Cultivating Differences: Genoese Trade Identity in the Constantinople of Sultan Mehmed II, 1453—81

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CULTIVATING DIFFERENCES: GENOESE TRADE IDENTITY IN THE CONSTANTINOPLE OF SULTAN MEHMED II, 1453–81

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ABSTRACT: *The Fall of Constantinople in 1453 marks a historical turning point in Mediterranean history and for many scholars the end of commercial relations between East and West. The Genoese community, however, asserted itself as an economic go-between. The Genoese thrived in a Muslim environment even, and perhaps especially, during times of war. Their economic success was due to their willingness to acculturate while attempting to maintain strong cultural ties with their identity. Examining various strategies, such as their immersion into the urban topography, their treatment in migration policies, and their negotiation of commercial privileges, this article concludes that the Genoese insertion into the Ottoman economy was a product not merely of their economic dexterity but of their cultural aptitude for innovation.*

KEYWORDS: *Mehmed, Genoese, Pera, Galata, Mediterranean trade, Braudel, Ottoman economy, Constantinople*

> Noi che sempre navegemo
> En gran perigolo semo
> En questo perigoloso mar
> Ni mai possamo repossar . . .
> Noi aiamo omi nostrai
> Destri, valenti, avisti
> Che mai par de lor n'ho visti
> In tuti ofici de mar.[1]
>
> —Anonymous thirteenth-century Genoese sonnet

When Sultan Mehmed II seized Constantinople in 1453, the Mediterranean seemed to have split into East and West, each one being the other's cultural

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and political nemesis in the Mediterranean. When the senate of Venice heard of the Fall of Constantinople, dispatches were sent across Italy to tell the news of "the deplorable fall of the cities of Constantinople and Pera [Galata]."[2] Word of mouth emphasized the bestiality of the Turks, the ferocity of their attack on Christendom. It was reported that all the churches had been destroyed and the sultan was gathering forces for an imminent attack on Italy. Historically and, with time, historiographically, the year 1453 became the symbol of the break between East and West.[3] By seizing Constantinople, Mehmed II antagonized most European monarchs, and an invisible yet potent dividing line came to dominate the Mediterranean Sea and alienated Christian and Muslim powers from one another.[4] In fact, in 1453, a Genoese reporter claimed, "whichever way I look, I see trouble."[5]

The Genoese had every reason to predict disaster, but as it happened, they experienced far less trouble than they had foreseen. Since the times of the Crusades, the Genoese had endured religious wars, famines, diseases, exile, and loss of territory, while nonetheless making a living as a consequence of their capacity to live in foreign societies. This article addresses how, faced with another disaster, the Genoese community in Constantinople found new ways to define itself in order to continue trading. Scholars examining the late Middle Ages agree that "exchange is . . . the very essence of survival in the Mediterranean world."[6] As the epigraph reveals, the Mediterranean was a dangerous sea, and for the Genoese trading nation there was no respite possible. Yet the Fall of Constantinople, and in particular the ensuing years of Mehmed II's rule, gave the Genoese community of Galata-Pera the opportunity to assuage discord.

What seems like a disaster to historians was really an opportunity for the Genoese, who exploited the situation through the skillful manipulation of their identity. The Genoese capitalized on their commercial and cultural differences.[7] Galata-Pera, the colony of Latins across the Bosphorus, was Constantinople's twin city, and the point of commercial operations for the Genoese who were some of the few non-Muslims who elected to stay in Constantinople after the Ottoman conquest.[8] While the political threat Mehmed represented to Westerners in Europe was fierce, those living under his auspices were allowed to trade and profit, live according to their customs, and practice their religion. Hence, rather than seeing the fall of the city to the Turks as the pinnacle of imperial domination, religious tension, and territorial expansion, I use the event to examine the process of Genoese identity formation as they found ways to negotiate their way into Ottoman society.[9]

The members of the Genoese merchant nation operating in Constantinople during the reign of Mehmed ably shaped their presence around their economic identity, or the behavior that affected their trade. Whereas studies on cross-cultural encounters usually emphasize confrontations, compromises, and negotiations, the Genoese case suggests that because their identity was so deeply rooted in economics, they were able to insinuate themselves into the Ottoman commercial life.[10] My research suggests that although they lost territories, the Genoese managed to negotiate commercial agreements, attract preferential treatments over other Christian nations in migration policies, safeguard their juridical interests, assert their religious rights, and contract benefits similar to those of Muslim traders. Surveying urban strategy, legal identity, migration strategies, and commercial privileges, this article examines this trading nation's ability to adjust to a foreign milieu in times of crisis.[11]

There is a wealth of studies on Italian colonies prior to Ottoman times.[12] Similarly, much scholarship is devoted to the Italians at the height of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century.[13] But the history of Italians under Mehmed II is surprisingly underresearched. Little is known about the Genoese prior to the times of formal embassies, which really flourished after the death of Mehmed II.[14] The mid-fifteenth century did not witness the writing of *relazioni* (closing reports based on diplomats' accounts) that would be so abundant during the following century. From the era of Mehmed II, only notary records and a few ecclesiastical accounts have survived. Nevertheless, these documents are revealing about the commercial attitude, the financial investments, and the social organization of the Genoese community. Moments of conflict enable us to better assess the degree of cross-cultural entente, or lack thereof, among the different factions that composed the social life of Constantinople.[15] Exploring the Genoese legal and commercial situation post-1453 shines light on cross-cultural interactions in a time of conquest,[16] and reveals how the Genoese fashioned a specific identity in order to survive, and ultimately thrive, under the rule of the person Pope Nicolas V called "the beast of the apocalypse."[17]

URBAN STRATEGY OF THE GENOESE IDENTITY

The frontier society of Galata-Pera was an outcome of the Genoese commercial expansion, and one of the many boundary societies they had replicated across the medieval Mediterranean.[18] Known as Galata in the Byzantine period and as Pera during the Middle Ages, the city across the Bosphorus from Constantinople was a

stepping-stone between Asia and Europe. Today it is called Beyoğlu and is referred to as the European side across from Istanbul. As the map shows, Constantinople and Galata-Pera were separated by but a strait of water (Figure 1). The city hosted mainly foreigners such as merchants, diplomats, scholars, travelers, and religious people. Each foreign nation had its quarter, and visitors lodged in the quarter of their country of origin. The Italian quarters were the largest. Galata-Pera provided economic coherence to Genoese exchanges in the Mediterranean,[19] where "frontiers of all kinds turned out to be remarkably permeable."[20] Galata-Pera was a colony of craftsmen and traders, a Latin outpost straddling two worlds. The Genoese used their commercial network, based on a clan-like organization of their overseas outposts, in their personal, economic, and political lives.[21] Hence, Genoese identity was rooted in culture and language, but mainly in vocation. The Genoese had established an "empire on the sea" with Constantinople as the gateway to the Black Sea, linking Smyrna to Sinope, Trebizond, Caffa, and Tana.[22] Well before the Ottoman conquest, the Genoese were involved here in the trade of alum, money, slaves, grain, wine, cloth, metals, and commodities (such as horses, gems, soap, and mastic).[23]

The city was the crux of the Genoese overseas expansion, but also its economic fulcrum from which every Genoese operation in the Levant was launched. Five years before 1453, French knight Bertrandon de la Brocquière found Constantinople fascinating but down at the heels. In contrast, he reported that the Italian town of Galata-Pera was "the handsomest port" he had ever seen; "the largest Genoese galleons can land there."[24] According to Venetian Giovan Maria

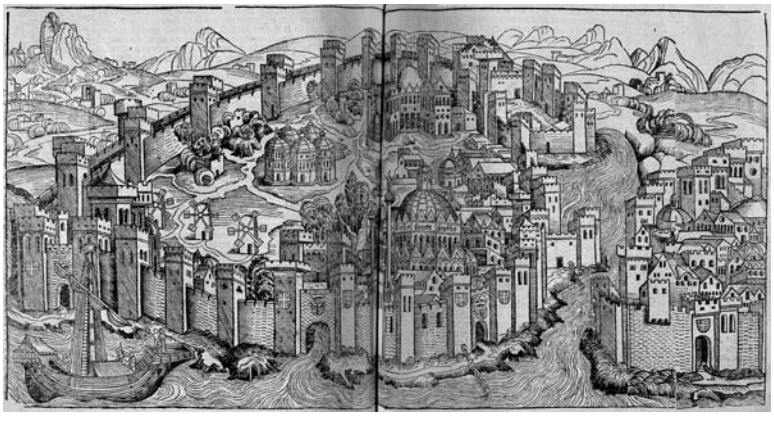

FIG. 1 *Constantinople*, by Hartmann Schedel, 1440–1514, *Liber Chronicarum* (Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, for Sebald Schreyer and Sebastian Kammermeister, July 12, 1493). Courtesy of University of Colorado Boulder, Special Collections.

