

“The Levant Company did me ye honour of appointing me consul of this place, Negropont and all Greece”: The Institutional Appearance of the British in Salonica

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“Levant Kumpanyası Beni Bu Yerin, Eğriboz’un ve Bütün Yunanistan’ın Konsolosu Tayin Etmekle Onurlandırdı”: İngilizlerin Selanik’teki Kurumsal Tezahürleri

Öz ■ 1581-1826 yılları arasında Osmanlı-İngiliz ticari ve siyasi ilişkileri Levant Kumpanyası tarafından idare edildi. İstanbul’daki İngiliz Büyükelçisi ile Osmanlı topraklarında faaliyet gösteren İngiliz konsolosları hem Levant Kumpanyası’nı hem de İngiliz hükümetini temsil ediyorlardı. Osmanlı ve İngiliz arşiv belgelerine dayanan bu çalışma, XVIII. yüzyılın ilk yıllarında Selanik’te İngiliz konsoloslğunun kuruluşunu ve ilk konsolos Richard Kemble’nin faaliyetlerini incelemektedir. Araştırma, Selanik’te İngiliz Konsolosluğu’nun kurulması ile onun çok yönlü etkilerini ortaya çıkarmayı, daha kapsamlı ve daha rasyonel bir tarihsel araştırma meydana getirmek için farklı arşivlerdeki belgelerin karşılaştırmalı değerlendirilmesinin önemini vurgulamayı ve geçmişteki insani faaliyetler hakkında daha derin bir kavrayışı başarmayı istemektedir. Çalışmada kullanılan belgeler Hertfordshire’deki Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies ile İstanbul’daki Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi ve Londra’daki (Kew) National Archives’de bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Kapitülasyonlar, Fransız konsolosluğu, Tercüman, Levant Kumpanyası, Yunanistan.

Introduction

The Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies there hold a letter, which was sent to the Merchant Ralph Radcliffe,¹ who was one of the members and merchants

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1 Ralph Radcliffe ‘was admitted to the Levant Company in 1706.’ Ron Pigram, *The Radcliffes of Hitchin Priory: Short History of Hitchin Priory during Georgian Days* (England: Stables Printers St Albanians Limited at the Priory Press, 1980), p. 3; Ralph Davis, *Aleppo*

of the Levant Company, and signed by Richard Kemble and dated 4 July 1718. In this letter, which was written in Salonica, Richard Kemble stated that ‘The Levant Company, thanks to you sir among ye best of my good friends, did me honour of appointing me consul of this port, Negropont and all Greece’.² What does this statement mean? What was the Levant Company? Who was Richard Kemble and what did he do in Salonica?³ What was his duty and why did the Levant Company commission him as a consul to Salonica, Negroponte and all of Greece?

The Levant Company, which was established in 1592 when the Turkey Company and Venice Company, founded in 1581 and 1583 respectively, were combined,⁴ after the Ottomans granted capitulations to the English (later, British) in 1580. This treaty not only administrated the commercial relations between the British⁵ and the Ottomans as a monopoly in the Levant (Ottoman dominions) but also governed the political relations between the Crown and *Grand Signor*, in that the British ambassador in Istanbul ‘had a dual role as both the diplomatic envoy of the crown to the Sublime Porte and guardian of the company’s commercial interests’⁶ during the period under question. Since the capitulations gave official permission to the European ambassadors in Istanbul to establish their own consulates in the Ottoman dominions, this means that the capitulations were the legal basis for the commercial relations between Europeans and the Ottomans. In that period, the consul’s, who was the ambassador’s representative, main duty was also commercial, and he was the leader and representative of his own merchant society.⁷ This was also accepted by the Ottomans.⁸

and Devonshire Square: English Traders in the Levant in the Eighteenth Century (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1967), pp. 10-11.

- 2 Letter by Richard Kemble (Salonika), DE/R/B114/1, Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, Hertfordshire, United Kingdom.
- 3 Although there are different names for Salonica, such as Thessalonika and Salonika, since the original documents used the word “Salonica”, the researcher also preferred this historical name in this research.
- 4 M. Epstein, *The English Levant Company* (London: George Routledge and Sons Limited, 1908), pp. 16-25.
- 5 Even though Ottoman documents and records use ‘İngiliz’ (the English) word every time, “the British” instead of “the English” was preferred by the author in this research.
- 6 Christine Laidlaw, *The British in The Levant* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010), p. 1.
- 7 Niels Steensgaard, “Consuls and Nations in the Levant from 1570 to 1650,” *The Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 1-2 (1967), pp. 14-15.
- 8 Mehmet Demiryürek and Hakan Yazar, “Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Kıbrıs’ta İngiltere Konsolosluğu,” *Bellefen*, 290 (2017), pp. 89-134.

As for the history of the British consulate in Salonica, prior detailed research has not been done regarding the institution or its establishment. Moreover, although the first English consul sent to Salonica was Richard Kemble in 1715⁹ and in the 18th century ‘the chief development took place in the newly established settlement of Salonica’,¹⁰ one can find little recorded knowledge concerning the history of the British consulate in Salonica. In addition, the date of foundation of the British consulate in Salonica has been indicated incorrectly by some researchers. For instance, Neslihan Ünal has recently written that it was founded in 1718.¹¹ Phokion Kotzageorgis and Demetrius Papastamatiou, and Suraiya Faroqhi, including Encyclopaedia Britannica underlined that Salonica was one of the prominent ports of the Ottoman Balkans¹² and Suraiya Faroqhi also stated that there were foreign consuls in Salonica from the beginning of the 18th century,¹³ even that of the French was set up prior to the 18th century, there has not been a detailed research concerning the British consulate in that port city yet. *The Greek Merchant Marine (1453-1850)* also does not unearth the foreign consulates in Salonica in the 18th century,¹⁴ it only mentions some pivotal commercial activities in Salonica in the beginning of the 19th century, though in 1745 Richard Pococke recorded that the English, French, Dutch and Venetians had had their own consulates in Salonica.¹⁵

There are, two valuable and accessible accounts available that directly concern the history of the British consulate in Salonica in the first quarter of the 18th century. A book published in 2017 reveals some important knowledge concerning the British

9 Alfred C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (Oxford: Frank Cass & Co Ltd., 1964), p. 122.

10 Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, p. 164.

11 Neslihan Ünal, *İki Osmanlı Kenti: İzmir ve Selanik* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2015), pp. 211-12.

12 Phokion Kotzageorgis and Demetrius Papastamatiou, “Wealth Accumulation in an Urban Context: The Profile of the Muslim Rich of Thessaloniki in the Eighteenth Century on the Bases of Probate Inventories,” *Turkish Historical Review*, 5 (2014), p. 166; Suraiya Faroqhi, “Selanik,” *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, New Edition, 1997, IX, p. 123; Suraiya Faroqhi, *Subjects of the Sultan* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010), p.166; “Salonika,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1959, XIX, p. 890.

13 Faroqhi, “Selanik,” p. 125.

14 George B. Leon, “The Greek Merchant Marine (1453-1850),” *The Greek Merchant Marine* (Athens: National Bank of Greece, 1972), pp. 318-19.

15 Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries*, vol. 2, part 2 (London: Printed for the Author, By W. Bowyer, 1745), p. 151.

consulate in Salonica in the 18th century, such as the names of the British consuls and the periods of their service.¹⁶ However, the findings related to Richard Kemble and his successor Robert Stevenson in this book contain some deficiencies, in that they are based only on Ottoman archival material. The second source is an article published by Helen Angelomatis-Tsougarakis in 2007. It is based on the Greek translation of Richard Kemble's consulship *berat* (imperial diploma) which was renewed by the Sultan Ahmet III (1703-1730) in 1719.¹⁷ This Greek translation is very important, in that the copy of the renewal *berat* has not been discovered yet, except for its abstract which was recorded in the *Düvel-i Ecnebiye Defterleri* (Ottoman foreign register of the British community). Even though this research brought new and important findings to the field, such as the publication of a Greek translation of this British consulate *berat* issued by the Sublime Porte, an evaluation of that *berat* under the British capitulations of 1675 and the real identity of Stephanos Dapontes, who was one of the British consuls in Greece at that time, these questions about the topic have been left unanswered. In a similar vein, the relation between Richard Kemble and Stephanos Dapontes has not been explained yet. What is more, although Angelomatis-Tsougarakis was aware of some documents about Richard Kemble in the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, she did not see or analyse them. Focusing on the various archival sources, this research seeks to fill these gaps.

