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The Ottoman Empire, Safavid Iran, and the Southern Black Sea between 1500 and 1700

The Southern Black Sea was dominated by the Ottoman Empire between 1500 and 1700. However, the political and trading activities show that the Safavid state of Iran was the main rival of the Ottoman Empire in the Caucasus and in Eastern Anatolia. These powers' wars and trades directly affected the daily activities of the Ottoman life in the Southern Black Sea area. These developments were also closely watched by the European and Eastern European powers too. In the second half of the seventeenth century, Russia began to interfere in Black Sea affairs, mainly due to the weakness of the Crimean Khanate. Thus, the Black Sea had—from an Ottoman perspective—undesired guests.

In order to obtain a clear chronological picture of what happened on the southern Black Sea coast we have to start with the Empire of Trebizond. By the beginning of the thirteenth century, Alexios Komnenos, from the Byzantine imperial family, escaped from Constantinople amidst an internal power struggle and established the Empire of Trebizond with the help of the Queen Tamara of Georgia in 1204. The date also coincides with the invasion of Constantinople by the Latins the same year. The empire initially consisted of most of the southern Black Sea coast. However, by the end of thirteenth century internal problems and outside interventions led to large territorial losses and by the fourteenth century the empire controlled the Black Sea coast between Giresun (known in ancient Greek as Cerasus) and Batumi, with some small regions in the south.[1] The Ottoman interest in the Black Sea began in the second half of the fourteenth century. Later they annexed the territories of the Turcoman principalities on the western shores of the Black Sea. During the reign of Murad II (1421–44, 1446–51), an Ottoman fleet's attack on Trebizond (Ottoman: Trabzon) was unsuccessful due to weather conditions. In the fifteenth century, the emperors of Trebizond began to look for possible allies against the Ottomans. One of them was the strong Turcoman Aq Qoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan, who offered the emperor protection and launched some military campaigns against the Ottomans in central and eastern Anatolia. The emperor also began to communicate with the Western world against the Ottomans.[2] These de-

1 On the establishment and later developments of the Empire of Trebizond, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1995) 2:451–54. See also Fyodor İ. Uspenski, *Trabzon Tarihi (Kuruluşundan Fethine Kadar)*, trans. Enver Uzun (Trabzon: Ofset Matbaacılık, 2003); Jacop Philipp Fallmerayer, *Trabzon İmparatorluğunun Tarihi*, trans. Ahmet Cevat Eren (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2011); Sergey Pavloviç Karpov, *Trabzon İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, trans. Enver Uzun (Istanbul: Kültür Bilimleri Akademisi, 2016).

2 For detailed information about the Ottoman conquest of Trabzon, see Kenan İnan, "Trabzon'un Fethi," in *Onyedinci Yüzyıl Ortalarında Trabzon'da Sosyal ve İktisadi Hayat*, ed. İsmail Köse (Trabzon: Trabzon Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2013), 17–19.

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velopments alerted Ottoman sultan Mehmed II (1451–81). Ottoman chroniclers relate that the Sultan was thinking of annexing the entire southern shores of the Black Sea.[3] In 1459, he annexed the Genoese castle of Amasra in estern Anatolia. Later, in 1461, the Turcoman principality of Candaroğulları with its important cities Kastamonu and Sinop was annexed, followed by Trabzon on August 15, 1461 Trabzon. With later annexations of Wallachia in 1462, Crimea in 1475, and Moldavia in 1476, Mehmed II almost transformed the Black Sea into an "Ottoman lake."[4]

In the Ottoman governmental organization, the biggest administrative unit was the *eyalet* (province); however, the most important and developed units were the *sancak*s (subprovinces). In the seventeenth and in the first half of the eighteenth century, with some changes, the southern shores of the Ottoman Black Sea were under the administration of three provinces: Anadolu Province, Rum Province, and Trabzon Province. These provinces included the important cities Sinop, Samsun, and Trabzon.[5] In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, Samsun and Sinop were some of the main ship-building ports of the Ottoman Empire, since the cities' geography included rich forests for timber. In terms of the size and number of ships built, Sinop was the third largest dockyard in the Ottoman Empire, timber, hemp, and oakum being readily available around Sinop.[6] In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, compared to Sinop and Trabzon, Samsun was a modest port town and did not receive a large share of the long-distance trade. Instead, the port's main revenues came from the slave trade and local products which were sent to Istanbul by ship. In the seventeenth century, the port and the town were twice attacked and burned by the Cossacks. This obviously hampered the town's development.[7] Ship-building activities were very common before and during the Ottoman naval activities in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and took on even larger dimensions during the seventeenth century, especially during the siege of the island of Crete.[8]

