that market and increase the volume of their exports, they imitated Florentine woolens in particular. Thus, during the post-conquest period, the Genoese, just like their Florentine counterparts, were quite active in the Ottoman textile market, exporting their woolens in return for raw materials.

In addition to woolen cloth, silk fabrics were another important commodity exported by the Genoese to the Ottoman market. In comparison with the state of Genoa's woolen cloth industry in the mid-fifteenth century, its silk cloth industry initially established in Genoa by Florentine and Lucchese specialists in the late fourteenth century was developed to a far higher level by Genoese craftsmen, who soon became masters in this field. In particular, Genoese velvets (with triple pile) were in great demand at the Ottoman court, where velvets were regarded as among the most prestigious silks in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.[86] Genoese merchants developed contacts at the Ottoman court to sell luxurious Genoese velvets and also to achieve easy access to Persian raw silk. The latter was important, because Genoa acquired the raw silk for its silk industry mainly from the Levant. According to Heers, even after the fall of Pera and Phocaea a significant amount of raw silk came to Genoa from Chios; there were even various types of raw silk known as silk of Chios, silk of Rhodes, and *stravai* (raw silk from Astarabad).[87] Levantine raw silk thus continued to constitute a significant portion of Genoese imports from the Ottoman market during this period.

Genoese merchants likewise continued to be quite active, especially in Bursa, a center for the silk trade. Both European and Ottoman sources frequently mention Genoese merchants and their business affairs in this Ottoman city. Florentine agent Giovanni di Francesco Maringhi, who acted as resident agent in Pera for a number of Florentine firms selling woolen cloth from 1497 to 1507, in his letters to Florence made reference to Italian and Jewish merchants residing in Bursa at the beginning of the sixteenth century, who

[84] Heers 1971a, pp. 180-182; Heers, 1971b, p. 1114.
[85] Heers 1971b, pp. 1116-1117.
[86] Atasoy et al. 2001, p. 16.
[87] Heers 1971a, pp. 184-185.

numbered around thirty-two. Along with their names, Maringhi also provided details about their occupations: cloth merchant, commissioner, banker, jeweler, silk weaver, and so on. Among them were several Genoese drapers and brokers (for example, members of the Spinola family) bartering finished cloth for raw silk in Bursa.[88] Not surprisingly, we come across Genoese names in Bursa's Ottoman-era court registers, which provide valuable information concerning their daily lives and business affairs.[89]

At this time, in addition to serving as an important transit port for raw materials from Asia Minor to Genoa and Europe, Chios was a textile-manufacturing center, and the main customer for its silk fabrics was the Ottoman palace.[90] Although information on the history of silk cloth production in Chios is quite limited, it is assumed that in the late fifteenth century the island was producing its own raw silk, which was used by local looms.[91] In 1480, there were quite a number of silk weavers on the island, and from evidence found for 1483, we understand that most of them had migrated from Genoa—concerning which the *Arte della Seta* in Genoa made a complaint to the authorities in Chios, asking them to return these craftsmen. Another such complaint, which offers perhaps the most striking example of the interplay between Chios and Genoa, has to do with the Genoese Gaspare Borra moving to Chios in 1498 and setting up a silk weaving business "with a secret manufacturing process and special machines." Upon this, the Genoese administration requested that the authorities in Chios destroy all the machinery and send Borra back to Genoa.[92] This indicates that the *Arte della Seta* in Genoa regarded silk cloth production in Chios as a potential threat to the marketing of their own silk fabrics. In any case, Chios maintained its importance as a supplier of silk cloth to the Ottoman palace. In a treaty between Sultan Selim I and the Genoese Chiots dating from 1512, it was affirmed that if the sultan ordered textiles, the cost would be deducted from the annual tribute the Genoese were obliged to pay him.[93]

In addition to raw silk, Genoese merchants also imported a significant amount of cotton. According to Mazzaoui, "in the fifteenth century the largest exporters of Turkish cotton were the Genoese,"[94] who bought the cotton of Asia Minor in the markets of Bursa and Phocaea and transported it through Chios to Genoa. There was also cotton from the

[88] G.R.B Richards edited and translated these letters in her book: Richards 1932, pp. 283-293; Lowry 2003, pp. 24-25.

[89] A selection of these court cases for the years 1478-80 and 1484-86, in original Ottoman Turkish along with their summaries was published by İnalcık 1960, pp. 45-102; İnalcık 1980/81, pp. 1-41. In these court registers, the Genoese of Pera were referred to as Galatalı zimmi, Galatalı Efrenci or Cenevizli. As their names were written quite differently in the Ottoman documents and the father's name (rather than the surname) was used as an identifier —for instance, Civanbatist oğlu Lorenco (Lorenzo, son of Giovan Battista) or Cenevizli Damyan oğlu Piero (the Genoese Piero, son of Damian)— it is a bit difficult to trace them in parallel with the European sources.