Consequently, it is clear that the detailed study of the history of the British trading and seaborne commerce, in this particular case the British consulate in Salonica in the early years of the 18th century, is still in its infancy and very few researches, comprising mainly that of Wood,¹⁸ Kentish,¹⁹ Svoronos,²⁰ Demiryürek and Angelomatis-Tsougarakis need to be developed. In short, as Angelomatis-Tsougarakis wrote in 2007, "very little is known about the British consulate in

16 Mehmet Demiryürek, *Ottoman Documents on the English in the Ottoman Empire (1700-1800)* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2017), pp. 42-44.

17 Helen Angelomatis-Tsougarakis, "A *Berat* of the British Consul of Salonica (1719)," *The Ottoman Empire, The Balkans, The Greek Lands: Towards a Social and Economic History, Studies in Honour John C. Alexander*, eds. Elias Kolovos, Phokion Kotzageorgis, Sophia Laiou, Marinos Sariyanis (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2007), pp. 49-60.

18 Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, pp. 122-164.

19 Susan Roy Kentish, "Fragile Alliances: How the Marginalised Levant Company Trading Community Operated to Overcome Its Weakness in Early Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Smyrna" (MA thesis), University of London, 2008, pp. 46-48.

20 N. G. Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique au XVIII Siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), pp. 166-68.

Salonica in the beginning of the eighteenth century” and Kentish stated in 2008²¹ that ‘the emergence of the British consulate in Salonica is still “hazy” and this research aims at unveiling the darkness, to some extent, in the context of the archival records. Therefore, this research is an attempt to trace the emergence of the British institutional presence in Salonica during the period under consideration, by revealing and evaluating the documents in the Ottoman Archives and those of the British Archives, and by focusing on the establishment of the British consulate in Salonica. In addition, this study intends to discuss the Ottoman records concerning the appointment dates of the foreign nations’ consuls by the Sublime Porte, that is, the date of the imperial decrees (*berat*) granted by the Sublime Porte, which meant the confirmation of their appointment by the Sultan. In other words, this research seeks to investigate whether the date of the imperial decrees related to the consul appointments issued by the Sublime Porte can be accepted as the beginning of their service.

Salonica: *One Thousand and Sixty-three Miles from London*

Salonica had an important role under both Roman and Byzantine rule and it maintained its importance during the Ottoman administration as well, mainly because of its strategic location. For one thing it was on the way of *Via Egnatia* and it had a good harbour.²² In essence, in the 17th century, although there was no British consulate in Salonica, British merchants and the commerce world knew Salonica and its commercial capacities. To illustrate, 38 years before the first British consul was named to Salonica in 1715, in 1677 *The Merchant Map of Commerce* by Robert Lewis recorded that in Salonica, ‘anciently called *Thessalonica*’, ‘the present inhabitants are *Greeks*, *Turks* and principally *Jews*, who are here found to be very rich and eminent merchants, 80 Synagogues of them being accounted to be in this town, employing themselves in several arts and merchandising. It is seated in the bottom of a Gulph called by the cities name, and by the demur that happened in the *English* trade to *Turkie* some years past, these *Jews* and inhabitants, and some *Moors* banished of the *Spain*, have here set up some *Looms*, and made cloth, in imitation of our *English Soffolk* cloths’.²³

21 Kentish, *Fragile Alliances*, p. 47.

22 Faroqhi, “Selanik,” p. 123; David Brewer, *Greece: The Hidden Centuries* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010), p. 19, 100-101; Ünal, *İki Osmanlı Kenti*, pp. 152-54.

23 Roberts Lewes, *The Merchant Map of Commerce, Wherein the Universal Manner and Matter of Trade is Compendiously Handled [...]*, (London: Printed for R. Horn [...], 1677), p. 268.

Some sixty years later, or thirteen years after the British consulate was established in Salonica, the *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis* recorded in 1728 that in Salonica ‘The Turks encouraging strangers to live here, more than is their ordinary custom to do; the reason is, they find the benefit of it by the customs rising to a greater height; for there is an extraordinary concourse of merchants. The chief product of the country exported here is leather, iron, and cotton wool. The first is the manufacture of the place, and they bring the hides even from Hungary, or at least from the Danube, whose distant is 180 miles north. The iron is very good, and the best without dispute in all south of Europe. But besides those goods they have here weel silk, goat and camels hair, or programs, honey, wax and a prodigious quantity of corn: or which, and the merchandizes brought hither in return, their harbour is always full of ships’.²⁴ Another book also wrote that in 1726 ‘Salonichi, the old Thessalonica, is the most considerable town in Greece, by reason of its good harbour, and traffick in silk, leather, iron, cotton, wax, honey, wool, corn, etc. chiefly managed by Jews’.²⁵

A book titled *A Set of Thirty-two New and Correct Maps of the Principal Parts of Europe* and printed in 1727 recorded that Salonica was one thousand and sixty-three miles and two hundred and fifty-five miles from London and Constantinople, respectively.²⁶ Richard Pococke, who was one of the British travellers who visited Greece, wrote in 1745 that ‘Salonica is fifteen days journey with a caravan from Constantinople’.²⁷ As to London, it can only be guessed how long that transit time during that period is likely to be. Kemble’s first letter from Salonica was written on 4 July 1718 and reached Marseilles on 27 August 1718. Two days later, on 29 August 1718, it was forward to London from Marseilles, and it was in London, probably, on 1st September 1718. Consequently it can be said that his letter from Salonica took nearly fifty-eight days to get to London, via Marseilles.²⁸

24 Dr. Halley, *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis or a General View of the World, so far as Relates to Trade and Navigation [...]* (London: Printed for James and John Knapton [et al.], 1728), p. 81.

25 M. Paschoud, *Historico-Political Geography*, vol. 2, the second edition (London: Printed for F. Clay [...], 1726), p. 93.

26 Herman Moll, *A Set of Thirty-two New and Correct Maps of the Principal Parts of Europe* (London: And sold by him [Herman Moll], 1727), p. 48.

27 Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries*, p. 151.

28 Davis also wrote that ‘most letters, from England, whether bu Vienna and Venice, by Marseilles or Leghorn, or by all-sea route from England took two months to get’ to Aleppo. See, Davis, *Aleppo and Devonshire Square*, p. 3.

This letter also shows that though he was appointed in November 1715,²⁹ in the following nearly thirty months the British consul to Salonica could not begin to work properly in Salonica until the summer of 1718. He reached Salonica on 9 April 1718³⁰ and about three months later he could send his first letter to London. Angelomatis-Tsougarakis argued that it took three years from his appointment to his arrival to Salonica, and that this “is rather odd, because a period of three years for him to move from Smyrna to Salonica seems excessive”.³¹ In fact, he was nominated by the Levant Company on 27 October 1715, and he was issued a consulship *berat* by the Sublime Porte on 14-23 February 1716 and he came to Salonica on 9 April 1718. Furthermore, in 1717 he was in London, and he sold his “the Crown Tavern in Cornhill”, owing to his “great losses in trade”. Apart from these incidents, his appointment to Salonica was approved by George I in 1718,³² probably in the early days of aforesaid year. As a result, he seems to have passed some two years, not three and this is not an “excessive” time during the early modern period, in which travelling and transporting were slower than modern times.

In the early modern period correspondence was one of the important communication tools but it “remained as it had been in the Middle Ages, tied to the speeds of man and horse on land, and of wind and current on water.”³³ Besides these circumstances, the security difficulties on sea or land, pirates and brigands respectively, must be added to the list. Messages travelled together with passengers and merchandise, but “much more slowly and laboriously”³⁴ than those of today, in the absence of modern or electronic communications. Merchants and consuls also used this communication tool both for personal and business needs and the first British consul to Salonica was not exempted from this.

Another pivotal point is that even though British merchants and vessels visited Salonica and some British merchants in Smyrna requested the Levant Company

29 Gülay Webb Yıldırım, *XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı-İngiliz Tıfık Ticareti* (Ankara: TTK, 2011), p. 82.

30 Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique au XVIII Siècle*, p. 166.

31 Angelomatis-Tsougarakis, “A *Berat* of the British Consul of Salonica (1719),” pp. 54-55.

32 Stephen Kemble, *Kemble Papers: Collections of the New York Historical Society, for the Year 1884*, vol. 2 (New York: Printed for the Society, 1885), p. xiii.

33 Kyle K. Brunelle “Communication and Transportation,” *Europe: 1450 to 1789, Encyclopaedia of the Early Modern World*, vol. 1, ed. Jonathan Dewald (New York, Munic [et al.]: Thomson & Gale, 2004), p. 21.

