

Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean

The Ottoman Empire and its Heritage

Politics, Society and Economy

Edited by

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Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean

The Making of the Adana-Mersin Region
1850–1908

By
Meltem Toksöz



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To Emre, Zeynep and Bızdık

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AP	Accounts and Papers, Parliamentary Papers, Great Britain
AMAE	Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Quai D'Orsay, Nouvelle Serie, Turquie, Paris, France
BAA, PA	Bundesarchiv Auswärtiges Amt, Politische Archive, Potsdam, Germany
BAA, HA	Bundesarchiv Auswärtiges Amt, Hauptarchiv, Potsdam, Germany
BOA	Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Istanbul, Turkey
FO	Foreign Office, London, Great Britain
IJMES	<i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>
JCCC	<i>Journal de la Chambre de Commerce de Constantinople</i>
RCL	<i>La Revue Commerciale du Levant, Bulletin Mensuel de la Chambre de Commerce Française de Constantinople</i>
USCR	United States Consular Reports, Washington, D.C., USA
USNA	United States National Archives, Washington, D.C., USA

NOTE ON WEIGHTS, MEASURE AND CURRENCIES

Weights

All weights are given in kilograms or tons (1,000 kg).

Oke=1.28 kg=2.8 lb

1 kg=2,20 lb

kantar=100 lb

One of the most frequently used unit of weight, the cotton bale, is also the most problematic. In the nineteenth century, the bale ranged from 150 kilograms to 250 kilograms in the various regions of the Ottoman Empire. In Çukurova, it seems to have changed between 150 and 200 kilograms. Therefore, I have avoided conversion throughout the text using the bale when there was no other unit of weight available.

Measures

When not in the metric system, measures are in dönüms.

1 dönüm=919 square meters

1,000 dönüms=200 acres=100 hectares

Currencies

The Ottoman kuruş (100 kuruş=1 Ottoman lira) and the British pound sterling are the most common used throughout the text.

The following exchange rates, unless otherwise noted, are from Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Paranın Tarihi*. Istanbul, 1999.

1 Ottoman Lira=0.9 sterlings=20 German marks=25 French francs=5 US dollars

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INTRODUCTION

Between Local and Global: A Story of Ottoman Modernization?

The 19th century southeast Anatolian crescent-shaped area bounded by chains of mountains on three sides and the Mediterranean in the south, known as Adana Ovası to the Ottomans, did not have much to do with either the earlier Cilicia or today's Çukurova.¹ The 19th century making of an Ottoman region out of this landscape entailed the meshing of very complicated processes including the increase of settled population on the land, intensification of commercialized market mechanisms, creation of contact with the outside world, and investing in agriculture and industry. By the first decade of the 20th century, these factors had combined and interrelated to produce an economy that sustained growth. This book is the story of that growth, about the interplay of multi-layered processes of sedentarization, the Egyptian experience of cotton agriculture, the development of a hitherto non-existent port-city, and the extension of cultivation via large-scale landholding patterns. These processes culminated in a fully commercialized regional economy, a radical change from an almost uninhabited marshland in 1800. Two major reasons mark this rise of Çukurova as uniquely impressive: the speed with which it transformed from predominantly nomadic life to commercialization and the continuation of capitalist agriculture into the era of the Turkish Republic. In fact, the 19th century process culminated in the development of full-blown capitalism when Çukurova became the most important region of cotton mono-culture and textile industry investments in Turkey in the 1950s. Today, two of the sixty-five largest global corporations belong to two families from Çukurova: the Sabancı and Karamehmet, the only representatives from Turkey.² However, this different trajectory

The names and boundaries of the area changed over time; in today's national geographic understanding of Turkey, Çukurova is a much smaller territory than either the Cilician or the Ottoman areas on both the southern and eastern sides.

² The Sabancı and Karamehmet families no longer rank in the same top 100. The Sabancı are now in the 1000 list, while the Karamehmet are ranked 247th. Viewed 23

does not readily render Çukurova to the study of intra-imperial and national spatial differentiation; the region must still be “constituted as an effect of analysis”.³

Formulation of this regional economy took place in the context of exchange between the commercial centers of Adana and Mersin and the vast hinterland, the histories of which helped distinguish a different constitution of a region. Crucial to this distinction are the different groups of tribes and merchants, landholders and industrialists whose accumulations of agricultural production, commerce and industry revolved around a single crop: cotton, the much wanted and valuable crop in the second half of the 19th century. Yet the commercialization of the crop’s agriculture in the 19th century did not simply depend on the world’s growing need for cotton. Neither did the resultant regional economy based on large holdings of cotton cultivation and textile industry arise simply as a response to the Ottoman imperial legal framework through which private property was constituted. Instead, the story of cotton production in a landscape like Çukurova was very much a multilevel regional history of capitalist transformation “as a reconstitution of places, and of the relations between places, on a range of scales—castle town and countryside, coast and interior, metropole and provinces, the state and the world”.⁴ Moreover this was not a homogenous region; its inhabitants coming from many different backgrounds and geographies reconstituted this landscape as a region of “an unambiguous economic identity” that metamorphosed into a wealthy area of Republican Turkey...⁵

A German document amply demonstrates the scope of this transformation between local, national and global. In 1915, ca. 4,000 dönüms of agricultural land near Ceyhan, in the Upper Plain of Çukurova, presented the German Levantine Cotton Company with an excellent opportunity. Heavily occupied with finding a suitable area for their *Musterfarm*, the Germans first explained the choice of Ceyhan over

May 2000: <http://www.forbes.com/lists/2008/10/billionaires08_The-Worlds-Billionaires-CountryOfCitizen_23.html> <<http://www.forbes.com/tool/toolbox/billnew/00/europe.htm>>

³ Doreen Massey, “Regionalism: Some Current Issues”, *Capital and Class*, 6 (1978) 106–125.

⁴ Karen E. Wigen (1995) *The Making of a Japanese Periphery, 1750–1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press) p. 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Adana, or of the Upper Plain over the Lower Plain. Around Adana, in the Lower Plain, there were already too many farms and no available large landholding. The acquisition of land near Ceyhan, on the other hand, necessitated a set of intricate transactions among different people scattered around Çukurova. The land belonged to the Sursock, a Beirut family living in Adana. The title deed was registered to Aziz Sursock who at the time resided in Tarsus. Because, Germans claimed, foreigners no longer could own land in the Ottoman Empire, a rental lease that included the upfront payment of the land's tax arrears was prepared for 5 years between Nejib Toueni and Selim Boutros, the German representatives, and Aziz Sursock. Then, two neighboring farms, ca. 5,000 dönüms belonging to one Aleybeyzade Mahmud and 2,000 dönüms to Boghos Khoubesserian, were also leased for 2 years to the same representatives for the Germans. All these different dealings, the Germans hoped, would help them in "using traditional methods to get the locals' trust and then to introduce new methods".⁶ The Germans even found a manager, expected to return shortly from the war and resume work on this new kind of farm in Çukurova.

This ordeal of acquiring land for an estate farm during World War I lay bare late Ottoman history from the vantage point of a geography far away from the imperial center. The story of large tracts belonging to different families in a corner of the region, that had begun producing cotton just a quarter of a century earlier, becoming a German model farm is an unusual Ottoman story of 19th century modernization in many respects. Admittedly, this modernization process at the level of the rule of law shares much with other corners of the Empire. What renders Çukurova unusual is the culmination point by 1908 when the region emerged in relative autonomy vis-à-vis both global and state forces. At the beginning of the 19th century, Çukurovan landscape was mostly a marshland with few settlements and a large nomadic population. One hundred years later, at the turn of the 20th century, it had become a major region of commercial cotton agriculture and textile production that placed it among the leading areas of Anatolia and the Ottoman Empire.

Bundesarchiv Auswärtiges Amt, Politische Archive, Potsdam, Germany (hereafter BAA, PA). Die wirtschaftliche Auskunftstelle der deutsch-türkischen Vereinigung, R 901/2271, Report on Farming in Cilicia, Adana, August 1915, 1.

As such, at first glance at least, there is nothing unusual in this ‘provincial’ history. Ottoman historical scholarship, abundantly demonstrating renewed intellectual rigor in recent years, has come full circle from state-centered linear narratives to social history and back to an interest in the state. That is to say, the 19th century modernization vocabulary has ‘brought the state back in’ as the circle rewound. Indeed, a spate of scholarship on Ottoman society with a variety of approaches has restored new dynamics to state-society relations which showed, at least for the 17th and 18th centuries, constantly changing boundaries between state and society.⁷ Just as the 18th century may no longer be confined to the domain of the *ayan*, the 19th century Ottoman state and society can no longer be viewed without the imperial project of centralization. Similar scholarly vigor with regard to late Ottoman history has removed the 19th century state from the old frame of decline paradigms, creating a remarkable near-consensus that the Ottoman Empire did indeed move in the direction of a ‘modern’ political, economic, and cultural framework before its final demise.⁸ This renewed interest in the Tanzimat era has uncovered an Ottoman realm of modernization, culminating largely in the practices of the reforming state.

To put it differently, ‘bringing the state back in’ also meant insisting on centralization and reforms.⁹ Most notably the writings of scholars from Arab provinces, who successfully moved beyond nationalist his-

Ariel Salzmann, “An *ancien regime* revisited: Privatization and political economy in the 18th century Ottoman Empire”, *Politics and Society*, 21/4 (1993) 393. Karen Barkey (1994) *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to Centralization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP). For the beginnings of the empire, see Cemal Kafadar (1996) *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

⁸ Huri Islamoğlu, “Modernities compared: State transformations and constitutions of property in the Qing and Ottoman Empires”, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 5/4 (2001). Selim Deringil (1998) *The Well-Protected Domain: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876–1909* (London: I.B. Tauris). Edhem Eldem et al. (1999) *The Ottoman City between East and West, Aleppo, Izmir and Istanbul* (New York: Cambridge UP). Donald Quataert (1994) “The age of reforms” in: Halil İnalcık with Quataert (Eds.), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, Vol. II, 1600–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP). Zeynep Çelik (1993) *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press) Sibel Bozdoğan (2001) *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press).

⁹ Jens Hanssen, Thomas Philipp and Stefan Weber (Eds.) (2002) *The Empire in the City: Arab Provincial Capitals in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Beirut/Würzburg: Ergon in Kommission).

toriographies and linked Arab nations of today back to their Ottoman past, also helped place the issue of state power and centralism back on the agenda.¹⁰ We may no longer talk of the weakness of the state or the reforms from an orientalist/essentialist point of departure, but we are still stuck with the pre-eminence of the central role of the state. Re-introducing the state helps us see the indelible mark of modernization, no doubt. But this renewed (Ottomanness of the modern) and much richer view (using Ottoman archival and local sources together) of the centrality of the state still leaves us with at least three problems. The first has to do with the perception of the imperial reform program as an unchanging whole, as a monolithic self-consistent entity at best created through a linear process. Almost a rhetoric now, Tanzimat has undeniably clouded over the many and conscious shifts within the reforms. These shifts were not solely due to problems in application and/or to the variety of localities but rather occurred in simultaneous response to the needs of the central state and world market dictates. The central state was being formed throughout the century and did not come with a *tabula rasa*, but only the intentions laid out in 1839 and 1856. World market dictates also periodically altered according to the differing agendas of various European states. In the words of Martha Mundy, “the reforms, transforming legal vocabularies from within Ottoman tradition, sought to respond to the competitive world system”.¹¹

Secondly, associating change directly with the state deals a blow to the study of social history, as the reform age is studied by assigning disaggregated spaces to both the state and society. Studying social history then becomes an issue of measuring the extent of state power, especially vis-à-vis factions within the local elite.¹² Using this kind of

¹⁰ Engin Deniz Akarlı (1993) *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861–1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press). Mahmoud Yazbak (1998) *Haifa in the Late Ottoman Period, 1864–1914: A Muslim Town in Transition* (Leiden: Brill). Eugene Rogan (1999) *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850–1921* (London: Cambridge UP).

¹¹ Martha Mundy and Richard Saumarez Smith (2007) *Governing Property, Making the Modern State: Law, Administration and Production in Ottoman Syria* (London: I.B. Tauris), p. 4. Although emphasizing the central state, Gökhan Çetinsaya, for example, relates the multiplicity of reform proposals among Ottoman officials when it came for example to Iraq, in his *Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890–1908* (London: Routledge, 2006) pp. 24–48.

¹² Despite many new formulations, here Albert Hourani’s approach to local notables (“Ottoman reform and the politics of notables” in: W.R. Polk and R.L. Chambers

approach, both the state and the so-called elite are seen as spatially separate entities that have fixed boundaries. Interdependence between state and society is by and large erased and 19th century provincial and urban formations materialize so long as the society in question is able to appreciate the reforms.¹³ Society in provinces and/or urban formations meshes with the state only in so far as it is able to own up to the central power to reform. How far have we come then since Inalcık's pioneering article on the Tanzimat and its application in various social formations of the empire?¹⁴

Last but not least, such treatment of Ottoman modernization overwhelmingly ignores the very alterations in the overarching modernization agenda which itself is still seen through "the optics of the inevitable unfolding of the destiny of the nation".¹⁵ Modernization as an ongoing process was, in the 19th century, spreading according to the different imperialisms in different historical spaces in both the Ottoman Empire and European states, which left autonomies room to maneuver in regional construction and politics through appropriation by the regional populace. As a result, multiple agendas informed anomalous regional processes against single-paradigm explanations of state power. Yet anomalies can be potentially productive, and regions can flourish without simply replicating the criteria of so-called modernization. When the 'modern state' is taken as the sole political agenda, it is as if one variable must explain a complex and uneven network of

(Eds.), *The Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The 19th Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968) pp. 83–109) as agents of reform still resonates especially in Ottoman urban formations: see also Leila Fawaz (1983) *Merchants and Migrants in 19th Century Beirut* (Cambridge: Harvard UP), and Jens Hanssen (2005) *Fin de Siècle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Provincial Capital*, Oxford Historical Monographs (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

¹³ For valuable contributions that array the elite and the non-elite in these dynamic processes of change, see Timothy Mitchell (1988) *Colonizing Egypt* (New York: Cambridge UP) and Roger Owen (2003) "Using present day notions of imperialism, globalization and internationalism: To understand the Middle East's late 19th century/early 20th century past", *MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 4/Fall. For the argument that there still persisted pockets of weakness on the part of the state, see Reşat Kasaba (1994) "A time and a place for the non-state: Social change in the Ottoman Empire during the 'long nineteenth century'" in: J. Migdal, A. Kohli and V. Shue (Eds.), *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP) pp. 207–230.

¹⁴ Halil Inalcık, "Application of the *Tanzimat* and its social effects", *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 5 (1973) 97–128.

¹⁵ Çağlar Keyder, "Peripheral port-cities and politics on the eve of the Great War", *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 20/Spring (1998) 27.

governance. But in the 19th century such complexity and unevenness was very much the order of the day everywhere, including the Ottoman Empire, shaped by multiple arrangements among international, central, regional and local agendas of the evolving political, social and economic circuits they managed.

Reform in Provincial History: Toward a New Context

Analyzing a region in southeastern Anatolia beyond the central administrative construction of a province can rid us of binary demarcations between state and society in general as well as of the question whether the Tanzimat drew the periphery closer to the center or whether this process was ‘negotiated’. Such a demarcation did not even exist for the inhabitants of regions like Çukurova, who came from very different backgrounds, not simply in terms of origin and ethnic and religious identity. However, once settled, they shared more than they differed because of their common experience of settlement in the region, and not because the larger political entity attempted to erode their differences via modernization. The construction of a region of migrant merchants and settling nomads has a continuous effect, especially observable in relatively autonomous spaces, in an age in which frontier cultures could presumably no longer prevail. In much the way Wigen and Lewis suggested “a regional scheme” of “multi-country agglomerations of historical and cultural bonds”, a regional analysis of multiple modes of life in the transformation of human geography can help us make sense of historical change in the Ottoman 19th century.¹⁶

Two milestones have generally been identified for changing Ottoman society in the provinces: i.e., the 1858 Land Code (*Arazi Kanunnamesi*) and 1864 Provincial Code (*Vilayet Nizamnamesi*). Faced with problems of Bedouin settlement and agricultural decline, Transjordan, for instance, went through a process of individuation made possible by the new bureaucratic methods.¹⁷ Accordingly, argues Rogan, the 1858 Land Code gave individuals title to their holdings, thus establishing ‘personal responsibility’ for tax payments. However, if the issue was ensuring tax payment by individuals, it had come to Cyprus and

¹⁶ Martin W. Lewis and Karen Wigen (Eds.) (1997) *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

¹⁷ Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, p. 13.

Kayseri, for example, much earlier than the 1844 income tax regulation, the 1858 Code or the 1864 Provincial Code. Very much on a par with fiscal practices and views in France, fiscal reform in 1833 paved the way for the registration of personal income that listed cultivated lands as an item for which income could be calculated.¹⁸ We do not know if such registrations were based on the existing title deed code (*Tapu Nizamnamesi* 1847) that regulated registration of all cultivated *miri* land with the Treasury.¹⁹ This income tax preceded the *temetuat* in the 1840s in Izmir after which property registration became very much an administrative issue that had to be negotiated with the locals.

In Izmir there was a powerful group of local notables towards whom the imperial center followed conciliatory policies: “the dialogue/negotiation shaped the cadastre. The cadastre became a process of accommodation, and the ability of the administration to legitimize it rested on the mediation and arbitration effected through its administrative practices.”²⁰

Çukurova had no *ancien regime*. The turning point came in the last quarter of the 19th century; registration of land began in the 1870s but accelerated only in the 1890s as cotton production intersected with property rights. In Çukurova, this process of accommodation took place as the very administrative practices were being molded. That is to say, the practice of establishing property rights very much meshed with the very process through which these rights were formed as administrative practices. These administrative practices may have initiated “the power fields where these struggles took place”²¹ through law and cadastral surveys, but it was the local populace that used

¹⁸ Alp Yücel Kaya (2007) “Les reformes ottomanes anterieures aux *Tanzimat*: Vers un nouveau mode administratif” in: Faruk Bilici, Ionel Candea and Anca Popescu (Eds.), *Enjeux Politiques, Economiques et Militaires en Mer Noire (XIV-XXI Siecles), Etudes a la Memoire de Mihail Guboglu* (Braila: Editura Istros) pp. 585–610. According to Kaya, this particular registry may have stemmed from the 1826 market tax (*resm-i ihtisab*) and war tax (*iane-i cihadiyye*) in 1833.

¹⁹ *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi*, Istanbul, Turkey (hereafter BOA), *İrade-i Mesail-i Mühimme*, 511, 1263/(1847). My thanks to Alp Yücel Kaya for sharing this document with me. Also see İlber Ortaylı who mentions two such regulations in 1845 and 1847, his *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* (Istanbul: Hil Yayın, 1983) p. 159.

²⁰ Alp Yücel Kaya, “Politics of property registration: The Cadastre of Izmir in the mid-nineteenth century” in: *NEC Regional Program Yearbook, 2005–2006*, p. 170.

²¹ Huri Islamoğlu (2000) “Property as a contested domain: A reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858” in: Roger Owen (Ed.) *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs, p. 39.

these practices, translating them into their own power fields as well. Commercial production on the land to be registered greatly helped to put local entrepreneurs in the power field, at the “intersection of law, administration and production”.²² In Çukurova individual rights were registered much later than the Code, in the 1870s, clearly showing that it was not the Code itself that gave way “to specialized techniques of government in the 19th century, rather it became increasingly bound up with administrative formalization”.²³ Thus the Code constructed spaces for negotiation between the landholders and the administration.

A similar relationship of negotiation that bordered on manipulation on the part of local entrepreneurs of the modern state, together with world commercial forces, marked Çukurova’s modernity that was not imposed upon it by either the reforming central state or world trade powers. Despite the purpose of uniformity and centralization, reforms throughout the long 19th century found different degrees of success and imposition in diverse regions.

This diversity itself is not simply about the failure of the reforms or the different peripheralization experiences at the mercy of a world market but rather about the different experiences of transition to the rule of law that, of course, should not be categorically identified with peaceful progress and thus prompt a new view of modernization. In such a smooth story of Ottoman modernization, we must include conflict leading to different paths towards the formation of the nation-state from the Balkans to Lebanon.²⁴ Çukurova’s transformation was at the very least confrontational as a new kind of space was created with multiple communities establishing conditions for their material relations. Nonetheless the Çukurovans attached themselves to the region and not to the Ottoman Empire or global forces alone. Therefore, repeated social conflict at all levels from communal to local to global operated as both source and agent of the region’s socio-economic autonomy.

²² Mundy and Smith, *Governing Property*, p. 4.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁴ For the resistance to the rule of law leading to proto-nationalist movements see Ahmet Uzun (2002) *Tanzimat ve Sosyal Direnişler: Niş İsyanı Üzerine Ayrıntılı Bir İnceleme 1841* (Istanbul: Eren). For the negative repercussions of the modern imperial rule of law see Ussama Makdisi (2000) *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

Ottoman Çukurova: Beyond the Province of Adana or the Cilician Territory

Çukurova is a very large landscape of mountains, lowlands, and deltas reaching the Mediterranean. Even demarcating production zones and population centers along intermontane basins was awe-inspiring. Politically too, it was rather difficult to define the region in any coherent and integrative whole, even after Adana, the central inland district of some significance to historians from the early 14th century onwards, had become the center of a new province named after itself. Making sense of and reconstructing the history of such an incircumscribable region seemed impossible until one first could figure out the relationship between the human element and the geography, not to mention the animals so central to the making of the region.

Except for the Armenian kingdom from 1080 to 1375, it can perhaps be argued that, from earliest Ottoman times until the administrative re-organization in the 19th century, the region did not have an official toponym in its entire 20,000 square kilometers.²⁵ Throughout this period, it was Adana that enjoyed the attention of both the political apparatus and historical interest. The rest of the region, including the port, did not count as part of this geographical unit. The area was thus always understood around the central district of Adana. Therefore although we possess abundant information on the town and district, it does not help in identifying a region. To the contrary, emphasis on the district is misleading, as its urban history downplays the main geographical reality and life-style of the region, namely nomadism.

In rural landscapes, the patterns and types of settlement reflect agrarian systems, the availability of water, and modes of life. In Çukurova, the juxtaposition of Mediterranean, steppe, mountain and plain environments and climates has had a profound influence on the region's patterns of population distribution and settlement.

The making of this region is characterized by five parallel developments: settlement, Egyptian conquest, Ottoman reforms, foundation of a port-city, and cotton agriculture.

²⁵ For Lesser Armenia and for other Armenian settlements in Anatolia, see Mehmet Ersan (2007) *Selçuklular Zamanında Anadolu'da Ermeniler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları). In the 14th century, Cilicia became subject to the Mamluks followed by the Ramazonoğulları.

The outcome is unique to the region, not because of any single process, but because large-scale cotton production took place in Çukurova and nowhere else in Ottoman Anatolia. The making of this complicated landscape into a region capable of holding its own was both the artifact and agent of a multitude of processes between the imperial center, the urban municipal and provincial governments, global forces and the migrant and settler inhabitants. Together, these processes entailed a completely new mapping of production and exchange circuits which helped delineate a distinct region in the larger economic and spatial order of both the Ottoman and Mediterranean worlds. A trio of confrontations between world trade, a modernizing center, and the nomads and migrants, who worked their way through the landscape, radically redefined the human geography of Çukurova. Only the unique configuration of the regional history can account for the continuity of Çukurova's affluence which proved so significant for both the Ottoman Empire and republican Turkey.

Indeed, by the 1860s, the Levant had long lost its status as one of the important suppliers of cotton. Long before 1857, when the British-Indian production ceased to be a major competitor, America had already seized the cotton market. The so-called mutiny in India²⁶ had rendered the British unable to compete with American production. It was no coincidence that the Cotton Supply Association of Great Britain looked to develop other cotton producers including those in Anatolia in 1857.²⁷ In 1861, when civil war broke out in America, the world lost its cheapest cotton source and crisis erupted.

The British held two international exhibitions for the world's agricultural produce in the early 1860s.²⁸ Çukurovan cotton at these exhibitions was considered quite high in quality, able to compete with Egyptian and Izmir cotton.²⁹ However, in 1862, this large plain had

²⁶ For the Indian Mutiny, see Bernard S. Cohn (1987) *An Anthropologist among Historians and Other Essays* (Delhi: Oxford UP).

²⁷ Charles Issawi (1980) *The Economic History of Turkey: 1800-1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) p. 264.

²⁸ London hosted these exhibitions in 1851 and 1862. The Ottoman state summoned each province to participate to these and to the Paris exhibitions in 1855 and 1867. See *Türk Ziraat Tarihine Bir Bakış* (Istanbul: Devlet Basımevi, 1938) p. 66. The cotton of the Çukurova found its way into the 1863 Ottoman exhibition as well. This exhibition in Istanbul was very much "in the nineteenth century fashion of holding international exhibitions in major Western cities." See Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul*, p. 35.

²⁹ *Türk Ziraat Tarihine Bir Bakış*, p. 167.

a populace of ca. 100,000, too sparse for commercial agriculture.³⁰ Thus, during the American Civil War, it appeared that the potential of Çukurova was not immediately realizable.

Nonetheless international interest persisted. At the end of the war, in 1865, the consul of Upper Syria presented a report to the British Parliament underlining the potential of the plains which remained unrealized. The consul complained that the nomads impeded the development of agriculture as they “made farmers pay large sums of money to protect their crops from the marauding flocks”.³¹

Two years later, in 1867, Napoleon III invited Sultan Abdülaziz to be the guest of honor at the Paris Exhibition.³² Queen Victoria extended a similar invitation to Sultan Abdülaziz for a visit to London. The Sultan then planned an elaborate and long trip to Europe with an entourage of five ships.³³ When in London, the Manchester Cotton Company Delegation presented the Sultan with a project. The Ottoman Empire could increase cotton production and sell the surplus to this consortium. The proposal included an offer of free seeds and machinery for the producers in exchange for a 20-year-long monopolistic sale agreement with Manchester Company.³⁴ Local historical rumor has it that the British delegation also indicated the Çukurova plains on a map to the Sultan himself as a most promising site for such cotton production.³⁵

USNA: Bureau of Foreign Commerce, Commercial Relations of the United States with Foreign Countries, Washington D.C., Report on Adana, 1862.

³¹ Accounts and Papers (hereafter AP), Parliamentary Papers, Public Records Office, Foreign Office Archives, London. De Heidenstam, “Report from Acting Consul for Upper Syria in answer to a circular regarding Cotton Cultivation in the Ottoman Empire”, Aleppo, 1865, pp. 19–20.

³² Salahaddin Bey (1867) *La Turquie à l'Exposition Universelle de 1867* (Paris: Hachette & Cie) pp. 12–13.

³³ *Ibid.* Also see Cemal Kutay (1970) *Avrupa’da Sultan Aziz* (Istanbul: Boğaziçili Yayınları).

³⁴ According to Kurmuş, by 1865 when peace was concluded in the United States, the cotton boom had ended in Turkey. The boom initiated by the Manchester Cotton Supply Association mostly in Izmir was dependent on the use of American seeds in western Anatolia. His findings in terms of the inability of the MCSA to revive the cotton production in Izmir, I believe, may help explain why the Manchester Cotton Co. would by 1867, be exclusively interested in Çukurova. See his “The cotton famine”, in: İslamoğlu (Ed.), *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987).

³⁵ See Kasım Ener (1990) *Tarih Boyunca Adana Ovasına Bir Bakış* (Adana: Hürsöz Gazetecilik, Yayıncılık ve Matbaacılık).

To reconstruct the story of the region in the age of such world trade, I have divided this text into two parts. The first part sets the stage and outlines various confrontations during the formation of the region. Chapter 1 explores how the spatial dynamics shaped the history of human-land relations over time. Chapter 2 opens with a discussion on the Egyptian rule (1832–1840) in the area and continues to identify the political and legal frameworks set in the aftermath of the Tanzimat reforms.

Analysis of the geographical and human potential of the area begins with a description of the landscape, the plains, the surrounding mountains, the rivers, deltas and swamps. The areas of the two major plains, upper and lower, differ greatly in terms of soil characteristics, climate and human usage. The Lower Plain, the focus of both the making of the region and the geography of the region itself, is also divided into two sub-regions according to fertility and settlement patterns. Nomads, semi-nomads, and the sedentarized populace inhabit the Adana-Tarsus and Ceyhan sub-regions quite differently, ultimately marking the region's history. Still a marshland where settled Armenian and Turcoman nomads merely cohabited, the area that apparently lacked an integrated social or political space first and foremost needed a population. The tribal background of the region, which was as diverse as Turcoman, Kurdish and Arab, represented a gray area situated between two major culture zones, between the Arab world and Anatolia.