[90] Atasoy et al. 2001, p. 173.

[91] Argenti 1958, vol. I, pp. 510-511.

[92] Argenti 1958, vol. I, p. 493.

[93] Atasoy et al. 2001, p. 173.

[94] Mazzaoui 1981, pp. 44-45. For instance, in 1458, 430 tons of cotton worth 74,000 gold ducats were imported from Chios to Genoa.

Balkans transported to the European markets via Chios. With these substantial cotton imports, the Genoese supplied the rural industries in Lombardy, Liguria, and Piedmont, where it was used for the manufacture of inexpensive cloth. They also re-exported a large quantity of cotton to Flanders and England. During the years between 1507 and 1537, cotton from Asia Minor represented "the highest volume of textile fibers imported into Genoa."[95] Thus, despite the loss of the Black Sea colonies, Genoese merchants continued to supply raw materials necessary for the textile industry, such as raw silk, cotton, wool, camlet, and mohair, along with alum and dyes, to Genoa and other European ports through Chios, which became an important base for Genoese trading activities. At the same time, the Genoese merchants of Pera and Chios competed with other Italians and local merchants in the Ottoman market to sell their finished cloth of varying types and quality. This competition not only promoted the development of the textile industries in Genoa and Chios, but additionally offered Genoese merchants new prospects for profit.

The Genoese of Chios also used their resources and skill at shipbuilding in the service of the Ottomans. During this period, as a result of the Ottoman naval policy to acquire control over the trade routes and protect trade entrepôts in the Eastern Mediterranean, there were repeated naval conflicts with the Venetians. With intensive activity underway to prepare a fleet for the Ottoman navy, the Genoese Chiots were able to provide skilled craftsmen and resources to the Ottoman arsenal. In 1468 Ottoman Grand Vizier Mahmud Pasha sent an order to *Maona* of Chios asking for sixty caulkers to be sent to Gallipoli to assist in preparing a fleet to be used in Ottoman attacks against Venetian possessions.[96] A similar order was made in 1488; in consequence, Genoese craftsmen Nicola Corsanego and Benedetto Brusacastella were sent to the arsenal in Istanbul to help with building ships.[97] In addition to caulkers and carpenters, building materials such as pitch were also obtained from Chios. In the first half of the sixteenth century the *Maona* continued to provide skilled shipbuilders to be at the disposal of the sultan. In 1545 Grand Admiral Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha sent an urgent message to Chios asking for the immediate dispatch of some craftsmen to the Ottoman capital to work at shipbuilding, noting that compliance would be regarded as a manifestation of their loyalty to the Sublime Porte.[98]

Conclusion

The conquest of Constantinople certainly affected the Genoese in Pera and other colonies on the Black Sea and the Aegean; yet, the assumption that it struck a serious blow to Genoese trading activities in the Eastern Mediterranean is misleading. By prioritizing their personal and commercial interests, the members of some Genoese merchant families adapted themselves to the new conditions and even tried to shape them according to what best served their interests. Due to the scarcity of sources, it is hard to pinpoint these families precisely; but in the light of evidence from the Ottoman survey of

[95] Heers 1971a, pp. 278; Mazzaoui 1981, p. 47.
[96] Argenti 1958, vol. I, p. 219.
[97] Musso 1976, p. 113.
[98] Sahillioglu 2002, doc. no. 283 (c. 951/1545).

1455 and from Genoese notarial documents, it appears that the Draperio, Langasco, Garra, Grillo, Spinola, Salvago, Gentile, Pallavicino, and de Franchi families were among the wealthy Genoese who became subjects of the sultan. Some of these families continued to hold the same important positions they had held before the conquest. The best-known example in this sense is Francesco Draperio. As a close friend of the sultan, he was able to keep the tax-farming concession of the alum mines in Phocaea after the conquest. At the same time, he was one of the partners who controlled the production and export of alum, which indicates the extent of the Genoese monopoly over this profitable commodity. As previously mentioned, in the process of building their state, the Ottoman rulers looked to increase state revenue by establishing fixed income streams rather than controlling and exploiting resources themselves.[99] This economic policy allowed the Genoese to hold onto their trade interests in the Ottoman realm for a time, though in Draperio's case, his position as tax farmer of the alum mines did not last long due to a conflict with the Genoese Chiots. This took place when, in 1455, Draperio asked for the payment of 40,000 gold coins owed to him for alum by the Genoese in Chios. The *Maona*, however, rejected this demand, claiming that the debt had already been paid. Upon this, Draperio resorted to asking for help from the sultan, who sent a fleet to Chios to collect the debt. In the end, faced with the threat of losing their colony, the Chiots agreed to pay increased tribute to the sultan.[100] After this event, we do not come across any references to Francesco Draperio in the sources; he seems to have been replaced as tax farmer of the alum mines in Phocaea by a Venetian merchant, Girolamo Michiel.