34 Brunelle, “Communication and Transportation,” p. 22.

to send a consul to Salonica in the later years of the 17th century onwards, the Levant Company resisted this development and after about twenty years of resistance it was decided to send a consul to Salonica. The first British consul to Salonica was Richard Kemble, who had been a merchant in Smyrna for a long time.³⁵

Konstantinoğlu's (the son of Konstantin) Case and the British in Salonica

The history of the French consulate in Salonica started in 1648, when the first French consul named Baltazar Daş (?) was appointed to the ports of Salonica and Euboea (*Eğriboz*) and other ports associated with them.³⁶ Some sixty-seven years later the British followed suit and formally set up their own consulate in Salonica in 1715. Nonetheless, it is clear that although there was not a British consul in Salonica in the first years of the 18th century, the British merchants, captains and commodities had reached Salonica under the protection of the French in Salonica.³⁷ In 1703, for example, the French consul in Salonica reported that the commercial cooperation between the British and Greeks was a serious threat for French trade in Salonica. In 1714, the commercial fear was expressed by the French consul in Salonica again. In their views the main reason of the rise of the British in Salonica was that the British baize was of higher quality than that of the French.³⁸ Even though the British trade was a threat in the first years of the 18th century, after a while competition from the British disappeared and the French trade gained superiority against the British trade with its cheaper yet quality goods across the Levant.³⁹

35 Kentish, *Fragile Alliances*, pp. 46-48.

36 The year of 1058 of the Hegira (1648) was derived from the Ottoman archival records. "... Eğriboz ve Selanik ve anlara tabi olan iskelelerde França konsolosu olmayub sair memâlik-i mahrusemde olduğu gibi ol cihâtlarda bir konsolos nasb olunmak lâzım olmağla ... Evâil-i Zilhicce 1058", See Ottoman Prime Ministry Archives (hereafter BOA), *Düvel-i Ecnebiye Defterleri, Fransa Nişan ve Abkam Defteri*, Fon Kodu: A.DVNSDVE, Defter no: 26/1, p.148, Entry (*bükküm*) no. 400. For the date of the establishment of the French consulate in Salonica various dates have been offered by the different researchers so far. For example, while Kentish's date, for example, was 1685, Eyal Ginio put forward 1682. Kentish, *Fragile Alliances*, p. 47; Eyal Ginio, "Jews and European Subjects in Eighteenth-Century Salonica: The Ottoman Perspective," *Jewish History*, 3-4 (2014), pp. 289-312.

37 Angelomatis-Tsougarakis, "A *Berat* of the British Consul of Salonica (1719)," p. 51.

38 Ünal, *İki Osmanlı Kenti*, pp. 214-15.

39 Laidlaw, *The British in the Levant*, p. 26.

An Ottoman document also exemplifies that British vessel visited the port of Salonica before officially commissioning a British consul in 1715.⁴⁰ The fact is that the capitulations of 1675 and previous ones stipulated that the British or those who were under the protection of them could trade in all Ottoman ports. It seems that April 1715 was a very interesting date in the history of the British consulate in Salonica in two ways. Firstly, the British *factory* in Smyrna had renewed its proposal to the Levant Company to appoint a British consul to Salonica on 25 April 1715. Secondly, evaluating an official request by a Salonica judge about a British captain and his crew who were accused of infringing Ottoman customs rules, the Sublime Porte had issued an imperial order dated 6-16 April 1715 and sent to the Salonica judge and the commander of Janissaries in Salonica. The record stated that the ship of a British captain named *Gavliye*, which was anchored in the Salonica port, had been detained by the Ottoman customs officials and having gained a Sultanic order, they had impounded the ship's commodities. During the investigation, they discovered about two hundred and twenty *tay*⁴¹ of tobacco (*duhan*) (approximately 19.758.200 or 20.040.460 kg)⁴² which had been prohibited to be exported to 'infidel' lands (*dar-ül-harb*). The owner of these smuggled goods was Konstantin, son of Panayot who was responsible for the customs of tobacco (*duhan gümrüğü emini vekili*) in Salonica. Konstantin was sent to

40 "The English galley coming from Salonica to Negroponte Castle, by loading cereal in Salonica ...". BOA, İE.AS. 26-2354, 7 Muharrem 1101 (21 October 1689). In addition to this, in 1714 it was reported that the Kadı in Salonica visited to the English and Netherlands vessels and drank with the Europeans. BOA, MD 120, hüküm no. 775, p. 195, 29 Rabi II 1126 (14th May 1714).

41 According to İnalçık "*Tay*" means "*balya (bale)*". See Halil İnalçık, "Introduction to Ottoman Metrology," *Turcica*, 15 (1983), pp. 311-34. In the eighteenth-century Salonica was the main exportation port for tobacco produced in Macedonia region. During the period from April to July (for three months) of 1698, for example, the amount of exported tobacco from Salonica port to Venice and France was 92.477 oke and the annual exportation amount in 1722 was 717.728 oke, from Salonica to various European countries. Besides exportation of tobacco, during those years smuggling of tobacco was rampant, despite all precautions taken by the Sublime Porte. See Fehmi Yılmaz, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Tütün: Sosyal, Siyasî ve Ekonomik Tahlili (1600-1883)" (doktora tezi), Marmara Üniversitesi, 2005, pp. 131-38.

42 In 1798, 1 *bale* was equal to 70-71 oke and 220 *bale* of tobacco thus was equal to (70x220=)15.400 oke or (71x220=) 15.620 oke. Since 1 oke means 1.285 kg and as a result the amount of smuggling of tobacco in this record can be counted as 19.758.200 or 20.040.460 kg respectively. Yılmaz, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Tütün," p. 73.

Istanbul and was sentenced to hard labour (*küreğe vaz' olunmak*). But there were also two problems. The first one was that the ship which underwent this operation was a British ship and its crew was also British, and their travels were under the protection of the capitulations. The second one was that the tobacco which was confiscated was smuggled. The Salonica judge did deal with these problems and requested the Sultan to solve them. According to the decision of the Sultan, as the ship travelled under the British flag (*ve geldiği hinde dahi İngiltere bayrağı ile gelüb*), and its crew confessed they were of this nationality to the British and the French consul in Salonica and his dragoman supported their confession, they would be released. The tobacco which was seized would be offloaded and sold in Salonica, at the official price (*değer bahası*), and the money obtained from the sale would be sent to the central treasury in Istanbul.⁴³

The document above, in essence, was the final scene of a play staged by the leaders of a Greek family, Konstantin and his son Panayot, who were subjects of the Ottoman Empire and at the same time under the protection of the capitulations granted to France, because Konstantin was one of the dragomans of the French consul in Salonica, and the Ottoman officials there. It can be guessed that the "Ottoman officials' envy of the family's wealth and political power" claimed by the French documents⁴⁴ arose in May 1695, when the aforesaid Konstantin, son of Paiko (*Payko*) obtained a dragoman *berat* (imperial diploma) from the Sublime Porte.⁴⁵ His imperial diploma was renewed in 1695, when a new Sultan came to the throne.⁴⁶ In 1710 his *berat* was annulled by the Sublime Porte owing to the animosities of some persons, though sadly the record did not express the cause of it. But soon after, probably through the intervention of the French consul in Salonica and the French ambassador in Istanbul he was reappointed as dragoman in September 1710, and he died in the last months of 1715.⁴⁷

His death was a sign of reversal of the family's fortunes and shortly after his death, his son Panayot was the recipient of some accusations by the Ottoman officials. Since his father who was under the protection of his dragoman *berat* had died, Panayot was devoid of his father's protection, since the sons of the

43 BOA, Fon Kodu: A. \d.3067, p. 72.

44 Ginio, "Jews and European Subjects in Eighteenth-Century Salonica," p. 305.

45 BOA, A.DVNSDVE, Defter no: 26/1, pp. 27-28, hüküm no. 70.

46 BOA, A.DVNSDVE, Defter no: 26/1, p. 31, hüküm no. 83.

47 BOA, A.DVNSDVE, Defter no: 26/1, p. 46, hüküm no. 161; p. 50, hüküm no. 189.

dragomans could normally benefit from the privileges of a dragoman *berat*,⁴⁸ but his fathers' rivals were alive. One of the causes of the disagreements between them was probably the fact that Konstantin was a merchant⁴⁹ and he was an "honorary dragoman" rather than an "actual dragoman",⁵⁰ who used the dragoman *berat* to facilitate his commercial businesses and sought to escape some taxes paid by non-Muslim Ottoman subjects and acting as a merchant under the umbrella of the foreign capitulations it seems the local Ottoman officials and notables were aware of this situation.⁵¹ The second factor in this friction could be the beneficial competition for the state, in that Konstantin was a successful tax farmer (*mültezim*). According to Eyal Ginio "in 1712 or 1713, he bid successfully for the post of *mültezim* of the tobacco customs in Salonica, Yenişehir (Larissa), Kolos (Volos), Kavala, and their environs in return for the payment of 13.500 *guruş*. His *iltizam* (right to collect public revenue) was granted for one year."⁵²