Angiolello, Pera was as big as Venice. "All the galleons and ships go through Pera, and all the Italian merchants stay in Pera."[25] It was "a large city, highly commercialized, inhabited by Greeks, Jews, and Genoese," and the Genoese colony was thriving and prosperous.[26] When Mehmed took the city, in fact, it housed ten thousand Genoese, and, tellingly, included inns that specialized in Italian dishes.[27]

The Genoese commercial success was due in part to their ability to reproduce their city. In each port city of the Mediterranean they duplicated their native city, starting with the construction of their national church.[28] Their adaptability was a function of both acculturation to a new political climate and maintenance of their cultural traditions.[29] Wherever they settled, the Genoese installed a vicar, a counselor, notaries, a governing council, an officer of commercial affairs, abbots, and a consul. They also established churches and monasteries, and naturally, private homes and entrepôts.[30] Under the Byzantines, Galata had been an Italian city, complete with a Gothic tower, Italianate churches, and a *piazzetta*.[31] According to de la Brocquière, "Pera is under the control of the Genoese who govern the city. There is a podestà and other officers according to their custom."[32] Galata-Pera represented a "little Italy" in Constantinople, an outpost of Italian culture that served as a springboard for commercial relations.

The conquest forced the inhabitants of Galata-Pera to reinvent themselves.[33] Mixing acculturation and ties to their identity, the Genoese became "hybrids."[34] In the same way as people whose parents come from different religious, ethnic, or national origins, the Genoese now belonged to two different cultural traditions. In a Mediterranean context, Steven Epstein suggests hybrids were the offsprings of parents originating from diverse sociopolitical backgrounds.[35] The Genoese hybridity, however, was spatial as their origins derived from a single cultural tradition, Genoa, but their economic pursuits forced them to navigate in a foreign political environment. In fact, the duality of Galata-Pera was expressed in a poem by Armenian poet Ayni of Karaman, who said, "if you desire to see two universes in one life, go to the city of Galata."[36] Scholars of the Mediterranean tackle the concept of hybridity in various ways. Brian Catlos, for instance, has called the process of acculturation "mutual intelligibility": there was no homogeneity or fluidity in the Mediterranean but mutual intelligibility in the ways actors of different cultural traditions interacted.[37] Because of the lack of homogenous institutions, a common religion, or a lingua franca across the medieval Mediterranean, it was left to the people who traversed the sea to produce criteria of mutual understanding. Merchants discarded religious bans on cross-confessional

trade, pious men lived among communities of believers in alternative creeds, and travelers learned to communicate in multiple languages.[38] The Genoese of Pera were able to operate in a foreign political and religious context by reproducing their national institutions across the Bosphorus. The works of Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, Francesca Trivellato, and E. Natalie Rothman suggest that transnational subjects, especially traders, were cultural hybrids with multiple identities.[39] In other words, cross-cultural interaction across borders was an active process that required transnational actors to reorganize their mechanisms of belonging.[40] There was no inherent contradiction in swearing political allegiance to a Muslim ruler while remaining a practicing Catholic. Nor was there any intrinsic contradiction in selling arms to Muslims while Christians were waging wars against them. Successful hybrids were able to adapt to any political, religious, or social climate while keeping their own cultural traditions, and even sometimes accumulating traditions whose values they appropriated.

Because of their economic acumen, the Genoese of Galata-Pera were skilled at integrating into foreign societies, and becoming "wanted migrants."[41] Early Ottoman politics emphasizes that Mehmed was economically minded,[42] and the Genoese ability to continue to do business and to make necessary adjustments to their new environment made them attractive to the sultan.[43] Able to bridge many worlds, they functioned in an alien cultural environment as cross-cultural brokers.[44] Mehmed also probably favored the commercial activities of the Italians partly because the Byzantine elite looked down on commerce, and partly because the Italians specialized in the exportation of luxury items and foodstuffs to the western Mediterranean and Europe.[45] Mehmed designed policies to augment the local labor supply in Galata-Pera, and to import specific skills and technical knowledge. Moreover, the Genoese community provided needed economic support for Mehmed's wars of expansion. Michel Doukas's chronicle reports Mehmed's feelings toward the Genoese on the eve of 1453: "I will allow the serpent to sleep until I destroy the dragon."[46] The Genoese were the serpent while the dragon was Italy, or more specifically Rome, whose conquest was Mehmed's ultimate desire.[47] Rome was the ancient capital of the last great Mediterranean empire. Rome had been able to unite actors of different traditions from across the sea. As transnational agents, the Genoese embodied contact with that empire. And as Italians, they represented the Roman cultural tradition in Constantinople. Through his economic concessions, the sultan sought to maintain Galata-Pera as a thriving frontier society within the abode of Islam, but for that, he needed to develop imperial institutions that would facilitate the insertion of the Genoese in Ottoman life.[48]

NEGOTIATING THE GENOESE LEGAL IDENTITY

The Genoese who opted to stay in the Golden Horn after 1453 agreed to a yearly tribute in exchange for legal concessions from the sultan.[49] The sultan offered both legal and cultural protection, promising to grant the Genoese treaties that were more beneficial than those of the Byzantine emperors.[50] A tributary condition meant that they acknowledged Mehmed's sovereignty, a situation that might not seem enticing economically. The yearly tribute also meant that they became non-Muslim subjects, fundamentally altering their civic identity. The Genoese hailed from the free Republic of Genoa and hence were subject to no prince. They were proud of their civic institutions for which they had fought fiercely. For citizens of a city-state, agreeing to a tributary situation might have seemed to some to be a civic step backward. But the Genoese did not see it this way. In return for symbolically presenting Mehmed with the keys to the city they received an *ahdname* (imperial pledge).[51] The *ahdname* conferred special status on the Genoese, who became foreign subjects of the Ottoman sultan.[52] As foreign subjects of the empire they received legal and political autonomy.[53]

Although, according to European dispatches, the Grand Turk had been ferocious during the attack on Constantinople, he developed imperial institutions of an inclusive character. He created institutional mechanisms that governed inclusion and exclusion over boundary communities.[54] This solemn pledge of the *ahdname* served as the judicial basis for the Latin community known as the "Latin Rayassi" (non-Muslim) and provided the Genoese with an elevated status.[55] The Latin community referred to all Europeans since Jews were included as Latin. Therefore the Latin community encompassed all those who hailed from Latin Christendom. In this manner, the Genoese lost their quality of foreigners and became subjects of the Ottomans, called *rayas* or non-Muslims. Their status was notably not that of inferior subjects, as the title they were given, *Magnifica Communità di Pera*, indicates.[56] Legal and political autonomy were milestones if we consider the simultaneous treatment of ethnic minorities around the Mediterranean. The term "Latin" defined their nation but not their legal status. Through the *adhname* the Genoese community was acknowledged as an independent construct with obligations (notably the paying of a tax for non-Muslims), but also rights and privileges in the Ottoman Empire. An important privilege given to the Genoese community was the exemption from the *devşirme*, the levy of youth for the sultan's service, so long as they obeyed the laws and paid the taxes.

The imperial pledge also enabled the inhabitants of Galata-Pera to maintain their status as a Latin outpost in the Levantine world.[57] The Genoese agreed

to a tributary situation because they sought legal protection, and because they knew their commerce depended on the maintenance of good relations with the Ottomans. To be sure, this was a mutually beneficial situation. The sultan was generous with their civic rights because he expected to receive great commercial wealth as a result. Thus, "in exchange for a yearly tribute," Mehmed "granted commercial privileges and protection to the Genoese,"[58] which included the right to maintain their customs, to keep their belongings and investments, and to practice commerce freely wherever they pleased.[59] The residents of Galata-Pera who stayed received property rights over their former residences.[60] The sultan swore he "would protect and defend them like [his] own person," granting them the right to a *primato* or civil leader of the community.[61] Hence, the Italian community was a hybrid construct that acted as a self-governing settlement, whose inhabitants benefited from the protection of their legal rights.[62]

The Genoese identity was altered as a result of their civic status in the Levant. They now operated under the umbrella of a new imperial institution. As Rayassi, they acquired a legal identity rather than a religious one. Scholars who examine group identity argue that the age of exploration and conquest prompted a change in group ascription. Because certain groups acted as points of intersection between multiple groups, they followed "juxtaposed" patterns of group affiliations.[63] The Genoese hence forged themselves a Levantine identity, and became cultural hybrids. They were Christians and Italians, but because of the legal space created for them by the Ottoman sultan, they were also Levantines capable of operating under a Muslim ruler.