The Egyptian regime was the first political entity to show a thorough interest in the area. In many ways, Ibrahim Pasha replicated in Çukurova what his father, Muhammad Ali, had done in Egypt; such a landscape was not unfamiliar. The Nile delta was his example par excellence, and producing cotton was nothing new to Egyptians who had turned their land into a mono-culture. This brief 8-year period was the beginning of a new process of social and economic stratification for the inhabitants and new immigrants.

A period of slump occurred between the departure of the Egyptians and Ottoman re-organization. However, in the 1860s we see reforms reaching the area, bringing yet another dimension which would eventually greatly affect its human geography; Muslim immigrants who settled in the area following the Crimean War would require constant protection from tribal attacks. The second wave of migration after 1862–1863, this time with Circassians from the Caucasus, points to a more conscious effort for efficient settlement which culminated in

the attempt to sedentarize a larger portion of the nomadic populace, namely the Forced Settlement (*Fırka-ı Islahiye*) in 1865, the central state's first direct interest in the area. However, sedentarization was no easy task and entailed a long process. As the region began to take shape, settlement became the pattern also attracting different ethnic communities such as Arab Christians and Greeks.

Establishment of a provincial administration in Adana (*Vilayeti*) followed in 1867, which provided the governor with the power to control tax collection. New institutions, such as district and township committees, created at sub-provincial levels, presented the local powers with new political mechanisms. These township committees consisted of tax officials, *kadıs*, police chiefs and Muslim and non-Muslim members of the local community. Through provincial administrative restructuring, the reforms instituted local empowerment mechanisms that were among the reasons behind the rise of local authority.

In sum, a new regional configuration was only possible if the settlers confronted more than the framework of modernization. The reforms, namely the 1858 Land Code and the 1864 Provincial Code, together with 1865 settlement efforts would fully pay off only when commercialization prompted the development of a port-city.

In Part 2, Chapter 3, analysis will focus on the construction of a regional economy, at the center of which is the foundation of an eastern Mediterranean port-town, Mersin.

Mersin, built up by immigrants coming from different parts of the empire, such as Beirut, Syria, Central Anatolia, Cyprus and the Aegean Islands, became the cosmopolitan area in the region forming the backbone of the regional economy. In Mersin, within 20 years between the 1850s and 1870s, multiple commercial, political and cultural trends from all over the world intersected with Ottoman imperial, regional and local powers with all actors showing great flexibility. This confrontation allowed the creation of a new kind of space in Çukurova where multiple communities could establish conditions for their material relations and attached themselves to the region and not the Ottoman Empire or European forces alone. Regional sources and regional development could hold the region intact as long as its relative autonomy was preserved vis-à-vis the Empire. Hence, the autonomous strength of the region peaked between the late 1870s and the 1890s when the indigenous population used every opportunity to attract the growing interest of both the central state and foreign capital, at different levels

and capacities that included dynamic municipal administrations in an increasingly urbanizing southern Çukurova, infrastructural improvements in the port-town as well as telecommunication and transportation networks. In 1886, the opening of the railway between the provincial center, Adana, and the port-town, Mersin, greatly helped the accumulation of local revenue and power. A few years later, branches of the Ottoman Bank stamped the final making of the region capable of holding its own. One immigrant family, the Mavromatis, from this cosmopolitan center rose to great prominence and established the most important network of human relationships in the region.

In Chapter 4, analysis will focus on the agricultural and industrial production in the region as well as the specific patterns that consolidated the regional economy. The region successfully completed its socio-economic reconstruction from a subsistence and nomadic economy to commercial agriculture and from manufacturing for domestic usage to mechanized export-oriented textile establishments during the first decade of the 20th century. Cotton agriculture for export required an entirely different approach towards production as more lands were reclaimed and cultivation extended and mechanized. Within a short time, the Ceyhan sub-region developed the largest estates ever seen in Ottoman Anatolian agrarian history.

By 1908, Çukurova had become a region of shared hegemony between large landholders, export merchants, foreign capitalists, and local bureaucrats. This book traces the different temporal and spatial scales that helped the people of Çukurova place their region among the leading territories of Anatolia, the Ottoman Empire and the Eastern Mediterranean and, for that matter, the Turkish Republic. No other Turkish region in the former Ottoman Empire had ever produced such wealth; by 2000 it had given rise to two corporations figuring among the top 100 global companies.

Despite clashes between Muslims and Armenians at the end of the Ottoman period, and despite considerable population reconfiguration following the loss of much of the Greek Orthodox community, the region survived as an economic entity. In the Conclusion, I will present an epilogue of sorts analyzing how the region continued to function despite disruptions. At the end of the Ottoman Empire, an ever-increasing share of profits that had previously been invested in the region ebbed away until, in the 1950s, the tide turned: following the capitalist boom, the region finally became a zone of the Turkish

national economy. Thus, in the 1950s, Çukurovan discourses endowed the Turkish vernacular with the term *ak altın* (white gold) meaning cotton. Following the peripheralization of the region by the national economy, Turkish literature welcomed a new genre in the so-called village novella, for which Yaşar Kemal created the imagery of the notorious landholder, *Ağa*.

PART I

THE LANDSCAPE, THE PEOPLE AND THE STATE

SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL DYNAMICS:
NOMADS AND SETTLERS

*And to the east beyond river Ceyhan, 'adem geçemez'*¹

In 1671, Evliya Çelebi described the town of Adana with considerable vitality: a center of trade with 2 gates, 17 khans, 700 stores, and 1 bazaar.² The liveliness of 17th century Adana, however, was in sharp contrast with the rest of this huge region as the landscape beyond the city gave the impression of an empty space. A few more towns such as Tarsus, Sis, Kars-ul Zulkadriye and villages in the valleys stood out against thinly populated zones of tribal control.³

From the 16th to the 19th centuries, the juxtaposition of Mediterranean, steppe and mountain climates profoundly influenced this landscape's patterns of population distribution and settlement. The economy of Çukurova, full of marshland and swamps, remained limited to the subsistence of the few settlements and numerous nomadic tribes. Even at the beginning of the 19th century, Çukurova was still described as "no more than a badly drained, fever-ridden, thinly populated country".⁴ The settled population then consisted of peasants and traders who managed the transit traffic between Erzurum and Adana, Konya and Aleppo, Istanbul and Baghdad. Nomads, on the other hand, exhibited a variety of habitation patterns from semi-nomadism to transhumance. Some had established a kind of symbiotic relationship to the settled societies in order to acquire the goods they could not produce themselves. The maintenance of this relationship and a pastoral economy meant highly complex processes of transformation

In 1671, the famed traveler Evliya Celebi described Çukurova beyond a few towns up to the Ceyhan River, as such a space, impassable by humans. *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, Vol. 9 (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1935) p. 333.

² *Ibid.*, p. 333.

BOA: Tapu Tahrir 998, 923 (1517-1518). Pages 390, 405, 353, 347, 542 show the *evkaf* of these towns.

⁴ Mübaccel Kiray (1974) "Social change in Çukurova: A comparison of four villages" in: Peter Benedict et al. (Eds.), *Turkey: Geographic and Social Perspectives* (Leiden: Brill) p. 179.

from one habitation pattern to the other.⁵ In other words, the nomadic inhabitants of the Çukurova had developed such complex life-styles that no linear evolution from nomadism to semi-nomadism and then to sedentarization could be discerned.⁶

However, by the early years of the 20th century Çukurova still emerged as a region in which we find a completely new circuit of relations between people and the land they inhabited. The very basis of the uniqueness of Çukurova lies in its human geographical potential. It was this landscape that attracted people first to a life of transhumance and thereafter to settled life. This history of relations between humans and 'their' land manifests how the human geography of the region encouraged or discouraged certain spatial patterns of economic activity.

The study of change as a process in a certain locale requires, first and foremost, analysis of the locale in terms of both human and geographic potential. Only through various scales of spatial analysis can one delineate transformation from nomadism to settled life. For an historian who is not endowed with any expert knowledge of geography, the task of reconstructing the landscape at the beginning of the 19th century is immense. My source base is primarily travel accounts of a specific kind: i.e., geographers who wrote their impressions as *experts*. Many such geographers and geologists were German or French. The choice of some accounts over others stems from the necessity of trying to imagine the spatial dimensions in order to understand the changes in usage by the people, who themselves were changing as well.

To my mind, this very complexity in the transformation of the types and patterns of nomadism toward sedentarization largely shaped the history of commercialization in Çukurova. Whether in the 1830s or the 1870s, attempts at commercialization required some sort of monitoring of the nomads. This was necessary not only to provide security and order for agricultural settlements but also much-needed labor in this landscape of sparse population. All the same, regulating the complexities of nomadic life was no easy task. The diversity of the human geography of this landscape of marshy but very fertile land posed the

⁵ Mustafa Soysal elaborates this complexity in *Die Siedlungs- und Landschaftsentwicklung der Çukurova, Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Yüreğir-Ebene* (Erlangen: Fränkische Geographische Gesellschaft, 1976).

⁶ For a similar example further west, see Xavier de Planhol (1958) *De la Plaine Pamphylieenne aux Lacs Pisidiens, Nomadisme et Vie Paysanne* (Paris: Dépositaire Librairie Adrien-Maisonneuve).

greatest challenge to commercialization. Yet, paradoxically, it also formed the basis of agricultural development. Had the nomads and tribes not gradually settled, tribal labor would not have been available and tribal chiefs would not have been able to become landholders.⁷

The first purpose of this chapter is to capture the sedentarization patterns of the people in this rural landscape before the development of commercial agriculture. I begin by outlining the physical geography of the plain. This outline first presents the different zones in the region in terms of mountains and plain areas, determining the soil types, usage of water, climates and passes in order to provide clues to the life styles, both agricultural and nomadic, that emerged in these zones. Then, the historical evolution of nomadism will be analyzed up to the beginning of the 19th century. The processes of transformation from one form of habitat to another will be delineated, as well as the sources allow, in order to shed light on the process of sedentarization in the remainder of the 19th century.

The Landscape and the People: An Historical Geography

Chains of mountains on three sides surround Çukurova, or Cilicia, a crescent-shaped area at the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea. Major ranges of the Taurus and Amanus mountains form natural boundaries and separate a 20,000 square kilometer Çukurova from the remainder of Anatolia and Syria.

Medieval Çukurova housed an Armenian Kingdom but did not have an official toponym during the Ottoman Empire and remained vulnerable to nomad incursions.⁸ One tribe from Khurasan, namely

⁷ The evolution of certain tribal chiefs into a landed class was by no means a phenomenon unique to Çukurova. The complexities of this evolutionary process and the gradual dominance of one tribe over others in Iraq has been studied in great detail by Hannah Batatu (1978) *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba'ithists, and Free Officers* (Princeton: Princeton UP) pp. 63–152. I must stress, however, that the tribal landlords of the 19th century Çukurova did not form a landed class then; there were few such landholders who became important political figures only after the 1920s during the formation of the Turkish republic.

⁸ The low lands of Çukurova show signs of settlement during the Bronze Age, because of their position along the route to the east. Çukurova had long been receiving migrant populations. Ruined forts, castles, etc., mark the sites of such settlements, showing the character of these colonizations. The Turkish conquest of Anatolia opened this land up for all kinds of Turkic life upon which the Seljukids followed up.

the Ramazanoğulları, selected the area for habitation. It appears that the grazing land they leased from the Armenian Kingdom grew so large that the Mamluks recognized this tribe as the major political entity and ended Armenian rule in the 14th century.⁹ However, the political structure of Çukurova continued to be fragile. In fact, at the beginning of the 16th century, the Ramazanoğulları themselves sought Ottoman protection and even joined Sultan Selim I's Egyptian conquest.¹⁰ Thus becoming part of the Ottoman imperial realm, Çukurova still remained in a fragile political state all the way up to the period of the Tanzimat. The Ottomans established 4 *sancak* (sub-province) in Adana, Sis, Tarsus and Özer, with 9 *nahiyeler* (districts) in the Adana *sancak*. Even some of these were set aside only as habitats for nomadic populations, while a few like Yüreğir were settled with mixed communities of Armenians and Turcomans.¹¹

Indeed, the sharp demarcation between two types of human habitation, nomadic and settled, corresponds closely to the geographic divisions of Çukurova during the pre-Ottoman and most of the Ottoman period. In fact, approximately 60% of Çukurova is mountainous, while 40% is the plain. This land mass was—to a certain extent still undivided into two different landscapes: lowland and hill country.¹² The lowland consists of two plains: the Lower and Upper Plains.

The Lower Plain, the largest of the lowlands, extends eastward from the natural quay of Erdemli (today's Mersin) to the river Ceyhan. This totally flat area with deep clay and fertile soil held the settlements of Tarsus, Adana, and Misis, commercially important locales. Both here and along the Silk Road in the coastal part—that lay between the coastal plains of Alexandretta to the east and Silifke to the west—there is no

About a century later, with the Crusades, the Armenians established Lesser Armenia in Çukurova with a capital at Sis (today's Kozan). In the 14th century, the Mamlukes invaded the area but made peace with the Armenians, taxing the kingdom under their power.

⁹ Stepanos Balasanian (1902) *Batmutiun Hayots* (Tiflis: Hratarakut'iwñ Lewon Saribegeani) p. 397. Translation by Kirkor Agopyan of Paris.

¹⁰ Müneccim Başı (Şeyh Ahmed Dede Efendi) (1285/1868–1869) *Sahaif-ül-Ahbar* (Nedim translation), Vol. III (Istanbul: Matbaa-ı 'Amire) pp. 170–171.

¹¹ Faruk Sümer (1963) *Çukur-ova Tarihine Dair Araştırmalar (Fetihten XVI. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısına Kadar)*, Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, Dil Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi Cilt I, Sayı 1 den ayırması, Ankara, p. 27.

¹² The core of the area is a lowland of alluvium that comes from the rivers Seyhan and Ceyhan and their tributaries, all of which directly flow into the Mediterranean Sea. The percentages reflect F. Schaffer's calculations at the beginning of the 20th century; see his "Cilicia", Gotha, 1903, pp. 1–8.

indication of tribal penetration except the Ramazanoğulları in Adana in the 14th century.¹³ To the east of Adana, between the rivers Seyhan and Ceyhan, lay the marshiest of lands in Çukurova which remained virtually unused by nomads and settlers alike during most of the Ottoman period.¹⁴ It was only in the agriculturally rich foothills beyond the marshy plains that small settled communities, both coherent villages and looser habitations of Muslim settlers as well as Armenian peasant settlements, survived while the steppes and hill country remained open to invaders. The Armenian peasantry also engaged in craft and produce trade between Çukurova and Kayseri, Erzurum, and even Trabzon.¹⁵ The rest of the Lower Plain, with its marshes and swamps, did not present any opportunity to either the settled or the nomadic populace.

The Upper Plain to the northeast of the Lower Plain is isolated from the Mediterranean and surrounded by hill country. Like the Lower Plain, it has a clay-like surface. The most fertile part is what I call the Ceyhan sub-region, as the major source of water here is the river Ceyhan, which flows westward before it reaches the sea in the south.

A number of natural phenomena rendered both plains unusually swampy. Firstly, the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers, and their large tributaries, frequently flooded. When the snows on the peaks of the Taurus melted, their waters flowed down towards the Lower Plain. Coastal parts of the Lower Plain also had their share of marshes owing to floods of salty water. The swamps made agricultural life very difficult but rendered most of the land immensely fertile.¹⁶

The mountainous zone, cutting through the plains covering the lowland like a crescent, can be divided into three groups. The Taurus chain

¹³ The western part of the Lower Plain, the Adana-Tarsus sub-region as I call it, also consists of large patches of permanent marshes.

¹⁴ The littoral of Karataş to the south of Adana was an exception, subject to settlement and extension of cultivation simultaneously with the Adana-Tarsus sub-region. The rest of this area developed last, in the post-World War II period, marking the culmination of the process analyzed here. With this last reclamation, Çukurova became fully capitalized in the 1950s and saw the emergence of the notorious landlord (*Toprak Ağası*) concept, and as such entered into Turkish literature as exemplified in the novels of Yaşar Kemal.

¹⁵ Victor Langlois (1861) *Voyage dans la Cilicie et dans les Montagnes du Taurus* (Paris: Benjamin Duprat) p. 67.

¹⁶ Kotschy, in his numerous works, insisted on an additional problem of course-shifting streams. Schaffer did not agree but added that the marshy land was composed of red soil containing much iron, the result of the dissolution of the lime in the high country. See Schaffer's "Cilicia", pp. 1-8.

follows northwest–southwest lines, changing direction at Uzun Yayla and continuing in a crescent-shape down to the core of the Lower Plain. It is the Taurus that separates Çukurova from central Anatolia. The Amanus Mountains with narrower foothills are located in the east of the Upper Plain, forming a barrier between Çukurova and northern Syria. The hill country around Misis Mountain, on the other hand, is a conglomeration of isolated low hills. These hills are to the east of the Lower Plain, between the Upper Plain and the Gulf of Alexandretta.

In the foothills of these high country ranges have resided a few solidly constituted peasant communities since the 13th century. Most of the hill country is famous for its unique rocky structure.¹⁷ It lacks any flat upland areas suitable to agriculture. It has been deprived of forests as well, due to centuries-long overgrazing. However, along the rivers are quite deep valleys with rich soil.¹⁸

These rich soils allowed for manured cultivation, feeding the animals and nomads in dry years. In the hill country other small alluvial plains have formed along streams that have also been important for nomads. But at the beginning of the 19th century, the flatlands along streams remained subject to flooding and thus ill-suited for agriculture.

All groups of Çukurovan nomads, coming from both the Amanus and Misis skirts, reached the high country each summer passing through the same route. It is highly likely that they mixed while also branching out in search of areas suited for animal husbandry. Hence it is difficult to determine their numbers, but census logs treated each branch as a different community, *cemaat*.¹⁹ At the tip of the Upper Plain, for instance, the Arıklı tribe of the Sis mountain was divided into 20 different communities while the Farsak tribe was again divided into about 15 tribal groups. These have been assigned to the area

¹⁷ Schaffer, "Cilicia", p. 14. The geographer Schaffer described the mountains of Çukurova as the rockiest found in the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁸ The Haçın Valley right in the Taurus line constitutes one of the richest travertine sections of the high country. Below is the *Feke* hill country which, following a southwestern line, ends in the very fertile *Göbel Su* Valley. See Schaffer, "Cilicia", pp. 1–8. The types of soil in the hill country are actually typical of the Mediterranean: white and red soil. While the white provides the chalk for the rocky structure, the red is fertile and found around lakes.

¹⁹ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Anadolu Yoklama Defteri* No. 2152/2243, dated 1133/(1720). Indeed, the census logs clearly show a differentiation between the peasantry (*reaya*) and nomads (*cemaat*), in the eyes of the central authority. Taxation was recorded according to occupation, and *ağnam* (animal tax) indicated animal husbandry, the main source of livelihood of the nomads.

around Payas in the Lower Plain. The Ottomans considered them all as Kozanoğlu, from whom fixed amounts of animal tax (*ağnam vergisi*) could be collected. The responsible party was the Kozanoğlu tribe but there is no indication if the taxes were paid.²⁰ Today we still find villages bearing the names of these tribes.

The second group in the hill country around Misis Mountain consisted of a total of 1,000 tents, all attributed to the Tecirli tribe.²¹ Just like the Kozanoğlu from the first area of the hill country, the Tecirli was divided into many other entities sometimes named squad (*bölük*), sometimes community (*cemaat*). In the same register, the Lower Plain area of Tarsus had been assigned for another tribe, the Menemencioğlu. The Elvanlı and the Tekeli, two other communities (*cemaat*), were mentioned as subordinate to the Menemencioğlu. Again, villages carrying these names or indicating a connection to these tribes still exist today.²²

The structure of these nomadic groups was very complicated, and the units bore a variety of names: tribe (*aşiret*), squad (*bölük*), and community (*cemaat*). This may have been due to the hazardous migrations of diverse origins which eventually regrouped together thus further complicating the final ethnic picture: Turcomans, Kurds, and Arabs. Place names that survived into the 20th century are the only sources we have to figure out ethnic and tribal structure as well as the kind of occupation of the soil and sedentarization patterns. De Planhol argues that descriptive names reveal to us important facts about the occupation of soil which are almost lost today.²³ If, for instance, a tribe was known by the name of a mountain, hill, or river, this shows regular migrations or the beginning of attachment to a certain land. The latter was true for the Kozanoğlu. Besides the descriptive place names, there are names that refer to tribes showing the orbit of nomadic migration; that is to say, the particular piece of land a tribal group selected for seasonal migration. In villages of the high country, some of the tribal

²⁰ BOA: *Maliyeden Müdevver, Defter 8458, 1705; Defter 3439, 1712; Defter 9956, 1722*. Each *defter* tells the tale of the Ottomans trying to fix the tribes in a certain area, and to collect taxes. However sometimes the authorities were willing to forgo all revenue if only the tribesmen were willing to settle. None of these efforts were successful.

²¹ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Anadolu Yoklama Defteri No. 2114, dated 1202/(1788)*.

²² T.C. Mersin İli İstatistikleri, 1997, pp. 1–12.

²³ De Planhol, *De la Plaine Pamphylieenne*, p. 95.

names date back to the 16th century,²⁴ meaning that certain tribes used these particular spots in the intra-Taurus for seasonal movement from the 16th century onwards, contrasting with the neighboring Greek and Armenian villages.

By the 18th century, nomads increasingly followed fixed routes between the high country and the plains in a certain orbit. Such fixation of migration was the first hesitant step towards sedentarization.

All kinds of forests existed in the foothills, steppes, and cold-weather peaks of the highlands of both hill countries—the Amanus and Taurus, and Misis Mountains. Human intervention caused the gradual extension of steppe areas, which in turn meant the deterioration of forests in the region. Particularly, the steppes in and around lakes that were once forested have been subject to human intervention, which has totally transformed them. Indeed, pastoral occupation in the upper mountains sharply differed from that in low foothills. For example, pastoralism in the low hills, especially those around the first group, i.e., around the Amanus and Taurus, meant more mobility. Here, the steppes of the cultivated plains were interrupted by forested hills, marking climate differences in a very short range and thus causing further migration for nomads. To sum up, the geography in the hill country favored the preponderance of nomad wanderings through the 16th to the 19th centuries. By the 19th century, nomads used more or less fixed patterns of migration in the hill country. Throughout the century, the persistence of such nomadism ensured dense pastoral occupation in both steppe and forests.

During the Ottoman era between the 16th and 19th centuries, nomads and settled people continued to share this land. At the beginning of the 16th century, the peasant economy essentially was founded on grains with a little cotton production, some of which did find buyers in the Mediterranean.²⁵ The 16th century system was characterized

²⁴ Münecim Başı, *Sahaif-ül-Ahbar*, pp. 170–171; Cengiz Orhonlu (1963) *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Aşiretleri Iskan Teşebbüsü, 1691–1696* (Istanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi) pp. 37–39.

²⁵ We know of cotton production since a tax named 'the cotton tithe' (*aşr-u penbe*) is cited in the Ramazanogulları Trust Deed (*Vakfiyye*) and Land Registers (*Tahrir Defterleri*), *Vakfiyye*, *Hicri* 945, *Vakıflar Umum Müdürlüğü, Defter No. 646*; and *BOA: Tapu Tahrir Defteri No. 254*, dated 954/1548 showing financial affairs of the *timars* (*nev'i maliye*) in Çukurova, namely for Yüreğir, Sarıçam, Dünderlu, Bulgarlu, Hacılu, Karaisalı, Berdendi, Ayas, Kınık townships (*nahiye*). The export of cotton is mentioned in Suraiya Faroqhi (1987) "Notes on the production of cotton and cotton cloth

by the relatively solid central power and by the existence—however precarious—of a prebendal military aristocracy and peasant subsistence.²⁶ In the 17th century, small village populations of Turcoman semi-nomads had moved to larger neighboring villages.²⁷ They had begun to choose larger villages since Byzantine times for these were on the lower banks of the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers, around Feke, Haçin, and Sis in the north, especially because markets existed there. Besides the few ancient centers that survived due to the persistence of a certain degree of commercial life, a new sedentary life began there in the 17th century together with the nomads.²⁸

However, nomads outnumbered the peasants and seem to have been far more important. Despite repeated efforts of the sultans to fix them to a certain area, most of them defied central authority. Indeed, according to Faruk Sümer, what made the area's history so interesting from the beginning of the Ottoman conquest was the political strategies of the many tribal and nomadic entities: the Turcoman and *yörük* tribes of the area produced a folk literature through the likes of Dadaloğlu and Karacaoğlan that told the tales of these struggles and strategies.²⁹ To be sure, the Ottoman state's alliances with large and powerful tribes, such as the Ramazanoğulları or the Kozanoğlu, represented this pressure and remained as the most important political tools for the central state. The Ramazanoğulları were semi-nomads in the sense that they had settled in the center Adana, but many members of this large tribe sustained their nomadic life-styles. The Kozanoğlu were not always a friendly ally to central authority; they too never really settled. Thus, a large part of Çukurova remained more or less nomadic until technical improvements began to allow for habitation. That is probably why many travelers described Çukurova as almost empty at the beginning of the 19th century.

in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Anatolia" in: Huri İslamoğlu (Ed.), *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP) pp. 262–270.

²⁶ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Tımar Defteri No. 2115*, no date. This Adana register is only three pages long and specifies only the name of the *tımar* holder and whether it still yields any income.

²⁷ Evliya Çelebi, pp. 337–338.

²⁸ Hütteroth differentiated such peasant settlement from nomad settlement. He argued that peasants were drawn to settle near nomad settlements because of the historic example set by the latter. Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth (1974) "Social structure, land division and settlement" in: Peter Benedict et al. (Eds.), *Turkey: Geographic and Social Perspectives* (Leiden: Brill) pp. 40–41.

²⁹ Faruk Sümer, *Çukur-ova Tarihine Dair Araştırmalar*, pp. 1–21.

Sources of water obviously were very important for both the nomads and the settled inhabitants.³⁰ Besides their location in the plain or the hill country, differences in the intensity of their usage and the ways in which they were used help explain the variety of habitation patterns from pastoral to settled. Water carries differential importance for nomads and settled populations. The most significant examples were obviously rivers that flowed during the entire year as opposed to streams with interrupted flows.³¹ Both groups of waters served the needs of human populations, albeit differently. At the very least they connected them, from Tarsus to Adana and to Misis. Valleys where streams were found, such as those between the Göksu delta and Lower Plain, welcomed human settlement more often than not: by Haçın Stream at the tip of the Taurus we find an Armenian village of the same name. For the nomads, watered regions were migration points in the dry seasons.³² Nomads used fountains and wells around the steppes heavily for the establishment of permanent pastures.³³

The passes are perhaps the most important part of the Çukurovan landscape. All travelers from Capadocia towards the southeast needed to traverse them. The southern coast lands of Anatolia and the Taurus Mountains with their snowy peaks and deep valleys have always posed a barrier for the movement of both people and objects. Travelers traversed the area in the early 19th century only through the Gülek pass, which connects Aladağlar and Bulgar Dağları in the northwest of the plain toward Niğde. The oldest settlement at the northeast tip of the hill country was an Armenian village named Pozanti.

One final word on the immense variety of the human geographic conditions of Çukurova should be added here: the climate, or rather

³⁰ The importance of the different types of water supplies for the human/historical evolution of a given area is stressed by Xavier de Planhol in *De la Plaine Pamphylieenne*, pp. 52–63.

³¹ Kotschy and other geographers categorized rivers and streams in these two groups; *Aus dem Bulghar Dagh des cilicischen Taurus*, Neue Folge, I (Berlin: [S.l.], 1856) p. 1.

³² Anthropologists call such rivers where nomads established cyclical movements ‘transhumance orbits’. See C.T. Glacken (1956) “Changing ideas of the habitable world” in: W.L. Thomas (Ed.), *Man’s Role in Changing the Face of the Earth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) pp. 70–92.