As for the allegations, *Konstantinoğlu* Panayot was "the local customs inspector in charge of tobacco" and he attempted to "smuggle iron and ammunition in the tobacco cargo dispatched to European harbours." What is more, he was a spy working for Venice since the beginning of the Ottoman-Venetian War (1714-1718). As a result of these accusations "at the beginning of March 1715", the Sublime Porte issued a decree that was sent to the Ottoman official in Salonica

48 Mauritis H. van den Boogert, *The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), pp. 67-8.

49 Ginio, "Jews and European Subjects in Eighteenth-Century Salonica," p. 305.

50 Svoronos described him as "drogman honoraire du consulat de Salonique et de l'ambassadeur de France à Constantinople". Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique au XVIII Siècle*, p.200. For the "honorary dragomans" and "actual dragomans" see Boogert, *The Capitulations* and Mehmet Demiryürek, "İngiltere Tercümanları ve 1758 Tercüman Reformu", *Belleten*, 288 (2016), pp. 339-84; Ali İhsan Bağış, *Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayrimüslimler* (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 1983).

51 It is possible that in the eighteenth century the majority of the records about the dragomans in the foreign nations registers (*Düvel-i Ecnebiye Defterleri*) in the Ottoman archives were related to the "honorary" dragomans. A register, for example, concerning the British in the Ottoman Archives, İngiltere Nişan ve Ahkam Defteri (İNAD), contains 159 records signed by James Porter (1743-1762) of which 127 are concerned with dragomans and the remainder relate to British consuls." Mehmet Demiryürek, "From Theory to Practice: British Travel Permits in the Ottoman Empire (1700-1800)," *Turkish Historical Review*, 9 (2018), pp. 39-53.

52 Ginio, "Jews and European Subjects in Eighteenth-Century Salonica," p. 305.

ordering them to arrest *Konstantioğlu* and send him “in chains and under guard to Istanbul”. Allegedly “his accomplices were his business partners, all of whom were Venetian subjects”, but the edict did not mention any of them.⁵³

It is very interesting that when in just under a month later another imperial order, which was broadly similar to the one above, issued by the Sublime Porte and sent to the Ottoman officials in Salonica, none of the allegations of wrongdoing were repeated. The second decree did not mention the previous allegations and only underlined his smuggling of tobacco. It is clear that something had changed. The cause of the change of the Sublime Port’s point of view was probably due to French intervention, and he was saved from that punishment by this intervention,⁵⁴ by implicating the British to this case and thus probably satisfying his commercial and financial rivals. In addition, it is proved that before the establishment of the British consulate in Salonica, British subjects visiting Salonica were under the protection of the French consul, in that the confessions of the British vessel’s captain and its crew were supported by the French consul in Salonica and his dragoman.

When these records are analysed, it can be said that Salonica was visited by the British before the British consulate was set up there and the French consul dealt with their official businesses before the Ottoman officials and court in Salonica. On the other hand, it must be underlined that most of the documents that have survived until today reflect the problems experienced between Ottoman officials and Europeans. If there was no clash between them and all operations ran smoothly, there probably would not be any record about these events. The historians thus owe many insights to the documents created by these problems. The record above proves this. Another result is that Salonica was a tobacco exports port and the tax farmers of the tobacco customs were local non-Muslim merchants in the early years of the 18th century, and non-Muslim Ottoman merchants began to gain foreign protection by obtaining a dragoman *berat* from the Sublime Porte. Consequently, the non-Muslim Ottoman merchants who were supposed to pay more customs tax than foreigners who enjoyed capitulary privileges strove to escape this fiscal burden by being appointed a dragoman in the service of a foreign consul or ambassador. Both this development and the financial competitions between Ottoman officials and dragomans could bring about disagreements. In

53 Ginio, “Jews and European Subjects in Eighteenth-Century Salonica,” p. 305.

54 Ginio, “Jews and European Subjects in Eighteenth-Century Salonica,” p. 305.

addition, the Europeans and also their protégés were under the protection of the capitulations, even when they participated in smuggling, as in this particular case the British captain and his crew.

Richard Kemble

Wood's identification of Richard Kemble as the first British consul who was appointed to Salonica in 1715, is also certified by the Ottoman records. There is evidence that the British ambassador in Istanbul sent a formal petition to the Sultan informing him that he had nominated Richard Kemble from England as the British consul to Salonica, and requested a consulate *berat* for him. His application was ratified by the Sultan and Richard Kemble was granted a *berat* on 14-23 February 1716.⁵⁵ It is reasonable to think that these bureaucratic procedures took some time and it is apparent that Richard Kemble's appointment was made by the Levant Company in October 1715 and was ratified by the Sultan in February 1716.

The documents of the Levant Company make it possible to comprehend more clearly the nomination of Richard Kemble than the Ottoman registers. In essence, the reason of Richard Kemble being commissioned by the Levant Company to Salonica was the "recommendation" of the British factory at Smyrna, which had been declared in the letter dated 25 April 1715, and that the suggestion had been endorsed by the Company administration on 27 October 1715.⁵⁶ The arrival of the letter of the British factory at Smyrna to London and the endorsement of their offer by the Levant Company took nearly six months. In conclusion, it can be accepted that the date of the Kemble's appointment was on 27 October 1715. In the same letter, which was also sent to the British ambassador at Constantinople by the Levant Company on 27 October 1715, the Company also wrote that the British ambassador had to 'procure a Baratz for' Kemble's establishment in that office, at his own charge as usual'.⁵⁷ On the same date two other letters were also sent, the first one to the treasurer of the British ambassador at Constantinople

55 Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, İngiltere Nişan ve Ahkam Defteri, Defter no. 35/1, (hereafter BOA, İNAD), p. 71, hüküm no. 109.

56 The National Archives (hereafter TNA), SP 105/116. Company to the British ambassador at Constantinople. October 27, 1715 and Company to the British consul at Smyrna. October 27, 1715.

57 TNA, SP 105/116. Company to the British ambassador at Constantinople. October 27, 1715.

and the second to the British consul of at Smyrna, and they were thus informed of this appointment.⁵⁸ According to these two letters, Richard Kemble had been 'chosen' Company's consul for Salonica, Negropont and all other parts of Greece as a result of the 'recommendation' of the British factory at Smyrna, and these places made up Richard Kemble's jurisdiction.

The Kemble's jurisdiction had some complexity initially, in that the Ottomans thought that he was the British consul for Salonica alone and the Levant Company considered he was chosen for Salonica, Negropont and all other parts of Greece. 'The Levant Company, thanks to you sir among ye rest of my good friends did me ye *honour of appointing me consul of this place, Negropont and all Greece*' Kemble wrote on 4 July 1718 to Ralph Radcliffe. In essence, this *ipso facto* was a significant matter; in that both the Ottoman official designation of outer parts of Salonica would create many headaches for Kemble and the British merchants visiting harbours beyond Salonica would not want to pay the consular tax for the consul and ambassador. In other words, his jurisdiction would be limited to Salonica. Therefore, Kemble wrote on 4 July 1718 that his jurisdiction must be extended 'to all Greece as I presume from Monte Santo to Athens on this shore. Thence through ye Moria [Morea] and ye bank of ye Golph of Lepanto to Nathalico and to down to Durazzo', and 'I have been obliged to apply to ye ambassador who has kindly promise me commands to my satisfaction.' His and the ambassador's efforts resulted in a new consulate *berat* in 1719 and consequently *Aynaroz* (Mounth Athos), *Yenişehir* (Larissa), *Galos* (Volos), *Ezdin* (Lamia), *Eğriboz* (Euboea) and *Adana* (probably *Atina*, that is Athens) were added to his consulate by the ambassador and this expansion of jurisdiction was approved by the Sultan and he was given a new *berat* on 12 March 1719.⁵⁹ Even though Angelomatis-Tsougarakis argued that the reason of the renewal of Kemble's *berat* was "the arrival of a new ambassador in Constantinople",⁶⁰ her consideration is incorrect, because there was no such a procedure on the renewal of the *berats* and the expressions above.

On 21 September 1719 Richard Kemble informed the Company that Mr. Daniel Paul, the son of the late Mr. James Paul acted as the British consul of Nathalia, Larta and all those parts of Greece. Probably, he had thought that Mr.