By becoming Ottoman subjects, the Genoese detached themselves juristically from the mother land. As of November 1453, the Genoese colony of Galata-Pera benefitted no longer from the Republic of Genoa's jurisdiction. The doge of Genoa himself saw the "whole business with the Ottoman sultan" as precarious. In fact, correspondence with the mother city indicates that caution was always recommended when it came to Genoa's relationship with "the Great Turk."[64] The Officium Provisionis Romanie, the magistrate of the Genoese colonies in the Levant, was abolished, and ad hoc officials who tried to protect the colonies in times of crisis assumed the management of the colonies.[65] The Genoese in Galata-Pera, however, surely felt that this agreement entailed more benefits than losses. Becoming a vassal of the sultan was economically more sound than enjoying the civic liberties of the motherland. They surrendered their legal safety in order to pursue their commercial ventures in the Levant. The benefits of this trade-off became evident throughout Mehmed's reign as the commercial gains of the Genoese in the Levant far exceeded those they had enjoyed under the Byzantine emperors.

The legal agreement had positive implications for their commercial activities. The Genoese living in the Ottoman Empire did not entirely sever themselves politically from Genoa. Only legally did they depend on Constantinople by becoming subjects of the Ottoman ruler. Hence, when in Mediterranean waters, they benefitted from the protection of both Genoa and Constantinople.[66] Legally speaking, then, the Genoese in Galata-Pera enjoyed the best of both sides of the Mediterranean world. This legal situation was not very different from the one they obtained in Europe, however. In 1474, for the purpose of stimulating the textile industry, King Ferrante of Aragón made some Genoese merchants his vassals in the Kingdom of Naples with all the rights and responsibilities that this act entailed.[67] For the Genoese, being a king's vassal meant that their merchandise was exempt from excessive taxation while receiving the protection of the Aragonese tribunals. In Constantinople, the sultan bestowed cultural and legal status on the Genoese who could then revive commerce in the Ottoman capital.

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT IN MIGRATION POLICIES

The exile experience was part of the Genoese personal identity. Being a Genoese merchant required a diasporic life to preserve the livelihood of the mother city. The Genoese did most of their trade in the eastern Mediterranean and therefore lived most of their life overseas. Because of their lengthy trips across the Mediterranean, they resided in non-Christian cities where their trade took them.[68] In fact, many of the clans' affiliates lived in the colonies, where they traded, while others resided in Genoa, where they protected the interests of the clan.[69] As one historian of Genoa claims, "[t]he city prospered by moving commodities and cash around the world."[70] This speaks to the adaptability of the Genoese, whose identity was based on movement and not on locus. In fact, their identity was based on dislocation. They deterritorialized, which became part of their identity. For most traders, Galata-Pera was not the home of their clan, but their wealth was made in the eastern Mediterranean. Thus, Genoa experienced a high dependency on the performance of its families in the Levant. The Genoese families active in Galata-Pera included the Spinola, Giustiniani, Negro, Gentile, Lomellini, Doria, Grimaldi, Franchi, Adorno, Vivaldo, and Pallavicino families.[71] In addition, many other families of lesser status traded in Galata-Pera. Family names indicate that the connection with Genoa remained strong, and that there was constant movement between Genoa and Galata-Pera. Until the sixteenth century, Genoa remained a transient city hosting mainly young and old people since an adult Genoese would

spend his life in the Levant, but would marry and retire in Genoa.[72] The Genoese were endogamous because marriage alliances secured property, liquid assets, and prestige, but also trusted business partners. The preservation of family interests was in many ways a commercial strategy. Also, Genoese institutions such as the *commenda* in which a member of the firm remained in Genoa while the other traveled, aimed at diminishing risk.[73] Hence, Genoese merchants can be said to have had a nonterritorial sense of identity, focusing instead on kinfolk interests as a signifier of their identity.

The Genoese were successful at negotiating their socioeconomic place in the Ottoman capital because they knew that many inhabitants had fled Constantinople. As a result of this exodus, the sultan accommodated migrant communities of traders.[74] The Genoese were among the few non-Muslims who had opted to stay in the city after 1453. The sultan's capture of Constantinople had caused a mass migration of non-Muslims out of Ottoman territories, thereby creating social and economic disarray. In the capital and surrounding areas, lands were left untilled, shops abandoned, commerce halted, and the general crisis left Mehmed in financial dire straits. A dramatic drop in population fostered the welcoming of foreigners into the city. Before the Fall of Constantinople, the city counted about one million inhabitants. In June 1453, the population had fallen to fifty thousand. Thus, ninety percent of the population had fled the city. This was a Christian exodus with no parallel. According to the Genoese parochial register, nine thousand Latin Christians lived in Galata-Pera in the 1460s.[75] A census from 1477 indicates that two-thirds of Galata-Pera's population was not Muslim.[76] In order to promote agriculture and commerce, Mehmed encouraged Christian immigrants to settle in the capital.[77] To do so, he ordered "that all who left Constantinople, whether as captives or as emigrants, either before its capture or since, and were living in other cities, should return from exile and settle here."[78] Over a decade later, the 1489 census reveals that Galata-Pera's population comprised 726 houses occupied mainly by Christians and Armenians, and some Jews.[79] Chronicles from the time reveal that the Genoese were dominant among the Christian population of Galata-Pera.[80] The measures taken to preserve the population of Galata reveal a keen interest in supporting the commercial activity in one of the most important trading colonies of the Genoese.

The Genoese gained much from the Islamic social legislation that Mehmed enacted. While this legislation sought to protect the settled population by promoting agricultural and commercial interests, the migration of both traders and farmers to the capital was encouraged.[81] However, the "mercantile nations" and the "farming nations" were ranked differently. In the Ottoman capital, Mehmed

developed a system whereby the division between East and West was not about Muslims and Christians, but about traders and farmers. The Genoese fit into the promotion of religious diversity and migration policies that were specifically intended to rebuild the Ottoman capital. These strategies indicate that some Christians were designated as traders, while others were selected to till the soil. Hence, migration acquired different meanings and purposes befitting Mehmed's economic agenda. While in the western Mediterranean, ethnic minorities were forced to convert or leave, in the early Ottoman Empire, minorities experienced the opposite situation, for better or for worse.

Jews and Italians were the traditional trading nations in the medieval Mediterranean, especially in Constantinople. Their status as a community of merchants made them desirable migrants following Mehmed's conquest of the city. They were seen as assets to any embryonic society because they would revive commercial activities. Diasporic communities of "ethnic merchants" played a major role in favoring market integration. While Italians and Jews served as traders, Armenians, Russians, and Greeks acted as farmers. The migration policies made a clear distinction between the Christian merchants of Frankish origins (Western Europe) and the other nontributary Christians.[82] The sultan's panegyrist, Kritoboulos, explained that in order "to repopulate the city . . . [Mehmed] gathered them from all part of Asia and Europe, and he transferred them with all possible care, people of all nations, but more especially of Christians. So profound was the passion . . . to bring [the city] back to its former prosperity."[83] If we read between the lines, the prosperity of the city depended on the ruler's capacity to restore the trade of Christian merchants, not because of their religion, but because they were the hegemonic traders prior to the Ottoman conquest. In other words, countless qualified people had departed and Mehmed aspired to their safe return. Because commercial goods were not freely available to all, the Genoese found their niche as importers of goods not available in the Levant. We often think of luxury goods such as silk and spices as prime items of exchange, but what the Ottoman economy needed after the conquest of Constantinople was grain, wheat, or flour for everyday consumption. Acting as commercial go-betweens, the Genoese increased their integration into Ottoman life because they could provide these items. The economic performance of the Genoese enabled them to heighten the status of their nation. As one of the numerous *millets* (religious minorities) in the Ottoman Empire, the Genoese negotiated their cultural acceptance through their economic talents. So the Genoese used their commercial skills to solidify their place in the Ottoman system.