Archival materials show that Trabzon Province and especially its center was the main place for the Ottoman administration in Black Sea activities and expeditions

3 Mehmed Neşri, *Kitab-ı Cihannüma, Neşri Tarihi*, ed. Faik Reşit Unat and Mehmet Altay Köymen (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1995), 2:739–41.

4 Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300–1600* (London: Phoenix, 1994) 23–30. See also Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, "Inner Lake or Frontier? The Ottoman Black Sea in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Enjeux politiques, économiques et militaires en mer Noire (XIVe–XXIe siècles): Études à la mémoire de Mihail Guboglu*, ed. Faruk Bilici, Ionel Cândea, and Anca Popescu (Brăila: Musée de Braïla, 2007), 125–39.

5 Ali Açıkel, "Rum Eyaleti," *TDVİA* 35 (2008): 225–26; Fehameddin Başar, *Osmanlı Eyalet Tevcihatı (1717–1730)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1997), 18–22.

6 İdris Bostan, *Osmanlı Bahriye Teşkilatı: XVII. Yüzyılda Tersane-i Amire* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992), 17–29.

7 Mehmet Öz, "Samsun," *TDVİA* 36 (2009): 84.

8 Bostan, *Osmanlı Bahriye Teşkilatı*, 18–24. On ship building at the Samsun port in the seventeenth century, see also, Istanbul, T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı (BOA), Trabzon Şeriye Sicilleri (T. Ş. S.), 1831, 87/7; 1835, 60/9, 61/2; 1836, 56/6.

against Iran. The city of Trabzon, the center of the Trabzon *sancak* (subprovince), was an important port on the Black Sea coast connecting the Black Sea to the inner parts of Anatolia and by trade road to Iran. In the sixteenth century the city hosted two important sultans, Selim I (1512–20) and Süleyman I (also known as Süleyman the Magnificent, 1520–66). Selim, as *sancak beyi* (subprovince governor) spread the Ottoman influence towards Georgia and battled against the Safavids. Trabzon became an important military base during the Çaldıran expedition. In the years of the war against the Safavids from the late sixteenth century to 1639, Trabzon became a big military supply center. In the late sixteenth century the *sancak* became a province with the addition of the *sancak* of Batum. Trabzon's military importance continued in the eighteenth century.[9]

The developments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as the plague epidemic,[10] Cossack attacks on the main Ottoman cities and ports on the Black Sea coasts,[11] the financial crisis of the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the *celali* (rebel) and *sekban* (mercenary unit, bandit) movements of the seventeenth century, administrative problems, and the Ottoman Crete campaign, had a profound impact on the city[12] and its population. The Ottoman Crete campaign (1644–69) against the Venetians affected Trabzon socially and economically; *avarız* (extraordinary taxes) were levied many times. Thus, despite distance, the city felt the siege.[13] In the late seventeenth and in the first half of the eighteenth century, the governors of the province of Trabzon were appointed on the condition that they would protect the castles of Azak and Özi on the northern Black Sea coast. Additionally, the governors supplied

9 M. Hanefi Bostan, *XV–XVI. Asırlarda Trabzon Sancağında Sosyal ve İktisadi Hayat* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2002), 18–23; Heath W. Lowry and Feridun Emecen, "Trabzon," *TDVİA* 41 (2012): 297.

10 See Ronald Jennings, "Plague in Trabzon and Reactions to it According to Local Judicial Registers," in *Studies on Ottoman Social History in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Women, Zimmis and Sharia Courts in Kayseri, Cyprus and Trabzon,* ed. Ronald Jennings (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1999), 667–76; see also Kenan İnan, "Trabzon'da Yönetici Yönetilen İlişkileri (1643–1656)," *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 23 (2004): 23–60.