³³ The names of these fountains and wells changed frequently. According to Languis, such name changes should be attributed to their greater use by nomads as opposed to settled people, as fixed names indicated their usage by settled people. Languis, *Voyage dans la Cilicie*, p. 21.

climactic variations. There is an immense difference between the Mediterranean and hinterland climates. In the lowlands, winter cold is almost nonexistent. The precipitation rate is insufficient as well as irregular. In the summer, on the other hand, high humidity makes nights difficult, particularly for the Lower Plain inhabitants.

As Schaffer pointed out, any traveler crossing Çukurova would first notice the unique rocky mountain chains.³⁴ Indeed, above and sometimes right in the middle of miles and miles of steppe lands, these mountains formed the natural boundaries. The boundaries of the 16th century administrative units, i.e., the organization of society, up until the 19th century, seemed to follow these natural boundaries.³⁵

*From Nomadic Life to Sedentarization: 18th and 19th Centuries*³⁶

The transition from nomadic to sedentary life is a complex and extended process in any landscape during any period in history. The scholarship on nomadism and settlement usually comprises two main ideas: the resilience of nomadic society, on one hand, and its flexibility, on the other hand.³⁷ The key phenomenon to explore the complexities of this transition is migration, which helps us situate nomads between resilience and adaptation during the period of change, namely the 18th and 19th centuries in Çukurova.

In fact, differentiation in the schedule, frequency, orbits and units of migration through the 18th century helps explain the changes nomads had experienced by the 19th century. Seasonal migration in Çukurova began to show stable patterns at the beginning of the 19th century. Nomads began to follow precise routes and fixed areas for

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³⁵ The oldest document from the Ramazanoğulları, a tribal entity that administratively oversaw the affairs of the then Adana *sancak*, namely the *Vakfiyye*, shows that clearly.

³⁶ The following sources have helped me in understanding the human geography of Çukurova: D.G. Bates, "Differential access to pasture in nomadic society: The Yörük of Southeastern Turkey", *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 7 (1971) 48–59; G.W. Dimbleby (1977) "Climate, soil and man" in: Hutchinson et al. (Eds.), *The Early History of Agriculture: A Joint Symposium of the Royal Society and the British Academy* (Oxford: Oxford UP) pp. 197–208; C.T. Glacken, "Changing ideas"

³⁷ O.S. LaBianca et al. (1990) *Sedentarization and Nomadization: Food System Cycles at Hesban and Vicinity in Transjordan* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews UP) pp. 13–14; P.C. Salzman (1980) *When Nomads Settle: Processes of Sedentarization as Adaptation and Response* (New York: Praeger Publishers).

winter quarters. Sometimes they visited well-established locations both in winter and summer, and less frequently only in summer. At the beginning of the 19th century, we can therefore pinpoint an initial form of semi-sedentarization, with the whole tribe migrating together each season to a fixed destination. But such semi-sedentarization did not take place uniformly.

For one thing, continuous spatial and temporal fixation of habitation did not automatically culminate in sedentarization: fixed frequency of summer and winter migrations and/or fixed winter and summer pastures did not entail semi-sedentarization by themselves. Nomads over the water basins in the mountains continued such migratory movement, despite the shortening of migratory time during the second half of the 19th century. However, there were summer pastures that turned into settlements all the way up to November and gradually for the entire winter. This latter phenomenon went hand-in-hand with the occupation of the soil which was previously unused. In winter pastures, it was not difficult to find a mixture of nomadic and semi-nomadic temporary settlement. The travertine regions in the north, for example, were areas of fixed summer villages of semi-nomads.³⁸

Another development in migratory movements, the fixed orbit, did not immediately cause sedentarization either. The persistent continuity in the choice of a certain orbit sometimes only meant taking advantage of the same favorable locale suiting nomadic life-style. Nonetheless, such orbits resulted in regular migratory movement to a familiar site which the nomads maintained.

Regular schedules of migratory movement played perhaps the most important role in the gradual transition from nomadic life to sedentarization. Not migration between winter and summer pastures at fixed orbits but rather nomadic travel each year at regular dates indicated possession of land, and thus a solid base. In the mountains, nomads migrated in the territory immediately adjacent to occupied land. However, extension of cultivation did not first take place in such mountainous regions, as nomads leased much of the land still temporarily.³⁹

³⁸ Schaffer, "Cilicia", p. 15. Still, until the last decades of the 19th century, the plain and the very snowy peaks were relatively empty as opposed to a vigorous sedentary rural life and density in the Upper Plain and the foothills of the high country.

³⁹ J.T. Bent, "The Yourouks of Asia Minor", *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 20 (1891) 267-276, and his "On the Nomad Tribes of Asia Minor", *Proceedings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science* (London: J. Murray, 1890) p. 545.

In addition, the opportunity to lease came later in the 19th century, and a solid base even if the nomads did not use it for cultivation meant an important step toward sedentarization. Therefore, the most decisive criterion of passage to semi-sedentarization was a stable dwelling of sorts, at least for one season.

The shrinking unit of migratory movement also formed an important step toward semi-sedentarization. Tribal communities often broke up seasonally, and cultural and organizational changes imposed further break-up into familial units. Strategic considerations also could bring unification or dispersion; for instance, a large tribe could be gathered together to pass through hostile territory and disperse later when in the targeted orbit. Wet seasons also brought them together for ceremonies, trade, and amusement, while the dry season required dispersion and work (for example, digging wells to water the animals).⁴⁰ Such dispersions gradually ended in the shrinking of the migratory unit in semi-sedentarization. In the Upper Plain, certain families continued further migration and left a few families migrating in a fixed orbit. For instance, only certain families migrated in a partially semi-nomadic village community while the others stayed put.

One of the most important dynamics in the process of semi-sedentarization perhaps had to do with daily migrations, which escape analysis as such migrants gave the impression that they were settled. The daily ones undoubtedly were related to trade. This meant combining two occupations, agriculture and animal husbandry, especially for larger units of tribes. The structure of dispersed tribes mentioned above came first in adapting to the new situation brought by sedentary agriculture. In addition, migration limited to women and children indicated adaptation to agricultural life. Male agricultural workers remained down in the lowland as their families continued migration. This is a distinct form of migration, but most argue that it is a kind of pastoral life, the most fragile type perhaps. This can only be explained by the disruption of nomadic life which renders nomads devoid of sufficient sources of livelihood except for seasonal agricultural work.

These changes in migratory movements altered nomadism itself and reduced it to the mountainous valleys. As such, migratory changes pointed to the beginning of the gradual narrowing of a nomad area from semi-nomadism to fixed areas and finally to settled life by the

⁴⁰ Dumbleby, "Climate, soil and man", p. 201.

end of the 1870s. Another decisive factor behind such semi-sedentarization stemmed from the expansion of farming elsewhere in Anatolia. Agricultural possibilities in Anatolia placed the peasantry against the semi-nomads who were now encroached upon and had to look for new pastures. The *yayla yörük* of the west, particularly from the plains of Aydın on the Aegean coast, were thus pushed to the Taurus. Parallel to economic impulses, we observe, during the 19th century, “a regular tendency to combat the nomads in the name of security”.⁴¹ This affected the routes nomads regularly passed: nomads who spent winters in Aydın and Antalya, and then moved to the eastern regions of Çukurova—and even further east—in the summer increased at the beginning of the 19th century. The expansion of farming in western parts of Anatolia and the increasing pressure to sedentarize there pushed them to the southeast, further transforming nomadism in Çukurova as at the beginning of the 19th century.

It appears from the foregoing that nomadic life-styles faced many pressures in the 19th century both in and outside Çukurova. Nomads of Çukurova had begun to select fixed regions for their migrations and to settle in one of these select areas. This settlement pattern suggests an evolutionary development. But nomads also settled abruptly, because of the development of agricultural life. This kind of swift settlement pattern can be observed in the aftermath of 1865, when nomads did not settle by force but did so when agricultural development visibly increased. Still, until the 20th century, agricultural settlement did not involve total breaks from migration in Çukurova, as even the sedentary people practiced *yayla* life in the summer.⁴²

While it is difficult to assess the concentration of one or another type of settlement, we can come to certain conclusions.⁴³ For example, nomads settled in the outskirts of agro-pastoral mountains, like the Amanus and Misis, because of cultivable land which facilitated the

⁴¹ Hütteroth, “Social structure”, pp. 19–47.

⁴² *Yayla* is summer residence or pasture, depending on to whom one is referring, on the outskirts of foothills. It is still a widespread escape from the summer heat in the southern and southeastern provinces of Anatolia. *Yayla* now means different things for its practitioners: for urbanites country life in the summer, for rural populace, seasonal work.

⁴³ The hill country remained nomadic until the 20th century. However, nomads began to use far more complex arrangements of migration and had a much more complicated calendar by the end of the 19th century. As a result, the nomadic occupation of mountains remained dense enough but subject to regression.

feeding of animals. The villages of tribal settlements founded after the mid-19th century were (such) recent extensions from piedmont villages or communities of settled folk that did not possess plain land. In certain cases, they were definitely nomads that had settled recently with a significant number of animals on small and infertile lands. Most nomadic dwellings (*yörük*) around Lake Antioch were examples of such sedentarization at the end of the 19th century.⁴⁴

Many villages of the Lower Plain in the second half of the 19th century also emerged out of an evolutionary pattern of nomadic settlement. This settlement pattern coincides with the gradual extension of cultivation from the 1870s onwards in the Lower Plain. Nomadic settlement in the Upper Plain, however, did not follow such an evolutionary pattern, especially in the mountainous regions where the relationship between nomadism and geographical conditions is known. I cannot underline strongly enough the contrast between the two plains. Increasingly dense settlements of the Lower Plain—in comparison to the Upper Plain—resulted from the gradual abandonment of the pastures of the plain. Sedentarizing tribes in the villages of the Lower Plain left the remainder of their tribes in the villages of the frontier between the Plain and mountainous zones. In the meantime, exceptional numbers of populations, both agriculturalists and animal breeders, continued to practice uninterrupted summer migrations, beyond the frontier villages, as the agricultural cycles allowed such seasonal migration. But in the Upper Plain, nomadism-proper continued until the late 1870s, until agriculture began to seriously advance into the region. Thus their evolution from nomadism to settled life did not involve as many complicated stages as that of the Lower Plain, and took about 20 years, which can be called abrupt enough for the end of a centuries-long tradition. Therefore, the development of settled life here in the 1890s seems directly due to the results of progress made in agricultural life.⁴⁵

Despite such sedentarization, seasonal migration remained a part of life in Çukurova until the end of the 19th century. By then, however, it assumed new forms, one of which De Planhol calls *dispersed habitat*, i.e., concentrations of population that did not always form

⁴⁴ Bent, "The Yourouks", p. 270.

⁴⁵ We see the first signs of this during the Egyptian rule between 1832 and 1840. This will be discussed separately in the next chapter where I will evaluate how much this political impetus changed the human geography of the region.

settlement units such as villages.⁴⁶ Such dispersed settlements could be seen in both the Upper and Lower Plains, albeit at different times. In the Upper Plain, the grand estates which involved the concentration of only a limited population were established at the end of the 19th century in already settled areas which later turned into villages of agricultural workers. In the Lower Plain where low plots of travertine were mostly irrigated by the river as of the 1870s, isolated houses around the large landholdings were the norm of life. Almost all of the Lower Plain was the zone of such dispersed settlement in the 1870s.⁴⁷

These examples tend to show that 19th century sedentarization patterns in Çukurova accompanied a land-holding pattern which allowed for the peaceful cohabitation of Muslim, Armenian and Greek mercantile and agricultural communities, on one hand, and of nomads and tribes, on the other hand. Unlike in other southern plains of Anatolia, such as Antalya, the settled and the nomads of Çukurova did not disrupt one another's lives as the tribes involved in transhumance did not pose a threat to what little settlement there was in this large landscape.⁴⁸ The absence of a dense population helps explain the absence of serious clashes between the two communities, at least until the Forced Settlement (*Fırka-ı Islahiye*) of 1865.⁴⁹ In fact, there is no *a priori* reason to suppose that the nomadic lifestyle imposed danger on the peasantry in a subsistence economy. The brigandage attributed to nomadic tribal tradition is often a hasty and incorrect assumption. The central state interfered to prevent brigandage only insofar as it attempted to address the complaints of the peasantry regarding the destruction of their crops by tribes. But this intervention rarely meant breaking up

⁴⁶ De Planhol, *De la Plaine Pamphylienne*, p. 240.

⁴⁷ Consul Bennet, cited in Gould (1973) *Pasha and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840–1885*, PhD Dissertation, Los Angeles, University of California, p. 165.

⁴⁸ De Planhol insists that for years such powerful nomadic groups and peasants had atrocious relations. He argues that frequently the central authority had to come to the aid of the peasantry and exiled the unwanted nomadic tribes of western Anatolia to Cyprus. He even cites a 1710 order of the central authority to exile all the unwanted nomadic tribes of West Anatolia to Cyprus—a futile effort. De Planhol, *De la Plaine Pamphylienne*, p. 117.

⁴⁹ De Planhol might have insisted on constant battle because he assumed that the dense population in western Anatolia meant clashes on sharing the land; Xavier de Planhol, "Geography, politics, and nomadism in Anatolia", *International Social Science Journal*, 11/4 (1959) 291–310.

nomadic life totally until the 19th century.⁵⁰ Expansion of the settlement in the 19th century was a universal phenomenon characterized by the emigration of settlers and by the expansion of agriculture and trade. As such, the Ottoman expansion of settlement did not represent a unique case that stemmed from a centuries-long battle between the nomads and the settled, and served as “a basis for modern political sovereignty”.⁵¹ In other words, the basis of the 19th century pacification was not the constant battle described by De Planhol.

Indeed, in Çukurova, before the 19th century onset of intensive cotton agriculture and horticulture, nomads and peasants of the few villages mostly cohabited without major battles. Faruk Sümer who has worked extensively on the Turcoman movements in Çukurova supports this cohabitation in the 16th century even as the Turcoman wave of migrations into the area more or less receded and the Armenian and Greek settlement intensified.⁵² Eberhard argues that unless disturbed by settlement policies, the two groups used the same wheat production areas without any problem. The settlers’ fields were empty after October and they did not mind the cattle grazing and fertilizing the fields.⁵³ In turn, the nomads bought the settlers’ products. Cohabitation, not constant battle, prevailed and nomads co-existed peacefully with the Armenian small-farmers and merchants, both Armenian and Greek, who had inhabited the foothills of the Upper Plain along the centuries-old caravan routes. Indeed, the settled population owed much of their accumulation to their profitable contacts with the nomads, even

⁵⁰ The most important exception occurred in the 17th century when the state attempted to stop brigandage after the Celali Rebellions. See Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Aşiretler*, p. 15. According to Faruk Sümer, the 17th century Çukurova housed many other *yörük* migrating from western and southwestern Anatolia because of the insufficiency of grazing area there in meeting the demands of an ever-increasing numbers of nomads. See his *Oğuzlar (Türkmenler) Tarihleri-Boy Teşkilatı-Destanları* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, Ankara, 1972) pp. 195–196. Other attempts at settlement during the 18th century, especially in order to tax the nomadic Turcomans, seemed to have failed. Yusuf Halaçoğlu (1997) *XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun İskan Siyaseti ve Aşiretleri İskan Teşebbüsü* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi) pp. 47–53 and 132–135.

⁵¹ Gould argues powerfully that the Ottoman expansion of settlement was an example of a universal phenomenon of the 19th century. See *Pashas and Brigands*, p. 1.

⁵² Faruk Sümer, *Çukurova Tarihine Dair Araştırmalar*, p. 27.

⁵³ Wolfram Eberhard, *Settlement and Social Change in Asia* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong UP) pp. 279–323.

during the latter's semi-nomadic fixation on a chosen landscape.⁵⁴ The Armenian merchants and money-lenders also proved indispensable for the semi-nomads, as they provided merchandise for the daily needs of nomads during settlement. They traveled to Adana to shop for food and clothing on behalf of the nomadic elements. And they themselves determined the mode of payment: usually by way of collecting the tribute of a town to be paid to the major tribal lords, who in turn were supposed to pay the taxes to the state: i.e., the animal tax (*ağnam*), irregular levies (*avarız*) and after the mid-19th century, the tithe.⁵⁵

Place names suggest that tribes and peasants cohabited without major problems, as “surviving names require a certain minimum of surviving population”.⁵⁶ Faruk Sümer also noted the absence of 17th century habitats especially those located in the southern parts of the Upper Plain, indicating emigration.⁵⁷ Indeed, villages that survived throughout centuries probably prove that there was no brutal break of habitation. Many antique names remained unchanged, indicating the absence of nomadic conquest or even penetration. In these locales, continuous cohabitation is indisputable. In addition, new names of tribal background point to nomadic settlement on previously unsettled land and thereby show that even the expansion of settlement in the 19th century did not disrupt any peasant community.⁵⁸ We can survey these 19th century tribal villages names through a list of villages published in 1928.⁵⁹ Many of the village names show soil type, vegetation type, human-made characteristics such as *viran* (waste-

⁵⁴ Işık Tamdoğan-Abel (1998) *Les Modalités de l'Urbanité dans une Ville Ottomane: Les Habitants d'Adana au XVIII^{ème} Siècle d'après les Registres des Cadis*, PhD Dissertation, Paris, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales.

⁵⁵ Cevdet Pasha (1991) *Tezâkir*, II (edited by Yusuf Halaçoğlu) (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu) p. 114.

⁵⁶ Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth (1990) “Methods of historical geography: Examples from Southeastern Turkey, Syria and Iraq”, *V, Milletlerarası Türkiye Sosyal ve İktisadi Tarihi Kongresi Tebliğler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi) p. 495.

⁵⁷ Faruk Sümer, *Çukurova Tarihine Dair Araştırmalar*, pp. 27–32.

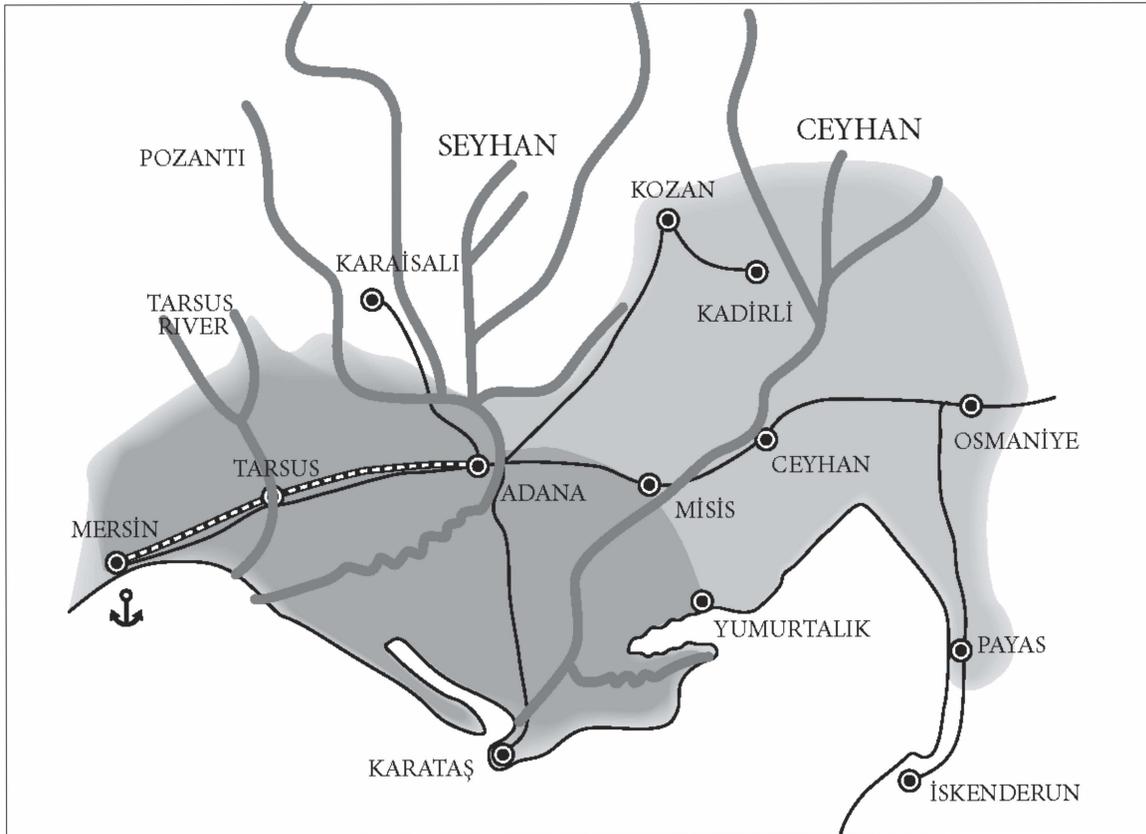
⁵⁸ Gould's work on the Forced Settlement of 1865 in Çukurova proves that the state's struggle of settling the tribes neither stemmed from nor caused any clash between the peasantry and the nomads, except a few isolated incidents. The struggle was between the pashas and brigands, not brigands and peasants. See Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, pp. 151–157.

⁵⁹ This is a list that contains 194 villages of Çukurova at the end of the Ottoman Empire. Today, there are 701 villages. Although the list was published in the 1920s, it comprises Turkish, Ottoman and French names that go back to the earlier century. *Dahiliye Vekaleti Son Teşkilât-ı Melâkiyede Köylerimiz ve Adları, Adana Vilayeti*, İstanbul, 1928, pp. 85–99. And T.C. *Adana İli İstatistikleri*, 1997, pp. 1–14.

land), *kale* (fortress), *ören* (ruins), *hisar* (fort), animal husbandry, and tribal/ethnic background. Villages named *Çamboyardı* (painted by pine trees), *Çımarlı* (that which has poplar trees), *Dağlıoğlu* (descendant of a mountaineer), *Karataş* (black rock), *Yamaçlı* (that which has slopes), *Dağcı* (mountaineer), and *Kızılagaç* (alder), designated tribal settlements of piedmont in high country plains. Many villages are called *Kışla* (barracks or winter quarters), indicating winter pastures for semi-nomads or summer nomads that traveled to higher and colder regions. Other village names that help us identify the quality of the soil such as *Alapınar* (red creek), *Taşoba* (land of rocks), *Kızılyer* (red land), *Tortulu* (turbid), *Çimli* (grassland), and *Kilbağ* (clay vineyard), indicate new settlement without any community on the land. Similarly, names that pertain to the climate point to new settlements, as newcomers usually remarked them as such, for example *Yelatan* (wind-swept). Interestingly enough, the 1928 register does not show any village named *Pazar* (market), *Pazarcık*, etc., which would indicate commercial activity. I deduce from that that most tribes did not live in such villages. We will later see that almost all inland commercial activity was in Armenian/Greek-named villages, the names of which also appeared in 19th century sources.



Map 1. Physical geography of Çukurova, Faik Sabri Duran, Büyük Atlası (1st edn., n.d.)



Map 2. The Plains of Çukurova (Red: Upper Plain, Green: Lower Plain)

THE STATE: POLITICAL AND LEGAL DYNAMICS FROM THE
EGYPTIANS TO THE OTTOMAN REFORMS

...*May God bless our arms with strength, our landlord with authority, our pocket with earnings, and may God bless the deceased Ibrahim Pasha with compassion.*¹

Egyptian Penetration and New Beginnings, 1832–1840

Ibrahim Pasha's impact on the history of Çukurova, from his short rule of the area between 1832–1840, is perhaps most evident in labor rituals that continued to survive up until the 1920s. Laborers in Çukurova ended each labor day with a prayer that included wishes for Ibrahim Pasha, commonly known as *fatıha* for his soul:

Respecting the night, awaiting the morning, we pray to Muhammad our prophet, may God damn the devil and bless our arms with strength, our landlord with authority, our pocket with earnings, and may God bless the deceased Ibrahim Pasha with compassion.²

During the first quarter of the 19th century, before the brief Egyptian conquest by Ibrahim Pasha, the area of Çukurova was mainly a site of transhumance. During the 100 years following 1800, this site of transhumance went through a multitude of processes including those of political regimes that transformed it into a region of commercial agriculture. First it was the Egyptian rule of the 1830s that exemplified imperial aspirations in the area, the hallmark of which was simply the extension of agriculture by a colonizing power. Indeed, it was during the reign of Ibrahim Pasha, son of Muhammad Ali Pasha of Egypt,

Laborers' prayer at the end of each workday, a tradition continued from the 1830s to the 1920s. Hilmi Uran (1924) *Adana Ziraat Ameliyesi*, Istanbul, p. 15. The translation is mine. Also see Uran's *Meşrutiyet, Tek Parti, Çok Parti Hatıralarım* (Istanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2009).

² Uran, *Adana Ziraat Ameliyesi*, p. 15. Saying of this prayer was common to all laborers, wage or *corvée*.

that the changing human geography of Çukurova embarked on the first intense activity toward becoming a productive sedentarized land.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the regime in Cairo organized military campaigns outside the boundaries of the Ottoman province of Egypt under the then governor Muhammad Ali. This expansionist policy took Egyptian armies all the way to Çukurova in 1832, and Muhammad Ali appointed his son as the governor-general of Northern Syria who remained in this post until 1840.

Scholars have argued that the transformation of Çukurova from an insignificant agricultural production to one of agricultural settlements with cotton production can be traced back to this period of Ibrahim Pasha's rule.³ It is agreed upon that his rule provided the momentum for the region's transition to commercialization, but what and how he actually achieved this has not been studied in detail. A closer look at the efforts of Ibrahim Pasha within the context of Muhammad Ali's policies in Egypt does indeed reveal that imperialistic ambitions had touched upon Çukurova. His son attempted to repeat in Çukurova what the father had done in Egypt.

Ibrahim Pasha in Çukurova

I have not done anything in Egypt that the English did not do in India
(Je n'ai fait en Egypte que ce que les Anglais ont fait aux Indes).⁴

Muhammad Ali is believed to have uttered these words in relation to his ambitions for a larger and independent Egypt. Çukurova may well have been envisaged as part of such an Egypt, colonizing another landscape similar to the Nile Delta. According to the Kütahya agreement of 29 March 1833 between Egyptian and Ottoman forces, the Adana district (*muhassıllık*) was given to Ibrahim Pasha together with Damascus and Aleppo. Although one of the original aims of the Egyptian conquest seems to have been reaching the forests of Syria, Çukurova and Antalya, obviously these areas, particularly, offered more than timber.⁵ It is nonetheless true that Çukurova could serve the Egyptian provi-

³ For instance Şevket Pamuk (1987) *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism, 1820–1913* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP).

⁴ Cited from Georges Douin (Ed.) (1927) *La Mission du Baron de Boislecote, L'Égypte et la Syrie en 1833* in: Henry Dodwell (1931) *The Founder of Modern Egypt: A Study of Muhammad Ali* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP), cover page. Dodwell does not specify the page number of his source.

⁵ Dodwell, *The Founder of Modern Egypt*, p. 116.

sioning of military equipment; the Egyptian fleet needed timber from the extensive oak forests of the area. Muhammad Ali impressed on his son the importance of Antalya, Alanya and Çukurova since “the matter of timber” was as crucial as “crippling the army of Constantinople”.⁶

Clearly, however, Egyptian expansionism involved various facets. The policies of Muhammad Ali played a great role in the development of capitalism in Egypt.⁷ Indeed, he “refined and expanded the existing economic system” in order to keep up with modernizing mercantilist economies.⁸ Muhammad Ali’s reforms, particularly those concerning the agrarian regime, necessitated regular income that could come from the efficient management of conquered lands. So the exploitation of conquered lands meant relieving pressure to raise greater revenues at home and thus enabled changes in the agrarian regime.⁹

The application of these policies can clearly be observed in Çukurova during the reign of Ibrahim Pasha. When Ibrahim Pasha took over Çukurova in 1832, the situation in the region was similar to that of Egypt when Muhammad Ali came to power. Egyptian agriculture had been suffering from a variety of factors including the quality of land, which had deteriorated due to the silting up of the canals. The delta, as a result, had lost a third of its cultivable area. The Fayum was depopulated for fear of tribal (*Bedouin*) raids.¹⁰ Çukurova, when Ibrahim Pasha entered, was not entirely dissimilar; its meager settled population peacefully cohabited with the nomadic populaces for the most part. But this did not mean total inactivity, for feuds among

⁶ Khaled Fahmy discusses the letters of Ibrahim Pasha and his father in which Muhammad Ali insisted that they should not give up Antalya, Alanya, and Çukurova since “the matter of timber” was as important as “crippling the army of Constantinople” in his *All the Pasha’s Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997) p. 50. Fahmy has lumped the timber of southern Anatolia together with that of Syria, as the issue in his work is taken up among the reasons for the conquest of Syria. Neither Muhammad Ali nor Ibrahim followed the same line of thought; they were specific about Çukurova.