The Genoese greatly benefited from a colorful taxonomy of foreigners based on economic performance. Contemporaries noted that migration policies

distinguished between the "men of crafts" and the "men of arts."[84] For farmers, a forced migration (*sürgün*) took place, while merchants received scores of incentives to settle and trade.[85] The sultan's attempt to diversify Constantinople followed stringent rules of "minority roles." The distinctions were not really based on ethnicity, since economically, Jewish merchants were considered Western Europeans. Thus, identity was based not on religion but on economics. These considerations compel us to reconsider the cosmopolitan character of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, initially Mehmed had an agenda that encouraged diversity, but it was a diversity that served economic purposes, not political ones. Merchant nations such as the Genoese received tax breaks to immigrate. Peasant farmers, on the other hand, saw their taxes increased to finance Mehmed's wars of expansion.[86] Thus, we can deduce that the Genoese took advantage of the fact that more value was conferred on those who increased the economic potential of the country than on those who sustained it. Their diaspora not only earned them a special advantage over the other non-Muslim populations of the empire, but also assisted them in developing Constantinople's economy.

Imperial institutions that shaped urban life also altered power relations among different communities, thereby enabling the Genoese to become the dominant minority. Because of their commercial expertise, their *millet* acquired a higher status. Kate Fleet has argued that the Genoese contributed to both the economic development of the Ottoman state and its territorial expansion.[87] Examining this process from the Genoese perspective instead, one may argue that their economic strength lay in their capacity for acculturation and the elasticity of their identity. Their cultural strength, the personal recognition of their nation, arose from their capacity to become the dominant minority. Since the sultan used the *millet* status as currency in his dealings with peripheral populations, the Genoese were not a tolerated minority but a dominant minority. The link between ethnicity and economics was a close one, and it was a matter of identity. The Ottomans created a class system based on the commercial skills and economic knowledge of a people, not on their religion. For instance, it was believed that certain religions fostered economics: Jews, Christians, and Muslims were among these, while Armenians, Greeks, and Russians were not. In fact, a maxim circulating at the court of Mehmed illustrates his favoritism toward "useful" ethnicities: "to get the Sultan's attention, reach fortune and consideration, one must be Persian, Jew, or Frank [French or Italian]."[88] The Genoese benefitted directly from the Ottoman perception of them, which, in turn, enabled them to negotiate their way into the commercial life of the empire.

The economic freedom of the Genoese led to their religious autonomy within the Ottoman state. Mehmed's acceptance of religious minorities (Jews, Christians,

Orthodox), or *millets*, is an indication of such politics. The *millet* system has been called an early example of premodern religious pluralism.[89] It was not exactly so. This religious pluralism was really a taxonomy of people based on economic performance. Religious ecumenism had therefore a purpose: to cultivate differences by enabling each community of traders to fit within a religious category. In addition to the concessions they previously received, the Genoese of Galata-Pera received the right to worship without hindrance. Their treaty with Mehmed stressed that "[t]he Genoese can maintain their churches and preach according to their laws and customs so long as they do not ring their bells."[90] While the Pope worried that the Latin Christians of Galata-Pera lived "under infidels,"[91] and the Genoese merchant, Jacopo de Promontorio, called Mehmed "a horrible, cruel, mad, and malignant Turk,"[92] various notary acts mention ongoing ordinary religious life in the Genoese churches of Galata-Pera such as Santa Chiara, San Domenico, and San Francesco, and the monasteries of Santa Maria della Misericordia and San Benedetto.[93] Obviously, Mehmed initially sought a territorial conquest, not a spiritual one. Spiritual freedom coupled with conquest nevertheless furthered peace and cross-cultural exchanges and was beneficial to the Genoese as "the people of Galata will maintain their churches and will exercise their cult freely according to their custom. . . . Their laws and customs will, from now on and forever, be the same. The Sultan will not transform the churches into mosques . . . the population will not be converted into Islam."[94] Religious toleration helped pacify subjects but it also maintained economic stability.[95] Mehmed's reluctance to link spiritual matters to imperial policies benefitted the Genoese who could maintain their cultural and religious identity while participating in the economic revival of the Ottomans.

The Genoese worked to gain spiritual concessions, a symbol of their investment in the East. But the relationship between the Ottoman state and religious minorities was based on economic exchange, not so much on religion. Contemporary examples where large portions of religious minorities were persecuted provide a case in point. There was no evangelization process as in the Iberian Peninsula. And the assimilation of religious minorities was not in the spirit of "can they become us?" as in the Spanish world in the Americas. What occurred instead was the construction of a multicultural polity based on economics. Diversity within the unity of the Ottoman Empire was encouraged. Yet this, too, relied on negotiations as to what Genoese Christians could do. Thus, economic diversity was predicated on the idea that different minorities had aptitudes for different types of economic activity as a result of their religious culture. But just as Mehmed had encouraged immigration with a specific intent, his religious policies also entailed intent. It is

arguable, then, that the sultan nurtured difference for the purpose of empowering each group to support the Ottoman economic aims of prosperity. The practice of one's religion seemed to be one of the markers of ethnic freedom. Civically, the Genoese had become subjects (which mainly meant that they had to pay the tax for non-Muslims), but they gained in exchange spiritual and commercial freedom.

Able to stay in Galata-Pera, the Genoese community witnessed a notable increase in economic confidence around the years 1460s. Notary records indicate that there was a revival in real estate purchases in Galata-Pera from the 1460s until 1500.[96] These real estate purchases were generally made by members of the nobility who were active in commerce. Their link to the city therefore remained strong. The predominantly economic identity of the Genoese (enhanced by their legal rights) led to greater Genoese financial investment in the Ottoman capital. Mehmed's policies were indicative of his aim of designing Ottoman legislation as a blueprint that would facilitate the permanent establishment of immigrants. In other words, because of the sultan's vision, over time the Genoese of Galata-Pera were transformed from a diasporic community into a protected minority.

NEGOTIATING COMMERCIAL PRIVILEGES

The commercial rights that their legal identity granted them allowed the Genoese to occupy a central place in Ottoman commercial life. Judging from the terms of the *adhname*, the Genoese secured an economic relation with the Ottomans, not a cultural one. Trade had already defied the paradigms established by the religious schisms of 1091 and 1453, the interdicts during the Crusades, and the numerous papal sanctions toward cross-confessional trade. The Genoese case underscores what has already been established: the pragmatism of trade in the medieval Mediterranean ignored religious postulates.[97] As a matter of fact, it has recently been argued that "war, as a constant reality of Mediterranean life above and beyond the Christian-Islamic divide, also acted as a stimulus of economic development and fiscal and financial innovation."[98] In effect, the monetary benefits for the Genoese increased during wartime because they loaned their financial, military, and naval know-how to states across the Mediterranean.

The Genoese negotiated themselves into Ottoman commerce by exploiting their legal and migratory status. Mehmed's edict drawn for the Genoese in June 1453 granted the Genoese traders of Galata-Pera access to the Ottoman economy through legal, religious, and commercial facilities in Constantinople.[99] The Genoese received a license to live and trade in the Ottoman Empire.[100] The

commercial inclusion of foreigners was not so unusual. The medieval Muslim world is generally seen as liberal from an economic point of view because it facilitated exchange and placed little restriction on goods and people regardless of their place of origin.[101] Marshall Hodgson has called this process of allowing foreign actors to participate in the Ottoman economy to "Islamicate."[102] In this context, not only did the Muslim majority play a role in society, but so did all the other religious minorities who were integral, if not fully equal, participants in shaping society, culture, and economy. Recently, Ariel Salzmann, in looking at the longue-durée interaction of these different actors and economies, has referred to this trend of inclusion as a "moral economy."[103] The Genoese of Galata-Pera received the right from Mehmed "to come and go, to export, practice commerce by land or by sea, as others will do in my country, without anyone preventing them to do so."[104] Since before the First Crusade of 1095, the Genoese participation in the Muslim economy was highly desired. In this context, rather than expelling them, the sultan was wise to include foreign merchants with an already established track record of import-export portfolio across the Mediterranean.