11 In 1632, the Bedesten and main trading district of Trabzon was burned by the Cossacks and other places around in Trabzon were also attacked. In the west, the city of Samsun and its port were twice attacked and burned. See Lowry and Emecen, "Trabzon," 300; Öz, "Samsun," 84–85. On July 23, 1653, Tirebolu Castle was besieged for three days by the Cossacks and an emergency force had to be sent from Trabzon; see BOA, T. Ş. S., 1833, 44/8.

12 For information on the Ottoman siege of Crete, see, İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 3, bk. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1983), 216–22; On the social, military, and economic developments in the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Halil İnalcık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600–1700," in *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1985), 283–337; Mehmet Öz, *Kanun-ı Kadimin Peşinde Osmanlı'da Çözülme ve Gelenekçi Yorumcuları* (Istanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 2015).

13 In November 1667, during the siege of Crete, cannonballs were sent from Erzurum to the Trabzon port. They were then loaded onto ships and sent to *Tersane-i Amire* (the Imperial Dockyard) in Istanbul. See BOA, T. Ş. S., 1845, 4/3, 4/4, 66/1.

grain and other necessities to the castle of Azak.[14] Hence most of the Ottoman military activities in the eastern Black Sea were the responsibility of the governor of Trabzon.[15]

The city of Trabzon, the center of the Trabzon province, came under Ottoman rule at a later date than most of the Ottoman Anatolian cities and also had a considerable non-Muslim population. According to sources, after the conquest, Mehmed II transferred some of the population of the city to the other parts of Anatolia and Istanbul and brought a Muslim Turkish population to the city.[16] However, it is clear that this in- and out-immigration did not change the majority of the non-Muslim population of Trabzon, which makes its position unique until 1583, when the number of Muslims surpassed the non-Muslim population for the first time. At the end of the fifteenth century, the population of Trabzon consisted of 2,015 Muslims and 5,549 Christians according to the *tahrir defter*s (land registers). In contrast, at the end of the sixteenth century, there were 6,083 Muslims and 4,901 Christians out of a total of 11,000 people. In the second half of the seventeenth century, however, we do not have *tahrir defter*s; instead we have *avarız defter*s (extraordinary tax registers). Besides the *avarız defters* we have other archival sources like *cizye defter*s (poll tax registers) and *cizye evrakı* (poll tax documents). These archival materials do not give us enough data to guess the exact size of the Muslim and non-Muslim population in seventeenth-century Trabzon.[17]

The Ottoman Empire protected its economic vitality and integrity, although it suffered military losses and political setbacks in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This success was largely due to the empire's position in the Black Sea. European states dominated the Mediterranean Sea trade and the Ottomans controlled the Black Sea. The importance of the Black Sea trade was echoed by the famous seventeenth-century Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi, who observed that 8,000 people in 2,000 shops in Istanbul were involved in the Black Sea trade. Again, in the eighteenth century, Henry Grenville, the British ambassador and representative of the Levant Company in Istanbul, mentioned that the Black Sea trade was so profitable.[18] Archival sources show that the extraordinary developments of the seventeenth century, whether internal[19] or ex-

14 In March 1653, an Ottoman attempt to supply grain to Azak Castle was hampered by bad weather and a Cossack raid; see BOA, T. Ş. S., 1833, 31/7, 32/1, 32/2, 33/1.

15 Temel Öztürk, *Osmanlıların Kuzey ve Doğu Seferlerinde Savaş ve Trabzon* (Trabzon: Serander Yayınları, 2011), 47.

16 Nihal Atsız Çiftçioğlu, *Osmanlı Tarihleri I* (Istanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1949), 208; Tursun Bey, *Tarih-i Ebü'l-Feth*, ed. A. Mertol Tulum (Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1977), 110; Kritovulos, *Tarihi 1451–1467*, trans. Ari Çokana (Istanbul: Heyamola Yayınları, 2013), 521; Konstantin Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, trans. Benjamin Stolz, ed. Svat Soucek (Michigan: Ann Arbor, 1975), 121.

17 For the population of Trabzon in the late seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century, see Miraç Tosun, *Trabzon'da Cemaatler Arası İlişkiler (1700–1770)* (Trabzon: Serander Yayınları, 2018), 39–58.

18 A. Üner Turgay, "Trabzon," in *Doğu Akdeniz'de Liman Kentleri (1800–1914)*, ed. Çağlar Keyder, Y. Eyüp Özveren, and Donald Quataert (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994), 45.