⁷ Peter Gran argued that Muhammad Ali expanded to the east for the purpose of vitalizing the trade routes along the Red Sea. See his *Islamic Roots of Capitalism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979) p. 32.

⁸ Afaf Lütfi al-Sayyid Marsot (1984) *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP) p. 1. According to Marsot, expansion could provide markets much needed for Egypt’s growing industrial sector. Yet, creating an industrial sector run by the state was one of the policies of Muhammad Ali.

⁹ Kenneth M. Cuno, “The origins of private ownership of land in Egypt”, *IJMES*, 12/3 (1980) 268.

¹⁰ Shafik Ghorbal (1928) *The Beginnings of the Egyptian Question and the Rise of Mehmet Ali* (London: Routledge).

tribes could erupt and cause chaos. Thus Çukurova presented a familiar scene, both socially and geographically.

Interesting as it might be from the point of view of the Ottoman state, Çukurova did indeed find some peace when Muhammad Ali Pasha expanded against the Ottomans. In 1832 the Ottoman state had just assigned Hüseyin Pasha, a new military officer to Adana, to suppress and arrest Hacıali Bey, a tribal leader. However, when he learned of Ibrahim Pasha's advance from Hums toward Adana, Hüseyin Pasha left his headquarters and retreated back to Ulukışla. The absence of military support, in turn, left the *muhassıl* of Adana, Mehmed Sadık Pasha, completely powerless against Ibrahim Pasha. Mehmed Sadık Pasha had also just been appointed to the post of keeping Adana and Tarsus secure from tribal powers. So when Ibrahim Pasha entered Adana, the city was being cleared of one of its tribes. He found a disabled Ottoman *muhassıl* without military support and no tribal opposition.¹¹

In Egypt, Muhammad Ali had begun the implementation of his agricultural policy by first solving the problem of nomadic tribes. He first appointed the tribal chiefs as governors of districts, recruited their followers as soldiers, and then went as far as forcing their transfer outside the delta area and imprisoning them.¹² Indeed, the similarity of the Egyptian and Çukurovan cases of tribal settlement by force is striking. Muhammad Ali had invented his own model of *Fırka-ı İslahiye* (*Forced Settlement*), perhaps a more successful one than the 1865 Ottoman effort in Çukurova, as we shall see.

Ibrahim Pasha also began with the tribes and tried everything short of forced settlement. Indeed, immediately after his conquest of Çukurova, Ibrahim Pasha sought the support of tribal leaders. Notwithstanding his cooperation with the representatives of the Ottoman state, Menemencioğlu Habip Bey was one of the first to put his armed

W.B. Barker (1853) in W.F. Aynsworth (Ed.), *Lares et Penates or Cilicia and its Governors* (London: Ingram, Cooke and Co.) p. 89.

¹² Gabriel Baer (1968a) "Social Change in Egypt: 1800-1914" in: P.M. Holt (Ed.), *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt: Historical Studies from the Ottoman Conquest to the United Arab Republic* (Oxford: Oxford UP) pp. 138-140. Another study on the development of tribal (*Bedouin*) landed property is far more critical and asserts, correctly I believe, that settlement of tribes was not all that smooth a process, and that the landed aristocracy of Egypt was not formed of only tribal chiefs. See Cuno, "The origins of private ownership", p. 271.

forces in the service of Ibrahim Pasha.¹³ Indeed, upon the advice of the Menemencioğlu, Ibrahim Pasha invited other tribal leaders from Konya to Mersin. The Menemencioğlu were also influential in defeating some Kurdish tribes who were around Iskenderun at the time. He kept permanent forces at Tarsus, Adana, Misis, and Gülek, strategic points for securing peace in the entire Çukurova.

After the successful conquest of Sis (Kozan), Ibrahim Pasha marched toward the Kozan Mountains where he managed to forge an alliance with the tribal lord of East Kozan, Samur Ağa. However, the leader of Western Kozan, Çadırcı Mehmed Ağa, resisted. Ibrahim Pasha's army fought unsuccessfully against the warriors of Çadırcı which effectively prevented his dominance over Kozan.¹⁴ As a result, the Kozanoğlu became even more powerful as such a victory over the Egyptian army further strengthened the tribe's relations with the Ottoman state. Another tribal leader who evaded Ibrahim Pasha's capture was Küçük Alioğlu Mısdık Bey, the leader of the Gavur Mountains around Kurtkulağı.

However, such defeats did not prove detrimental to Ibrahim Pasha's plans because the tribes that he could not bring under his power remained outside the core of the Lower Plain. Thus Ibrahim Pasha concentrated on the Lower Plain where, as discussed in the preceding chapter, evolution from nomadic life to sedentary life had already begun. Ibrahim Pasha established his administrative control in this area, in (what I call) the Adana-Tarsus sub-region of the Lower Plain. This was to become the core area of cotton cultivation and commercial development in Çukurova. The whole process began here, thanks largely to the efforts of Ibrahim Pasha who had to fight the tribes around Adana and Tarsus fiercely in order to prevent them from going into the Taurus. When that failed, he succeeded in inducing the tribes in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region to spend at least part of the year in cultivation.¹⁵ This was also to help in drawing the line separating the eastern—less cultivated and more nomadic—from the western part, the Adana-Tarsus sub-region. Ibrahim Pasha's new spatial direction

¹³ Menemencioğlu Ahmed Bey (1997: edited by Yılmaz Kurt) *Menemencioğulları Tarihi* (Ankara: Akçağ Yayınları) p. 158.

¹⁴ Cevdet Pasha, *Tezâkir* (1963: edited by Cavit Baysun) (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu) p. 128.

¹⁵ Public Records Office, Foreign Office Archives, London (hereafter FO) 78/283, Query 27, Campbell at Cairo, 31 July 1836.

marked a milestone in settlement patterns and networks of commercialization, as the core area of the Lower Plain later became the center of the regional economy. Decades later, Cevdet Pasha fought with the tribes on the eastern mountainous frontier for the same purpose, to push them outside the core area of the Lower Plain.

One of the British consuls located in the area wrote to Consul-General Colonel Campbell, stationed in Egypt, that Ibrahim Pasha's rule meant security from arbitrary acts, which in turn meant security of property. "Native capitalists now venture(d) to embark on their fortunes in commercial speculations which formerly they did not venture to do."¹⁶

Laborers, Irrigation, Crops: New Measures

Perhaps the most long-lasting change brought about by Ibrahim Pasha had to do with the demography of this landscape. Arabs and even north Africans began to settle in the area at his instigation and remained there, introducing another demographic element to the human geography previously shared by Armenians and tribes. This began with the bringing of expert labor as he attempted to solve yet another major problem, namely, the lack of workers. Actions such as these helped change the human geography of Çukurova so deeply that later on, as we shall see, Christian Arabs were easily able to become part of the commercial and industrial entrepreneurship.¹⁷ Cotton is labor intensive, tying more people to the land. Its cultivation required close supervision and a stable labor force with a surge of demand at harvest time. In addition to seasonal workers who would work picking cotton in October, the preparation of the fields for the following year's cotton cultivation, and hoeing cotton, required still other forms of labor. Syria with a population of 2 million was very important as a great source of manpower, for not only Egypt but also for Çukurova.¹⁸

¹⁶ FO 78/283, Query 20, Campbell at Cairo, 31 July 1836. This Foreign Office record includes inquiries numbered 1–27 conducted by the Syrian British consular officers in Çukurova and Syria, to be reported to Campbell.

¹⁷ The late 19th century immigration of some elite families particularly from Beirut may be explained more by the Eastern Mediterranean links of commerce. However, Vahé Tachjian correctly points out that Egyptian rule also favored the immigration of Arabs. See his "La période d'occupation égyptienne en Cilicie (1832–1840): changements économiques and démographiques", *Chronos*, 11 (2005) 103–141.

¹⁸ A.J. Rustum (1936) *The Royal Archives of Egypt and the Origins of the Egyptian Expedition to Syria* (Beirut: Sarkis Press) p. 169. Most of these laborers were forced to

Many *fellahin* from Syria continued to pour in as laborers even after the Egyptian retreat and the re-establishment of Ottoman authority. The laborers owed to Ibrahim Pasha, more than anything, the complete re-organization of the work week. Previously work began each Wednesday and used to continue until the following Tuesday, with the exception of Friday in the middle of the week. At the time, the central market of Çukurova was held in Adana every Tuesday which meant that the workers had to travel in the night to join the market. This left them vulnerable to brigands and theft. In order to prevent this, Ibrahim Pasha announced that work would stop mid-day Monday without any adjustment of payment. Thus, the workers were given a half-holiday and also protected from thieves, while still earning the same amount of money.¹⁹

To recruit seasonal labor, the landlords used an intermediary whose job it was to bring in and organize seasonal labor. The intermediary, the *elcibaşı*, worked for 10% of the produce collected by the laborers he recruited. This kind of management of the labor force saved the landlord from direct contact with the laborers and usually ensured sufficient labor power. Now, the *elcibaşı* is almost a hereditary institution in charge of labor, determining every single detail of a workday for the seasonal laborers.²⁰

Perhaps the second most important measure Ibrahim Pasha undertook was the drainage and canalization projects for Tarsus. For in the vast deltas of the Seyhan and Ceyhan Rivers, numerous swamps were caused by insufficient drainage, and poor climatic conditions, and patches of still water surrounded these rivers of the Lower Plain. Thus, when the irrigation project of the Tarsus River was carried out, draining of the swamps became a necessity as well. Previously, the water would inundate the land and then would be captured by the people in small dikes, a traditional basin irrigation method. But growing cotton in large quantities requires perennial water resources, which means that the water level of the rivers must remain permanently high. Thus, as was done to the Nile, dikes and dams along the river were

work, but they remained in the area even after the departure of the Egyptian forces now working as wage laborers.

¹⁹ Uran, *Adana Ziraat Amelesi*, pp. 16–17.

²⁰ Mustafa Soysal, *Die Siedlungs*, pp. 122–123. Mustafa Soysal observed the unchanging operations of the *elcibaşı* when he did his research in the 1960s and 1970s. I myself interviewed many *elcibaşı* during numerous field research in the region in the late 1990s and 2000.

constructed in order to raise the water level.²¹ This also meant more canals and thus more land was gained for agriculture. Lands long abandoned were brought under cultivation again.

For the Egyptians the most important crop was also cotton, and they were familiar with the crop rotation system around cotton (cotton-sesame-wheat or cotton-wheat) employed in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region since the 16th century.²² Egypt had begun producing the long-fiber cotton, the *jumel*, in the 1820s.²³ Ibrahim Pasha emulated this Egyptian experience with cotton in Çukurova. In order to use the land more efficiently for cotton cultivation, fallow was eliminated and wheat was grown as a second crop. Ibrahim Pasha brought wheat from Cyprus to be planted in Çukurova in addition to Divrak barley from Egypt.²⁴ He also introduced a new product: sugar cane, the seeds of which came from Egypt with an expert labor force. Some Copts were brought in specifically to produce sugar cane.

Ibrahim Pasha was also responsible for land reclamation in Çukurova where there was abundant uncultivated land and showed a direct interest in the cultivation of large estates. He was personally involved in cotton production on his own account and encouraged, if not forced, his cadre to become landholders and follow his example.²⁵ Most of the earliest large landholdings in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region dated back to the period of Ibrahim Pasha. He had simply followed the Egyptian

²¹ The same had been accomplished in Egypt where, by 1834, all existing irrigation canals had been cleared and new ones added. As a result, a great amount of land in Upper Egypt was brought under cultivation. Helen Rivlin (1961) *The Agricultural Policy of Muhammad Ali in Egypt* (Cambridge, Harvard UP) pp. 178–190. In the meantime, grants were freely made in order to promote agriculture. These were transformed into absolute property by 1842. Members of Muhammad Ali's family received grants of estates (*çiftlik*s) in the irrigated area on condition of promoting cultivation. Ahmed Abdel-Rahim Mustafa (1968) "The breakdown of the monopoly system in Egypt after 1940" in: P.M. Holt (Ed.), *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt: Historical Studies from the Ottoman Conquest to the United Arab Republic* (London: Oxford UP) pp. 291–308.

²² Huri İslamoğlu and Suraiya Faroqhi, "Crop patterns and agricultural production trends in sixteenth-century Anatolia", *Review*, 2 (1979) 401–436.

²³ Patrick O'Brien (1968) "The long-term growth of agricultural production in Egypt: 1821–1962" in: P.M. Holt (Ed.), *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt: Historical Studies from the Ottoman Conquest to the United Arab Republic* (London [u.a.]: Oxford UP) pp. 162–195.

²⁴ T. Kotschy (1858) *Reise in den cilicischen Taurus über Tarsus* (Gotha: J. Perthes) pp. 118–119.

²⁵ F. Charles Roux, "La domination Egyptienne en Syrie", *Revue d'Histoire de Colonies*, XXI (Juillet–Octobre 1933); A.J. Rustom "Syria under Mehemet Ali", *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature*, XLI/1 (October 1924).

model in the formation of estates.²⁶ During his rule, migrants from Egypt and Syria settled in the area as landlords.

These migrant landlords and others employed a sharecropping system in Çukurova akin to the *tamaliyya* of Egypt. The *tamaliyya* was one of the most commonly used sharecropping systems that came out of Muhammad Ali's agricultural policies. Its purpose was to use the peasantry at reduced wages for cotton cultivation while they would be allowed to plant another crop on part of the land.²⁷ To establish sharecropping in Çukurova, more Arab migrants were settled between Yumurtalık and the Ceyhan River, to the east of the Adana-Tarsus sub-region which was still uncultivated.²⁸

Administering Balance: Urban and Rural Çukurova

Ibrahim Pasha seems also to have been a good administrator, as attested to by his accomplishments in Adana, his headquarters.²⁹ There he sought to eliminate corruption and bribery. He set up the first Administrative Council of Çukurova, the main duty of which was to listen to complaints and to register petitions from the people. The members were salaried officers.³⁰ Indeed, he attempted to make Adana into the urban center of Çukurova. At the time, the Adana population of 13,000 hardly received any urban services. Ibrahim Pasha began building an infrastructure.³¹ One of the most important actions was

²⁶ Muhammad Ali, after applying new methods of agriculture and irrigation, had turned to estate formation. Since the peasantry—who were to become soldiers for the most part—did not have the capital or technical know-how to produce such crops on a large scale, the Egyptian state became the capitalist itself, opening up estates and reducing the peasantry to wage laborers. See Alan Richards (1982) *Egypt's Agricultural Development, 1800–1980: Technical and Social Change* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press) p. 145. Part of this policy was to turn to his own family and high officials to increase efficiency. The Turkish-Circassian aristocracy seems to have benefited from this opportunity almost immediately. See Rivlin, *The Agricultural Policy*, pp. 68–69.

²⁷ Richards, *Egypt's Agricultural Development*, p. 58.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 146–147.

²⁹ The first investigations into the potential for mining in Çukurova were also conducted under his rule. Russegger was a mining engineer who was brought for this purpose from Austria. J. von Russegger (1849) *Reisen in Europa, Asien und Afrika Atlas*, 5 (Stuttgart: Schweizerbart).

³⁰ Menemencioğlu Ahmed Bey, *Menemencioğulları Tarihi*, pp. 157–158. The Menemenci family history is full of testimony to his just statesmanship, perhaps because they profited from his rule. But other sources used here corroborate this family history.

³¹ Ahmed Lütfi Efendi (1292/1875) *Tarih-i Lütfi*, III (Istanbul: Matbaa-ı 'Amire) p. 145.

the construction of a bridge over a ravine that flooded during the rainy season but remained marshy during the rest of the year. This was to provide continuous passage between the city gate and beyond; Kuruköprü from then on became the tax post (*bac*) for the peasants entering into town to market their produce. Thus, from Kuruköprü to the west, he created a new commercial center through which all of Adana's exports and all the imports from Beirut and Alexandria to the interior passed. This new center became important to the peasants and the town-dwellers in different ways, so they gave it different names. The peasants called this new place Bacınbaşı while the name used by the urban populace was Kuruköprü. Just like Taşköprü, Kuruköprü was also closed at night. For latecomers, Ibrahim Pasha had built a place to stay (*khan*), a small mosque (*mescid*), and a garrison to provide safe accommodation.³² This neighborhood around Kuruköprü has remained an important center of commerce and travel to this day. The bridge itself was intact until the beginning of the 20th century. The bridge area included a canal for draining the rain waters that flooded the River Seyhan. The people I interviewed in Adana told me that until quite recently some remains of the canal were still being found in construction excavations.³³ North of the bridge no public works were undertaken until the end of the nineteenth century as the area was within the boundaries of the *Ramazanoğulları Vakıfı*.³⁴

Ibrahim Pasha had also built a water system for the residential areas of the town, including wheels raising the water of the river for public fountains.³⁵ As a result of these numerous works, Adana had the infrastructure it needed by the second half of the 19th century to become a major center of southeastern Anatolia. The Tanzimat regime inherited this infrastructure although following the departure of Ibrahim Pasha from Çukurova it was allowed to deteriorate.

In the short period of his administration, Ibrahim Pasha established order, struck alliances with the tribes, promoted agriculture, and augmented trade. Many of the programs he attempted to introduce in Çukurova were to be ruined or damaged only to be replicated and

³² Kasım Ener (1967) *Adana Tarihine ve Tarımına Dair Araştırmalar* (Adana: Türksözü Matbaası) p. 108.

³³ Interview conducted with Seyit Seyhan of the Municipality and Veysel Erdem Bozdoğanlı, former Director of the Cultural Affairs, Adana, November 1998.

³⁴ Kasım Ener (1979) *Ramazanoğulları Türkmen Beyliği Tarihi* (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı) pp. 16–17.

³⁵ Menemencioğlu Ahmed Bey, *Menemencioğulları Tarihi*, p. XLI.

recovered three decades later. The example was set, and the potential proven. The most important and perhaps the most permanent achievement of Ibrahim Pasha in Çukurova was the organization of sedentary life around cotton production. Although cotton had been produced in the area since the 16th century,³⁶ commercial cotton farming did not emerge until the 19th century. It was certainly his success that prompted the Ottomans to take charge in these lands. His efforts paved the way for Çukurova to become integrated into the world economy following the cotton famine in the 1860s. The resulting Ottoman interest in the agricultural potential of the area, beginning with the Forced Settlement, forever changed Çukurovan history. One final parallel between Egypt and Çukurova can be seen during the period of the most dramatic agricultural changes. In both Egypt and Çukurova, the total cultivated area and cotton production expanded during the period from 1890 to 1914.³⁷

Achilles' Heel: What Egyptians Did Not Do

Unlike his father, however, Ibrahim Pasha did not extend his power to the control of land revenues. After appropriating Mamluk lands, Muhammad Ali had conducted a survey of the tenures of all lands and had changed the existing tax-farming system.³⁸ Ibrahim Pasha does not seem to have introduced any systematic changes in the collection of land revenues. As usual, the land revenue formed the basis of financial resources. But in terms of assessing an amount on a specific parcel of land, Ibrahim Pasha had not changed the existing, chaotic, system. Nor did he undertake any cadastral survey like that conducted in Egypt.³⁹

³⁶ BOA: *Tapu Tahrir Defterleri*, Adana, No. 254, dated 954/(1547). The taxes collected from rice paddies and the sale of cotton products testify to the agricultural activity in Adana, the center of Çukurova.

³⁷ Alan Richards, "Technical and social change in Egyptian agriculture, 1890-1914", *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 26/4 (1978) 725-745.

³⁸ Gabriel Baer (1962) *A History of Land Ownership in Modern Egypt, 1800-1950*, Middle Eastern Monographs, No. 4 (London: Oxford UP) pp. 1-7; A. Paton (1863) *A History of the Egyptian Revolution*, Vol. II (London: Trübner & Co.) p. 27.

³⁹ In 1816 Muhammad Ali had a cadastral survey conducted. Moustafa Fahmy (1954) *La Revolution de l'Industrie en Egypte et ses Conséquences sociales au 19e Siècle, 1800-1850* (Leiden: Brill) pp. 23-25; A.E. Crouchley (1938) *The Economic Development of Modern Egypt* (London: Longmans, Green) pp. 155-157.

After all, Ibrahim Pasha did not have enough time in Çukurova to establish trade monopolies as his father had done in Egypt.⁴⁰ However, the surplus cotton of Çukurova became an important part of Anatolian trade during his reign, as it traveled directly to the hinterland via Kayseri. The leap in the amount and price of cotton received from Adana in trade centers such as Tokat attests to the success Ibrahim Pasha achieved in domestic trade.⁴¹ He also prepared facilities for commerce. He designated Mersin as the principal port for the region.⁴² At the time Kazanlı, the natural port nearby Mersin, was being used, but it did not have a large dock and the bottom of the sea was covered with silt making anchoring almost impossible. Ibrahim Pasha decided to abandon Kazanlı and Mersin was established as a port city.⁴³ Thereafter, the history of Mersin, a flourishing port-town in the 19th century, bears a similarity to Alexandria. Muhammad Ali had spent much effort establishing Alexandria as a major port in this period. He had begun with building a dock in Alexandria and linking the port-city to the Nile, by the recently dug Mahmudiya Canal. By mid-century, Alexandria had become one of the favorite cities of Egypt, preferred over Izmir by the Turkish-speaking elite, and the foremost port of Egypt.⁴⁴ Alexandria indeed was the only example of “conspicuous

⁴⁰ Muhammad Ali was the chief merchant of his country and he determined not only the kind of produce but also what would be done with it. It was delivered into the government warehouses at a fixed rate from where he himself conducted its sale. This monopoly angered many foreign merchants, but it served to protect the industries of Egypt. Jean Batou (1991) “Muhammad Ali’s Egypt, 1809–1848: A command economy in the 19th century?” in: Jean Batou (Ed.), *Between Development and Underdevelopment: The Precarious Attempts at Industrialization of the Periphery, 1800–1870*, 6 (Geneva: Libr. Droz) pp. 181–217.

⁴¹ See *Tokat Şeriye Sicilleri* (TSS) 38:4, Ramazan 1248/(1833); TSS 39:5, Şaban 1249/(1834); TSS 39:5, Zilkade 1249/(1834); TSS 47:31, Rebiulevvel 1251/(1835); TSS 48:2, Cemaziyelevvel 1252/(1836); TSS 49:i, Şevval 1252/(1837); TSS 49:I, Rebiulevvel 1253/(1837); TSS 50:5, Rebiulevvel 1254/(1838). My thanks to Dr. Yüksel Duman for sharing this information with me. For further information on the usage of Adana’s cotton in the textiles of Tokat, see Yüksel Duman (1998) *Notables, Textiles and Copper in Ottoman Tokat, 1750–1840*, PhD Dissertation, Binghamton University, State University of New York.

⁴² Lothar Rother (1971) *Die Städte der Çukurova: Adana-Mersin-Tarsus; ein Beitrag zum Gestalt-, Struktur- und Funktionswandel türkischer Städte (Tübingen: Im Selbstverlag des Geographischen Instituts der Universität)*. p. 74.

⁴³ Vital Cuinet (1892) *La Turquie d’Asie, Géographie administrative, statistique descriptive et Raisonnée de chaque Province de l’Asie-Mineure, II* (Paris: E. Leroux) pp. 60–62.

⁴⁴ Gabriel Baer (1968b) “Urbanization in Egypt, 1820–1907” in: W.R. Polk and R.L. Chambers (Eds.), *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East* (Chicago: Chicago UP) pp. 155–169.

growth” between the 1820s and 1860s.⁴⁵ The rest of Egypt was urbanized much later, between 1864 and 1882.⁴⁶ It was in the 1860s that foreign consular officers in Çukurova began to prefer Mersin, which much like Alexandria, was the first point of growth. Like the rest of Egypt, the rest of Çukurova would catch the momentum of development only as late as 1890s.

The Aftermath of Egyptian Rule

When the Egyptians left, the Ottoman state calculated the tax arrears for the years 1838 and 1840 (1254 and 1256) to have been some 6 million kuruş.⁴⁷ This investigation made it quite clear to the Ottomans that Ibrahim Pasha had indeed amassed a great income in Çukurova for his government, himself, and both native and Egyptian notables. Ibrahim Pasha himself had made over 73,600 kuruş from his fields.⁴⁸ The equipment and animals Ibrahim Pasha and his retinue left behind in Adana were worth to 280,000 kuruş, and in Tarsus some 80,000 kuruş. Most importantly they left behind produce from the 1840–1841 harvest. The amount of produce that came out of Adana, Tarsus, Gülek, and Bilan was considerable, thanks to the development undertaken by the Egyptians. Most of the landholdings of Egyptian notables were concentrated in Tarsus, but some pashas had cotton fields as far away as Feke in the north of the Upper Plain. Cotton was not the only source of the Egyptian wealth. The men brought into the region by Ibrahim Pasha had established great gardens and cultivated important amounts of wheat and barley as well. They had also invested in industry; Ibrahim Pasha and his men had at least three mills operating in Tarsus. Stores and shops in Mersin and Tarsus indicated the extent of their commercial dealings. Ibrahim Pasha had built two mansions in Tarsus for his personal use. Other activities involved mining and animal husbandry. In addition, control of the Gülek pass seems to have

⁴⁵ Robert Ilbert (1996) *Alexandrie 1830–1930: Histoire d’une Communauté citadine* 1–2 (Le Caire: Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale).

⁴⁶ Baer, “Social change”, pp. 154–156.

⁴⁷ BOA: *Maliye Nezareti, Maliye*, 184, 1267.5.21 (2 June 1851). Only less than half of this amount (2.8 million kuruş) was procured from the Egyptians. The state tried to figure out ways of procuring the rest, but political control could not easily be established immediately after the Egyptian rule.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* What was registered as Ibrahim Pasha’s was as follows: from Gülek wheat worth 38,000 kuruş, barley worth 5,600 kuruş, sesame worth 1,880 kuruş, and some onions, corn, and chick peas; from Feke cotton worth 24,000 kuruş, and tobacco the total value of which came to 4,080 kuruş.

brought considerable income to the military men of Egypt, including Ibrahim Pasha himself.⁴⁹

The Ottomans had a hard time collecting taxes after the Egyptian forces had withdrawn. However, there was no other indication of an immediate slump in the productivity of the area. Apparently, the system continued to function for several years; the 1844 budget still indicated some vitality in production and commerce. The budget recorded by Barker showed only the activity under state control. According to the author this did not represent the whole truth; there was more profit made which escaped state records and taxation.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, the recorded amount of cotton produced in 1844 was no less than 18,000 bales, almost all of which was sent to Kayseri from where it was distributed to the interior. Other agricultural production was insignificant, i.e., just 450 tons of wheat. Sesame, another crop developed by Ibrahim Pasha, was not produced in large quantities; it was exported to Britain. Tobacco production was considerable, with all 283 tons (1000 *kantars*) sent to Egypt.⁵¹

Perhaps it is difficult to see the extent of the success of Ibrahim Pasha in Çukurova during the 8 short years he reigned there. Whatever the shortcomings of the imperial vision of Muhammad Ali, there is no doubt that his reign during 1805–1848 opened up an era of reorganization in Egypt. The centralization of his administration altered the structure of political power.⁵² This struggle against local powers meant, first and foremost, implementing a comprehensive agrarian policy.⁵³ The introduction and implementation of long-staple cotton production on a large scale was the main pillar of his regime.⁵⁴ Whatever else he achieved was because of the financial gains made through this agricultural development. Cotton cultivation changed the nature of Egyptian agriculture and integrated the Egyptian and European

⁴⁹ BOA: *Maliye Nezareti, Maliye*, 169, 1257/(1840–1841). This is a register (*defter*) showing all valuables including the produce left behind by the Egyptians. The Ottomans also took over the Egyptian naval forces and weaponry anchored at Mersin and Kozanlı and other military equipment in Tarsus.

⁵⁰ Barker, *Lares et Penates*, p. 386.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 382–384.

⁵² Cuno, “The origins of private ownership”, p. 271.

⁵³ Rivlin, *The Agricultural Policy*, p. 59.