58 TNA, SP 105/116. Company to the treasurer of the ambassador at Constantinople. October 27, 1715. SP 105/116. Company to the British consul at Smyrna. October 27, 1715.

59 BOA, İNAD, p. 73, hüküm no. 120.

60 Angelomatis-Tsougarakis, "A *Berat* of the British Consul of Salonica (1719)," p. 55.

Daniel Paul's act was a threat for his own jurisdiction. The response of the Company was reasonably firm, in that it stated that it did not recognize either Mr. Daniel Paul or his father Mr. James Paul's consulates. Moreover, it wrote that it had ordered on 28 February 1715 Sir Robert Sutton, the British ambassador, to 'recall and supersede Mr. James Paul's Baratz', but Sir Robert Sutton had never obeyed this order. Now, the Company reordered the British ambassador, Abraham Stanyan, 'recall and supersede the same' on Mr. Daniel Paul.⁶¹

This expansion, however, only seems to have lasted only two years and the British ambassador in Istanbul decided that the islands and harbours newly added to the Salonica consulate were too far to Salonica and the consul in Salonica had some difficulties to look after the British merchants trading in those islands and harbours. As a result, a new consulate, called *Eğriboz* (Euboea) and *Eskeplos* (Skopelos), containing Euboea, Mount Athos, Larissa, Volos, Lamia and Athens, was formed by the British ambassador and Stephan Deponte (Stephanos Dapontes) was appointed as consul. When the British ambassador informed this development and requested a *berat* for the new consul, his application was approved by the Sultan and it was issued a consulship *berat* for Stephan Deponte *nâm İngilterelü* (from England) on *evâsıt-ı Zilhicce 1133* (9 March-19 March 1721).⁶² Angelomatis-Tsougarakis discussed the establishment of this consulate and concluded that in fact he was "British vice-consul, and not consul, in Skopelos", in that the Levant Company "was reluctant to increase the number of the British consulates" and "only the British subjects were appointed to consuls. Greek, Levantines and Jews were granted vice-consulates". She also wrote that Skopelos was a small island. Her conclusions, to some extent, were valid, for the Ottoman authorities also strove to prohibit the Ottoman non-Muslim subjects being assigned by the European ambassadors in Istanbul from 1695 onwards.⁶³ On the other hand European ambassadors had created a formula for the non-Muslim Ottoman subjects to be commissioned by them as consuls and they claimed that those consuls, in this particular case Stephan Deponte, were European, *müstemin*. Depending on the ambassadors' claims the Ottoman authorities approved their appointments.

61 TNA, SP 105/116. Company to the British ambassador at Constantinople. December 14, 1720.

62 BOA, İNAD, p. 74, hüküm no. 130.

63 Mehmet Demiryürek, "XVII. Yüzyıl Sonlarında Hollanda'nın Draç ve Tevâbi'i (Arnavutluk) Konsolosluğu," *VIII. Uluslararası Büyük Türk Dili Kurultayı Bildirileri*, eds. İbrahim Atabay and Rasim Özyürek (Ankara: Bilkent Üniversitesi, 2013), pp. 194-202.

Her second argument in which Deponte's jurisdiction contained only Skopelos is untrue, because the Ottoman record related to this appointment stated that his consulate was responsible for the added places of Kemble's *berat* in 1719, that is Euboea, Mount Athos, Larissa, Volos, Lamia and Athens. Though she stated that "under what circumstances the translated *berat* came into Kaisarios Dapontes' hands is unknown",⁶⁴ this circumstance, in essence, points out the close relationship between Kemble and Deponte confirmed by the Greek translation of the Kemble's *berat* published by Angelomatis-Tsougarakis. Even though the Ottoman archival record was described by Deponte as "a consul" he was a vice-consul of Kemble, as argued by Angelomatis-Tsougarakis and he was accountable to Kemble for his conduct. The source of his imperial diploma was Kemble's *berat*. Hence, he had a copy of the Greek translation of Kemble's *berat* dated 12 March 1719, not the first one in 1716. Lastly, Angelomatis-Tsougarakis postulated that the date of the foundation of the British consulate in Skopelos was between 1719 and 1739. As explained above, this date was 1721.

In the meantime, according to the Ottoman official records at the start of 1720 a dragoman named Manos veled-i Ali (Manos, son of Ali) was commissioned by the British ambassador to the Salonica consulate.⁶⁵ The appointment of dragomans for the ambassadors in the capital or consuls in Ottoman mercantile cities was a procedure derived from the capitulatory privileges granted to the European nations. According to the English capitulations of 1675, the British ambassador or consuls could appoint whoever they wished as a *yasakçı* (guard) or *tercüman* (dragoman). The dragoman sent to Salonica would work under Richard Kemble and deal with Richard Kemble's businesses, and those of the British merchants visiting the above mentioned islands and seaports. This nomination was approved by the Sultan and a dragoman *berat* was granted to Manos veled-i Ali on 29 January 1720.⁶⁶ Probably in the same days, the British ambassador sent another petition to the Porte and requested that the Ottoman officials in Salonica and adjacent regions to Salonica to be sent an order, so that they would recognize Manos veled-i Ali as the British dragoman under the British consul in Salonica and not intervene him while he was working. Accordingly an imperial order dated 21-31 January 1720 was issued and sent to the *Eğriboz muhafızı* (commander of Euboea), *Selanik Paşası* (governor of Salonica), *Yenişehir Mollası* (kadı or his agent

64 Angelomatis-Tsougarakis, "A *Berat* of the British Consul of Salonica (1719)", p. 53.

65 BOA, İNAD, p. 74, hüküm no. 127.

66 BOA, İNAD, p. 74, hüküm no. 127.

in Larissa), *Aynaroz*, *Ezdin kadıları* (judges of Mount Athos and Lamia) and other *kadıs* working in those regions.⁶⁷

At this point, it is very interesting to take a look at Kemble's letter to Ralph Radcliffe, in that it provides some different details concerning his dragoman: 'Ye druggerman, who took out my Baratz, has unkindly confined me contrary to ye Company's intentions' Kemble complained. His explanation discloses a very important result, in that when the date of his letter is taken into consideration, i.e. 4 July 1718, one of them is that the consuls could only employ a dragoman after the dragoman was appointed officially by the Sultan, through the medium of ambassador. Kemble did not mention the name of his dragoman, but it can be guessed that he was Manos veled-i Ali and his official appointment took nearly one and a half years. Without a *berat* by the Sultan the consul or his dragoman could not work freely or safely, even though they had some of the documents granted by the ambassador. 'The ambassador's patent or com[m]ission is in conformity' wrote Kemble properly. Even though the reason for the dragoman's attitude was not clear, he probably abused it for his personal ambition, such as travel or another need, it is clear that this situation did not last a long time, in that in November 1718 he was in Smyrna and was engaged in business.⁶⁸

Though he had a consulate *berat*, there is evidence that Kemble experienced some disagreements with the local authorities in Salonica. One of them is related to his servant who was a non-Muslim Ottoman subject. Abraham Stanyan, who was the British ambassador in the Ottoman capital, reported that "Salonica jizye collector had demanded Kemble's servant to pay jizye contrary to Kemble's *berat*" and he requested the Ottoman Sultan to send an edict to the Ottoman officials in Salonica, in that the jizye collector not to demand and oppress Kemble's servant to pay the jizye. The record dated 24 September-4 October 1719 stated that following the complaint of the ambassador the Ottoman officials investigated the Porte Archives and witnessed that Richard Kemble was the British consul in Salonica and it was recorded that the consul's servants were exemption from *haraç ve avarız ve kassab akçesi vesair rüsûm ve tekâlif-i örfiyye*. Soon an edict dated 24 September-4 October 1719 was issued and sent to the kadı of Salonica and ordered that no one demanded Kemble's servant to pay jizye for Kemble's *berat*.⁶⁹ It

67 BOA, 2 Numaralı Mora Ahkâm Defteri, p. 51, hüküm no. 1.

68 Letter by Richard Kemble (Salonika), DE/R/B114/2, Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, Hertfordshire, United Kingdom.

69 BOA, 2 Numaralı Mora Ahkâm Defteri, p. 48, hüküm no. 2.

is clear that the British consuls in the Ottoman Empire had to contend with the local Ottoman authorities, such as commander of janissaries, tax collectors and customs officers.