19 In Trabzon Province there were complaints to the governor of Trabzon that bandits had been hindering traders in Of *kaza* for some time, BOA, T. Ş. S., 1835, 54/1, Evail Zilkade 1066/August 21–30, 1656;

ternal, did not stop the Black Sea trade. Trabzon's trade with the Black Sea's other ports or interior regions continued. The trading network of traders in Trabzon had a great role in this development. We think that one of the important reasons for this was the involvement of *askeri* (tax-exempt individuals) in trading.[20] The court records reveal that the traders of Trabzon had relations with other ports of the Ottoman Black Sea and main centers like Erzurum in the east and Aleppo and Baghdad in the south. The latter two cities were connected to Iran and India in the east. The non-Muslims of Trabzon also played a large role in this trading network.[21] For social, economic, or political reasons, many people originating from Trabzon, both Muslims[22] and non-Muslims, settled in other Black Sea cities and interior regions, whereupon they continued trading activities with Trabzon.[23]

Evliya Çelebi pointed out that Trabzon's main trading area was in the *Aşağı Hisar* (Lower Castle). There was another small trading area in the *Orta Hisar* (Middle Castle). Sources indicate that in the Lower Castle, traders and guilds of different faiths were active.[24] In that quarter, there was a big trading area called *Suk-i Sultani* (Sultan's Market). In the center of the market there was the *bedesten* (covered bazaar), full of traders from the Trabzon province and other regions as far away as Iran. It is important to note that when the stores and shops were burned during the attacks by the Cossacks, they did not stop the city's desire for trade.[25]

The continuous trade in Trabzon Province was the result of the activities of all religious groups under Ottoman administration. In addition to the ruling elite and Muslim traders, the Greek Orthodox and the Armenians who had settled or existed in Trab-

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Similar complaints were repeated in the presence of the governor of Trabzon that traders were prevented from trading in Gönye Castle and that their goods had been confiscated by bandits, BOA, T. Ş. S., 1836, 14/3, Evahir Cemaziyülahir 1067/April 5–14, 1657.

20 From many court entries we provide just one example: Fazlullah Bey, the previous governor of Kefe from Trabzon's Ortahisar quarter, sold his shops and cellar in Trabzon's marketplace to the former janissary officer Mustafa Çavuş for 470 *gurus*, BOA, T. Ş. S., 1840, 25/5, Gurre Ramazan 1074/28 March 1664.

21 BOA, T. Ş. S., 1831, 16/5; 1832, 41/2. These two entries consist of names of non-Muslim traders in Trabzon.

22 It must suffice to provide some *sicil* record numbers demonstrating Muslim involvement in trading and other activities, BOA, T. Ş. S., 1837, 22/2 (Rumelia); 1843, 50/3 (Erzincan and Bağdat); 1843, 19/3 (Rumelia); 1843, 22/1; 1843, 23/5 (Rumelia, Georgia); 1843, 33/1 (Rumelia); 1843, 51/1 (Rumelia).

23 On Trabzon's relations with the north of the Black Sea before the Ottoman conquest, see Rustam Shukurov, "The Empire of Trebizond and the Golden Horde," in *I. Uluslararası Karadeniz Tarihi Sempozyumu Bildiriler Kitabı*, ed. Kenan İnan and Deniz Çolak, (Trabzon: Avrasya Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2020), 89–95.

24 *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi: 2. kitap: Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 304 yazmasının transkripsiyonu-dizini*, ed. Zekeriya Kurşun, Seyit Ali Kahraman, and Yücel Dağlı (Istanbul: YKY, 1999), 47–55. For detailed information on the trading activities in Trabzon in the second half of the seventeenth century, see Kenan İnan, "Kadı Sicillerine Göre 17: Yüzyıl Ortalarında Trabzon Esnafları ve Faaliyetleri," in *Mahmiye-i Trabzon Mahallatından* (Trabzon: Trabzon Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2013), 57–82.