⁵⁴ Muhammad Ali’s building of a modern army is considered no less a success. See Fahmy, *All the Pasha’s Men*.

economies. As a result, Egypt's budget increased tremendously, thus altering the relationship between Cairo and the rest of the country.⁵⁵

These policies of Muhammad Ali help us understand the efforts of Ibrahim Pasha in Çukurova. Ibrahim Pasha attempted to achieve virtually everything his father tried to do at home in order to increase cotton production: from the introduction of new cotton types to irrigation works, from organizing the agricultural work force to the settlement of tribes, and finally building a port-town. These programs served as the basis of commercial cotton production as did those of Muhammad Ali in Egypt. The changes both regions went through, coupled with the demand in international markets in the 1860s, culminated in large-scale cotton production. Furthermore, the American Civil war caused Britain to push for accelerated cotton production in Egypt and forced Britain to look for other potential regions, such as Çukurova.

Ottoman Involvement: New Frameworks, 1839–1880

Following the departure of Ibrahim Pasha, nomadic elements again penetrated Çukurova, at least during part of the year. There was little agricultural activity which remained limited to the plain north of Adana and west to Tarsus. In the remainder of the Adana–Tarsus sub-region, there was almost nothing all the way down to the southern-most coast.⁵⁶ Clearly, the Ottomans were unable to follow up on the Egyptian success.

However, while Çukurova was seemingly experiencing a period of stagnation, various revisionist programs articulated by the state since the late 16th century had culminated in the Tanzimat Edict that formulated and enacted the reforms of the 19th century. It took a few decades for the reforms to reach Çukurova; the earliest and perhaps most important had to do with reorganizing and promoting cotton cultivation. The rhetoric of Tanzimat, since the 1838 Free Trade Agreement, had included increasing agricultural production for export. Çukurova's development as a cotton-producing area has been linked

⁵⁵ The direct relationship between cotton production and Egyptian financial development is best studied by Roger Owen (1969) *Cotton and the Egyptian Economy, 1820–1914: A Study in Trade and Development* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

⁵⁶ Kotschy, *Reise in den cilicischen*, pp. 284–287.

to this agreement as well as Tanzimat-instigated interest in agricultural reform.⁵⁷

A cursory look at the newspapers of the 1840s clearly illuminates a greater interest in the production of cash crops in the empire. A piece in *Ceride-i Havadis* in 1840 highlighted the importance of cotton which was ‘the’ item of European trade both within the continent and with America, stating in short that “the Ottoman sale of cotton to Europe amounted to 50 thousand bales from Egypt and a few from the rest of the empire during one year which shows that it is necessary to increase cotton agriculture so as to increase its trade”.⁵⁸ After the American Civil War erupted, such publications appeared even more frequently, especially after the foundation of a Manchester-based cotton trade company that also set up a committee to assist in increasing Ottoman production for export to England. The committee was directly involved in the export of cotton from Izmir and Iskenderun, the latter presumably including the produce from Adana and its environs.⁵⁹

This 20-year-old rhetoric on cotton cultivation did not have any impact on Çukurova until an 1862 decree. The state played its part through certain stipulations that seemed to have had some effect such as: free cotton seeds to be provided for producers who would be exempt from the tithe (*öşür*) for 5 years. To get them started, previously uncultivated land could be transferred to potential producers without a registration fee.⁶⁰ Any machinery necessary for the sorting of cotton, or ginneries, could also be imported without dues. The same year newly reclaimed lands were exempted from tithes.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Şevket Pamuk, “Anatolia and Egypt during the nineteenth century: A comparison of foreign trade and foreign investment” in: *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 7 (1992) 37–56. And Donald Quataert (1973) *Ottoman Reform and Agriculture in Anatolia, 1876–1908*, PhD Dissertation, Los Angeles, University of California. Quataert does, however, argue that particular central state involvement in cotton production before 1876 was limited. See pp. 275–276. Also see Donald Quataert (2008) *Anadolu’da Osmanlı Reformu ve Tarım, 1876–1908* (Istanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları).

⁵⁸ *Ceride-i Havadis*, 1 Zilkade 1256 (25 birincikanun 1840). The actual wording is: “Ve memaliki mahrusede çıkan pamukta bir sene müddette Avrupa’ya giden Mısırdan elli bin ve mehali saireden birkaç bin balya pamuğa baliğ olmuş ise de bilutfihi Teala sayei şahanede bundan böyle daima artması ve ziyadelenmesi memul olup erbabı ziraat ve harasete bu ticaret daha bir nevi baysi refah ve mamuriyet olur.”

⁵⁹ *Ceride-i Havadis*, 2 Muharrem 1278/(10 July 1861).

⁶⁰ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 26 Receb 1278/(27 January 1862).

⁶¹ BOA: *Maliye Nezareti, Maliye*, 1722, 1277/(1862).

These measures came at the time of the American Civil War when world cotton prices rose greatly. However, by the time free cotton seeds had been distributed in the area, the American Civil War had ended, and European demand for cotton seemed to slow down. In any case, the Ottoman state did not pursue its initial interest in cotton cultivation. For Çukurova as well, intensive cotton cultivation did not even begin before the late 1870s. In other words, the decree and other incentives for the extension of cultivation remained premature. More important was the framework set by provincial and other reforms of the Tanzimat, some 20 years after the departure of the Egyptians.

Tanzimat and Provincial Reform in Çukurova

Long before the Provincial Code of 1864, under the reigns of Selim III and Mahmud II, the Ottoman state took substantial steps to reshape the administrative apparatus. Under his reign, centrally appointed provincial governors, with the status of *Vezirs* and *Pashas*, assumed important responsibilities such as supervising all tax farms (*iltizam* and *muqataa*). *Buyrukdus* were issued starting in 1831 for such appointments, charging governors with such duties as military conscription and tax collection as well as the appointment and supervision of the *mütesellim*.⁶² Yet Adana did not even have a governor, as a low-level local official (*mutasarrıf*) had been the central authority in the city since the departure of the Egyptian forces in 1840. Before Çukurova became a province, the province of Adana, in 1867, the administration was Aleppo-centered.

The Provincial Code of 1864, for its part, sought to devolve central control to all provinces (*eyâlet*) but also provided the governors with the power to control tax collection.⁶³ The first order of work for the new provincial authorities was straightening out past problems. This resulted in a great deal of effort to deal with the many complaints about and wrong-doings on the part of the former Aleppo-centered administration, particularly of the former Aleppo Governor Halil

⁶² Musa Çadırcı (1991) *Tanzimat Döneminde Anadolu Kentlerinin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapıları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu) p. 18.

⁶³ *Devlet-i Âliye, Düstur*, Vol. I, Istanbul, 1289/(1873), pp. 608–624. The governor was not supposed to use the income without the approval of the Sublime Porte.

Pasha. In some cases complaints might have simply been the opinions of those who stood to benefit from the change.

The new administration received complaints from the foundation (*vakıf*) of the Grand Mosque in Adana, and the *ulema* (Islamic scholars). It turned out that under the orders of the former Aleppo governor, the educational section (*medrese*) of the complex and some shops behind the *medrese* had been demolished unlawfully and without compensation during the repair of the Tarsus Gate Market (on the Tarsus road).⁶⁴ The *vakıf* was to receive compensation in the form of new construction in its complex. In other words, the former Aleppo government's attempts at infrastructural improvement became the first expense that the new local budget had to meet.

The administrative changes brought about by the Tanzimat met with a more serious obstacle stemming from the human geography of the area. The power vacuum that followed the departure of the Egyptian colonial forces had resulted in the re-emergence of tribal power that greatly curtailed centrally controlled reform efforts from the 1860s well into the late 1870s. For instance, the commercial court of Adana, the provincial capital, established in 1864 in accordance with the Provincial Code, initially benefited a local tribal notable rather than bringing order to mercantile activities.⁶⁵ The first head of the court, Derviş Efendi, used this position to procure credit for his own affairs and thus managed to accumulate a large amount of debt to the tradesmen who applied to the court.⁶⁶ In search of compensation, the new administration investigated the matter and found out that Derviş Efendi not only owed a Christian Arab merchant from Beirut but also local merchants. No compensation came forth, however, as the central authorities chose to do nothing on the matter and merely replaced Derviş Efendi.

Another sign that change did not shape Çukurova until the 1870s has to do with the Maritime Commerce Code (*Ticaret-i Bahriye*) that

⁶⁴ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/32, 9 *Rebiulevvel* 1287 (9 June 1870).

⁶⁵ The first one, that of Istanbul, dates back to 1846 but between 1861, following the amendment to the 1838 Trade Agreement, and 1868 almost all of the provincial capitals had commercial courts. See Fatmagül Demirel (2003) "*Adliye Nezareti'nin Kuruluşu ve Faaliyetleri (1876-1914)*", Doktora Tezi, İstanbul Üniversitesi, İstanbul.

⁶⁶ But the issue of Derviş Pasha remained a problem until 1870 as evidenced by the exchange of letters between the governor and the central state. The final document that ended the exchange but not the issue belongs to 1870. BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/35, 12 *Rebiulahir* 1287 (12 July 1870). For the Local Public Fund (*Menafî Sandığı*) see below.

regulated harbor infrastructure. As a follow-up to the 1861 renewal and extension of the 1838 trade agreement, the code introduced a budget to improve harbors.⁶⁷ To be sure, no change that this code could instigate was immediate in Çukurova.⁶⁸

Provincial Networks: The Later Additions

Between the late 1870s and the 1890s, settled people rather than nomads came to dominate affairs in Çukurova. Indeed, the period from 1876 to 1908 saw a development of commercial, telecommunications and transportation networks. Certainly this progress was partly due to the efforts of the Hamidian administration which built on and continued the Tanzimat reforms. But more important was the fact that now more and more settled indigenous people could take advantage of the growing interest of both the state and foreign capital.

One of the reforms involved the procurement of capital. In 1864 the establishment of regional funds for public improvement (*Menafî Sandıkları*) aimed at providing credit for cultivators and for agricultural improvements at a local level. However, Çukurova regional funds were not established until the 1870s. These public improvement funds together with the Agriculture and Public Works (*Ziraat ve Nafia Komisyonu*) Commission did not provide much credit for the cultivators and they were not able to become the major force behind the accumulation of agricultural capital in Çukurova.⁶⁹ In 1888 the Agricultural Bank was established under the supervision of the Ministry of

Generally the Code established the Ottoman Fleet and aimed at regulating maritime trade between world markets and Ottoman ports. For the changes in the 1838 Anglo-Ottoman free trade agreement throughout the 19th century, see Necdet Kurduş (1985) "Ticaret Anlaşmaları" in: *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 3, İstanbul, pp. 666–667.

⁶⁸ For instance, the number of ships sailing Ottoman waters increased gradually until the 1890s and reached 50,000 only in 1898. *Devlet-i Osmaniye, Nezaret-i Umur-u Ticaret ve Nafia, İstatistik-i Umumi 1313*, İstanbul, 1316 (1898), p. 145.

⁶⁹ FO 424/122, Bennet Report on Adana, 28 April 1881, pp. 182–189. Bennet mentions cultivators unable to get loans from the Agricultural Bank (*Ziraat Bankası*). The bank he refers to is actually the Adana public fund (*Menafî Sandığı*), as the Agricultural Bank did not yet exist. By 1883, all such funds passed under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Trade and Public Works Ministry. Another 1% (*Menafî İlane Hissesi*) was added to the tithe (*aşar*) to provide for these funds. See A. du Velay (1903) *Essai sur l'Histoire Financière de la Turquie* (Paris: Rousseau) p. 205.

Commerce and Public Works.⁷⁰ Within a short time, the bank had 400 branches in the Empire. Although one of the highest amounts of loans was registered in the province of Adana between 1889 and 1903, as we shall see in Chapter 4, most of it went to agricultural reforms and the needs of the state model farm. In terms of credit, the branches often fell under the unchecked control of local notables who used the credit mechanism to their own benefit, as yet another state attempt fell prey to the local power structure.

Transportation improvements that the Tanzimat had set in motion also began to materialize in the 1890s. The construction and repair of roads began in 1869 when a type of forced labor was recruited from the villages close to the building sites. In other words, a new tax was introduced to be paid by the villages located near the roads.⁷¹ The proceeds from this tax went to the Public Works Ministry. However, as the collection of tax became difficult, peasant labor and cattle services were accepted instead of taxation.⁷² In Çukurova, the repair of the main roads connecting Adana, Tarsus and Mersin began in the 1870s. Regular maintenance of existing roads and the construction of new roads, however, came after the construction of the railway in 1886. As the railway necessitated the speedy betterment of the road system, the new road network spread between important trade centers of the region such as Tarsus, Adana and Kozan.⁷³ These roads facilitated tax collection while serving the needs of agriculture and trade.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Board members consisted of high officials from the Ministry, the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, the central Auditing Office (*Divan-ı Muhasebat*), and the State Council (*Şura-yı Devlet*). The general agricultural inspector (*Umum-i Ziraat Müfettişi*) was also a member of the board. The entire Charter of the Bank was published in *JCCC*, 22 September 1888, pp. 452–453. Also see Quataert, “Ottoman Reform”, p. 135. The capital came from the *Menafi Sandıkları* (funds for public improvement) which were now part of the bank, while the proceeds came from the *Menafi İane Hissesi* (1% surtax for public improvement), private accumulations, and the interest from the loans themselves. Donald Quataert, “Dilemma of development: The Agricultural Bank and agricultural reform in Ottoman Turkey, 1888–1908”, *IJMES*, 6 (1975) 212–213.

⁷¹ A. Heidborn (1912) *Manuel de Droit public de l'Empire ottoman*, Vol. 2 (Vienna: Stern) pp. 264–266.

⁷² In 1858 the total road network of the Empire was 6500 kilometers. The length had doubled by 1895. *İstatistik-i Umumi* 1313, p. 152.

⁷³ *BOA: İradeler, Ticaret ve Nafia*, 75/549–2, 14 *Rebiulahir* 1316 (3 September 1898).

⁷⁴ I will tackle the construction of railways in Chapter 3 when discussing the entry of foreign capital to the imperial domains. To be sure, railways were one of the latest-addressed issues in the Tanzimat era.

The Tanzimat reforms also initiated the era of telecommunications which did not really spread throughout the Empire until the 1890s. The telegraph first linked Adana with Aleppo and Istanbul in 1863. It helped the operations of the Forced Settlement division in 1865 but fell into disuse afterwards.⁷⁵ We see the establishment of a telegraph center in Adana in 1892.⁷⁶ In the same year a telegraph line linked Adana with Mersin.⁷⁷ The next year new offices opened in Mersin for ‘Turkish Communications’ (*Muhaberat-ı Turkiyya*), and officers were appointed to Mersin and Adana for ‘Foreign Communications’ (*Muhaberat-ı Ecnebiyye*), to “ensure the efficiency of telegram sending”.⁷⁸ A few years later a new line, the third one, was set between Üsküdar and Adana.⁷⁹ Many locals found job opportunities in the Adana Postal Office which was headed by non-Muslims, mostly merchants, up until 1914.

Local Government: Çukurova Configured and Configuring Çukurova

In reorganizing the state structure, the Tanzimat itself instituted local empowerment mechanisms, which were among the reasons behind the 19th century rise of the local powers versus central state power. This consequence was all the more obvious in a region like Çukurova where there was already a power vacuum.

Perhaps the most important administrative change of the Tanzimat regarding Çukurova had to do with local authorities. In addition, new institutions created at the lower levels, such as the sub-district (*kaza*), provided perfect mechanisms for local powers to assert their interests against those of the central state. For example, *kaza* committees in Çukurova frequently acted on their own without resorting to central authority. These committees, consisting of five members including the tax official (*muhassıl*), the judge (*kadı*), the police chief, one

⁷⁵ Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, p. 86.

⁷⁶ BOA: *İradeler, Telgraf ve Posta*, 3025, 13 Safer 1310 (6 September 1892).

BOA: *İradeler, Telgraf ve Posta*, 672, 6 Zilhicce 1310 (21 June 1893).

⁷⁸ BOA: *İradeler, Telgraf ve Posta*, 687, 23 Rebiulahir 1311 (3 November 1893).

⁷⁹ BOA: *İradeler, Telgraf ve Posta*, 1382, 16 Cemaziyelahir 1316 (1 November 1898). Between 1892 and 1914, and the last head of the Adana Postal Office was a Greek merchant, Agah Efendi. BOA: *İradeler, Telgraf ve Posta*, 748, 10 Receb 1331 (15 June 1903). Additional postal services to Erzincan, Islahiye, Hassa and Bahçe in the district (*sancak*) of Cebel-i Bereket were only established after 1908. BOA: *İradeler, Telgraf ve Posta*, 319, 18 Safer 1326 (22 March 1908).

Muslim and one non-Muslim local leader, performed the most important administrative functions as early as 1870, just 3 years after Adana had become an independent province.⁸⁰ Local councils like these *kaza* committees wielded great power for the formation of a local political, legal and financial environment that could be quite independent of the central state. The local elite always headed these local councils and committees, and they had the power to supervise economic activities and prices. The degree of their power depended on their relationship with the central state, which theoretically provided and controlled their budget. Yet it is quite clear that they escaped such control easily, as long as the local elite did not cause a major disturbance and as long as they made sure that the appropriate taxes reached the central treasury. Apparently, in this initial stage before the 1877 Municipal Code but after the 1867 amendments to the Provincial Code that had begun to create municipal institutions, the duties of municipal councils involved only local law and order, as they could not tackle tasks such as public health for the lack of necessary funds.⁸¹ For instance, a doctor from Adana, Doctor Dimitraki, went to the district (*sancak*) of İçil (Mersin is the center of İçil) as a municipal employee. Although the municipality could not pay the salary of the doctor, he moved there anyway, probably for private practice alongside his post.⁸² The financial problems of the municipal councils were clearly a major obstacle to their functioning. At first, the central state allocated some of the land taxes and income taxes of the merchants to these councils. For instance, store and shop owners in the market of Adana were taxed for the care and cleaning of the market. These amounts, paid at different rates by the shop owners according to the location of the shop, were to be spent for the sweeper cars, horses to pull them, price controllers, and police

⁸⁰ *Adana Salnamesi*, 1287 (1870–71), pp. 200–201.

⁸¹ The 1867 Amendments to the Provincial Law created municipal institutions such as a 12-member city council, working under a superintendent and selected from among merchants and guild members. Yet, this still did not mean ‘mayorship’ as we understand it today. In 1868, other commissions to deal with daily affairs were established for Istanbul and environs. The local elite staffed commissions, such as *Meclis-i Emanet* and *Cemiyet-i Umumiye*. Osman Ergin (1914), *Mecelle-i Umur-u Belediye, I*, (Ankara: Dersaadet Arsak Garoyan Matbaası) pp. 1415–1423. Ortaylı mentions the malfunctioning of municipal organizations in Adana due to fiscal difficulties. İlber Ortaylı (1985) *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Yerel Yönetim Geleceği* (Istanbul: Hil Yayın) pp. 19–30.

⁸² *BOA: Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/39, 18 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1288 (5 August 1871).

forces for the market and for illumination by gas. But the municipal council of Adana, the *İdare Meclisi*, consisting of eight members under the Governor (*Vali*), five of whom were well-to-do merchants, thought this money either should be kept by the local councils or the tax not be collected at all, as it was too much of a burden on the market merchants. Sweeping services, it argued, could be avoided by getting the owners of shops to do it for themselves, since they feared “all sorts of people” would leave their garbage around (*münasebetsiz münasebetli mahallere*). However, the central state warned the Adana council that these were indeed duties that should be carried out by such municipal authorities, which should not burden people with payment for such services. The Adana council was thus ordered to find a way to render these services without additional taxes.⁸³

Such municipal councils operated long before there was a mayor. Mayorship across the Ottoman Empire had existed since at least 1864, as the Provincial Code included Article 4 which stipulated that every village be a unit of local government (*her köy bir belediye dairesidir*).⁸⁴ In the absence of state funds or additional taxes, municipal councils resorted to local wealth, facilitating private enterprises.

Such local resourcing, in my mind, motivated and facilitated the establishment of the office of the mayor in Mersin in 1873, before the Municipal Code. Adana and Tarsus also had mayors during this period. Said Efendi, who served in Adana, controlled the market and organized the merchants. After the 1877 Municipal Code, mayors and municipal administrations, parallel to the development of agriculture and commerce, became more and more dynamic. In Adana, Bezdikyan Kirkor Efendi in 1879, followed by Sinyor Artin in 1879–1881 and Hacı Yunus Ağa in 1881–1882, became more and more influential in the construction of roads and other public works. In Mersin, Salih Efendi served only for a year until 1874, succeeded for 20 years by Barbur Bey and then followed by deputies until 1903.⁸⁵

⁸³ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/22, 16 *Zilkade* 1287 (7 February 1871).

⁸⁴ Çadircı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Anadolu*, p. 275.

⁸⁵ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/35, 3 *Rebiulahir* 1288 (23 May 1871); *Adana Salnamesi*, 1296 (1878–1879); *Adana Salnamesi*, 1308 (1890–1891), p. 132; *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, İçel.



Ill. 1. Adana Clock Tower and Covered Market

Local councils and the municipalities increasingly did find other sources of income. In the absence of state funds or additional taxes, they resorted to local wealth, facilitating private enterprises. This provided the perfect mechanism through which both the inhabitants of commercial centers and the municipalities gained independence from central control. For instance, many mills in Burakir, Karataş, and Muhacirin townships and those around Ceyhan in Terkeşan were supposed to be repaired and managed by the municipalities. Since the municipalities could not come up with the funds, they chose to auction the management of the mills to the highest bidders.⁸⁶ Mayors of Adana from their inception controlled the market, and organized the merchants.⁸⁷

The imperial involvement in the affairs of Çukurova was not limited to the above-mentioned changes between 1839 and the 1890s. The 1860s brought yet another change to Çukurova which eventually greatly affected the human geography of the area. The Forced Settlement established in 1865 attempted to pacify the 'rebels' and settle

⁸⁶ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/22, 16 Zilkade 1287 (7 February 1871).

⁸⁷ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/35, 3 Rebiulahir 1288 (23 May 1871).

the tribes. Because it constituted direct state involvement in Çukurova and proved to be the most important turning point in the course of reform, I will give it special attention below.

Forced Settlement

At the end of the American Civil War, in 1865, the British Consul of Upper Syria reported on Ottoman cotton cultivation, praising the potential of Çukurova for cotton agriculture, with one obstacle: the nomads “who made farmers pay large sums of money to protect their crops from the marauding flocks”.⁸⁸

There can be little doubt that the Tanzimat reforms helped shape the configuration of this area into a regional space. But I believe the most direct involvement of the central state had to do with settlement policies that would allow for the tribal populace to turn into regional inhabitants. It is in this context that I see the undoubtedly gradual processes of Forced Settlement and settlement of immigrants as one of the milestones of Çukurova’s transformation.

Military reform to protect Ottoman territorial integrity was one of the early objectives of the Tanzimat. The first reform was the regular recruitment and military service law of 1843 that created a territorial army, the fifth, for Syria.⁸⁹ When the draft was met with great opposition, the Ottomans had to find a middle way to placate the nomads while accomplishing some conscription; the Cerid and Tecirli tribes agreed to the draft because they were allowed to continue nomadic life.⁹⁰ However, no other tribe agreed, even to such a favorable offer. The powerful position of tribal lords in Kozan and Kadirli vis-à-vis the state remained unchanged.

In addition, the Muslim immigrants settled in Çukurova following the Crimean War required constant protection from tribal attacks. The first refugee settlement, of the Nogay Tatars, was along the Ceyhan

⁸⁸ De Heidenstam, “Report from Acting Consul for Upper Syria in answer to a circular regarding Cotton Cultivation in the Ottoman Empire,” *Parliamentary Papers*, 1865, Vol. 57, pp. 19–20.

⁸⁹ Eduard Englehardt (1882) *La Turquie et le Tanzimat (depuis 1826 jusqu’à nos jours)*, Vol. I (Paris: A. Cotillon) p. 70.

⁹⁰ BOA: *Iradeleler, Dahiliye 15110, 21 Rebiulevvel 1268* (14 January 1852). It is very doubtful that nomads would have joined in any war, for this move would have been disruptive to the entire cycle of transhumance. Presumably, this agreement allowed nomads to continue as before, but legitimated by the authority of the state.

River.⁹¹ The coming of these immigrants, sedentary people with an appreciation of agricultural production, was a further disruption for both the nomads and the settled population of the area. The state's intention of using the immigrants in agriculture hardly materialized.⁹²

In 1862 a murder further interrupted life in Çukurova. Bandits murdered an American missionary expelled by the Armenian community in Haçin.⁹³ This time it was not only the central state that was interested in Çukurovan security but also foreign powers.⁹⁴ This murder gave European consuls the excuse to interfere and seek their own way of penetrating the area. They chose to support the tribal lords, the allies of the Armenian notables in Haçin, and not the missionaries. Shortly afterward, Cevdet Pasha was appointed to settle the tribes in the plain, pacify rebels in the mountains, and force the Kozanoğlu to surrender.⁹⁵ Thus began the most important state action in Çukurova, namely the Forced Settlement.

The policy of forced settlement began under Derviş Pasha in 1865 and lasted until the 1890s.⁹⁶ In his *Tezâkir*, Cevdet Pasha relates a meeting of the cabinet (*Vukelâ*) at which his description of the human geography in Çukurova prompted Ottoman rulers to undertake the Forced Settlement.⁹⁷ The question most emphasized by Cevdet Pasha was the strengthening of military power. Particularly after the Crimean War, conscription of the non-Muslim population was a constant theme of

⁹¹ BOA: *Cevdet Dahiliye*, 2899, 1277 (1853).

⁹² Some were relocated in the district of Kars (Kars-ül Zülkadriye, today's Kadırlı), to work on the newly opened cotton plantations. BOA: *Bâb-ı Âli*, *BEO Vilayet Gelen-Giden*, Adana Gelen, 238/4, 22 *Safer* 1277 (9 September 1860).

⁹³ The missionary, one of the few who had penetrated the mountains of Çukurova as early as the 1860s, claimed that Armenian notables of Haçin had amassed great wealth by their alliance with the Kozanoğlu. He had angered the anti-missionary Armenian community who did not want to change the status quo. The murderers were never identified. USCR: Special Report of the Consul General in Istanbul, 27 July 1862.

⁹⁴ The event attracted the attention of the Sublime Porte rather quickly because the murder took place on the coastal road to Payas which was the route of the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca. Gould suggested that the incident "was the culmination of an escalation of brigandage in Cilicia (Çukurova) over the previous three or more years, and it was unique only because a foreigner was killed." Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, p. 55.

⁹⁵ Cevdet Pasha (1980: edited by Yusuf Halaçoğlu) *Mâruzât Türbe* (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları) p. 114.

⁹⁶ Gould studies the Forced Settlement in great detail; see his *Pashas and Brigands*, pp. 74–119.

⁹⁷ Cevdet Pasha, *Tezâkir*, 1963, p. 107.

discussion.⁹⁸ Drafting non-Muslims seemed like the only solution for protecting the Muslim inhabitants against further war-related losses. So the main issue was not enlisting more soldiers but balancing the losses to the Muslim population. However the Ottoman authorities also wanted to avoid the infiltration of non-Muslims into the army. In this impasse, Cevdet Pasha proposed to recruit tribal populations, a policy that he had successfully followed in Bosnia. Earlier he had served in Bosnia specifically to implement tribal settlement policies, the first example of such vigorous settlement efforts of the 19th century.⁹⁹ Çukurova was not a suitable place for such a recruitment drive.