Richard Kemble's letter dated 4 July 1718 also gives his considerations concerning the British trade in Greece. According to him Greece took off the British 'woollen manufacture product on better terms [terms] than Smyrna or Constantinople' but by reason of the war the trade in that region was affected negatively. His expectation was that when peace returned, the trade would briskly pick up and extend. He also states that the 'consumption is but a modicum in respect to those other scales the returns money [money] or remittance to Smyrna or Aleppo by way of Constantinople.'⁷⁰ Nearly two years later, on 7 June 1720 there were two British factories in Salonica.⁷¹

Although Kemble's real term of office was rather short-lived after residing in Salonica, he seems to have been a successful British consul, both as the local founder and protector of the interests of British subjects, including their protégés, and the Levant Company. Evaluating Svoronos' findings about the early days of his consulate, Angelomatis-Tsougarakis underlined that "he had taken strong action on behalf of British interests, demanding from the French consul the consular duties of the ships he found in port as soon as he arrived to Salonica, securing large revenues and unrepresented, for Salonica, wealth from the British ships."⁷² In addition, to establishing a new consulate and assigning a consul there were a series of complicated initiatives and multiple processes in the Ottoman lands during the period under question.

The Evaluation of Richard Kemble's Consulship *Berat*

The record concerning the appointment of Richard Kemble as the British consul to Salonica in the Ottoman registers is quite short⁷³ and it does not reveal

70 DE/R/B114/2, Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.

71 Svoronos, *Le Commerce de Salonique au XVIII Siècle*, p. 166.

72 Angelomatis-Tsougarakis, "A *Berat* of the British Consul of Salonica (1719)," p. 58.

73 "Nişân-ı hümayûn oldur ki,

Elçi-i merkûm arzuhâl gönderüb Richard Kembel nâm İngilterelü Selanik iskelesine konsolos nasb ü tayin olunmağla ahidnâme-i hümayûn mucibince olub geldiği üzere berât-ı şerîfîm virilmek bâbında inâyet ricâ itmeğin mucibince nişân yazılmışdır. Fi Evâhir-i Safer sene 128." BOA, İNAD, p.71, hüküm no. 109. [It is a firman that, The firman was issued on 14-23 February 1716, because the above-mentioned ambassador sent a petition and

either his powers and responsibilities or his duties. Notwithstanding this brevity, it proves the appointment of Richard Kemble by both the Levant Company and the Ottoman Porte as the first British consul to Salonica. Its date is also valuable from this point of view. Though the record related to his *berat* in the Ottoman register was rather short, a complete copy of his consulate *berat* is filed under SP 105/216 in the National Archives.

The British consuls in the Ottoman Empire had to have a document called *berat*, approved by the Sultan, just like the other European nations granted capitulations by the Ottomans.⁷⁴ The *berat* confirmed their rights and privileges and was granted on the request of the British ambassador in Istanbul. In this particular case, in 1716 such a *berat* was issued for Richard Kemble. According to his *berat*, his duty was to resolve the problems of the British merchants and those trading under the British flag visiting Salonica and other ports adjacent to Salonica under the *ahd-nâme*. The British merchants and those trading under the British flag could apply to Richard Kemble, when they encountered any hindrance. Correspondingly when they arrived at harbours under the jurisdiction of the British consul of Salonica, they had to show their commodities' list and pay a certain tax called *konsolosluk hakkı* (consulage) under the capitulations. It was the first *berat* of a British consul in Salonica in the İngiltere Nişân ve Ahkâm Defteri in the Ottoman Archives. Kemble's other privileges were outlined as follows:

1. No one could disturb the British for a debt or an offence committed to others, and if one of the British had a debt and disappeared this debt would not be demanded from the consul, without his sponsorship.

2. When there was any case involving more than four thousand *akçe* between the British consul or his men with malice committed to others, those cases would be transferred to Istanbul and heard here under the *ahd-nâme*, upon the condition that it is not record in the *sicil* (*kadı* register) or there were no *hüccet* (script) or *temessük* (document) signed by the consul. Witnesses, who they were deemed to be untrustworthy, would not be taken into consideration.

requested an imperial diploma under the capitulation and same as before, for an Englishman named Richard Kembel who was appointed to Salonika port by him as a consul.]

74 For example, for the case of the Venetian consul on Cyprus case in 1745, see Mehmet Demiryürek, "The Commercial Relations Between Venice and Cyprus After the Ottoman Conquest (1600-1800)", *Levant*, 42-2 (2010), pp. 243-44.

3. If some men accused the consul or other British from profiteering or cursed their wives or sons or oppressed them unfairly, Ottoman officials would protect them.

4. If there were any slaves who were subjects of the British held by the Ottomans or by those under their rule and the British ambassadors or consuls demanded they be handed over to them, the matter would be investigated, and they would be released and handed over to the ambassador or consul, when it was established that they were real British.

5. If pirates or *Müslüman levendât* (muslim sailors, a corps of naval gunners) attacked and looted British ships at sea and brought the booty to Salonica or neighbourhood regions, *kadıs* and the officers would save the booty, such as the British ships, commodities, animals or other things, and would hand them over to the consul. Afterwards, the Muslim sailors who attacked the British would be sent to Istanbul.

6. No one should interfere with the British merchants or their subjects whether they were coming by sea or land, and they could freely trade in safety.

7. The customs tax collectors or others could not demand from them to pay more customs tax than indicated in the capitulations. In addition the customs tax collector and *iskele yasağçuları* (port guards) could not take the money termed *pîş-keş* (gift) or any other fee by force from British ships.

8. When the British consul's foods, drinks, cloths and furnishings arrived at any port, the officials could not demand from him to pay the customs tax and *bâc ve yasadık ve refî*.

9. The consul could not be imprisoned and his house could not be sealed, and all cases related to the consul would be heard in Istanbul.

10. When a case was brought between British subjects, the British consul would hear it according to the law of the British. No one could interfere with his decision.

11. The judges working in the Ottoman dominions had to take into account these privileges.

12. If the consul sent one of this men to other places for some businesses, nobody could interfere with him, his men, his possessions and war tools, animals, their houses and where they dwelled. They could travel safely and freely.

13. When the consul or some of his men wished to buy şıra (grape juice), no one could prevent them under the *ahd-nâme*, and they could buy their foods according to the local prices.

14. When the consul decided that one of the British was guilty and wanted to send him to his native country, no one could prevent him.

15. If the consul went to the *kadı*'s court for any reason, the *subaşı* (an officer responsible for the provision of security of a district) could not enter his house by force and all cases of the consul would be heard fairly according to Islamic Law.

16. When the consul applied to *kadı*'s court for any reason, the *kadı* would hear his case according to Islamic Law, at once.

There is evidence that this *berat* was fully dependent upon the capitulations and phrased as such. For instance, the first article of his *berat* can be found in article four of the British capitulations of 1675.⁷⁵ Similarly, one can find in the fourth article of his *berat* the wording from the sixteenth article of those capitulations.⁷⁶ The ninth article of the *berat* can also be seen in the seventeenth and eighteenth article of the capitulations.⁷⁷ Another example is the tenth article of

75 In his *berat* it was written that “ve İngilterelüden birinin borcu olur ise gaybet ider ise anın için kefâletsiz andan taleb eylemeye”. The related capitulation article said that “ve İngilterelüden biri medyûn veyahud kefil olub firar iderler ise veya müflis olur ise deyn borçludan taleb olunub elinde müddeinin hüccet-i şer‘iyye ile kefil olmayıcak aher kimesne dutulub deyn-i mezbûr aherden taleb olunmaya”, BOA, İNAD, p. 3, article 4 related to *meydûn* (debtor), (line 8-11), [and if one of the British has a debt, or he is a guarantor or a bankrupt, and disappeared, the debtor will be demanded to pay the debt, but if there is no any guarantor under the court approval, the others will not be demanded to pay the aforesaid debt.]

76 In his *berat* it was written that “ve İngilterelüden ve anlara tâbî’ olanlardan esir bulunur ise ve İngiltere elçileri ve konsolosları murad ve taleb iderler ise teftiş ve tefahhus olunub İngiltere olduğu zâhir ve malûm olur ise ol makûleler ıtlâk olunub elçilerine veya konsoloslarına teslim oluna”. The related capitulation article said “ve İngilterelüden ve anlara tâbî’ olanlardan esir bulunur ise ve İngiltere elçileri ve konsolosları murâd ve taleb iderler ise teftiş ve tefahhus olunub İngilterelü olduğu zahir ve ve malum olur ise ol makuleler ıtlak olunub elçilerine veya konsoloslarına teslim oluna.” BOA, İNAD, p. 4, article 7 related to *esir* (prisoner), (line 6-9).