25 Jennings, "Plague in Trabzon"; İnan, "Trabzon'da Yönetici Yönetilen İlişkileri (1643–1656)," *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 23.

zon with different aims considerably contributed to the social and economic life of the city. The Armenian population of Trabzon in general was scattered around the city's quarters in the eastern suburbs. They were also allowed to continue living in the city's Middle Castle reserved for the Muslim inhabitants of the city.[26] They were heavily involved in trading activities in Trabzon and in transit trades.[27]

There was also a final group that contributed to the city's life called *Acem taifesi* (Iranians).[28] Even before the Ottoman conquest, in the early fourteenth century, the most important trading square in Trabzon, without an alternative Greek name, was called the *meydan.* This seems to be the result of the opening of the Trabzon-Tabriz trade route after 1260 and the effect of eastern traders on the city.[29] It is very logical to think that this group had been living in Trabzon for a long time and had considerable economic and political relations with powers in eastern Anatolia and Iran.[30]

As in all parts of the Mediterranean Sea, in the Black Sea too the slave trade was one of the most profitable activities. This trade, compared to the other trading activities, brought a continuous flow of humans to the Black Sea ports and cities. In Trabzon, Muslims and non-Muslims possessed male or female slaves of mainly East Slavic and Georgian descent. In addition, there were Polish, Hungarian, Moldavian, and Circassian slaves.[31] A male or female slave was sold mostly for more than one hundred *guruş* (piaster). That was nearly equal to the price of a two-storey house in the city.[32] Slave traders usually sailed or went over land to Georgia, bought slaves, and sold them in Trabzon.[33]

It is known that the negative developments in the Ottoman Empire starting from the end of the sixteenth century and continuing almost throughout the seventeenth century mostly affected Ottoman Anatolia. Trabzon Province and its center, Trabzon city, seem to have been affected by these negative developments as well. Not only internal pressures[34] like village evacuations, banditry, illegal taxes, and plague epidem-

26 Bostan, *XV-XVI. Asırlarda*, 160–62.

27 BOA, T. Ş. S., 1832, 38/2; 1833, 26/2; 1837, 22/1, 44/12.

28 BOA, T. Ş. S., 1835, 7/9, 8/1.

29 Anthony Bryer and David Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos*, vol. 1, *The City of Trebizond* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 1985), 198.

30 Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Toplum ve Ekonomi* (Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1996), 208.

31 On slaves of different nationalities in Trabzon in the second half of the seventeenth century, see BOA, T. Ş. S., 1834, 22/4; 1842, 85/11, 45/3; 1834, 17/9; 1846, 7/7; 1847, 4/1.

32 Kenan İnan, "1831 Nolu Şer'iye Siciline Göre 17. Yüzyıl Ortalarında Trabzon'da Mülk Satışları," in *Mahmiye-i Trabzon Mahallatından,* 147–80.

33 BOA, T. Ş. S., 1845,42/2; 46/1; 1844, 54/4. On the slave trade in the northern Black Sea in the same period, see Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, "Slave Hunting and Slave Redemption as a Business Enterprise: The Northern Black Sea Region in the Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries," *Oriente Moderno* 86, no. 1 (August 2006): 149–59.

34 For some examples on the public order and banditry around Trabzon, see BOA, T. Ş. S., 1835,54/9; 1836, 14/3. See also Kenan İnan, "Trabzon'da Yönetici-Yönetilen İlişkileri (1653–1656)", in *Mahmiye-i Trabzon Mahallatından.* 195–234.

ics,[35] but also external ones such as Cossack raids seem to have caused economic and social problems affecting the entire population of Trabzon Province, whether Muslim or Christian. However, the sources relate that people around the Black Sea continued with their lives and adapted to the new and ever-changing conditions. They moved to, traded, and settled in other safe places and built up a new life there.[36] Trabzon's Greek Orthodox community usually carried out commercial activities in the region and in the Black Sea. The resident or transit trading Armenians, on the other hand, were at the forefront of trade with the east and the south. The trading activities of the city of Trabzon continued with the other ports of the Black Sea, and Anatolian, Iranian, and Ottoman Arab cities in the Middle East. It seems that the richness of Trabzon's society in terms of social, cultural, and ethnic structure helped develop the city's trading capacity with different geographies. Since the conquest of the city, the tax-exempt administrative sector and janissaries gradually increased their weight in the administration and economy of the city as a typical feature of the seventeenth century and controlled most of the commercial activities.[37]