Cevdet Pasha did not, however, wish to go to Çukurova, and a brief look at his career helps explain why.¹⁰⁰ Cevdet Pasha had received his political education while serving the modernizer Mustafa Reşit, and he came from the ranks of the *ulema* (Islamic scholars). This mixture of *ulema* and modern bureaucracy was not only a peculiarity of Cevdet Pasha's career but an important reality of the Tanzimat period in general.¹⁰¹ Indeed, the bureaucratic cadres of the day had to face a challenge: being modernizers even though they had not been raised and educated accordingly. Cevdet Pasha's *ulema* background actually was the key feature that allowed him to organize the Justice Section of the Supreme Assembly (*Meclis-i Vâlâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye*). Then bureaucratic power games within the Sublime Porte, between the old and new elites, affected his career. Quite unwillingly in 1863 and 1864, he found himself in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This was no honor but a form of exile. When he was sent to Kozan in 1865 with the same duty, to what seemed yet another exile, he tried to turn it into an opportunity for his re-entry into the Sublime Porte. And indeed, in 1866, Cevdet Pasha officially transferred to the bureaucratic cadres (*Kalemiye*) and became the Governor of Aleppo. This was a far better position even if it was not in Istanbul. Cevdet Pasha constantly tried to get back to the capital, but he was the victim of plots, or so he thought. Finally, when

⁹⁸ Cevdet Pasha, *Mâruzat*, pp. 114–115.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ See Fatma Aliye (1332/1913–1914) *Ahmet Cevdet Paşa ve Zamanı* (Istanbul: Dersa'adet Kana'at Matba'ası); M. Cavid Saygun, "Cevdet Paşa, Şahsiyetine ve İlim Safhasındaki Faaliyetine Dair", *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, 11 (1954) 213–230; Beşir Atalay, "Ahmet Cevdet Paşa Tarihinde Devlet Görüşü (Bir Deneme) ve Ahmet Cevdet Paşa'nın Özgeçmişi", *Atatürk Üniversitesi İşletme Fakültesi Dergisi*, 1/4 (1975).

¹⁰¹ *BOA: İradeler, Dahiliye*, 23773, 1281 (1864).

Abdülhamid became Sultan, he was back in Istanbul first as the Minister of Justice, then of Interior Affairs, then of the *Vakıf* and even of Commerce. These were rewards for his support of Abdülhamid against constitutional monarchy (the *Meşrutiyet*). It was in the context of this political and personal career that he wrote his *Tezâkir*, the major source we have at our disposal for the Forced Settlement.¹⁰²

In May 1865, Cevdet Pasha led the reform unit in charge of registering land accompanied by a large body of troops headed by Derviş Pasha. If the division needed additional troops, Derviş Pasha could communicate with Istanbul immediately through the newly established telegraph services and have them delivered by steamship to Iskenderun in 7 days.¹⁰³ However, before resorting to any coercion, the division tried consent and sought the support of certain tribal lords, promising them rank and amnesty. The first to agree to such an alliance was the Mürselzade of the Reyhaniye tribe. The Mürselzade had also convinced the director (*mudir*) of the town Hacılar, Pasho Bey to join the alliance. This gave the division a perfect opportunity for the peaceful penetration of the Gavur Mountains. Both of these magnates were paid handsome sums for the military support they were to provide.¹⁰⁴ The first group of nomads, about thirty households from the Amik plain (east of Iskenderun), settled near Hacılar in a new village, namely Ordu-köyü.¹⁰⁵ Another new addition to the province at the intersection of the Maraş–Iskenderun and the Adana–Kilis road was *Islahiye*, named after the division.¹⁰⁶ The administrative council of the town comprised the Delikanlı and Çelikanlı tribal lords; thus two tribes were settled without using force. The pressure exerted on these rather small Kurdish tribes who were outnumbered by Turcomans of the Reyhaniye tribe, however, must have been the more convincing reason behind their alliance with the council. The appointment of a newly arrived Circassian *‘alim* (a member of the *ulema*) as the local religious authority (*müftü*) of this town¹⁰⁷ served two possible purposes: to settle Circassian refugees in the area and to have a loyal

¹⁰² For a detailed work on the career of Cevdet Pasha as a chronicler, see Christoph Neumann (2000) *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat: Tarih-i Cevdet'in Siyasi Anlamı* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları).

¹⁰³ Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, p. 86.

¹⁰⁴ Cevdet Pasha, *Mâruzat*, pp. 132–133.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

¹⁰⁷ Cevdet Pasha, *Tezâkir II*, p. 151.

administrator in the town of two tribal lords, i.e., a member of the *ulema* indebted to the central state for his appointment. In short, the Forced Settlement ended up being a matter of striking a balance in the area between the state and the tribes.

Other tactics followed, intended to achieve balance. For example, ensuring the consent of the villagers who had left for the mountains for the summer to escape conscription required yet another method. They were invited to sell their crops to the troops at fair prices; the army was more than willing to pay for its provisions. Furthermore, the prices offered were clearly higher than the local market prices, matching prices in larger markets such as Aleppo and Kayseri.¹⁰⁸ Once summoned to profitable trade, the people met with a liberal attitude toward conscription and taxation. In many cases, back taxes were not collected or at least were reduced to one-fifth of the original claims. Consequently, new tax registers were drawn up with the consent of the potential tax-payers.¹⁰⁹ Such tax amnesties and leniencies inscribed in the new tax registers were frequently employed methods. The division considered small gains better than none.

Two more tribes, the Tecirli and Cerid, were settled in a completely new town, Osmaniye, using similar methods: this new town on the western slope of the Gavur mountains quickly received all the necessary funds for its establishment.¹¹⁰ At the time, the neighboring Kars-ül Zülkadriye (Kadirli), a tiny settlement, was abandoned, but scattered Bozdoğan tribes settled here after a brief feud. The division did not have to do anything except wait it out while one tribe fought against another. In the same manner, the Gökvelioğulları welcomed the division in the hopes of being freed from the pressure of the Kozanoğlu.¹¹¹ The division in turn hoped to get closer to the Kozanoğlu, the most prominent of the tribes.

However, the division had to ally itself with the Armenians in Sis and Haçin before making war on the Kozanoğlu. According to Cevdet Pasha, the Armenians welcomed the division in exchange for some public works in the town of Sis (Kozan) and monetary compensation for military aid. It seems to have been easy to convince the community leader of an empty town, Catholicos Kiragos II, to summon the

¹⁰⁸ Cevdet Pasha, *Mâruzât*, pp. 149–159.

¹⁰⁹ Cevdet Pasha, *Tezâkir II*, p. 143.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 160; and *Mâruzât*, p. 150.

people who had left for the hills for the summer.¹¹² Further Armenian support, particularly in the capture of Ahmed Ağa of the Kozanoğlu tribe in west Kozan¹¹³ proved far more decisive for the success of this first enforcement of the division in 1865.¹¹⁴ After the Kozanoğlu, other tribes followed easily, either surrendering or receiving titles, monetary compensation, and in a few cases, land. Those who surrendered were exiled to various places, some to Konya. At the end of 6 months, when cholera hit the troops, only the Menemencioğlu and the Karsantioğlu had escaped capture and/or surrender. Orders for their exile were placed when the division left to go back to Istanbul in November, intending to return in the spring with a new army free of cholera.¹¹⁵ However, before the return could even be envisioned, the Kozanoğlu rebelled and it was not until 1867 that they could be captured.¹¹⁶ Things did not seem to have changed much in Çukurova. Before any further pacification could be planned, uprisings in Wallachia and Moldavia erupted, forcing the withdrawal of most of the troops from Çukurova. As the central state was unwilling to fund any other troop deployment after 1867, Çukurova was left more or less to its own devices, and Cevdet Pasha was very much disappointed. Indeed, the Grand Vizier (*sadrâzam*) thought that the Forced Settlement was rather costly and neither Derviş Pasha nor Cevdet Pasha received their due rewards.¹¹⁷

When the entire movement is considered, it is difficult to disagree with the *sadrâzam*. The division did not fight very much while maintaining a huge army was expensive; the provisions delivered by certain tribes did not suffice to change the balance. In the meantime, peaceful settlement had not brought in any taxes and had meant liberal distribution of gifts, not to mention expenses for public works. Neither

¹¹² Cevdet Pasha, *Tezâkir II*, pp. 170–172.

¹¹³ Cevdet Pasha, *Mâruzât*, p. 160. In both of his accounts, Cevdet Pasha wrote of his gratitude to the Armenian guild warden (*kethuda*) for convincing Ahmed Ağa to surrender, which he finally did upon receiving the title of Pasha. This eliminated the need to fight against the very target of the division.

¹¹⁴ It is somewhat difficult to determine why the Armenians easily agreed to play such a decisive role in the capture of the Kozanoğlu with whom they had profitable dealings. The answer lies in the further profits sedentary Armenians could expect once the complete pacification of the area had been achieved. As we shall see, their alliance with the state proved to be of benefit, at least until 1909.

¹¹⁵ Cevdet Pasha, *Mâruzât*, p. 165.

¹¹⁶ Cevdet Pasha, *Tezâkir II*, p. 200.

¹¹⁷ This of course is the opinion of Cevdet Pasha, quite heatedly expressed in his *Mâruzât*, pp. 174–175.

had any agricultural improvement taken place which by generating substantial revenues could have compensated for some of the expenditures of the division. Whatever success or failure the division met with was determined by the very tribal structure the state had set out to destroy.

Therefore, despite the ambitions of Cevdet Pasha, it is difficult to claim that the Forced Settlement signified an immediate change over from nomadism to sedentary life. Rather, it is important to realize that settlement was a gradual and painful process extending over about 3 decades. However, Cevdet Pasha's settlement program is still important as it set in motion the gradual transformation of the region from the winter pasture of nomadic tribes to a productive agricultural area.¹¹⁸ After Adana became a separate province in 1867, the formation of the new administrative structure meant more settlements or at least new efforts at settling the tribes in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, the first area where cultivation was successfully extended. For instance, in 1869 the suppression of the tribes of Bozdoğanlı and Karakuyulu necessitated the creation of many new villages around Karataş (southern tip of Adana), Misis (northeast of Adana where Armenians resided), Tarsus, Gülek (the Taurus gates), Muhacirin (northeast of the Lower Plain), Elvanlı (around Mersin), Sirkıntı and Karsıntı (*kazas* west of Sis, created by the Forced Settlement). The villages created in the last two townships were called Hatablı and Karagöl. The new village of Sarıkavak was in Tarsus. In Muhacirin the village was named Büyükparsuvar, Gerlez in Gülek, and Sandal in Elvanlı. In addition, the state began constructing government offices (*hükümet konakları*) in Elvanlı, Namrun, Gülek, Misis and Sirkıntı as these were now administrative sub-divisions of a sub-district (*kaza*), while a previously built structure in Karakuyulu was repaired. Like Mersin the Yumurtalık port became a district (*sancak*) center. A further government office opened in Yumurtalık where the Bozdoğanlı tribe was to be in charge. This new administrative arrangement came with markets to be held on Fridays in order to provide the inhabitants with their necessities. To feed goods into these markets and also to promote the commerce that was

¹¹⁸ Gould has studied the struggle between the Ottoman polity and the tribal population in great detail. See his *Pashas and Brigands*, pp. 141–157.

slowly developing in the province, a yearly fair was to be established near Adana, on the shores of the River Seyhan.¹¹⁹

For the tribal entities left in place a new phase opened; they gradually recognized the opportunities settlement would bring. Yet the process was not altogether smooth. Tribal settlement not only upset the provincial alliances vis-à-vis the state, but it also changed trade relations for the Armenians. Non-Muslims although sedentary also were affected by the Forced settlement. Before leaving the area, Cevdet Pasha had ordered the re-population of the many villages around Payas, the port-town, abandoned because of the nearby malarial marshes. In an effort to re-establish the port, 38 Muslim and 38 non-Muslim households from the mountainous villages of Uzerli, Çok Merzemen and Ocaklı were brought to the town.¹²⁰ This indeed typified what the Forced Settlement tried to do in abandoned towns in the delta of Çukurova: i.e., bring in people from the northern slopes of the nearby mountains in exactly equal numbers from each ethno-religious group. They were careful in selecting settled and nomadic people separately, that is to say, nomads were not mixed with already settled people and, when it came to relocating the settled people, care was shown in selecting equal numbers from different religious groups. This policy especially applied to resettlement in the old natural ports of Çukurova such as Yumurtalık and Payas. Perhaps these measures contributed toward the southward movement of the non-Muslims of Çukurova, many of whom already were moving south on their own. But Cevdet Pasha's re-population policies seem to have helped as well.¹²¹

The efforts to rejuvenate small ports did not pay off because of insufficient expenditure on public health and infrastructure. Also in the case of Payas, the non-Muslims who were forcibly moved were no longer able to gain their livelihoods from commerce on the eastern route to Niğde and Kayseri. Thus the authorities found that in a very short while the settlers returned to their original locations. All attempts to force them back proved futile. Finally, the state tried a new policy of bringing in two or three households from each village

¹¹⁹ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/8, 18 Şaban 1286 (23 November 1869).

¹²⁰ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/18, 18 Şaban 1286 (23 November 1869).

¹²¹ This opinion resonates in Yusuf Halaçoğlu, "Fırka-ı İslahiye ve Yapmış Olduğu İskan", *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, 37 (1973) 1-19. Also see Maps 5 and 6 for the main area of Cevdet Pasha's settlements.

in the north, instead of resettling entire village populations.¹²² Payas was mostly populated as a result of this second policy, but still failed to become a major port.

The people of the Cebel-i Bereket mountains were settled in one of the most fertile parts of the Lower Plain between Yumurtalık and Misis. The provincial authorities wanted to populate this empty area in an effort to develop agriculture, but it was later considered unnecessary since Çukurova had abundant fertile land. The prevalent concern of the authorities lay in the prevention of tribal retreat to the mountains, not necessarily immediate agricultural development. As a result, this area remained undeveloped in the period under consideration here. The fragile state of law and order in these mountainous zones remained a constant worry, and as many police stations as money allowed were set up along the routes to these zones.¹²³

The Forced Settlement and attendant policies represented a corrective to the ever-anomalous position of nomads in the Ottoman socio-political formation. Tribes represented, perhaps more than ever in the 19th century, an ill-fitting element in the straightforward relationship of the state with its subject sedentarized population. Whatever political reasons the central state might have had for this kind of direct intervention, settling tribes proved an important initial step to the later development of agricultural commercialization. The second step had to do with settling immigrants.

Settlement of Immigrants in the 1870s

Generally speaking, the high land/labor ratio was one of the greatest problems of the Ottoman agrarian system. The rural population had decreased since the 17th century, especially in central and southeastern Anatolia. With the influx of refugees after the 1850s, the central state hoped to achieve a larger population. Thus, in 1857 the High Council of the Tanzimat issued a decree welcoming all migrants whatever their origin. The 1857 Refugee (*Muhacirin*) Code granted refugees land in exchange for 60 gold *mecidiye* or 1,500 francs. If refugees settled, they were provided freedom from military service, in Rumeli for 6 years, in Anatolia for 12 years. However, they had to cultivate the land, which

¹²² Yusuf Halaçoğlu, "Fırka-ı İslahiye".

¹²³ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/39, 18 Cemaziyelevvel 1288 (5 August 1871).

they were not at liberty to abandon for 20 years. They also had to become Ottoman citizens.¹²⁴

However, migration to Anatolia was not merely a state-run phenomenon and had begun back in the 18th century. Until the Tanzimat, the Ottoman state dealt with the migration issue only if it occurred on a large enough scale. Even then, the state was content to issue codes regarding the placement of migrants. The remaining problems would usually be left to local authorities. In short, there was not a specific administrative apparatus for migration.¹²⁵

The 1857 code can therefore be considered as the first serious attempt by the central state to control immigration. Still it took another 3 years for the Ministry of Trade to implement the code. Thus, the central state established an autonomous commission, the Refugee Commission (*Muhacirin Komisyonu*) in 1861. The Commission would help settle people, taking account of their religion, agricultural abilities and other relevant factors. After the Crimean War (1853–1856) most refugees were Muslims anyway, and they were settled at a growing rate thereafter.¹²⁶

However, these attempts in 1857 and 1860 do not portray a central state consciously seeking to respond to the land/labor ratio problem. They were rather a hasty response to Russia's forceful eviction of Crimean Tatars after 1856. These people were first settled in Istanbul, Izmir, Izmit, and Eskişehir, and later dispersed throughout the Empire.

Çukurova, however, may be considered to have been a more successful placement area immediately after the Crimean War. Georgians and Nogay Tatars coming from the region along the River Kuban in northern Caucasus, some 4000 households, were settled along the Ceyhan River. These people were settled on 'empty land', as local history tells

¹²⁴ BOA: *İradeler, Meclis-i Vâlâ*, 367, 1857. See also Kemal Karpat (1985) *Ottoman Population 1830–1914. Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press).

¹²⁵ For the general attitude of the central state toward migrants see, Kemal Karpat (1983) "Population movements in the Ottoman State in the 19th century: An outline" in: Jean-Louis Bacque-Grammont and Paul Dumont (Eds.), *Economie et Sociétés dans l'Empire ottoman (fin du XVIII^e–début du XX^e siècle): Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg (1–5 juillet 1980)* (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la Recherche scientifique), pp. 389–426; Faruk Kocacık, "Balkanlardan Anadolu'ya Yönelik Göçler", *Journal of Ottoman Studies*, I (1989) 157–186.

¹²⁶ Ahmed Refik (1340/1925) "Mülteciler Meselesine Dair", *Türk Tarih Encümeni Mecmuası*, *sene 12 ve 13*, Nos. 89–90, Istanbul.

us they were the first inhabitants of today's town of Ceyhan. They are said to have established the villages of Çiftlikler, Kelemeti, Toktamış, Altıkara, Yıllankale, Mercimek, Küçük and Büyük Mangıt, Çakaldere, Yahsılar, Kılıçkaya, and Hamitbey. Yet except for Toktamış, Yıllankale, Mercimek under Misis and Cebel-i Bereket none of these villages seem to have flourished in the Ottoman period.¹²⁷ These settlements either dispersed within short order, and thus went unrecorded in the 19th century documentation or else they were not created at all in the 1880s and only established much later during the Republican period. It is probable that most immigrants settled in already existing communities. Only in one instance do we encounter immigrants living in an entirely new village called Kopçak, a Nogay settlement that dates back to 1864.

Of course there could also be the case of the villages that were completely erased from the map in the Republican period by changing their Ottoman names.¹²⁸ In any case, the immigrants mostly went back to tribalism. Confiscation or re-confiscation of their land became very possible and increasingly frequent, especially as they were hit severely by the 1865 and 1873 cholera epidemics.¹²⁹

Of course, immigrants were successful settlers if they could be motivated. The 1858 Land Code ruled that immigrants would receive up to 70 dönüms of good quality arable, 100 dönüms of medium-level arable and 130 dönüms of non-arable land, the last presumably for

¹²⁷ *Son Teşkilât-ı Melâkiyede Köylerimizin Adları, Dahiliye Vekaleti*, İstanbul, 1928. The local history of these villages not mentioned in the list comes from the oral history archive collected by the Directory of National Education in cooperation with local historian Cezmi Yurtsever of Adana Fen Lisesi (the Science High School) during 1992–1995. I have had the privilege of analyzing the interviews from 1200 villages in Ceyhan, Kozan, Adana, Kadirli and Osmaniye in terms of the composition of population in these villages since the 1930s. (My thanks to Cezmi Yurtsever for graciously sharing these with me). Also see Fatma Sayman (Ed.) (1986) *Anılarla Milli Mücadelede Ceyhan*, Adana, pp. 17–24.

¹²⁸ Name changes, aimed at erasing the pre-Turkish past of multi-ethnic regions of the Ottoman Empire, were part and parcel of the nation-state formation of Republican Turkey, the official historiography of which maintains a long and peaceful history of Turkification.

¹²⁹ Sayman, *Anılarla*, p. 21. The author, herself a high school teacher originally from Ceyhan, collected oral history sources, mostly interviews. In this book sponsored by the Ceyhan Municipality, she gives a brief historical account of the period prior to the French occupation. The author relates the long Turkish settlement in the area, but paradoxically mentions that most immigrants lived as semi-nomads until the end of the 19th century. Claiming exclusive Turkish settlement is a common paradox in the local histories of Çukurova written in the 20th century.

pasture.¹³⁰ Immigrants often complained about the land on which they were settled and claimed that they actually received land in a place different from the area originally promised. By the 1890s, the parcel of land received was minute, no more than 7 dönüms.¹³¹ According to the Code, if a peasant did not till the land for 3 consecutive years, it would be sold to the highest bidder. But the defaulting peasant himself had the first priority to re-buy it. However, in many cases, this priority was not observed and an immigrant received the land in question for free. When immigrants made good use of the land, previous holders went to court to claim their right of priority. The Code gave the right to sue the immigrant for a period of 10 years. Such law suits did not, however, always result to the benefit of the previous holder, because there was an additional ruling that the land of the immigrant could not be sold for 15 years. All of these rulings meant one thing: let the land be tilled by the most able.

The second wave of forced migration after 1862–1863, this time of Circassians from the Caucasus, points to a more conscious effort towards efficient settlement. The immigrants were employed in road construction in Trabzon, Sinop, and Samsun. They were also settled along the Euphrates. Those sent to Adana and Iskenderun were to be employed in cotton cultivation. But a large number were settled around Adapazarı and Bolu, mountainous zones where they resumed their traditional cattle raising occupations.

In Çukurova, this second wave of immigrants again meant placement around the Ceyhan River, in the port town of Yumurtalık and in Misis.¹³² The port of Yumurtalık was little used and had a very small population. To be sure, Turcoman nomads had been using the Cebel-i Bereket mountains that surrounded Yumurtalık and Misis since the 16th century. The Reyhaniye tribe had power over the plain while two Kurdish tribes, the Delikanlı and Çelikanlı, held the mountains.¹³³ The tribes and the mostly Armenian inhabitants of Misis had cohabited

¹³⁰ Stanley Fisher (1919) *Ottoman Land Laws* (London [etc.]: s.n.) Article 43–44.

Kocacık, “Balkanlardan Anadolu’ya Yönelik Göçler”, p. 180. Also see Hilmi Bayraktar (2007) “Kırım ve Kafkasya’dan Adana Vilayetine Yapılan Göç ve İskanlar (1869–1907)”, *Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, pp. 405–434.

¹³² The habitation of Turcomans in the Upper Plain, as nomads and semi-nomads together with the small Armenian and Turkish villages from very early on is visible in the Adana section of *BOA: Maliye Defteri*, 8458, 1102–1134 (1690–1722).

¹³³ Cevdet Pasha, *Mâruzat*, pp. 124–125. As mentioned in the previous section, the state considered enforcing settlement here but quickly abandoned the plan.

peacefully for centuries. As mentioned before, this peace had not been broken when Ibrahim Pasha settled North African Arabs between Yumurtalık and the Ceyhan River.¹³⁴ But bringing nomadic Circassians next to this settled population would complicate the relations between Arabs, Armenians and the tribes.

Nonetheless, the real demographic change that would disrupt the peaceful co-existence of the sedentary and nomadic people occurred after 1877. Before then, the economy of the region accommodated the two groups of people, as we have seen in Chapter 1.¹³⁵ In the decades following 1878, however, the settlement of tribes finally occurred after a long struggle by the central state, especially after the Ottomans were defeated by Russia. This defeat meant two things: i.e., settling many immigrants from formerly Ottoman territories, and consolidating the frontier zones. The most important frontier zone was the eastern border with Russia where the state had no control over the tribes. Çukurova had been subject to the penetration of these eastern Turcoman and Kurdish nomadic elements at least during part of the year. In 1878 some 150,000 immigrants were dispersed in Aleppo, Damascus, Adana, Ankara, Diyarbakır, Konya, Kastamonu and Amasya. In Çukurova, Circassians settled, while Balkan immigrants again dispersed around the River Ceyhan. To help the new immigrant communities, the government distributed food allowances to the elderly and women and children.¹³⁶ Most probably they settled in the area that became a district *kaza* named Hamidiye in 1896. Similarly, Bulanık became Bahçe in the same year.¹³⁷

The establishment of Hamidiye on Sultan Abdülhamid's initiative came immediately following the Zeytun affair in which Armenians and many Turcoman nomads had clashed.¹³⁸ Other law and order initiatives in areas of Armenian population followed. In 1896, the prison of Hamidiye was enlarged and provided with more guards, and police forces in the province were increased. A new district official (*kaymakam*), Poti Şehbender, an Armenian known to be 'faithful' to

¹³⁴ Kotschy, *Reise in den cilicischen*, pp. 146–147.

¹³⁵ Eberhard, *Settlement and Social Change*, p. 279.

¹³⁶ FO 424/107, Barnham to Trotter, *Diyarbakır*, 19 June 1880, pp. 20–22. BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 21, 14 *Zilhicce* 1313 (27 May 1896).

¹³⁸ The so-called Zeytun affair that resulted from the Armenian protest against the new regime brought by the Forced Settlement will be discussed in Chapter 4. Suffice it to say here that the Ottomans were quick to suppress the Armenians when the whole affair ended in January 1896.

the *Hilâfetpenah*, i.e., the Sultan, was appointed to Haçin.¹³⁹ Clearly, the immigrant nomads and Armenians around the Lower Plain had problems in terms of sharing the land which now was being cultivated for foreign markets. Later on, that is in the 1890s, some immigrants were sedentarized within newly established neighborhoods in existing towns. For instance, in 1893, 25 newly constructed houses inside Mersin became a new neighborhood (*mahalle*).¹⁴⁰ Immigrant settlements sometimes possessed their own administrative status. The largest sedentary immigrant population that lived inside the Adana Province had their own town (*nahiye*) named Muhacirin, combined with the neighboring town of Cirid and Yarsuvat, an Armenian town, turned into a single district (*kaymakamlık*).¹⁴¹ By the end of the 19th century, Nogay Circassian and even Balkan immigrants also lived there. The town of Yarsuvat became the center of this new district.

Such administrative reorganization served the purpose of bringing all immigrants in Çukurova together under a single unit. I believe this was done partly to protect immigrants from the indigenous populace and partly to control their activities. In the same year, a similar administrative re-arranging was put in force for Circassians who had already settled around Inderesi within the boundaries of Feke, in the mountainous part of the Upper Plain. It seems they had selected the place on their own to continue their semi-nomadic lifestyle around the Inderesi River. Again, perhaps they had created no problem for the Armenian small farmers of the area up until that time. Yet, their neighborhoods known as Yayköy and Ademi were combined and turned into a separate village named Burhaniye.¹⁴² Today however there is no Burhaniye within the district of Feke. I thus gather that these Circassians left the rural settlements to live in the towns, Feke and Haçin, since they are found there today.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 21, 26 and 68, 25 *Rebiulevvel* 1314 (3 September 1896), 20 *Receb* 1314 (25 December 1896) and 14 *Cemaziyelahir* 1314 (20 November 1896).

¹⁴⁰ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 618(63/6), 9 *Muharrem* 1311 (24 July 1893).

¹⁴¹ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 1087(1881715), 9 *Ramazan* 1311 (16 March 1894).

¹⁴² BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 1167, 23 *Zilkade* 1311 (28 May 1894).

¹⁴³ Feke and Haçin also received many more Circassian and other Muslim immigrants after 1908 and during the Balkan Wars. After 1915 Haçin especially became a Muslim immigrant town following the loss of the Armenian population.

Even in the early 20th century, the central state continued to arrange immigrant settlement, for instance in Hamidiye, a town newly created under Sultan Abdülhamid. The neighborhood of Çaklı, where immigrants lived, became a village by the name of Ahmediye.¹⁴⁴ Borders changed, especially among the northern Armenian settlements. The villages of Çörekli and Kazancı in Haçin were annexed to Feke.¹⁴⁵ New Crimean refugees (*muhacirin*) still kept arriving. Most of the 1,100 immigrants that had settled in Iskenderun were relocated in Adana as there was no place for them in Iskenderun. They dispersed to Hüdavendigâr and Konya as well, but the Refugee Commission decided the best place for them was Hamidiye in Adana, an already sedentarized location. In actuality, the problem stemmed from the original settlement of these new immigrants in Iskenderun. The immigrants had asked for neither Iskenderun nor Hamidiye and indeed they had not been consulted, although the commission stated they should have been. They complained about the quality of the soil in Hamidiye which they found rocky. Also because their extended families had already settled in Adana, they wished to be settled there. The commission granted their wish even though it did not agree with their reasoning.¹⁴⁶ As a result, like many other intended inhabitants of Iskenderun they ended up in Adana. Another immigrant settlement in Belalı Deresi of Tarsus was re-designated a new village with the name Şükranîye.¹⁴⁷ In the same vein, the tribes that were still causing problems were finally brought to observe law and order. One such tribe, the Tekveli, was apprehended after a battle and brought by force to five villages in Anamur.¹⁴⁸ These late efforts indicated a re-shaping of the area in terms of sedentarization from the 1890s onward. Any opposition to such settlement on the part of the tribes was quickly suppressed.

The re-shaping is clearly seen in the construction of certain public buildings by the central state, for the use of the now-settled immigrants and tribes. When the immigrants had a demand for their village or quarter, the central state obliged in order to ensure their attachment to their new environment. The Cretan immigrants in Recmiye

¹⁴⁴ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 14, Şevval 1317 (February 1900).