77 In his *berat* it was written that “ve konsolosları habs olunmaya ve evleri mühürlenmeye her ne makûle davaları var ise asitâne-i saadetimde görüle”. The related article of the capitulation “konsolosları asla habs olunmayub ve evleri mühürlenmeyüb kendülerin aramayalar ve ref’ olunmayalar ve her ne makule davaları olur ise südde-i saadetime arz olunub İngiltere elçileri cevabın vireler.” BOA, İNAD, p. 7, article 17-18 related to *himâyet* (extrterritoriality), (line 10-13), [and their consuls are not imprisoned and their houses are not sealed,

his *berat*.⁷⁸ Even though most articles of his *berat* can be followed in the capitulations text, some of them can only be seen partly in their wording.⁷⁹ Moreover some articles in this *berat* were not included *in verbatim* in the capitulations text.⁸⁰ However, this does not mean that his *berat* conditions are contrary to

and they are not investigated and dismissed, and their all kind of cases are submitted to Istanbul, so that the ambassadors can be dealt with.]

78 In his *berat* it was written taht “ve İngiltere taifesi mücerred mabeynlerinde davaları olur ise ayinleri üzere konsolosları görüb fasl idüb hâricden kimesne dahl eylemeye”. The related article of the capitulation “ve İngilterelülerin birbirleriyle niza’ları oldukda elçileri ve konsolosları görüb kadılar ve sair zabıt kullarım karışmayub daima ayin ve adetleri üzere fasl ve kat’-ı niza’ eyleyeler.” BOA, İNAD, p. 4, article 10 related to *dava* (lawsuit), (line 13-16).

79 In his *berat* it was written that “ve eğer ol cânibde korsan eşkıyası ve Müslüman levendât İngiltere gemilerin ve ademlerin deryada dutub garet eylediklerinden sonra ol canibe getirürl-er ise vilâyet kadıları ve zâbitleri ol makûle garet olunan İngiltere gemilerin ve esvâbların ve davarların ve sair eşyaların korsan eşkıyasının elinden hâlâs idüb İngiltere konsolosuna aynı ile teslim oluna.” The related capitulation article said “ve eğer korsan taifesi ve deryada yürüyen furkatası İngilterelünün gemilerin alub ve esbâb ve malları her ne ise garet ve hasâret iderler ise ve memâlik-i mahrûsemizde dahi bir kimesne İngilterelünün cebren ve zulmen nesnelerin alurlar ise ol makuleler ele getirülmesine sai’ ve ikdâm olunub.” İNAD, p. 5, article 12 related to *korsan* (pirate), (line 7-13), [and if the pirates and their vessels in the sea seize the English’s ships and their all kind of commodities are plundered, and if anyone takes their goods by cruelty and forcibly in the Ottoman dominions, the Ottoman officials will try to capture the offenders]. Similarly, in his *berat*, article 2, it was written that “ve ol câniblerde mezbûr konsolosa ve ademlerine garazan bir dava olur ise dört bin akçeden ziyâdesi madem ki sicil ve hüccet olunmuş olmayub veyahud kendi hattı ile temessük olma-ya ol makule aslı olmayan davalar asitâne-i saadetime havâle olunub divân-ı hümâyûnumda görüle bî-vech şahidleri olandan istima’ olmaya”. The related capitulation article said “ve dört bin akçeden ziyâde olan davaları asitane-i saadette istimâ’ olunub gayri yerlerde istimâ’ olunmaya.” BOA, İNAD, p. 7, article 16 related to *umur-ı şer’iye* (claim), (line 6-10), [and their cases exceeding four thousands *akçes* will be heard in Istanbul, not anywhere].

80 For example, the seventh and eighth articles of his *berat*, “ve ümenâ taifesi ve gayriler ahidnâme-i hümâyûnumdan ziyâde gümrük taleb itmeye ve ümenâ ve iskele yasakçıları barçalarından ve gemilerinden pîş-keş aher bahaneyle bir akçe ve bir habbelerin almayalar ve me’külât ve meşrubât ve melbusât ve mefruşât her kangı iskeleye gelür ise gümrük ve bâc ve yasak ve reft nâmına bir akçe ve bir habbelerin almayalar.” [customs officers and other tax collectors will not demand (the English) to pay much more tax, after they pay their taxes under the capitulation and old customs] and [(the Ottoman officials, such as customs officers and others) had demanded the English to pay *reft* (a kind of customs tax paid by the Ottoman subjects) and after this they had taken their *akçes* by forcibly. It must be investigated, and the money taken by forcibly and illegally has to be paid back to the owners].

the capitulations.⁸¹

In addition to this, the *berat* of the British consul in Aleppo, John Purnell, which was prepared about two months later, contained a few different articles to those of Kemble's *berat*.⁸² To illustrate, Aleppo consul's *berat* stated that his men, his male and female servants were exempted from the taxes such as *haraç ve avâriz ve kassâb akçesi*. Even though Kemble's *berat* did not contain an article like this, in September 1719 this exemption was sent as an imperial order to the *kadı* of Salonica to save consul's man, as explained below. In essence, the similar *berats* were granted to other European nation's consuls in the Ottoman Empire.⁸³ Consequently it can be said that while the Ottomans produced a *berat* for any consul, they took into consideration the capitulations text and its spirit and they created a joint capitulatory system. All foreign consuls had the same right more or less whether it was written clearly in their *berats* or not.

The other significant point is that according to the full copy of Kemble's *berat* in the National Archives⁸⁴ and the short copy of it in the Ottoman register,⁸⁵ dated 1715 and 1716 respectively, he was accountable for the British merchants trading in Salonica, even though according to Levant Company's consideration he also had accountability for Salonica, Negropont and all the other parts of Greece, when he was appointed in 1715.⁸⁶ It must also be stated that to suppose him as only acting as one of the Levant Company's consuls, responsible for the merchants in his area, is presumably incorrect, in that at the same time he was probably one of the trade agents of the merchant Ralph Radcliffe. 'To return you thanks for ye several acts of friendship and civility, you so generously vouchsafe me when in England to give you notice of my arrival and settlement here and to make you a civil and mercantile tender of my best service in these ports' wrote Kemble on 4 July 1718. In essence, Ralph Radcliffe was one of the prominent figures supporting him to be sent to Salonica as the British consul and "I may stand in need of

81 See the capitulation text in the İNAD, p. 16, 17, 18. These privileges in the *berat* text can be seen in the different parts of the capitulation text. It is understood that the clerk who wrote the *berat*, compiled and combined these concessions.

82 BOA, 2 Numaralı Mora Abkâm Defteri, p. 27, hüküm no.1.

83 Venetian consul's *berat* was like that in 1745. See Demiryürek, "The Commercial Relations," p. 244.

84 TNA, SP 105/116.

85 BOA, İNAD, p.71, hüküm no. 109.

86 Kentish, *Fragile Alliances*, p. 48.

[th]em with ye Levant Company with you kindly promise me several times before I left England” wrote Kemble in the same letter.⁸⁷

As to the differences between this first *berat* and the renewal, Angelomatis-Tsougarakis wrote that “it is impossible to know whether there were any additions or alterations to the original wording, or whether it consisted of a verbatim repetition of the contents of the first *berat*.” She also was not sure whether the Greek translation was in accordance with the original *berat*.⁸⁸ My opinion is that there is a chance of setting out an argument on the similarities or dissimilarities of two *berats*, in that in one way or another we have access to both of them. When the evaluations concerning the Greek translation of the renewal *berat* by Angelomatis-Tsougarakis is taken into consideration, it can be argued that the second one considerably resembled the first *berat* dated 1716, except for the names of places specifying were under the jurisdiction of the British consul in Salonica. Secondly, many of the articles in both versions can be found in the English capitulations of 1675 and previous ones.⁸⁹ Although Angelomatis-Tsougarakis did not translate the *berat* entirely into English, her summaries about the articles of the *berat* reveal the similarities between the two *berats*. Consequently, these two *berats* are the same, except for the detailed place names which was the real cause of the renewal.

Richard Kemble’s Death and His Successor

The Ottoman sources and sources of the Levant Company do not record the same date as the death date of the first British consul to Salonica. Which one is correct? If the Ottoman registers are taken into consideration, one can think that Richard Kemble died in 1725, when his successor Robert Stevenson was granted a *berat* dated 17 May 1725. According to the Ottoman records Kemble’s successor was Robert Stevenson, who was an English nobleman, and following the death of Richard Kemble, he was appointed by the ambassador to Salonica and this nomination was confirmed by the Sultan on 17 May 1725.⁹⁰ For this reason, one can think that Richard Kemble’s appointment in Salonica lasted about ten years.