The name Safavi derives from Shaykh Abu'l-Fatḥ Isḥāḳ (d. 1334), an ancestor of Shah Ismāʿīl I, the founder of the Safavid state. It is important to note that the national unity of Iran[38] originated from a religious source and this had an enormous effect on the continued rivalry between the Ottoman Empire and the Safavids.[39] Safavid rule over Persia is conventionally dated from Shah Ismāʿīl's capture of Tabriz in the aftermath of his victory over the Aq Qoyunlu[40] ruler Alwand at Sharur in 1501. The direction of Ismāʿīl's early campaigns certainly suggested that it was the Turkmen[41] heritage he was primarily interested in. By 1508, then, Shah Ismāʿīl was effectively the ruler of most of the territories that had constituted his grandfather's Turkmen empire. Ismāʿīl's expectation was to establish a Turkmen empire after Aq Qoyunlu pattern, consisting of eastern Anatolia, Azerbaijan, western Persia, and Iraq. His military composition relied

35 Jennings, "Plague in Trabzon."

36 BOA, T. Ş. S., 1835, 19/5; 1837, 22/2; 1843, 19/3, 22/1, 23/5, 33/1, 51/1, 50/3.

37 For an example of the involvement of janissaries in commercial life, see BOA, T. Ş. S., 1840, 25/5.

38 For a general outline of Iran's history and ethnographical structure, see Johannes H. Kramers, "Iran," in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 5, bk. 2 (Eskişehir: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, Eskişehir Anadolu Üniversitesi Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, 1997), 1013–30.

39 Bekir Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı-İran Siyasi Münasebetleri (1578–1612)* (Istanbul: İstanbul Fetih Cemiyeti, 1993), 1. See also Walter Hinz, *Uzun Hasan ve Şeyh Cüneyd XV. Yüzyılda İran'ın Milli Bir Devlet Haline Yükselişi*, trans. Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992).

40 For detailed information, see John E. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Chicago: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1976).

41 On the role played by the Anatolian Turkmens in the establishment of the Safavid state, see Faruk Sümer, *Safevi Devletinin Kuruluşu ve Gelişmesinde Anadolu Türklerinin Rolü* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1999).

on Turkmens. He declared Tabriz his capital and thus he may have seen himself as the legitimate successor to his grandfather, Uzun Hasan.[42]

However, a state whose center was still in Azerbaijan and eastern Anatolia clearly had much more to fear from the Ottoman Empire. The main reason for the conflict between the two empires was that a large proportion of the supporters of the Safavids came from among the Turkmen tribesmen of eastern and central Anatolia, that is to say, mostly from the Ottoman territory. This obviously meant that the Ottoman Empire lost important manpower to its neighbor, but also that for many of those who remained, the Ottomans could not be relied on. The major Qızılbaş[43] revolts of 1511 and 1512 took place in Ottoman Anatolia with vigorous Safavid support in the latter stages. These revolts exhausted the patience of the Ottomans. In 1512, Sultan Bayezid II was forced to abdicate in favor of his son Selim I, who prepared to confront Shah Ismāʿīl directly by marching across Anatolia towards Azerbaijan in 1514. The Battle of Çaldıran was to have lasting consequences both for the future of the Safavid Empire and for the political geography of the Middle East down to the present day. The Ottomans were totally victorious.[44] The defeat Selim I inflicted on Ismāʿīl I (Safavi) determined where the political borders of the Safavids would lie. The sense of loyalty that spread from Azerbaijan to the interior of Anatolia was destroyed by the Ottoman sultans and the Battle of Çaldıran showed how impossible Iranian expansion in this direction was.[45] Indeed, the current border between Iran and Turkey is a result of Çaldıran. This meant a decisive change to the shape of the Safavid Empire. It was no longer the old Turkmen state with Khorasan added on: Instead it was something more like Iran as we think of it today. Inevitably, although the Turkmen element in the Safavid polity was still of immense importance, this shift of the center of gravity eastwards also resulted, in time, in the state becoming more "Persian" and less "Turkic" in character.[46]

Upon Shah Ismāʿīl's death in 1524, his ten-year-old son Ṭahmāsp I ascended to the throne. Till the Treaty of Amasya in 1555, the Ottomans did not have any peace agreement with Iran, and Süleyman I commanded his army in several expeditions against the latter.[47] In 1554, on his return to the capital from the Nakhchivan expedition, the shah sent his men to offer a truce between two states. From this time to the date the hostilities began in 1578, the Ottomans respected the Amasya agreement. In fact, the embassies of Shah Ṭahmāsp, sent to celebrate the enthronement of Selim II and Murad III, were well received in Istanbul and Edirne. However, sometime after the Amasya agreement decrees were sent to the governors of Erzurum and Trabzon

42 David Morgan, *Medieval Persia 1040–1797* (New York: Longman, 1990), 112. On Shah İsmail's life, see Tahsin Yazıcı, "Şah İsmail," in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 11:275–79.