Manipulating the Ottoman commercial system through imperial institutions, the Genoese became active participants in Ottoman mercantile life because of their expertise in the import-export trade. The Genoese expertise was a must because of their capacity to transport all kinds of commodities, from staples to luxury items, aboard their ships.[105] Thanks to commercial policies, as non-Muslims, the Genoese paid a tax (*cizye*), but prospered from their status as the sultan's tributary subjects because Ottoman policies sought to reduce the amount of taxes that their subjects paid.[106] Because of favorable interest rates and commercial policies, the benefits that the Genoese received under the sultan remained similar, if not superior, to those they had earned under the Byzantines.[107] During the whole reign of Mehmed, we see the Genoese being engaged in all kinds of trade, especially the purchase of slaves, ships, and grain imports.[108] In this embryonic Ottoman society, exports were taxed while most imports were not. For instance, imports were favored over exports of items such as wheat, barley, eggs, flour, yogurt, and bread. The Genoese brought in vital resources (mainly foodstuffs) very much needed in the newly annexed Ottoman cities. For the Ottomans, the prime issue was to protect their commercial shipping.[109] Hence, the Genoese were also able to navigate the import-export custom laws easily because they imported items needed for daily living.[110] For instance, the boats arriving from Genoa paid a lower toll than those belonging to nontributary merchants.[111] To finance his great undertakings (repopulation, territorial expansion, economic recovery), the sultan had increased custom duties.[112] So, in the

customs of Galata-Pera and Constantinople the foreign toll was five percent. For the Muslims and Genoese from Galata-Pera, on the other hand, it was four.[113] Similarly, the merchandise unloaded by the Genoese of Galata-Pera was taxed at the low rate of four percent.

Their status of tributary subjects entitled the Genoese to commercial rights, but also to the right to negotiate with the state. For instance, in 1462 Mehmed seized the Genoese island of Lesbos, rich in alum, retiring the Genoese from the profitable mine business. Nevertheless, the Genoese negotiated with the sultan and restarted the business two years later.[114] All was not blissful on the eastern front, however. In 1475 the Genoese lost their colony of Kaffa, a crucial point in the Black Sea trade. Thanks to their status of tributary subjects, however, their involvement in the Black Sea trade endured, even without Kaffa.[115] The Bursa customhouse provides an interesting case study for the participation of the Genoese in the Black Sea. At Bursa, Europeans would acquire silks in exchange for fine woolen cloth from Europe, which was much in demand in the Ottoman Empire, Persia, and Central Asia. Jewish and Italian merchants waited anxiously for the arrival of silk caravans from Persia to buy and dispatch the goods to Italy.[116] As tributary subjects, the Genoese of Pera paid a custom toll of three percent, the same amount as Muslim traders.[117] The Black Sea and Danube custom registers indicate that in these harbors, Bursa merchants sold European woolens, Persian silk and peppers, and spices and dyes from India.[118] The silk industry of Bursa resembled capitalist production in that it mainly supplied external markets and was dependent on foreign merchants.[119] In turn, during the time of Mehmed, the Bursa-Ragusa-Genoa-Florence trade route became increasingly important.[120] Commercial exchange was not brought to a halt. Rather, it simply continued under different precepts, and often very productively.

Through their colony of Galata-Pera, the Genoese became cross-cultural brokers of the Ottoman economy. The merchandise included cloth, leather, lynx, fox, sulfur, horses, glass, linen, caviar, sandalwood, and soap.[121] The items sold in the markets of Constantinople and Galata-Pera[122] included cloth from across Europe and the western Mediterranean (London, Barcelona, Mallorca, Bergamo, Florence, France, and the Barbary coast).[123] The Genoese were a desired community because they supplied the capital with essential consumer goods, that is, non-luxury items such as barley, wheat, flour, yogurt, and grain.[124] Notary records point out that many of the Genoese transactions involved the purchase of houses and slaves, an indicator of their permanence in the city and signifier of their commercial activities.[125] Their *loggia* (warehouse) and *piazza* (town square) prevailed well into the sixteenth century.[126]

The Genoese were involved in cloth import-export from the capital and around the Black Sea. In the central bazaar of Galata-Pera, Christian merchants became registered guild members for the practices of goldsmithing, money exchange, cotton manufacture, and wool dyeing.[127] They were accepted as guild members working alongside local Muslim merchants. Guild meetings probably included discussions of inheritances, revenues, and trade strategies regarding the import and export of their wares.[128] In the customhouse of Bursa, Italian merchants from Chios, Genoa, Florence, and Venice were acknowledged for their participation in the selling of cloth.[129] The Genoese merchants continued to trade throughout Mehmed's reign, enabling luxury items to reach Europe and thus contributing to Italian wealth.[130] During the reign of Mehmed's son, Bayezid (1481–1520), the economic exchange in silk and other luxury items between the Genoese community of Galata-Pera and the Ottoman court continued.[131] Items the Genoese acquired in the Levant, such as sugar and silk, and in Italy, such as cloth, were offered as gifts to the envoys of the Ottoman court or to the Genoese officials who visited Topkapi Palace.[132] The customs registers along the Black Sea show a noticeable increase of traffic between 1487 and 1490. Muslim Turks transported the silk from Persia to the Black Sea, but it was left to Italians established permanently there to export it to Europe.[133] Commerce boomed as a result of the high European and Ottoman demand for cloth. Thus, while silk, linen, and cotton were exported to Europe, any type of cloth was imported from Europe.[134]

Their role as commercial go-betweens enabled the Genoese to serve in the Ottoman fiscal administration. From Galata-Pera, the Genoese engaged in tax farming for the Ottoman state.[135] Unlike in Europe, where tax farming on products of consumption was common, in Ottoman lands it was the Sultan who normally retained those rights. Merchants paid a tax to the Ottoman state via a customs officer called a *dellāl*. After the conquest, however, Mehmed adopted European fiscal methods and tax farming became more common. Some Christian merchants became tax farmers for the Ottomans (especially in customs tax collection).[136] This crucial commercial service to the Ottoman state awarded them a customs fee equal to that of Muslims. Acknowledged as full members of the Ottoman economy, they acquired privileges similar to the Muslims. The Genoese ability to trade with minimal taxation gave them substantial benefits compared to the other non-Muslim nations.

CONCLUSIONS

The relationship between Mehmed II and his "foreign subjects" of Galata-Pera shines a light on various topics relating to trade, migration, identity, and state

building in early modern times. The Genoese paved the path for economic and diplomatic relations with the eastern Mediterranean. As Mehmed sought to maintain trade with the West, all the trading nations established quarters in Galata-Pera. The sultan extended trade privileges to other Italians, such as the Florentines, in 1469,[137] and renewed those of the Venetians upon the end of the Venetian-Turkish War in 1479. The privileges the Genoese received were a signifier of Mehmed's policy toward Italian traders. These privileges opened up avenues for further European diplomatic and commercial exchanges with the Ottoman Empire. More Europeans were actively seeking agreements with the Ottoman sultans following the Genoese *adhname*. Subsequent Ottoman rulers granted capitulations, notably to the Venetians and the French.[138] For the Genoese, trade also continued with other Islamic powers, such as Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt.[139]

The examination of the Genoese community of Galata-Pera conjures up interesting thoughts on frontiers, especially cultural ones. This article has provided a history *of* the Mediterranean, in the sense that it has considered how the sea creates links between societies, economies, and cultures. As Fernand Braudel asserted, history *of* and history *in* the Mediterranean are both intrinsically tied to a landscape that is characterized more by permeable frontiers than by the clash of civilizations.[140] Because there were so many areas of negotiation (cultural, commercial, territorial), Mediterranean trade was a forger of new identities. Maria Fusaro, Colin Heywood, and Mohamed Salah Omri have suggested that "in a Mediterranean world whose keywords are exchange and fluidity, where the frontiers between empires and states, cultures and religions were ever permeable, it is not a surprise that social and economic behaviors frequently involved the display of multiple identities."[141]

Although I have sided with economic continuity, the diversity of the human experience also needs to be taken into account. As Braudel stated, "the Mediterranean speaks with many voices; it is a sum of individual histories."[142] The Genoese community of Galata-Pera operating during Mehmed's rule is one such voice. This is what has prompted Horden and Purcell to claim that the complexity of Mediterranean diversity set it apart from actors in other regions.[143] The Genoese were an example of the Mediterranean capacity to transform one's identity to fit commercial purposes. In the Genoese case, frontiers (cultural, religious, economic, and political) were porous and easily traversed, and identity (cultural, economic, and religious) could easily be molded and altered.

The Genoese community's relationship with the Ottoman state enabled temporal and spatial continuity between East and West. Assessing Ottoman imperial institutions and norms in comparison to those of the Genoese, we can retrace how socioeconomic organization following the conquest aimed at reinforcing

the economic status quo.[144] I am arguing not for fluidity, but for continuity. Conceivably, the concessions granted by the sultan were entirely within a Byzantine commercial tradition.[145] Long before the Fall of Constantinople, the Genoese had already learned to negotiate their way with the Greek emperors,[146] to whom they paid trading concessions.[147] Because of their ability to incorporate themselves into a Muslim society (which claimed to be the successor of the Roman Empire), the Genoese followed the principle of *translatio imperii* on a Mediterranean scale.[148] Thus, 1453 did not presage a considerable break. The era of Mehmed actually foreshadowed sustained exchange between East and West because of the imperial institutions in place. This article has therefore offered Mehmed's reign not as a historical hiatus for the Genoese (as the historical literature portrays) but as a situation that assisted them in manipulating Ottoman imperial resources in order to continue operating in Constantinople.