87 Letter by Richard Kemble (Salonika), DE/R/B114/1, Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.

88 Angelomatis-Tsougarakis, “A *Berat* of the British Consul of Salonica (1719),” p. 55.

89 These features of the renewal *berat* was stressed by Angelomatis-Tsougarakis. She wrote that articles 13, 25, 32 and 60 of the capitulations were included in the *berat*. Angelomatis-Tsougarakis “A *Berat* of the British Consul of Salonica (1719),” p. 56.

90 BOA, İNAD, p. 76, hüküm no. 139.

But a record of the Levant Company tells us a different story. According to a letter dated 14 December 1720, he had died prior to date and following his death Mr. Joseph Gibson had been proposed by the British ambassador in the Ottoman capital as vice-consul in place of him. Even though ambassador's suggestion had not been approved by the Levant Company yet, a new election would be made by the Company for Salonica in a short time.⁹¹ Although the "short time" took nearly twenty-four months, this letter also reveals that Richard Kemble was alive on 21 September 1719, in that Richard Kemble sent a letter dated 21 September 1719 to the Levant Company. As a result, it can be said that he died between 21 September 1719 and 14 December 1720. However, there is a chance of fixing a more specific date about his death, since a book concerning one of his grandsons, Stephen Kemble, revealed that he died in June 1720.⁹² In the present case, it can be said that his duty lasted nearly five years, officially some five years, but in reality, two years and three months when one takes consideration his arrival date to Salonica into consideration.

There is a similar situation concerning Michael de Vezin's consulship, who was one of the consuls responsible for Aleppo and Cyprus in the last decades of the eighteenth century. Vezin's successor was Antonio Vondiziano, who was granted an imperial diploma by the Sublime Porte in November 1799. If only the date of the imperial diploma given to Vondiziano is taken into consideration, it can be concluded that the date of death of the consul Vondiziano's predecessor was 1799. But this is incorrect. In fact, he died in 1792 and a new consul was not appointed immediately. Similarly, according to Ottoman records, the date of the Vezin's appointment is also insufficient to reveal the date of his real appointment, in that Ottoman records state that a *berat* was issued for him in January 1778. But he had been appointed by the Levant Company in 1776,⁹³ two years ago before the Ottoman *berat* was issued. So, to reveal the real date of an appointment needs to study both Ottoman and Levant Company records.

Yet, Robert Stevenson was Kemble's successor in Salonica, but not immediately following his death. Stevenson sent a letter dated 6 May 1723 to the Levant Company in London and requested that Company's members to "choose" him

91 TNA, SP 105/116. Company to the British ambassador at Constantinople. December 14, 1720.

92 Stephen Kemble, *Kemble Papers*, p. xiii.

93 Demiryürek, *Ottoman Documents on the English*, pp. 20-3; Demiryürek and Yazar, "Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerine Göre," pp. 104-9.

as the British consul to “Salonica and ports adjacent.” His request was approved by the Company about seven months later and he was informed about his appointment to Salonica and he was authorized him to set in train the processes of procuring a consulship *berat* from the Sublime Porte and “other necessary commands” with a letter signed 27 December 1723.⁹⁴ This operation took nearly seventeen months and the imperial diploma concerning his commission to Salonica was approved by the Sultan on 17 May 1725.

Results

The establishment of the British consulate in Salonica was not easy and the difficulties of forming it were obvious. There were both local and bureaucratic obstacles. Moreover, the correspondence took a long time. In the early modern period this process was probably normal, in that letters were the main communication tool and the speed of travel of this communication also depended on a variety of conditions, such as weather, decision making process (in this particular case, the Levant Company and the Sublime Porte) and sea or land lines of communications. The important point, therefore, is that the persons charged carried on the business.

The first British consul to Salonica, Richard Kemble, was appointed and his appointment was confirmed by the Sultan in 1716 and he was able to come to Salonica in April 1718. His *berat*, however, showed that his jurisdiction covered a huge area and contained more comprehensive rights than that of other British consuls in the Ottoman Empire but he worked effectively for only about two and a half years. His successor, Robert Stevenson, was commissioned by the Levant Company in the last days of 1723 and his nomination was approved by the Sultan in May 1725.

There is evidence that the history of the French consulate in Salonica in one form or another had a longer history than that of the British, dating back to the mid-seventeenth century when a French consul was appointed to Euboea and Salonica in 1648, and the French consuls resident there also served the British subjects as a legal protectora under the capitulations until 1715, when a British consul was sent by the Levant Company to Salonica. However, the British merchants visiting Salonika maintained to pay the consulage to the French consul until 1718, when Kemble reached to Salonika.

94 TNA, SP105/116. Company to Robert Stevenson at Salonica. December 27, 1723.

In this context, it must be underlined that the British consuls to the Ottoman dominions were nominated firstly by the Levant Company and the British ambassador in Istanbul who then requested the Sultan to approve this appointment by being issued an imperial diploma for the consul. Consequently, the Ottoman records did not mark the real dates of the consul appointments, dismissal, or their death. The records only pointed out the date of the confirmation related to their appointment by the Sublime Porte afterwards and their rights during their service in the Ottoman dominions.

Conclusion

The ramification of the Levant Company in the Ottoman mercantile cities, whether through its own native agents, the British consuls, or local non-Muslims who gained in one way or the other British protection, had a major influence on the Ottoman state through the British ambassador in Istanbul and constitutes a major topic in studies of the last century of the early modern period and the first century of the modern period, the 18th and 19th centuries respectively. Although the capitulatory system was created, by and large, to develop the commercial relations between the European nations and the Ottomans and to protect the Europeans who travelled and traded in the Ottoman dominions, the last years of the 17th and early years of the 18th centuries saw the gradual corruption and disorganization related to the capitulatory regime in which the Sublime Porte perceived a threat to the Ottoman order regarding its non-Muslims subjects. Accordingly, as a result of this disorder created through the illegal practices of the non-Muslims, such as gaining European protection by obtaining a consulship or dragomanship *berat* or patent for a consul's or dragoman's servant to evade taxes paid by non-Muslims and the ability to trade under European protection, also vexed the local Ottoman authorities and notables.

This article has aimed to explore the first steps of the British institutional presence in a single port city, Salonica, and its influence on local non-Muslims under these circumstances. It has examined the establishment of the British consulate in Salonica, as documented in the British and Ottoman archival sources. The persons who enjoyed the capitulatory privileges were not only the Europeans, whether merchants, foreign subjects or consuls, but also their protégés, such as dragomans and their son/s, who also benefited from the concessions of the capitulations. From the early years of the eighteenth century onwards, the non-Muslim Ottoman merchants sought to manipulate the dragomanship

system to avoid some of the taxes paid by non-Muslim Ottoman subjects and they were successful in this strategy. This development led to some arguments between Ottoman officials and non-Muslim merchants and owing to the complaints by Ottoman officials and the intervention of foreign missions in Ottoman lands, the Ottoman central government had to change its decisions. Legal or illegal interventions by European ambassadors or consuls brought about some disagreements between the Ottoman local or central administrations and the European representatives, and a measure taken by the Ottoman government resulted in a new step taken by the European ambassadors or consuls, who created various formulas to protect the Ottoman non-Muslim subjects who traded, by selling *berats*, giving patent or claiming that they were not Ottoman subjects, but real Europeans. These corruptions and quarrels heralded the first Ottoman reform movements of the consulship and dragomanship which lasted throughout in the 18th and 19th centuries. The difficulty of achieving this reform, nonetheless, was obvious.

“The Levant Company did me ye honour of appointing me consul of this place, Negropont and all Greece”: The Institutional Appearance of the British in Salonica

Abstract ■ From 1581 to 1826 the Ottoman-British commercial and political relations were administrated by the Levant Company. The British ambassador to Istanbul and the British consuls who were established in the Ottoman dominions were representing both the Levant Company and the British government. Based on the Ottoman and British archival documents, this study examines the foundation of the British consulate in Salonica and the activities of its first consul, Richard Kemble, in the early years of the eighteenth century. In doing so, it seeks to reveal the establishment of the British consulate in Salonica and its side effects including multiple outcomes, and emphasize the importance of a comparative evaluation of the documents in different archives in order to form a more comprehensive and rational historical research and to achieve a more profound understanding of human activities in the past. The evidence used is derived principally from the records of the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies in Hertfordshire and the Ottoman Prime Ministry Archives in Istanbul and the National Archives in London (Kew).

Keywords: Capitulations, British Consulate, Dragoman, Levant Company, Salonika.

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