43 For detailed information, see Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, "Kızılbaş," in *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 6:789–95.

44 Morgan, *Medieval Persia*, 116–17.

45 Kramers, "Iran," 1023.

46 Morgan, *Medieval Persia*, 117.

47 For detailed information on Süleyman I's Iran expeditions, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1983), 2:345–61.

provinces from Istanbul stipulating that those who were caught escaping to Iran should be punished.[48] During this struggle the Ottomans allied themselves against Persia with the Sunni Shaybanids of Central Asia. In 1554 the sultan sent three hundred janissaries and an artillery company to Barak Nawruz Khan for deployment against the Safavids.[49] During the reign of Sultan Selim II, the Ottomans launched a strategic attempt to control the north of the Caspian Sea. A canal was to open between the Don and Volga rivers to transfer some Ottoman ships to the Caspian Sea. Previously khan of the province of Khwarazm, Haji Muhammad sent a letter and claimed that the Iranians were blocking Central Asian pilgrims' route to Mecca and thus if the Ottomans were to capture Astrakhan from the Russians, Asian pilgrims would have safer passage. It seems that an attempt was also made to weaken Russian influence in the north of the Caspian Sea. Ottoman activities in the region began in 1568 and ended in 1569 without success. Similar proposals to control the Astrakhan region were later made by the Central Asian rulers. In 1587, the ambassador of the Uzbek ruler Abdullah Khan went to Istanbul and encouraged the Ottoman sultan to capture Astrakhan. However, a collective expedition to the region with the Crimean Khanate was not realized.[50] The Ottomans tried to profit from the internal dissension which broke out in Persia after the death of Shah Ṭahmāsp. They entered Persian territory, and the war that followed lasted from 1578 to the Treaty of Qaṣr-i Sẖīrīn or Zuhab in 1639. The Persian campaign went through three stages and posed serious threats to the Ottoman Empire.[51]

In fact, the reign of Shah ʿAbbās I (1587–1629) proved to be the high point of Safavid power and prestige. Initially, he was obliged to make a humiliating peace with the Ottomans in 1590. Vast areas of western and northern Persia, including Tabriz, the original Safavid capital, were ceded to the Ottoman Empire by the Istanbul agreement. During the years up to 1598, Shah ʿAbbās transferred the capital from Qazvīn to Isfahan. ʿAbbās later fought against the Uzbeks, recovering some cities. With the eastern border reasonably secure, it remained to mount a counterattack on the Ottomans. By 1617 the Ottoman troops had been driven from most of the territory that had been defined as Persian by the Treaty of Amasya (1555), and in 1623 ʿAbbās was strong enough to take Baghdad. The previous year, the island of Hormoz in the Persian Gulf, an important center of international trade, was taken from the Portuguese, though not without the help of an English fleet. During his reign, ʿAbbās sought to consolidate his conquest with internal adjustments such as recruiting new Caucasian people to build a standing

48 Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı-İran Siyasi Münasebetleri*, 4–9.

49 Halil İnalcık, "The Heyday and Decline of the Ottoman Empire," in *The Cambridge History of Islam*, ed. Peter M. Holt, Ann K. S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 1 A:333.

50 Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 3, bk. 1, 35–38.

51 İnalcık, "The Heyday and Decline of the Ottoman Empire," 338.

army. The new campaign was actually taken against the Anatolian Turkmens in the government.[52]

Shah ʿAbbās I died in 1629. As a result of his administrative reforms, more power was centered on the court and the capital than in the sixteenth century. Perhaps of equal importance was the fact that after the reign of Ṣafī I (1629–42), Safavid Persia did not have to face any major external challenges to its security for the remainder of the seventeenth century. War broke out with the Ottomans, always Persia's most dangerous enemy, in 1629, and fighting continued sporadically over the next decade. In 1638, Baghdad fell, and finally ceased to be a Persian possession, remaining part of the Ottoman Empire until World War I. The Persians had to reconcile themselves to the loss of the whole of what is now Iraq, but the Persian-Ottoman border, which approximates to today's border between Iran and Iraq, was established, and there were no more Ottoman-Safavid wars.[53]