NOTES

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1. "We, who always navigate, are in great danger, in this dangerous sea, and we can never rest. . . . We love our men, skillful courageous and swift, I have never encountered similar men in all the offices of the sea." López (1938: 40).

2. Crowley (2005: 238).

3. Contemporary Christians and Muslims felt the siege of Constantinople was a determining moment. For the Muslims, see "Letter of Sheik Aq Šems ed-Dîn to Mehmet II" (Carile 1983c). For the Christians, see "Letter of the Knights of St. John on Rhodes which was sent to Jerusalem to the Margrave of Brandenburg" (Carile 1983a). The famous capture and escape of Archbishop Isidore of Kiev terrified the whole European continent: "Letter of a Member of the Household of Archbishop Isidore of Kiev to Cardinal Dominico Capranica" (Carile 1983b).

4. See various scholars of the Mediterranean, e.g., Braudel (1972); Constable (2003); Fernández-Armesto (1987).

5. Angelo Lomellino, Genoese podestà of Galata, to his brother, June 23, 1453. See Melville-Jones (1972: 135).

6. Wittow (2001: 900).

7. David Abulafia explains that in the late Middle Ages, it was differences that generated trade across the Mediterranean, with goods being either exotic or commonplace on each side of the sea. See Abulafia (2012).

8. Suraiya N. Faroqhi has recently argued that the Genoese withdrew from the eastern Mediterranean during the reign of Mehmed. See Faroqhi (2013: 1–16).

9. Kinoshita (2012) calls Mediterranean events of great scale that bring people together "strategic regionalism." She argues that what looks quintessentially other, such as religion, ethnicity, or political affiliation, was brought together due to zones and moments of interaction.

10. For a reference to other trade diasporas such as the Chinese and Lebanese, see the work of Cohen (1997). On trade diaspora, the best work is still Curtin (1991: 12).

11. Tracy (2011: 9–54) emphasizes conflicts of civilizations, ignoring the fact that in the Muslim-Christian competition, accommodation was as common as conflict.

12. The first study of the Genoese colony is that of Promis (1871: 516–633). Most famous is Jacoby (1997: 245–84). See also López (1938); Jehel (1993); Kedar (1976); Balard (1987); Fleet (1999); Basso (1994).

13. Rothman (2011); Dursteler (2006); Nicol (1992); Green (2002); O'Connell (2009).

14. Marc von der Höh argues that diplomatic relations between the Italian states and the Ottoman Turks increased as a result of the multiplication of embassies by the early sixteenth century. See von der Höh (2013: 163–82).

15. Nirenberg (1996), for instance, has examined the treatment of Jews and Christians during periods of Christian festivities in medieval Spain, drawing conclusions about the religious discrimination that gave birth to moments of violence in times of crisis.

16. Daniel Goffman has proposed that the least understood actors in the interaction between Italians and Ottomans are the merchants, diplomats, and religious men along the middle grounds; see Goffman (2010: 61–74).

17. Jensen (2007: 79).

18. Constable refers to the *funduk* as an institution of cross-cultural trade across the Mediterranean, which served as both merchant base and living quarter; see Constable (2003). For an account of the Genoese colonies, see López (1938).

19. Starting in the fifteenth century, Galata-Pera became the commercial heart of the empire, with other such Latin outposts in other Ottoman cities. By the end of the sixteenth century an array of such sites existed. See Eldem et al. (1999).

20. Fusaro (2010: 20).

21. The Genoese are seen as pre-capitalist entrepreneurs since they invented institutions such as the *fraterna*, a commercial firm based on mutual trust. See Abu-Lughod (1989: 114). Jessica Goldberg (2012: 3–40) acknowledges the phenomenon of trust as crucial in the medieval Mediterranean and compares merchants from Egypt and Italy through the Geniza records.

22. Balard (1978). They were called "gin" by the Black Sea population; see Basso (1994). "Gin" must have been a bad pronunciation of the word "Genoese" by the inhabitants of the Black Sea.

23. For a detailed account of various trade goods prior to 1453, see Fleet (1999).

24. De la Brocquière (1988: 88).

25. Angiolello was captured during the siege of Negroponte and remained in the service of the Ottomans after the death of Mehmed; see Angiolello (1982). See also Guérin Dalle Mese (1985: 97). Consult also his famous *Gio.Maria Angiolello* (BNF) MS. Cod. Mixt. 1238.

26. De la Brocquière (1988: 88).

27. The inhabitants of Galata included Genoese artisans. On the demands of bakers to the Genoese podestà to continue baking their bread, see ASG, 2707 A. Letter 735 year 1453 Luciano Spinola in Constantinople to the Republic.

28. David Abulafia (1993) portrays the medieval Italian trader as "a citizen who had travels in his blood." For Fernández-Armesto (1987: 103–4), the Genoese displayed an affectionate recollection of Genoa as the atmosphere of Pera was strikingly similar to Genoa. Such was the case of street plans, names, and building style, but the recollection also extended to language, guilds, confraternities, commercial companies, and the supremacy of Genoese law.

29. For an example in the Italian Peninsula, see Dauverd (2014a).

30. Balletto (1995: 258–68). The Genoese loggia stood in Galata, where the Galata *bedestan* (the market) was built in the later sixteenth century. See Kafescioğlu (2009: 37).

31. This seems to be prototypical of the Genoese migration around the Mediterranean, as the anonymous saying illustrates: "E tanti son li Zenoexi, E per lo mondo sì destexi, Che unde li van

e stan, Un'altra Zenoa ge fan"; Cocito (1970: 194–98). "There are so many Genoese, who travel across the world, and wherever they go, another Genoa they make."

32. De la Brocquière (1988: 88–89).

33. Wojciehowski (2011: 11) has argued that during the Renaissance the accelerating awareness of other cultures and ideas precipitated the formation and organization of the new group, developing new conceptions of group identity.

34. The classic work on hybridity is Bhabha (1994). For an overview of hybridity, see Benton and Muth (2000) and Burke (2009).

35. In a Mediterranean context, Steven Epstein suggests that a hybrid is the product of a mixed relationship, or parents from different origins. See Epstein (2014).

36. Kafescioğlu (2009: 176).

37. Catlos (2013).

38. For a recent work on the concept of identity of Mediterranean merchants, see the work of John Watkins and Kathryn Reyerson (2014).

39. Horden and Purcell (2000); Trivellato (2009); Rothman (2011).

40. The Genoese surely collaborated with Muslim merchants, who had been a resident community in Galata-Pera since the late twelfth century; Reinert (1998: 125–50).

41. See Jacoby (1997: 245–84).

42. Lowry (2003) argues that Mehmed's primary motive was his desire for booty and slaves. The empire was a "plundering confederacy" and open to anyone who could contribute to this goal.

43. Kate Fleet (2012: 327–44) has argued that the position of Latin merchants (both Genoese and Venetians) was much more insecure in Mamluk territories, for instance, than in Ottoman ones.

44. Felipe Fernández-Armesto has called the Genoese who migrated across the Mediterranean "hermit crabs" because they were able to adapt to any foreign environment by keeping their cultural habitat intact; see Fernández-Armesto (1987). For the Genoese merchants' reliance on informal networks, see Court (2004: 987–1003).

45. Balard (2006: 99).

46. Doukas (1975: 212).

47. For details on Mehmed's aspiration to absorb and surpass the Roman Empire's dream of Mediterranean unity, see Dauverd (2014b).

48. Francesca Trivellato (2007) has argued that in early modern times imperial structures were needed to protect merchants and facilitate their jobs.

49. The Genoese were accustomed to working with the Ottomans for financial rewards prior to the conquest of Constantinople. For instance, their ships had assisted the Ottoman armies around the Black Sea prior to 1453; İnalcık (1973: 134). It can be argued that preferential treatment was bestowed onto the Genoese because of their commercial dexterity but also because they had been fundamental in the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, hence Mehmed sought to keep them as allies.