¹⁴⁵ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 15, Şevval 1317 (February 1900).

¹⁴⁶ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 7037, 6 Zilhicce 1321 (23 February 1904).

¹⁴⁷ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 7689, 22 Rebiulahir 1323 (26 June 1905).

¹⁴⁸ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 8 Muharrem 1316 (May 1898).

within the boundaries of Adana, for instance, had their own mosque and school.¹⁴⁹ The state did the same for a tribal population that lived in the Karakuyu town of Adana.¹⁵⁰ To be sure, the places in which the state helped were located in the center of the province. Beyond the district of Adana it is doubtful that the state could—or would—show its power with such speed and care. Most state activity was concerned with organizing Çukurova administratively for taxation purposes. Such organizational changes continued into the 1890s. For instance, four different villages recently annexed to the sub-district of Karaisalı, north of Tarsus, in 1895 still paid tax as a single village.¹⁵¹

The limits to what the state accomplished after 1878 can be clearly seen in the institutional framework it established. Faced with intensified migration, the central state set up three different institutions to deal with the immigrants. The International Aid Committee (*Beynelmillel Muhacirin Komisyonu*) was actually a foreign private foundation of 83 members that set up a refugee relief program. This was active at temporary immigration points, namely Edirne, Istanbul, Çanak-kale, Izmir and Samsun. This committee never visited Çukurova. The most meaningful institutionalization was at the provincial level, as every province now had one Immigration Bureau, under the General Administration for Refugees (*İdare-i Umumiye-i Muhacirin*).¹⁵²

Overall orderly settlement was only possible if the settlers were provided with more than the framework. The administrative changes and settlement efforts would only pay off when commercialization prompted the development of a port-city, the extension of cultivation, and registration of land. Clearly sedentarization was no easy task and entailed a long process. Indeed, as late as the 1880s foreign consuls reported pacification and the suffering of nomad populations who were becoming poorer and poorer.¹⁵³ The central state miserably failed to survey and register the land already assigned for tribal settlement until the 1880s.¹⁵⁴ Even if the tribes remained on their assigned land, they took off in the summer and the land, without a valid title, became

¹⁴⁹ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 7690, 22 *Rebiulahir* 1323 (26 June 1905).

¹⁵⁰ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 7884, 10 *Şevval* 1323 (8 December 1905).

¹⁵¹ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 35, 8 *Rebiulahir* 1313 (28 September 1895).

¹⁵² BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 23899, 1295 (1877–1878).

¹⁵³ FO 424/132, Wilson to Dufferin, Adana, 31 December 1881, p. 32.

¹⁵⁴ Land registration for two of the largest tribes, the Cerid and Tecirli, started in Osmaniye only in 1880. BOA: *Yıldız* 18–153/124–93–94, 3 *Cemaziyelahir* 1289 (8

accessible to others. Likewise, the process of Nogay, Circassian and Çeçen settlement alongside the existing sedentary population did not come to completion until the 1880s. The rather problematic population figures of Çukurova still point to this change in the last decades of the 19th century; there are many different sources of statistics of population in these years. Although with different configurations, they seem to show the population of the Çukurova in the pre-war period as ranging between 300,000 and 500,000 with a steady rise as of the 1880s.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, these varying sources continue to give greatly different figures in 1914. I believe that these differing figures indicate the socio-economic problems of the shrinking Ottoman Empire at the turn of the 20th century, when nationalism had begun to encroach particularly upon heterogeneous regions like Çukurova. For such discrepancy cannot be simply explained by the multitude of the sources. To begin with, there is no indisputably powerful reason as to why foreign sources would differ to the extent they do from the Ottoman sources. Neither the Ottoman nor the foreign or non-Muslim sources can be readily dismissed for being biased. It is important to remember that 1910–1920 were long war years for the Ottoman Empire which collapsed shortly after World War I. In addition, the Empire never had a regular population census system. This may account for the otherwise inexplicable differences in the Ottoman sources themselves from one census to the next. Table 1 contains quite a few immediately recognizable discrepancies.

In Part 2, I will analyze these developments which dictated law and order in Çukurova starting with Mersin, the port-town.

August 1872). The earliest such registration took place in Kozan. See Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, p. 150.

¹⁵⁵ *Bulletin Annuel de Statistique*, Istanbul, 1911. *Annuaire Oriental de l'Empire Ottoman*, Istanbul, 1912, p. 1369. "Devlet-i Âliye-i Osmaniye'nin 1313 senesine mahsus İstatistik-i Umumisi", *Ticaret ve Nafia Nezareti*, Istanbul, 1316.

Table 1. Population of Çukurova, 1831–1914

Çukurova Source	Total	Muslim	%	Armenian	%	Greek	%	Other	%
1831	¹ 91,850	85,781	93	2,727	3			3,342	4
1862	² 100,000								
1871	³ 207,000								
1874	^{4*} 324,062	282,466	87					41,596	13
1894	⁵ 392,997	349,636	89	32,815	8	6,262	2	4,284	1
1897	⁶ 398,764	355,912	89	32,879	8	5,886	1	4,087	1
1914	411,023	341,903	83	52,650	13	8,537	2	7,933	2
1914	⁸ 475,179	436,814	92	28,876	6	5,847	1	3,642	1
1914	⁹ 430,000	252,000	59	130,000	30	30,000	7	18,000	4

Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 113.

² US: Bureau of Foreign Commerce, *Commercial Relations of the U.S. with Foreign Countries*, Report on Adana, 1862.

AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria for the Year 1872, Province of Adana, p. 584.

⁴ Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 117.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 160–161.

⁷ BBA: *Yıldız Esas*, 33/553–48, 1332 (1914).

⁸ USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC, 1107, Roll 8, No. 19.

⁹ Armenian census of the Patriarchy reprinted in *Ibid.*

Note:

* “Other” indicates total non-Muslim population in the year 1874.

PART II

CONSTRUCTION OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

MIGRATION AND FAMILY NETWORKS:
ENTERPRISING A PORT-CITY

*Mersina, a natural quay, with nothing but a few huts on the shore.*¹

Traveling through the city of Mersin in the 1970s, historical novelist Joseph O'Neill felt that he looked out upon a world full of stories he did not understand:

After the Greek Orthodox Church, the carriage jingled past big merchants' houses, some semi-abandoned, most in disrepair. In the top corner of each, it seemed, lived an old lady whom one knew—Madame Dora, Madame Rita, Madame Fifi, Madame Juliette, Madame Virginie.²

O'Neill's imagination stemmed from his own family history in Mersin through which he recounted the lively multi-ethnic port-town of the late 19th century.

Indeed, the remarks of another traveler from the 1870s gave the first glimpses of this town:

Mersina seems a flourishing little place; its bazaars, thronged by the various races who have settled here, present a scene of great animation.³

The 1870s marked a turning point for the making of the region, the central stage of which was the port-town Mersin. In other words, political, economic and legal changes after the 1830s culminated in the process of spatial change with the creation of a new port-town for the large hinterland that was Çukurova. Existing nearby port-towns, Iskenderun and small ports like Tarsus, proved inadequate for this new task. Tarsus had been important in the early development of

The description is in Francis Beaufort (1818) *Karamania, or, A brief description of the south coast of Asia-Minor and of the remains of antiquity [With plans, views, &c. collected during a survey of that coast, under the orders of the Lords commissioners of the Admiralty, in the years 1811-1812]* (London: R. Hunter) p. 266.

² Joseph O'Neill (2000) *Blood-Dark Track: A Family History* (London: Granta Books) p. 20.

³ E.J. Davis (1879) *Life in Asiatic Turkey. A journal of travel in Cilicia (Pedia and Trachoea), Isauria, and parts of Lycaonia and Cappadocia.* (London: E. Stanford) p. 13.



Illustration 2. Mersin's coast

Çukurova. In the 1830s, limited exchange had been done through Tarsus, where mostly Egyptian and Greek ships stopped.⁴ Even in these years of little commercial activity, Tarsus was not significant enough for merchants to conduct their business from here instead of Izmir or Istanbul.⁵ In the 1850s, the port improved as the town became the seat of the British, French, Dutch, and Russian consulates, but the climate made Tarsus an undesirable place for continuous residence. Most of the consuls had already moved to Mersin, coming back to Tarsus for the summer.⁶ The other commercial center for the region was of course the port of Iskenderun. In the 1830s Iskenderun was actually the port for the Province of Aleppo which administratively included Çukurova as well. Because Iskenderun serviced such a large area, we do not know how much use Çukurova made of it. Compared to Tarsus its potential was obviously greater. In fact, in 1835, Ibrahim Pasha had drained the marshes there as well.⁷ However, once the Egyptians left, the situation worsened. The lack of major roads linking Iskenderun with Aleppo and Çukurova was probably the main hindrance for further trade links from the plain to this port. Iskenderun remained

⁴ Russegger, *Reisen in Europa, Asien*, pp. 678–679.

⁵ Barker, *Lares and Penates*, pp. 116–117

⁶ Langlois, *Voyage*, pp. 260–61.

⁷ H. Guys (1853) *Statistique du Pachalik d'Alep* (Marseilles: Vial) p. 91.

Aleppo's outlet, despite the steady decline of trade since the opening of the Suez Canal had made the Euphrates route to the east obsolete.⁸

The natural quay together with the village Kazanlı that were later to become Mersin, on the other hand, occupied the coastal area nearest to the capital, Adana, with easy access by road and a ring of towns servicing the port-town. The port was first discovered during the time of Ibrahim Pasha in the 1830s and during his short reign used as the center for trade between Syria, Cyprus, and Egypt.⁹ However, the efforts of Ibrahim Pasha to promote Mersin did not shift commercial activity from Tarsus and Iskenderun. The move began some 20 years later, with the Crimean War.¹⁰ Thereafter Mersin slowly replaced the other exchange centers.

The process that changed Mersin from being a natural quay into the 'spatial expression' of Çukurova's human geographical transformation accelerated after the cotton famine, simultaneously with the process of commercialization of agriculture: the process of the transfer of cotton from the plain to industrial Europe. Such a process obviously required an export-import center the *raison d'être* of which lay beyond intra-empire trade. The emergence of such an eastern Mediterranean port-town set the stage for the establishment of a commercial network with its center at Mersin. The port-town was the final destination for the trade network of the hinterland, and the starting point in the foreign trade network.

Mersin, founded by immigrants coming from different parts of the Empire such as Beirut, Syria, Central Anatolia, Cyprus and the Aegean Islands became the cosmopolitan space of the region and formed the hub of the regional economy. A new organization of economic space meant the emergence of a new regional circuitry between the agrarian hinterland and the port. Such regional circuitry helped the region gain relative autonomy vis-à-vis the Empire. Transferring the cotton surplus from the producers of Çukurova to foreign markets necessitated new groups of people living in the port-town who, in the case of Mersin, migrated mostly from outside Çukurova. By the late 1880s and

⁸ *Journal de la Chambre de Commerce de Constantinople* (hereafter JCCC), Istanbul, 28 April 1888. The opening of the canal was in the beginning just one of the many ideas of the British: In 1830, The Head of the India Board of Control at Calcutta came up with the project for the Suez Canal, and predicted such an outcome for Aleppo.

⁹ Russegger, *Reisen in Europa, Asien*, p. 678.

¹⁰ Langlois, *Voyage*, p. 353.

the 1900s, nomads and migrants amply drew on the interest of both the central state and foreign capital, and raised the region's strength to almost autonomous levels.

The organization of this new kind of economic space in and around Mersin began in the 1860s with the first migrations to Kazanlı, the village nearby the quay. This was also the beginning of the construction of the town in terms of infrastructure, commercial and human networks.

Spatial Beginnings: The Port and the Town

Many European travelers observed the beginnings of the making of Mersin in the 1850s. Among the first buildings on the shore were the summer residences of consuls with their offices in Tarsus as well as residences of Greek and European merchants.¹¹ A geologist, Kotschy, made three successive trips to the area in 1853, 1856, and 1858, and noticed the impact of the Crimean War on the town's population, which had been only 100 before the war but later rose steadily. Construction flourished, particularly after both the Lloyd steamships and the French Messageries Maritimes began to use the port.¹²

At the time, however, Mersin was not really a properly functioning port although it did have a warehouse and a health clinic.¹³ The water was shallow, requiring rowboats and cranes to travel between shore and ships that anchored quite a distance from the shore. Apart from this, there were no mechanical appliances for the discharge or loading of ships.¹⁴ Nonetheless, between 1844 and 1865, the number of sailboats that called at Mersin doubled.¹⁵ By the end of the 1870s, the port had expanded to four different quays, two of which were made of stone and the other two of wood.¹⁶ This expansion attracted the British and

Kotschy, *Reise in den Cilicischen*, p. 3.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 6–26.

Ibid., pp. 23–26.

¹⁴ BAA, PA, *Eisenbahnangelegenheiten in der Türkei*, Potsdam, 1858, No. 15175, p. 57.

¹⁵ In 1844 the number was 159 as opposed to 311 in 1865. Only 3 steamships had come to Mersin in 1844 whereas in 1865 the number reached 97. See Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, p. 197. No sources are available for the years between 1844 and 1865. The absence of data probably points to the absence of any substantial increase in the maritime movement of Mersin.

¹⁶ *Adana Salnamesi*, 1296 (1878–1879), p. 148.

French consuls who began to report on the maritime trade generated from the Mersin port. Consuls did not report much commercial data prior to the 1870s, as there probably was no notable volume of trade yet. However, the 1870s marked a turning point when Mersin began to supersede the other ports of the area with considerable export-import rates.¹⁷ Other signs of this change could be observed in new provincial and municipal arrangements. Municipal taxes began to finance the port's regular maintenance as the town's administrative apparatus was complete with a Court of Trade, telegraph and port officers in addition to the customs-house, *kapudan* (navy commander) and *fener* (lighthouse) officers. The provincial government assured the regular servicing of a lighthouse 6 miles from the land.¹⁸ The customs-house of Mersin worked more or less satisfactorily for the merchants. With the exception of tobacco and coal, the duty was 8% uniformly for all imported goods, simplifying transactions between the merchants and the customs-house.¹⁹ However, the customs-house officers were often found colluding with the merchants at the expense of the central revenue administration. Especially in time of crisis, as during the famine of 1873–1874 and the 1877–1878 War, administrators, including the *kaymakam* (local governor) of Mersin, made profits through their collaboration with merchants.²⁰

After this initial establishment of the port, many upgrades followed. A second lighthouse as well as four landing stages, each operated separately by the municipality, the customs-house and the Adana-Mersin railway company, greatly facilitated anchoring and hauling.²¹ In the 1890s, the Governor General, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, managed to get

¹⁷ Some 340 tons of cotton went out from Mersin in 1870 although it was not even a particularly good year; the war in France alarmed speculators so much that almost two-thirds of the year's cotton produce remained unsold. AP, Report by Consul Skene, on the Trade of the Provinces of Aleppo and Adana in the Year 1870, pp. 1089–1090.

¹⁸ *Adana Salnamesi*, 1296, pp. 145–149. The mayor's office as well as non-Muslim subjects and European assessors made up the Court of Trade made up of six members including two Greek and an Armenian merchant. The British consular officer remarked that the court was far from just but that the presence of European assessors helped. AP, Report by Consul Skene, on the Trade of the Provinces of Aleppo and Adana in the Year 1870, p. 1090.

¹⁹ AP, Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria for the Year 1872, Province of Adana, p. 585.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1264. Also see Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, p. 22.

²¹ These landing stages underwent repair while a new one was added in the 1920s. JCCC, August 1926, No. 8, p. 230.



Illustration 3. Mersin Central Square

the port widened as part of ongoing imperial public works project.²² The landing stage built by the railway company was also extended for another 40 meters.²³ Another construction at the port involved the enlargement of the customs-house to provide speedy service.²⁴ To save time and money, cargo could be handled after dark provided prior notice had been given to the doctor and the police.²⁵ Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha also tried to get a concession granted for the construction of roofing over the principal quays, but the central authorities did not accept his proposal.²⁶ Other governor-generals, and particularly the local authority (*mutasarrif*) of Mersin, never tired of urging the construction of a sheltered port, but to no avail.²⁷ Throughout the period

²² AP, Report by Vice-Consul Massy on the Trade of the Vilayet of Adana for the Years 1895–1896, p. 11.

²³ *La Revue Commerciale du Levant, Bulletin Mensuel de la Chambre de Commerce Française de Constantinople* (hereafter *RCL*) No. 261, 31 December 1908, p. 797.

²⁴ *RCL*, No. 249, 31 December 1907, p. 812.

²⁵ AP, Report by the Vice-Consul Townshend at Adana for the Year 1903, p. 16; AP, Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 7.

²⁶ AP, Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1897, p. 12.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

discussed here, Mersin did not possess a roofed warehouse complex to protect the goods from rain, etc. Thanks to the prevalence of good weather, business was not unduly affected.²⁸ Other benefits existed: the addition of a steam crane and the *Société de Remorquage de Mersina* that charged modest embarkment fees to haul all merchandise with its 3 steamships and 50 small vessels²⁹ By 1908, 200–300 tons of merchandise could be landed in a day from a single ship. About 1,000 tons daily could be loaded onto a ship. The railway, for its part, could deliver to Adana 300 tons per day.³⁰ The port-town also had efficient telegraphic services.³¹

Clearly, by the beginning of the 20th century, Mersin was no longer the small summer residence coastal town of a few decades earlier. Many accommodation facilities, namely 4 inns (*hans*) and 2 hotels, received guests regularly. The town also had 2 baths, 90 entrepôts, 2 steam mills and 1 water mill, and even a ginnery built as early as 1869 by the British.³² The market, to the west of the town, had over 30 large stores with a total of 387 shops, 15 crowded coffeehouses, and open warehouses in 3 covered alleys that traded in articles of every possible origin, both indigenous and foreign, as well as all kinds of delicatessen and foodstuffs.³³ The main street of the town started from this market and extended directly to the Adana road and the train station, passing through the richest neighborhood.³⁴ Every day caravans filled this grand street adding to its very lively appearance.

The town expanded day by day especially toward the main lighthouse to the west where the gardens were accessible along wide streets, all paved. The offices of many shipping lines and mercantile agencies

²⁸ AP, Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1901, p. 14.

²⁹ RCL, No. 272, 30 November 1909, p. 485. Also BAA, HA, *Jahreshandelsberichte des Konsulats in Mersina* (6707), 53, 30 July 1908, p. 19.

³⁰ AP, Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 7.

³¹ RCL, No. 272, 30 November 1909, p. 485; AP, Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 8.

³² Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, p. 58. This ginnery was in addition to the three gins in Adana and Tarsus also built by the English and Americans. AP, General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1871, Province of Adana, p. 284.

³³ USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 97, 20 February 1918, p. 2.

³⁴ *Adana Salnamesi*, 1296/(1878–1879) p. 149.

added to the new dynamics of the town.³⁵ The houses were constructed of white stone. There was not a single house without a terrace. The municipality planted trees all over the town in 1889 and established a network of canals to ensure the evacuation of stagnant waters.³⁶ There was also running water in all the quarters of the town by the end of the 1890s. A Polish engineer came from Beirut to supervise the work.³⁷

Orange groves were found all around the town, inhabited by Arab peasants (*fellahin*). Each year new construction materialized, not just buildings but whole neighborhoods around the groves. One such completely new neighborhood, consisting of 25 dwellings, was created with a new name in 1893: the Hamidiye neighborhood. The area first was considered to be part of the Bahçe neighborhood but such rapid erection of houses necessitated a separate administrative unit (*muhtarlık*).³⁸ In short, a town unknown 30 or so years earlier had become one of the best known in the Mediterranean.³⁹

The immediate surroundings of the town also benefited from this growing prosperity, making Mersin administrative and commercial center. Kazanlı, 4 kilometers from the center and on the coast, with its 10 villages, had a population of 2,000. Since its days as a port in the time of Ibrahim Pasha, Kazanlı had become a resort in the vicinity of Mersin. Also a few kilometers from Mersin were also Elvanlı, Yeniköy, and Hıristiyan-Köy; all new settlements. Buluklu, 10 kilometers from Mersin, became the place of pleasant country residences for escape from the summer heat. Another such mountain resort, Gezne, was 20 kilometers away and considerably above sea level where the notables of Adana and Mersin including the governor-general, stayed during summer.⁴⁰

³⁵ Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, p. 52. The first of these offices belonged to the French Messageries Maritimes.

³⁶ *Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Quai d'Orsay, Nouvelle Serie, Turquie*, Paris (hereafter AMAE); *Correspondance Commerciale, Tarsous*, 1874–1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous et Mersine, 2 December 1889.

³⁷ AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale, Tarsous*, 1875–1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersine et Adana, 15 June 1896, pp. 42–43.

³⁸ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 618 (63/6), 9 Muharrem 1311 (24 July 1893).

³⁹ Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, p. 51.

⁴⁰ Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, pp. 61–62.



Illustration 4. Panorama of Mersin at the end of the 19th century

Table 2. Population of Mersin, 1850–1914

Mersin	Total	Muslim	%	Armenian	%	Greek	%	Other	%
Early 1850s ¹	100								
1860s ²	2,000								
1892 ³	9,320	5,500	59	860	9	2,700	29	260	3
1896 ⁴	10,000								
1908 ⁵	22,000								
1912 ⁶	25,000								
1914 ⁷	25,000								

Source

¹ Kotschy, *Reise in den cilicischen*, pp. 3–6.

² Gould, “Pashas and Brigands”, p. 199.

³ Cuinet, *La Turquie d’Asie, II*, p. 50.

⁴ Townshend, *A Military Consul*, p. 112.

⁵ Adana Salnamesi, 1908–1909 (1309) p. 138.

⁶ Shaw, “The Ottoman Census System and Population: 1831–1914”, *IJMES*, No. 9, 1978, p. 338.

⁷ USCR, Daily Consular and Trade Reports, 24 September 1914, p. 1604.

Surrounding Mersin: Roads, the Railroad and Caravans

The process of making of Mersin into a port-town required connections beyond the town. For continuous security of access to the produce, the repair and construction of roads constituted the first and perhaps the most important step. The camel, the mule, at best the bullock-wagon were the only means of transport to Mersin at the time of its creation. The Mersin-Tarsus-Adana road, at the end of the 1850s, often had to pass right through reed beds. Winter travel proved very difficult owing to the mud. As early as 1858, foreign consulates and merchants had petitioned the local government for the repair and elevation of the road to avoid the swamps.⁴¹

Ibrahim Pasha had first constructed the Tarsus portion of the Mersin-Adana road in the 1830s, straight for its entire length of 40 kilometers. Almost three decades later, the *mutasarrıf* of Mersin, Halil Pasha managed to arrange for its first repair, employing *corvée* labor.⁴² The remainder was also repaired and extended right into the main street of Adana, thus completing 67 kilometers.⁴³ The road went through a countryside seemingly devoid of people with cotton and wheat alternating with wide areas of uncultivated land. In the north, it extended to Konya whose grain surplus was also exported through Mersin.

Following the repairs, well-to-do merchants of Mersin and Adana partnered a joint stock company for a 12-car horse carriage enterprise. The local company engaged in transportation between the port and Adana.⁴⁴ The company turned into a consortium of cart and wagon transportation that directly contracted with tribal nomads, the traditional suppliers of horses.⁴⁵ This made a lot of sense since a camel could carry two bales of cotton while a horse-cart carried six, lowering the cost and thus rendering the plain's cotton more marketable in Europe.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Kotschy, *Reise in den Cilicischen*, p. 26.

⁴² BOA: *İradeler, Meclis-i Mahsus*, 6 *Muharrem* 1285 (29 April 1868).

⁴³ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/15, 12 *Agustos* 1286 (24 August 1870).

⁴⁴ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/47, 5 *Rebiulevvel* 1287 (5 June 1870).

⁴⁵ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria for the Year 1872, Province of Adana, p. 586.

⁴⁶ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/47, 5 *Rebiulevvel* 1287 (5 June 1870).

In the late 1870s, cotton carts drawn by oxen could be seen plodding steadily in both directions.⁴⁷ This meant more traffic on the Tarsus-Mersin road, necessitating another repair in 1878. This was also the year that Circassian refugees relocated in Anatolia. Mersin itself received some 6,000 to 7,000 refugees upon whose arrival 11 villages were settled in the plain. This in turn made trading in Mersin brisk and caused an increase in the customs duties of the port.⁴⁸ Some of these immigrants received land in exchange for guarding stations set at 1-hour distances along the road to Adana.⁴⁹

In terms of the network of roads connecting Mersin with minor centers within the region to the north and east, much had been accomplished in the 1870s, especially the maintenance of old routes. Sis, the northern center of the network of roads in the plain, had a connection to the villages of Rum Nahiyesi and Bilanköy.⁵⁰ A native of the eastern center Misis, Ispirakis Efendi, cleared the swamps on the road between Mersin and Misis in 1883. In exchange for his services, he secured a concession for operating steamboats on the Seyhan and Ceyhan as far as Adana and Misis.⁵¹

River transportation on the plain, especially between minor centers and the three towns of Adana, Mersin and Tarsus, was indeed a viable option. The timber for the construction sector of Mersin actually came via the three branches of the Tarsus River, all of which were efficiently navigable, with many mills that worked to full capacity.⁵² The other two rivers, the Seyhan and Ceyhan, were navigable by tug. The Seyhan, flowing directly into the Mediterranean, was deep enough to allow navigation directly into Adana. However, larger volume navigation on the Seyhan did not become possible, as it required the dredging of swamps. Navigation also caused some damage to the water mills that provided irrigation for the gardens alongside the river. Some private entrepreneurs, ready to clear swamps, already in the late 1860s attempted to establish river navigation. For example, a Frenchman named Dushan, having secured permission to use a ship on the Seyhan, wanted to do the same on the Ceyhan all the way from Maraş to

⁴⁷ Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, p. 15.

⁴⁸ AP: Report by Consul Henderson on the Trade and Commerce of Adana for the Year 1880, p. 1264.

⁴⁹ *Adana Salnamesi*, 1296 (1878–1879) p. 131.

⁵⁰ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/1, 5 *Rebiulevvel* 1287 (5 June 1870).

⁵¹ AMAE: *Bulletin Consulaire Français*, Tome VII, *Alexandretta*, 1883, p. 635.

⁵² *Adana Salnamesi*, 1296 (1878–1879) pp. 149–152.

Misis and Adana. He asked for a 20-year concession for his operations on both rivers. This he was not granted, but he did manage to bring people from Adana to Mersin on his ship. It seems the state did not grant the concession for two reasons: The prospect of unemployment for the camel caravaneers of the area whose protest would disturb the societal balance, and the prospect of benefiting a foreigner. Instead, provincial authorities received orders to start Adana's own river navigation on the Ceyhan that would reach the Yumurtalık port, opening up a commercial route between Sis (Kozan), Maraş, and the coast.⁵³ After a short while however, navigation on the Ceyhan halted, as the connection between Maraş and a small port like Yumurtalık did not bring any profit. The Seyhan received more interest later in the century when the Dutch envisaged a project for clearing swamps and starting navigation, but Sultan Abdülhamid dropped the idea.⁵⁴

The creation of Mersin served as an example for the development of the many other albeit smaller ports of the region such as Yumurtalık, Karataş, and Silifke. Karataş, for example, was the nearest port to Adana. Modernizing the Karataş and Yumurtalık ports were projects worth considering as they could also be used for connection to the Mediterranean, but existing small ports never received such attention. The port of Ayas in the east, for example, did not have a road system to connect it to the interior. In the west, Taşucu and Silifke became only lumber ports.⁵⁵ Both Ayas and Silifke served mostly other ports of the Empire and Egypt. Anamur was the export port for iron whence some 40,000 tons went abroad annually.⁵⁶

As Mersin became the port of Çukurova, and even beyond, the means of transportation improved remarkably, a direct outcome of the increase in the merchandise to be exported. Although camel caravans remained important between Adana and Tarsus and the minor centers of the plain, wheeled transport via cotton carts between Adana, Tarsus and Mersin became more and more feasible thanks to the repaired

⁵³ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/11, 23 Şevval 1286 (26 January 1870).

⁵⁴ United States Consular Reports, Washington, D.C. (hereafter USCR). Inquiry Documents, Report by O.J. Campbell on the *Vilayet* of Adana, 24 September 1914, p. 32.