The Ottoman–Iranian war, in addition to the political developments, had other important factors we must consider. On the Ottoman side, it seems that wars in the early seventeenth century contributed to the development of some sectors like sea transportation and muleteers in the eastern Black Sea and eastern Anatolia. Transportation of materiel and grain sent by Istanbul and Rumelia to Trabzon and then on to Erzurum increased the activities of muleteers in the region sharply.[54] Again, in the sixteenth century Iranian silk was very valuable for Mediterranean trade and for the Ottoman economy. Iranian silk had been famous since the Middle Ages. In the Ottoman Empire, in Bursa, Aleppo, and İzmir, Western traders bought and invested in Iranian silk. The biggest silk bazar was in Aleppo, with silk coming from Baghdad. When Shah ʿAbbās I tried to deprive the Ottomans of this wealth, the Ottoman-Iranian War became an economic war. ʿAbbās I banned Iranian silk, and the Ottomans responded by preventing gold and silver from going to Iran. This increased the economic crisis in Iran. In fact, this kind of blockade attempts between Iran and the Ottoman Empire displayed important and notable phases. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, Iran made more frequent communications with Britain, Spain, and Moscow to harm the Ottoman trading activities. When the Russian advance to the Black Sea and the Caucasus alarmed the Ottomans, friendly relations began between Iran and Russia. In the early seventeenth century, Iran, with British help, attempted to stop the silk trade via the Ottoman Empire. However, Shah Ṣafī I (1629–42) realized that the British did not

52 Morgan, *Medieval Persia*, 132–35; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 3, bk. 1, 63–68. For diplomatic relations between Ottoman Empire and Iran from 1590 to 1603, see Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı İran Siyasi Münasebetleri*, 201–22.

53 Morgan, *Medieval Persia,* 144–46; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 3, bk. 1, 194–206.

54 See Ömer İşbilir, "Savaş ve Bölgesel Ekonomi: İran Savaşlarında Doğu Karadeniz ve Doğu Anadolu," *OTAM Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* 21 (2007): 19–40.

want to pay cash for silk. Thus, Iranian silk once more found its way to Ottoman Aleppo.[55]

Ṣafī was succeeded by his son ʿAbbās II, during whose reign later Safavid Persia reached the height of its prosperity. The shah resisted the temptation to embroil Persia in the politics of Ottoman Iraq. He preferred to preserve the lasting peace made with the Ottomans in 1639. Shah ʿAbbās II died, aged only thirty-three, in 1666. The new shah was ʿAbbās's eldest son, Sām Mīrzā, who took the title of Ṣafī II. The new shah could perhaps hardly be held responsible for the immediate troubles of his reign: a sudden rise in food prices, outbreaks of famine and disease, an earthquake, and raids by the Cossacks into the Caucasus. Corruption and oppression increased; the military capacity of the state continued to decline. Shah Ṣafī II, also known as Suleyman, died in 1694. The Safavid Empire was handed over to the last shah of the Safavid dynasty, Sultan Ḥusayn. The reasons for the fall of the Safavid dynasty have been attributed mostly to the decline in the personal qualities of the rulers.[56] With the exception of the territory lost during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to Russia in the northwest and northeast, and to Afghanistan in the east, the boundaries of Iran are substantially the same today as in the period from the late tenth to the sixteenth century, and we may assert, therefore, that the rise of the modern state of Iran dates from the establishment of the Safavid state in 1501.[57]

55 İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Toplum ve Ekonomi*, 172–78. The importance of the silk trade for the Ottomans was echoed in the peace agreements made after the wars against Iran between 1578 and 1617, Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 3, bk. 1, 57–68. See also Afşin Şahin-Sibel Cengiz, "The Effects of the 16th Century Price Revolution and The Ottoman-Iran Wars on the Ottoman Silk Industry," *Business and Economics Research Journal* 1, no. 1 (2010): 69–82.

56 Morgan, *Medieval Persia*, 148–51.

57 Roger M. Savory, "Safavid Persia," in *The Cambridge History of Islam*, 1 A:398.