50. Zaganos Pasha, one of Mehmed's close advisors, commented, "Be not afraid. You are the ruler's friends, and your city will suffer no injury. Furthermore, you will receive better treaties than your former treaties with the emperor and with us"; Doukas (1843: 297).

51. As early as 1352, the Genoese were granted a *capitulation* (a decree granting trade privileges, notably lower taxation) from the Ottomans established around the Black Sea, giving them long-term monopoly over alum production, crucial for European textiles, still the biggest industry in the West; Fleet (1993).

52. BNF ms. Fond Turc Ancien 130, fol. 78r°-v°, Constantinople, June 28–July 17, 1453. The representatives of the city of Pera were the three Genoese, Babilon Pallavicino, Marchisio de Franchi, and Nicola Pagliuzzi.

53. The Genoese bargained for capitulations as soon as the Grand Turk gained power. See ASG, 2774 A.

54. For a study of the inclusion-exclusion of migrant communities in early modern Europe, see de Munck and Winter (2012).

55. Saih (1908).

56. See Marmara (2004: 19).

57. "Their fortress will not be destroyed, their boats, merchandise, vineyard, mills, wives, little boys, and slaves will be safeguarded. They will conduct commerce freely by boat or by land. They were to pay the tax imposed on the subjects of the Sultan, but the inhabitants of Galata would be treated respectfully and prospected like the other subjects." ASG, 2774 D "Capitulatione fatta dall'Imperator Sultan Mehmet con li Perotti." The Genoese of Pera were still doing commerce in the Ottoman Empire through their outpost well into the seventeenth century; Pàstine (1952).

58. Mehmed II insisted that the Genoese "be saved from any obligation, except from that of giving me a tribute every year, as every other subject of mine must do, and in exchange I will grant them graces and protect them as should be done in the rest of my country." See ASG, 2774 D.

59. Mehmed II promised that "from part of the people and the nobility of Pera and in demonstration of friendship they presented me with the keys of their land, and made themselves subjects I accept them in such condition that they can live, organize, and govern themselves." See ASG, 2774 D.

60. See Kafescioğlu (2009: 44).

61. ASG, 2774 D.

62. Mehmed II wrote in his decree, "I command with every faculty that the ships, furniture, entrepôts, vineyards, mills, possessions, galleys, merchandise, wives, sons, grandsons, daughters, and slaves be allowed to settle in their own way, without me preventing them to do so." ASG, 2774 D.

63. Some scholars call this "kaleidoscopic" identities; see Sabean and Teuscher (2011).

64. Belgrano (1877a) and (1877b).

65. ASG, Archivio Segreto, *Frammenti di diversorum*. In 1407 the financial institution of the Casa di San Giorgio started to manage the outstanding debt of Genoa. It directly controlled most public revenues and administered several colonial territories such as Cyprus, the Black Sea territories, and Corsica.

66. On one occasion, the Genoese complained to the authorities that one of their ships, anchored at Galata and about to leave for Italy, was mistakenly sunk during the siege of Constantinople. The Turks apologized and declared, "we did this not knowing that the ship was yours but thinking that it belonged to the enemy . . . you will be indemnified for every injury and loss sustained"; Doukas (1843: 278–79).

67. See ASN, Ministero dell'Interno 242.

68. For traders' quarters across the Mediterranean, see Constable (2003).

69. See van Dessolaere (2009).

70. Epstein (1996: 232).

71. See ASG, Sezione notai, Oltremare.

72. At the apogee of its mercantile and political power Genoa had up to ten thousand men on the sea at any given time, prompting mothers, wives, and widows to step in and take positions of responsibility in Genoa (Angelos 1994: 299–312; Petti-Balbi 2007). Epstein adds, "Genoese notarial cartularies are replete with women who conducted business in their husband's absence, or indeed without a [husband (1996: 215)."] Many of the Genoese transactions in Constantinople involved wills, inheritances, and dowries whose beneficiaries, such as daughters, wives, and young sons, were in Genoa. The migration to Constantinople therefore had repercussions onto Genoa itself; see ASG, Sezione notai, Oltremare. For inheritances (*eredità*) and wills (*testamenti*),

see 89/23, 90/24, 111/37, 115/38, 119/39, 121/90, 122/41, 123/42, 124/43, 125/44, 148/60, 143/63, 156/65, 163/58, 214/97, 218/98, 264/121. For dowries, see 159/66.

73. See Abu-Lughod (1989: 115).

74. There were two notable plague epidemics that further reduced the population in Constantinople: one in 1466 and another in 1470. The sultan's panegyrist, Kritoboulos, spoke of six hundred deaths each day; see Kritoboulos (1970: 221–22).

75. Belgrano (1877b: 997).

76. The census indicates about 80,000 people, including 9,400 Muslim families, 3,700 Greek Orthodox families, 1,640 Jewish families, 430 Armenian families, 380 other Greeks, 330 Europeans (mainly Genoese and Venetians) in Galata-Pera; 270 non-Muslim from Caffa and 30 Gypsy families; İnalcık (1973: 141). There were 14,803 households in Constantinople and 1,521 in Galata-Pera. This number does not include madrasa students, slaves, and soldiers.

77. In order to repopulate the capital and encourage agriculture and commerce, Mehmed implemented a policy of "coercive colonization." See the Ottoman chronicle of Tursun Bey (1977). For a succinct report, see Beldiceanu and Beldiceanu-Steinherr (1995).

78. Kritoboulos (1970: 148).

79. See Barkan (1957: 9–36, esp. 27–35, table V).

80. Ibid.

81. İnalcık (1978c).

82. Beldiceanu (1960: 105).

83. Kritoboulos (1970: 105).

84. Hadidi (1991).

85. For the Catalans, see Duran I Duelt (2002: 97–105).

86. İnalcık (1973: 30).

87. Fleet (1999).

88. See Franz Babinger (1957: 505). The whole of Mehmed's entourage, especially his son Beyazid, complained about "his leniency toward Christians."

89. See Sachedina (2001). Mehmed granted extensive autonomy to the Greek, Jewish, and Armenian *millets*, the religious minorities of the empire. However, only the Genoese of Pera were exempt from toll taxes.

90. BNF, ms. Fond Turc Ancien 130, fol. 78r°-v°, Constantinople, June 28–July 17, 1453. The Genoese could not ring their bells or build new churches. They were, however, free to maintain those they already had.

91. Belgrano (1877b: 999).

92. Babinger (1957: 92).

93. Roccatagliata (1982: 75, 94, 99). The monastery of Santa Maria della Misericordia united with San Benedetto and was said to be "very well located, at the mouth of the port, well built, with a nice church and a garden . . . benefitting from 200 golden ducats, and making 100 ducats in rent and 100 in fruits"; see Belgrano (1877b: 1001).

94. ASG, 2774 D. In this section, the sultan added, "children will not be levied into the janissary corps, no agent of the Porte will take quarter in their houses, and both inhabitants and merchants will be exempt from forced labor." The congregation of Galata-Pera was considered "the most frank (free from tax), privileged, and free congregation of Christians in all the domains of the Turk"; see Belgrano (1877b: 998).

95. For an account of the relatively peaceful relations across the premodern Mediterranean, see Karabell (2007: 159–69).

96. ASG, Archivio Segreto, Sezione notai, Oltremare.

97. Christian merchants exchanged spices and raw material from the East for western woolens and finished products throughout the Middle Ages; see Jacoby (2005).

98. Cancila (2007).

99. ASG, 2774 D.

100. Ibid.

101. For a recent work on Muslim trade and the transformation of Europe, see Heck (2006).

102. Hodgson (1974).

103. See Salzmann (2008: 453–78). The concept was first used by Polanyi (1957).

104. ASG, 2774 D.

105. Kafescioğlu (2009: 29). Mehmed II's book of law specified the gates and ports of entry for particular goods. See Anhegger and İnalcık (1956: 41–50, 57–60, 82–85).

106. Diego Galán, a Spanish Christian prisoner of the Turks in Istanbul, described pragmatic Ottoman policies: "it does not seem to be the work of barbarians, but instead of the people most refined in the world, and I call them barbarians because of their religion, because apart from their religion and government they are superior to us in many things, including in the custom of making subjects pay taxes rather low." See de Bunes and Barchino (2001: 208).

107. As opposed to the western mercantile system, imports to the Ottoman capital were encouraged and custom rates for exports were high. The wealthy people were thus not those who produced the merchandise but the merchants who sold those products. İnalcık (1978c).