It is difficult to trace the Genoese community of Pera through the sixteenth century, as its members became reduced in number for various reasons and gradually acculturated and assimilated into Ottoman society as Perots, who represented "the last vestiges of the Genoese community that had thrived in the area for centuries, joined by refugees from Caffa forced to move to the Ottoman capital after its takeover in 1475."[101] Those who found better opportunities for their interests made their way to new markets and routes in the West. It has been declared that although the Genoese lost easy access to the alum mines in Phocaea, the discovery of alum mines at Tolfa near Rome in 1464 served as compensation for this, which event was described by Pope Pius II as "our greatest victory against the Turk."[102] However, Musso notes that alum was still sent from Phocaea even after the discovery of Tolfa.[103] Moreover, after the loss of Samastro (Amasra) in 1460 and Caffa in 1475 to the Ottomans, the Genoese turned their sights to Sicily and Morocco for grain and to Calabria, Sicily, and Granada for raw silk. The sugar previously supplied by Syria and Cyprus was now obtained from Spanish colonies such as Madeira and the Canaries. Nonetheless, some Genoese families also maintained their

[99] Fleet 2004, p. 127.
[100] Doukas 1975, pp. 246-255.
[101] Dursteler 2006, p. 142. Also see Fratta 1925. According to Mauri della Fratta, a patriarchal vicar in Istanbul between 1629 and 1631, there were 41 Italian houses and 50 families in Pera. Among them, the Genoese Draperio, Grillo, and Salvago families had remained since pre-Ottoman times.
[102] Abulafia 2001, pp. 392-93.
[103] Musso 1976, p. 110.

presence and trading activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. Through an extensive mercantile network from the Levant to the Atlantic, they were able to transmit information and know-how quite easily among different markets. For instance, in the late fifteenth century the Doria family was active in London, Spain, Madeira, Chios, and Flanders; the Spinola family operated in London, Spain, Portugal, Madeira, Chios, and Gallipoli.[104]

The death of Sultan Mehmed II in 1481 and the conflict between his sons Cem and Bayezid over the throne aroused hopes in Genoa of recovering its possessions from Ottoman control. To this end, the Genoese administration agreed to send galleys to Otranto (which had been already invaded by the Ottomans in 1480) and in tandem with the government in Genoa, the Genoese of Pera offered their help to King Ferrante of Naples.[105] The real intention of the Genoese was to benefit from the chaotic situation in the Ottoman Empire after the death of the sultan and if possible take over control of Caffa and the trade posts on the Aegean. However, as a result of the ambitions of Alfonso II, duke of Calabria, and the distrust between the papacy, King Ferrante, and the Genoese, such plans did not reach any conclusion.[106] According to Dauverd, the year 1480 was a decisive moment for the Genoese of Pera, who upon the death of Mehmed II would shift their alliance to King Ferrante in order to concentrate their trade in the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily. She argues that the trade privileges and concessions granted by King Ferrante attracted the Genoese to southern Italy and marked a new alliance.[107] Although there is no trace in the Genoese archival sources of such a mass migration of the Genoese from the Ottoman lands to Naples, it is true that over time the Genoese merchants shifted the bulk of their trading activities to southern Italy, Iberia, and western Europe.[108] After 1528, when Andrea Doria transferred his allegiance from France to Spain, Genoese mercantile interests became more and more concentrated on the Spanish colonies extending from southern Italy to the Atlantic and the newly discovered Americas, which together provided a market with ample scope for the activities of the Genoese merchants.

By the mid-sixteenth century, Chios was the only link connecting Genoa to the Eastern markets. There remained almost no ties with the Genoese of Pera. This could be seen in the Genoese diplomatic efforts at the Sublime Porte in the 1550s, for which the Republic chose a Genoese citizen and Ottoman subject, Francesco de Franchi from Chios, instead of a Genoese Perot to establish contacts with the Ottoman court and facilitate the negotiations at the Ottoman capital. Meanwhile Genoese ambassadors were also strongly exhorted not to accept any requests for protection from the Perots, which gives an idea of the level of attachment existing between the *patria* and the Genoese of Pera.[109]

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[104] Doria 1995, p. 112.

[105] ASG, Archivio Segreto 2774 A Oriente e Costantinopoli: "1480 Proposta fatta in consiglio di governo a Genova per aiutare il Re Ferdinando contro l'armata turca a Otranto."

[106] Grasso 1880, pp. 1-21.

[107] Dauverd 2015, pp. 30-31.

[108] Kelly 1999, pp. 392-93.

[109] For the diplomatic negotiations between Genoa and the Ottoman Empire in the mid-sixteenth century, see Mercan 2019, pp. 542-565.

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