108. ASG, Sezione notai, Oltremare. For slaves, see 127/47, 129/48, 133/50, 138/53, 139/54, 140/55, and 142/56.

109. Fleet (2013).

110. The Ottoman state forbade the export of coins, precious metals, grain, and wood, which it desperately needed. As a result, those who exported wheat, flour, millet, barley, oat, bread, eggs, and yogurt had to pay full custom. If these were imported, on the other hand, there was no custom toll because they were welcomed commodities. See BNF, ms. 39, fol. 77 v°81.

111. The Genoese paid 4 percent aspron while the non-tributary paid 5 percent. See BNF, ms. 39, fol. 128 r° 133 v°. The aspron was a bronze coin about one-quarter of the value of the gold solidus, in circulation since Roman times. While the gold solidus kept being used in international commerce around the Mediterranean, Byzantine currencies got devalued overtime. For instance, during the reign of Alexius Commenus (1081–1118), the three main currencies were the solidus (mainly gold), the hyperpyron (mainly silver), and the aspron (mainly bronze).

112. İnalcık (1973: 30).

113. This was part of the agreement between Mehmed and Genoa. "The Genoese merchants can go by land and by sea and practice commerce, but they will have to pay a custom fee according to our customs." See ASG, 2774 D. The custom register conveys "the merchandise unloaded from boats coming from Genoa, Venice and elsewhere destined to be sold will have to pay a custom toll of 5%, but we will perceive only 4% from the Muslims and tributaries." See BNF, ms. 39, fol. 77 v° 81 v°3.

114. ASG, Archivio Segreto, *Diversorum Registri*, 557.

115. The Ottoman state acquired commercial dominance in the Black Sea, but the network was operated for the most part by the subjects based in Constantinople and Galata-Pera. By 1479 Constantinople had become the main commercial center of the Ottoman realm. To give a sense of gain, Constantinople gained 13 million akçe (the akçe was a silver coin in use in the Ottoman Empire from 1327 to 1687) in three years, while the Bursa custom zone gained 700,000 and that of Antalya 150,000; see İnalcık (2001). The slave trade, whose central point was Kaffa, was largely dominated by the Genoese. Other items such as wheat, metal, alum, and silk forced Mehmed to implement commercial policies that would integrate Italians. See Boyar and Fleet (2010: 13).

116. Richards (1932: 122).

117. "The Sultan will perceive, according to the ancient law a custom toll of 3 aspron % on the cloth brought and sold by Muslims, tributary and foreign merchants from Genoa, Venise, Chios and other places." See BNF, ms. 39, fol. 63 v° 65 r° (Bursa).

118. İnalcık (1960).

119. İnalcık (1960). See also İnalcık (1978d).

120. Stoianovich (1960: 236–37).

121. BNF, ms. 39, fol. 81 v° 84.

122. The construction of the covered market of Istanbul was finished in 1461. Kritoboulos recalls that Mehmed "commanded those who enjoyed great wealth and prosperity to build baths and inns and marketplaces, and very many beautiful workshops, mills, and entrepôts"; Kritoboulos (1970: 140, 465).

123. These included silk, linen, carpets, sugar, ginger, spices, wood, dried fruits, iron, wine, cotton, indigo, and vinegar. Initially, these items were not imposed a custom tax when being imported. Starting January 28, 1476, imported spices were imposed a custom tax of 4 percent for Muslims and tributary and 5 percent for non-tributary Franks. See BNF, ms. 39, fol. 77 v°- 81 v°3 and ms. 85, fol. 292 v°- 293 v°.

124. BNF, ms. Fond Turc Ancien 35, fol. 147 r°-148v°. For agricultural products sold in Constantinople see ms. 39, fol. 71 v°-73.

125. ASG, Sezione notai, Oltremare, purchase of house: 86/22, 96/27, 99/29, 136/52, 144/57, 152/62, 154/64, 166/69, 178/75, 206/92, 222/101, and 267/122; purchase of slaves: 127/47, 129/48, 133/50, 138/53, 139/54, 140/55, and 142/56.

126. ASG, Sezione notai, Oltremare. Notai sisto Cristoforo e De Ferrari Giovanni Battista (1452–63); Notai de Algario Domenico e Torriglia Nicola (1461–89); Notaio Calvi Lorenzo (1453–82); Notaio de Rapallo Cristoforo (no date); Notaio Casanova Francesco (1427–61); Notaio Torriglia Antonio (1448–65); Notaio Granello Emanuele (1450–80); Notai Cortesia Agostino della Pieve, Lanfranco Piolo da Oneglia e Staliano Davide (1485–95); Notai Bonavei Battista e Castelasso Teramo (1472–94), filze 52, 59, 60, 65, 69, 70, 79, 89, 91, 101, 102, 105, 110, 116, 120, and 123.

127. İnalcık (1985). Jacopo de Promontorio argued that Mehmed owed his ascendency to his constant use of money; Babinger (1957: 84). Following that thought, Doukas argued that "the Turkish nation was a lover of money"; Doukas (1834: 287).

128. Faroqhi (2009).

129. BNF, ms. 39, fol. 63 v° 65 r°. The dissemination of the *florin* is a signifier of the intensification of European merchants' involvement in Constantinople's markets. The Florentines were solicited because they supplied quality cloth in return for raw silk. Silk was in the hands of Muslim merchants, however, though Italian merchants such as Genoese, Venetians, and Florentines were permanently established along the Black Sea. See Clot (1990: 243).

130. I thank David Jacoby for graciously sharing his ideas on this project and for sending me his article. See Jacoby (2009).

131. See ASG, San Giorgio, 34, 590/1304 (1390, iii, 31).

132. See ASG, Antico Comune, 22, fols. 70, 192 (1391, xii, 19), fols. 74, 193 (1392, i, 16), fols. 76, 193 (1392, ii, 24), fols. 78, 196 (1392, v, 23), fols. 88, 175 (1392, x, 15).

133. In 1497, the silk from one caravan had the value of 200,000 ducats. See Clot (1990: 245).

134. Florence exported 60,000 ducats per year of cloth to Constantinople for ceremonial dresses; see Babinger (1957).

135. Beldiceanu (1973).

136. Fleet (1999: 134–41) argues that tax farming was introduced late in the fourteenth century, but it really boomed in the mid-fifteenth. Halil İnalcık also supports this theory; see İnalcık (1978a).

137. According to Iacopo de Promontorio, a Genoese merchant based in Istanbul, in 1475, 120,000 ducats of the Ottoman state's income came from mines, for which the Florentines acted as tax farmers; Babinger (1957). We know that the monopoly on soap was granted to the Italian, Antonio Uberto, in 1479. At that time, there were about fifty Florentine trading houses in the empire.

138. ASG, 2774 A, "Memoriale di Claude Dubourg, cavaliere e consigliere del re di Francia andato a Costantinopoli per ragioni di traffico (concessioni di privilegi commerciali ai genovesi)." Mister Dubourg's notice reveals the extent of the Genoese trade protection but also of the nascent privileges to the French. "Note from Claude Dubourg, knight and counselor to

the king of France, who went to Constantinople on a business trip (because of the concessions and commercial privileges given to the Genoese)."

139. ASG, 2774 B. Chios was on the way to becoming Ottoman. ASG, 2774 C.

140. Braudel (1972: 759).

141. Fusaro, Heywood, and Omri (2010: 22).

142. Braudel (1972: 13).

143. Horden and Purcell (2006).

144. For a good study of imperial institutions, see Murphey (2007).

145. Charles A. Frazee claims that "it made little difference to them [Genoese and Venetians] whether the ruler of Constantinople was Greek or Turk. Their concern was business; they could deal with anyone who allowed them to pursue their commercial interests in the East"; see Frazee (1983: 5).

146. In 1304, Andronicus II conceded a parcel of Galata-Pera to the Genoese, permitting them to build houses, butcher shops, a loggia, a bath, and a church in the area. *Liber iurium Reipublicae Genuensis*, II (no. 160), cols. 441–45.

147. The Italian merchants' money had been integrated into the Ottoman world long before the Fall of Constantinople. For instance, they secured a commercial treaty with the Byzantine emperor in 1261, and in exchange for maritime assistance, the "Latins" obtained land concessions around the Golden Horn and the Black Sea. Michael Paleologus renewed Genoese rights in Constantinople and granted them a "loggia, palace, bath, oven, garden, and as many houses as they needed." See *Liber iurium Reipublicae Genuensis*, I (no. 945), cols. 1350–59.

148. For Mehmed as heir to the Roman Empire, see Dauverd (2014b).

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