⁵⁵ USCR: Inquiry Documents, Report by O.J. Campbell on the *Vilayet* of Adana, 24 September 1914, p. 32.

⁵⁶ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 4.

roads. In addition, by the mid-1880s, caravaneers were definitely enjoying better roads and safer travel.

Private enterprises together with the local authorities had much to do with connecting the port to the plain. Nomads and settlers made Mersin the outlet for trade, while Circassian migrants kept the roads safe for caravaneers. Security in Çukurova was finally complete; people could travel safely to and from Kayseri, Konya, and Izmir without guards. Indeed, the situation was much better than in Aleppo.⁵⁷ The tribes now had permanent winter homes in the villages established by the Forced Settlement.⁵⁸ The tribal notables, though deprived of their traditional base of power, profited from agriculture and trade and also made political gains. Construction of roads and bridges, one of the most important factors in the development of commercialization, became their main activity.⁵⁹ Former tribal chiefs formed the majority in the councils for public works in Mersin, Adana, and Tarsus.⁶⁰ It seems one of the tactics of the imperial government in settling tribes had proved successful even though it took a quarter of a century: Giving the tribal elite certain positions in the decision-making of the region.⁶¹ This inclusive approach made the tribal population not only part of the state apparatus but also of the commercial networks.

The port-town now required a new and speedy type of transportation pattern particularly to maintain bulky exports. Accomplishing such a formidable task depended on the rapid development of a more adequate transportation system than the existing one: a rail line between Adana and Mersin. This meant inviting foreign presence to the region, to invest first in the railway and then in mechanisms of banking and credit.

Especially after the 1870s, railway construction became a major enterprise in the Ottoman Empire.⁶² Short lines had been built and

⁵⁷ FO 424/169, from Jago to Salisbury, Aleppo, April 1891, pp. 69–71.

⁵⁸ Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, p. XIV. But also see Chapter 1.

⁵⁹ The assessment that notables in towns came from tribal families now successfully pacified after the *Fırka-ı Islahiye* is due to Gould. Naturally, part of the rise in the urban Muslim population is to be attributed to the settlement of tribal entities.

⁶⁰ *Adana Salmesi*, 1309 (1891–1892) pp. 137–140 and 148.

⁶¹ Eberhard is of the same opinion. *Settlement and Social Change*, pp. 284–286.

⁶² For an overview on Ottoman rail construction, see Quataert, “The age of reforms”, pp. 804–815. For an assessment of the impact of the railways on the Ottoman economy, see his “Limited revolution: The impact of the Anatolian Railway on Turkish transportation and the provisioning of Istanbul, 1890–1908”, *Business History Review*, 51/2 (1977) 139–160.

a German engineer, Pressel, had already planned the Anatolian Railways.⁶³ But the construction of extended lines did not take off before the 1890s. Most of the Anatolian Railways were constructed between 1890 and 1895 as part of the rail system extending from Western Europe.

The construction of the Mersin-Adana line, however, was the exception. It served the economic development of Çukurova rather than providing a connection to the existing rail system and its construction preceded the boom of the 1890s. Though insignificant lengthwise, the line fulfilled, more than anything else, the great need for a modern means of transportation in Çukurova. The line became part of larger schemes much later, as an important part of the Baghdad Railway (1906) and from 1910 it connected Çukurova with Istanbul.⁶⁴

In fact, an imperial decree (*ferman*) granted the concession for the railway, as early as January 1883, to Mehmed Nahid Bey and Costaki Theodoridi, who passed on the rights to a French citizen residing in Istanbul.⁶⁵ The capital, having assimilated Ottoman participation, was divided into 55% French, and 45% British. The job at hand was not considered difficult with the exception of the construction of a bridge on the Tarsus River. The line of 67 kilometers opened in August 1886, linking the most important cotton-producing sub-region of Çukurova, namely the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, to the port of Mersin. Initially the line did not make money because of crop failures and mismanagement arising from disagreements between French and British shareholders.⁶⁶

In the year the line was opened, 1886, and the following year, a total of 27,000 tons of goods were carried from Mersin to Adana; the trains took 2 hours and 29 minutes to run between the two towns. For passenger traffic, the price was rather high. During the first 2 years, there still was a decided competition between the railway and carriages. In November 1887, heavy rain destroyed five miles of the line

⁶³ Quataert, "The age of reforms", p. 806.

⁶⁴ For the Baghdad Railway, see Jonathan S. McMurray (2001) *Distant Ties: Germany, the Ottoman Empire, and the Construction of the Baghdad Railway* (Westport, CT: Praeger).

⁶⁵ Jacques Thobie (1973) *Les Intérêts Economiques, Financiers et Politiques Français dans la Partie Asiatique de l'Empire Ottomane de 1895 à 1914*, PhD Dissertation, l'Université de Paris, p. 169.

⁶⁶ For an overview on the early phase of the line, see Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, pp. 18–19.

between Adana and Tarsus, causing suspension of traffic for a fortnight.⁶⁷ Repairs began immediately but the new tracks were wooden, impairing speed. This caused critical attacks on the company for their mistakes in the original construction of the line.⁶⁸ Immediately following this rain an unusual drought struck the harvest of 1887 and rendered the railway almost redundant, for little trade took place.⁶⁹

During this initial phase, traffic on the Mersin-Adana line remained limited although in years of good harvest it brought great profits.⁷⁰ However, it quickly became the major factor behind the extension of merchant capital beyond existing markets. The coming of the railroad and hence foreign capital into the region further oriented production for export, not only in the region but also in far-away corners of the interior. In fact, Mersin fed the trade of such towns as Niğde, Bor, Aksaray, Nevşehir, Ürgüp, Everek, and Kayseri and to some extent Yozgat and Sivas, as they received their supplies from Mersin.⁷¹ As the importance of Mersin increased so did that of Adana, which became a considerable commercial center of great importance, with good roads in all directions to the interior of Asia Minor.⁷² Many of the Anatolian manufacturers and merchants either sent their produce directly to Mersin or further to Beirut and Izmir via Mersin.⁷³ This made Mersin and Adana important intermediary points between Anatolia and Beirut and Izmir. Kayseri sent many of its products for export to Mersin, especially wool.⁷⁴ Hamidiye at the southeastern end of the Ceyhan sub-region exported its cotton to Mersin.⁷⁵ Between Adana and Kayseri

⁶⁷ FO 417/99, Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance, 1888, London, pp. 4–5. Another source indicates that the destroyed part was not in use from November to January. *JCCC*, 24 December 1887, p. 333.

⁶⁸ *JCCC*, 24 December 1887, p. 334.

⁶⁹ FO 417/99, Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance, London, 1888, p. 5.

⁷⁰ A. Cheradame (1903) *La Question d'Orient* (Paris: Plon) p. 42.

AP, Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 10. Imported sewing machines in the amount of 3,500 tons were sent to Kayseri from Mersin while exports of cereals and opium in the amount of 5,200 tons went from Kayseri to Mersin in 1908. A merchant from Kayseri calculated these amounts for the British consular agent at values of respectively, 280,000 and 300,000 sterling.

⁷² AP, Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1901, p. 14. *RCL*, No. 239, 28 February 1907, p. 265.

⁷⁴ *RCL*, No. 165, 31 December 1900, p. 851. For Kayseri, another important port was Samsun, on the Black Sea coast.

⁷⁵ AP, Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 4.

lay the other market towns of the sub-region: Misis, Ceyhan, Kars-ul-Zulkadriye (Kadirli), and Sis (Kozan). Sis and Misis, important trade centers since the Silk Road, now connected to the Mediterranean via Mersin. This network and beyond resulted from the coming of age of Mersin and its hinterland. Mersin had “become the shipping port of all the southern provinces of Asia Minor.”⁷⁶ In addition, the shortest way from Konya to the Mediterranean passed through the Taurus, despite the difficulty involved. Three hundred and thirty kilometers, the distance between Konya and Mersin, could be traversed by camel caravans in 12 days costing around one golden lira for every 15 tons. At the end of the 19th century, Konya received most of its imports from Mersin, and occasionally sent export merchandise to Izmir and Istanbul via Mersin.⁷⁷ In 1896 when railways reached Konya via Eskişehir, the hinterland commercial traffic moved to Konya and from there, to Mersin, the nearest port.⁷⁸ In terms of Konya grain exported from Mersin until 1904, camel transportation remained the only way through the Taurus, costing daily 8–10 francs per ton.⁷⁹ The completion of the extension of the railway from Konya to Ereğli in 1904, and hence the loss of grain exports from Mersin, did not have a major impact on the trade between the port and Anatolia, for two reasons. Firstly, Mersin had become dependent on cotton export rather than grain export as the railway meant low transportation costs for the cotton that grew in the region. One of the most important consequences of the railroad was increasing cotton exports from the region, as towns in close proximity to the railroad thrived as mercantile centers. Secondly, any other merchandise that was transferred to Mersin came

⁷⁶ AP, Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of North Syria for the Year 1874, Province of Adana, p. 1701. These were the very words of the British Consular Officer.

⁷⁷ Until the last decade of the nineteenth century, Antalya was the port most used by Konya. However, when the Aydın Railway connected Aydın with Sarayköy and Dinar in the 1880s and the 1890s, most trading activity turned toward the west. With the Ankara line opened in 1893, more of the commerce of Konya moved to the north. BAA, PA, *Eisenbahnen*, No. 94 (15071), Konya, 16 June 1907, p. 50.

⁷⁸ BAA, PA, *Eisenbahnen*, No. 94 (15071), Konya, 16 June 1907, p. 51. For the competition between caravan routes and railroads, see Quataert “Limited revolution”.

⁷⁹ *AMAE: Correspondance Commerciale*, No. 109, Ministère du Commerce, de l’Industrie et des colonies. “Situation commerciale de Mersina en 1892”, p. 6.

from far away points in the hinterland that still remained outside the rail network.⁸⁰

For small towns such as Niğde, caravan routes were still the best connection to Mersin. The Haydar Pasha-Konya railway, Izmir-Dinar railway, and the Niğde-Mersin caravan route comprised the main routes of the hinterland.⁸¹ Only camels could traverse the Gülek pass, providing for the transportation from the eastern hinterland at a cost of 60–70 marks or 4–5 sterling per ton.⁸²

Nonetheless the railroad still resulted in changes in the caravan traffic to and from Mersin.⁸³ And this change was not simply about the expansion of caravan transport once the railroads were established. As a general rule, caravans that previously bore the region's surplus to domestic and foreign buyers alone found themselves in more demand as there was more to carry to the railway stations. However, in Çukurova there were some qualifications to this general increase.⁸⁴ First of all, the railroad between Adana and Mersin paralleled the old caravan route. After 1886, several developments took place simultaneously: in the first place, caravans began making Adana their center of departure without going to Mersin. Until the railroad came, the caravaners used to haul the merchandise all the way to the last point along the trade route. But once they could no longer compete with the railroad, most came only as far as Adana, where the merchandise was then loaded on trains. Thus the center point of all deals would be either Adana or Tarsus, and not Mersin. Secondly, caravans began engaging in one-way traffic, hauling harvest to the final destination of Mersin. Some still

⁸⁰ AP, Report by the Vice-Consul Townshend at Adana for the Year 1904, p. 7. Perhaps the Konya-Ereğli rail did divert the trade of Ereğli to Konya and Istanbul.

⁸¹ BAA, PA, *Eisenbahnen*, No. 94 (15071), Konya, 16 June 1907, p. 52.

⁸² BAA, HA, *Jahreshandelsberichte des Konsulats in Mersina*, (6707), 53, 30 July 1908, p. 16.

⁸³ Of course, the caravan routes to the other minor ports were still used. These were well-marked routes between Ayas-Iskenderun, Misis-Ayas, Silifke-Ermenek, Silifke-Karaman and Silifke-Anamur. Mark Sykes (1915) *The Caliph's Lost Heritage* (London: Macmillan and Co.) p. 29.

⁸⁴ Quataert also discusses this general increase and evaluates the situation of caravans in the age of railways when animal carriage became too costly, asking if the railways destroyed, or damaged caravaners or if they caused renewed prosperity. For him too, the railroad never meant a complete disappearance of caravan business, but fluctuations occurred depending on many factors, not only technological: "The state of the crops, regional and international business cycles, war, epizootic diseases, and the development of alternative transport modes." See his "The age of reforms", p. 820.

hauled merchandise all the way to Mersin, the last point of the inland commercial network, but now they only did so one-way. Thirdly, caravaneers lowered their fees in the face of the fierce competition of the inexpensive rail charges. If their prices fell, they remained as an alternative. Finally, those caravaneers living in the region began concentrating on grain traffic. They compensated for their loss in hauling cotton by carrying grain almost exclusively. In other words, the vitality in the cotton business meant vitality for the caravaneers carrying other agricultural crops, the second most important being grains in Çukurova.

In short, the caravan system and the railroad complemented one another in mountainous regions where semi-nomadism still continued to a certain degree. Undoubtedly, the rail also stimulated population movements, but sedentarization finally began to bear fruit, not through the Forced Settlement but through the new market opportunities.⁸⁵ Nonetheless, sedentarization did not come to a close with the railroad either, for nomads found new outlets as suppliers of horses and camels. As long as there was only one rail line in the whole of Çukurova, there would be a need for the caravaneers and their centuries-old routes:

Notwithstanding the Adana-Mersin railway which passes through Tarsus, the town remains a place of many caravans... in their traffic between interior and coast through the Cilician Gates... are numerous camel saddles.⁸⁶

Yet, the caravaneers no longer held a monopoly over either the trade routes or the now different commercial world. Now, at best, they shared their zones with those controlling trade from Mersin and catered to the needs of such merchants to the best of their ability. Merchants, confronted with an ever-rising volume of commerce, began to alternate between the railroad and the caravan route.

However, merchants also received free passes and special privileges for their cargoes on the rail, which undoubtedly helped the commer-

⁸⁵ Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, pp. 221–226. Gould also argued that although a large part of the tribal population suffered in the face of a new economy, by the 1890s, when settlement efforts were successful, "...tribal elites had the most to gain from reform once they shifted their sights from traditional feuding to the more sophisticated methods of economic gain through commerce and agriculture." p. 225.

⁸⁶ W.J. Childs (1917) *Across Asia Minor on Foot* (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood.) p. 334.

cial network extend and flourish.⁸⁷ For instance, cereals, cotton, opium, construction timber, oil-producing plants, raisins, carpets, and leather goods were exported while imports included every conceivable item, even including sewing machines from Europe and America.⁸⁸ Mersin handled many prohibited items as well. Tobacco and gunpowder were the most important illegal imports and the Ottoman state brought a patrol ship from Beirut to Mersin to police such activity.⁸⁹

All commercial activity took an upturn from 1890 onwards, although cotton exports doubled between 1891 and 1895, indicating that the commercial network of the plain worked very efficiently now that the majority of the produce was exported. The merchandise carried by the railway almost doubled between 1886 and 1890. In these years, beginning in the 1890s, the railway began to make important profits, doubling those of the previous years. Its operations were so successful that a syndicate was established for the extension of the existing line to Birecik on the Euphrates, with a branch line to Maraş.⁹⁰ The number of passengers increased substantially also, with 38,000 people in 1890 as opposed to 27,000 the previous year.⁹¹ A newly introduced 4th class on the train allowed workers and peasants to travel at a reduced rate.⁹²

It is not surprising that the railroad also activated many changes for the town of Mersin. First of all, the port became an extended roadstead where rail cargoes were unloaded on the piers now equipped with a light tram. Two years after the opening of the line, the Mersin municipality undertook the project of building a light tram between the customs house and the railroad station.⁹³ The municipality managed the

⁸⁷ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 9. See Quataert for similar Anatolian Railways policies, "Limited revolution", pp. 145–146.

⁸⁸ Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, p. 53.

⁸⁹ BOA: *Yıldız Mütenevvi Mâruzat*, 26/64, 28 Şaban 1304 (2 May 1887). In addition to the Arkadi from Beirut, the Minister of Domestic Affairs argued for the necessity of using additional patrol ships that were used for the same purpose in Trabzon, Izmir, and Salonica.

⁹⁰ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1891, p. 14. The project was abandoned two years later.

⁹¹ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1890, pp. 9–10. And this success was achieved despite the cholera which struck in November and caused the complete cessation of the port traffic for two months. Many deals were canceled and only one-third of the cotton could be exported in December when the steamers began to call at Mersin again.

⁹² AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1892, p. 12.

⁹³ JCCC, 28 April 1888.

tram at its own risk. The tram traveled a length of 1,350 meters and was completed in 1889 by a French company.⁹⁴

Once the railroad line had proved its worth, its extension became very much an item on the agenda. The British wished for its extension to the interior, and to the east to Diyarbakır.⁹⁵ Actually Baron de Ven-devre, the financial director in charge, made an inspection at the end of 1894 to investigate future developments of the Mersin-Adana line. The Baron was vehemently against the prolongation of the line unless the imperial government accorded a kilometric indemnity. Often when it came to railway building in the Ottoman Empire, foreign capitalists feared that their capital could be sunk for a long period without profit, so they insisted on the imperial government guaranteeing a certain amount of subsidy for each kilometer opened. The Baron was adamant about this 'kilometric guarantee', also because he perceived the threat to the Mersin company posed by the Anatolian Railways that had just connected Konya to Eskişehir. After his inspection, the extension projects were abandoned although the Baron considered any French involvement in the irrigation of the plain worthwhile.⁹⁶

His assessment proved right. In 1899, just 13 years after the opening of the Adana-Mersin rail, British vice-consul Massy wrote: "A greater prosperity reigns, and agriculture and trade are thereby given an impetus unknown for several years past. Safety to life and property throughout the *vilayet* may be said to be everywhere complete".⁹⁷ Indeed trade from the region easily topped other Anatolian provinces. In 1899, Mersin superseded Izmir even in the export of grains.⁹⁸ Moreover, the decline by almost half of Izmir cotton exports in the period between 1876 and 1908 was not to be recovered even in the face of improving foreign demand.⁹⁹ Undoubtedly Çukurova produced more cotton and Mersin replaced Izmir as the export port of the crop.

⁹⁴ JCCC, 2 February and 22 June 1889.

⁹⁵ FO 424/144, Report by Bax-Ironside on the Railways in Asia Minor, 28 March 1887, Istanbul, pp. 21–22.

⁹⁶ The Baron also thought that the storage facilities at the port needed better organization. Thobie, "Les Intérêts", pp. 172–173.

⁹⁷ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1899, p. 12.

⁹⁸ RCL, No. 149, 31 August 1899, p. 328.

⁹⁹ Quataert, "Ottoman reform", p. 288. The exports of Izmir between 1896 and 1900 went back to their level of 1878–1882. Reşat Kasaba (1988) *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy, The Nineteenth Century* (Albany: SUNY Press) pp. 120–121.

Mersin apparently exported everything Çukurova had a surplus of, including straw.¹⁰⁰

In such a growing region, it was natural, then, that the Germans expected the Baghdad Railway to change Mersin into the largest market of Mesopotamia.¹⁰¹ The Mersin-Adana railroad now passed under the control of the Baghdad Railway, with no kilometeric guarantee. The tracks had been repaired with German capital. Eighty new trucks, 4 new locomotives, and 6 passenger cars were ordered in 1908.¹⁰² The line had earned some 550,000 francs (22,000 pounds) in 1903. In 1908, the German administration succeeded in raising this profit to 28,000 pounds. Almost all of the profit came from the haulage of export-import items.¹⁰³

In these years, the railway annually carried some 55,000 tons of merchandise between Mersin and Adana, two-thirds of which were exports from Adana to Mersin. Ships that stopped at Mersin annually carried approximately 550,000 tons.¹⁰⁴ The continued prosperity of Mersin at this point depended largely on the Baghdad Railway. The French consular agent noted humorously that the only thing Mersin lacked, now that it was entirely connected with Anatolia and that it had all kinds of technological advances, was cars: "We have all that, and we should naturally be among the first to have automobiles, only if we had the routes to run them on!"¹⁰⁵ In this milieu, however, the merchants of Mersin did not need cars; they had more than enough for maneuvering and taking advantage of every opportunity to accumulate capital. The result was a lively Mersin with a commercial network of its own in the Eastern Mediterranean, with an ever-increasing number of ships from a greater variety of European countries. Thus, by 1899, Mersin's maritime commerce surpassed Lataqia, Iskenderun and Tripoli.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 44, *Receb* 1316 (November 1898).

¹⁰¹ RCL, No. 239, 28 February 1907, p. 265.

¹⁰² AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 8.

¹⁰³ BAA, PA, *Eisenbahnen* No. 94 (15072), 17 May 1909, p. 51.

¹⁰⁴ BAA, HA, *Jahreshandelsberichte des Konsulats in Mersina* (6707), 53, 30 July 1908, pp. 18-19.

¹⁰⁵ RCL, No. 261, 31 December 1908, p. 797.

¹⁰⁶ RCL, No. 142, 31 January 1899, pp. 152-153. Indeed, in 1899 the total tonnage of imported goods in Mersin was 440,710, twice that of Lataqia, 60,000 tons more than that of Iskenderun and almost the same as the amount entering Tripoli, Syria.

Migrants and Merchants: The Human Network

This new social and economic space in and around Mersin would have availed nothing had it not been for the people willing to engage in its making. No network of transportation could be established around the new port-town without the people that recently had migrated there; migrant merchants were the lifeblood of the port-town whence they directed affairs between the producers and the markets. The regulation of this exchange set out the parameters of the regional economy of Çukurova, as merchants also helped change this human geography of 20,000 square kilometers from basically a nomadic life-style to settled and urban life. They were also the most important community that connected Anatolia to the south, to the Mediterranean and thereby to Europe. In other words, the migrant merchants that created Mersin not only affected the port-town and Çukurova, but also connected eastern Anatolia with Istanbul, the Mediterranean world and the world at large. On a range of scales, they remade this space through the relations they established between the port and hinterland, coast and interior, with the two other urban sites of Adana and Tarsus, with municipalities and provinces, the central state and the world.

These migrant merchant families must be seen as full partners of the process of regional transformation as they became both the source and agent of a multitude of scales of relations emanating from the port-town. They came from as far away as the Fertile Crescent, the Aegean Islands, Cyprus and Cappadocia. The migration, settlement, networking and imprint of one particular family reveal the intricacies of the space and the conditions under which they migrated in great clarity: “The Cypriote Mavromatis Family had a very important place in Mersin. They were considered to be the richest people in Cilicia. They had very good careers as merchants, as industrialists, and as bankers.”¹⁰⁷ The former inhabitant of Mersin was not wrong in uttering these words about his hometown in Ottoman times. The family’s rise to riches underlies the various crucial mechanisms for the mercantile community at large and to the development of the port-town. The head

Quataert also mentions this increase in the second half of the 1890s in his comparison of the periods 1891–1895 and 1896–1900. See his “Ottoman reform”, p. 290.

¹⁰⁷ Center for Asia Minor Studies (hereafter CMAS), Oral Archives, Athens, Greece. Cilicia File 3, *The Periphery of Mersina*, Chapter II (CAMS), Interviewee Miltiadis Agionoglou, interviewer E. Tsalikoglou, 30 June 1959.

of the family is a great example of a lesser migrant merchant becoming within about 20 years a moneylender, tax-farmer, manufacturer and in the end a banker in about 20 years.

Indeed, Konstantin Mavromatis, later to be named Hacı, migrated to Mersin from Cyprus perhaps as early as the 1850s.¹⁰⁸ Apparently he was already engaged in cotton and grain trade, with which he branched out all the way to Marseilles. His involvement in the operations of the Messageries Maritimes was possibly the reason behind the opening of an agency branch in Mersin, the first shipping line to do so.¹⁰⁹

He did this in the period before the railroad, when there was no discernible pattern of exchange. Merchants like him set the rules of exchange as they went along, and most began with next to nothing. After all, before the railway, Mersin was a port-town without banks or any other reliable credit system. In these precarious years, mediating between producers and consumers involved many risks in the absence of financial facilities. But merchants like Mavromatis were representatives of close-knit ethnic and religious communities; communal ties strengthened them against business risks. In many cases, the rise of such mercantile classes and/or the predominance and preeminence of Christians in the commercial world of the Ottoman Empire is explained as being due to European protectionism, but this does not really hold true for Mersin: It was established by immigrants coming mostly from Christian backgrounds.

Whence and when did they come from? Rums, who spoke Karamanlica, began to come from Cappadocia while other Greeks arrived from the Greek islands as early as 1842, to Kazanlı a nearby village used by Ibrahim Pasha. This first destination of the first wave of Greek migration shows the potential that he had created, but others from various parts of Anatolia and Greece followed suit: 350 families from Cappadocia, 150 families from Chios and 150 families from Cyprus. Others from Lesbos, Crete, Santorini, Piraeus, and Paxoi had come to Mersin and settled, which is one of the facts that attest to strong links between commercial centers in the Mediterranean.¹¹⁰ The

¹⁰⁸ CAMS, Interviewee grandchild of Hacı Konstantin Mavromatis, Alexandra Prezani, interviewer I. Loukopoulou, 29 May 1962.

¹⁰⁹ Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, p. 52.

¹¹⁰ Sia Anagnostopoulou (1997) *Asia Minor, 19th Century–1919, The Rum Orthodox Communities: From the Rum Milleti to the Greek Nation* (in Greek), Athens, p. 264. Also see Evangalia Balta (2002) “The Greek Orthodox Community of Mersina (mid-19th century–1921)” in: Yenşehirlioglu et al. (Eds.), *Mersin, the Mediterranean*

Rum and Greek settlers in and around Mersin were all latecomers with the exception of one village, Hirstiyankoy, near Mersin, and a much older settlement than Mersin.

Rum and Greek migration did not remain limited to the town of Mersin either as only one-third of the total Greek Orthodox population of the entire province was indigenous, while one-third came from Cappadocia and another third from the Aegean Islands. Two-thirds of this total spoke Turkish (Karamanlica).¹¹¹

As for the Arab Orthodox community, the few families, remnants from the days of Ibrahim Pasha, were in close cooperation with Greeks of the same church in engaging in trade. One such family from Syria, the Butrus, just like that of Mavromatis, in the course of only two generations, managed to amass a fortune from trading between Damietta and Çukurova.¹¹² Actually, during this first phase, the population of Mersin was mostly made up of Greeks and Christian Arabs. Very few ethnic Turks and other Muslims resided there while Europeans, still few in number, preferred it in the summer.¹¹³

As for the Armenians, Armenian migration to the port had also begun at around the same time. The construction of the first Armenian Church in Mersin dates back to the early 1870s. The Armenians had asked for permission for the construction of their church from the Adana *mutasarrıf* (local official) Halil Pasha back when Adana was attached to the Aleppo province, before 1867. The then governor of Aleppo, Naşid Pasha had granted permission. But when the church was about to be finished, the matter of a license came before the authorities in Mersin and Adana. Upon investigation, the status of the land on which the church was located proved problematic. The land, previously categorized as *mülk* (private dominion) by Aleppo authorities, turned out to be part of the *Vakıf* (pious foundation) of the deceased Valide Sultan so the matter was taken up by the central state that prohibited all construction on *Vakıf* terrain. But the approach of Easter and the fact that 50,000 kuruş had already been spent on the church

and Modernity: Heritage of the Long Nineteenth Century (Mersin University Press) pp. 39–44.

¹¹¹ CAMS, Christian Association of Mersina, “Orthodoxia, Calendar of 1909”, p. 171.

¹¹² C. Favre and B. Mandrot, «Voyage en Cilicie 1874», *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, VII/15 (Janvier–Février 1878) 131.

¹¹³ Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, pp. 13–14.

convinced the state authorities to allow its temporary usage until a new location was decided upon.¹¹⁴

From the beginning, the human network was run by a variety—if not hierarchy—of merchants positioned at different points between the hinterland and Mersin. Rural merchants who had penetrated into the countryside formed the first link as they bought from the producers directly to sell in market towns throughout the hinterland. Such rural merchants were active as early as 1866, coming from outside the region as far away as Kayseri and other commercial centers in Eastern Anatolia. One of the first centers of these mostly Christian merchants was around Mersin, long before its emergence as the port of the area. They were the pioneers; they came without families and roamed around the villages buying their produce at “1 kuruş when it was worth 5” and selling to the villagers at “5 kuruş when it was really worth 1”.¹¹⁵ They conducted their trade via Karaman (Konya) as it was near. Taking advantage of Cevdet Pasha’s operations in the east, they had gone to Konya around the time of the Forced Settlement. They quickly drew the attention of the state, as the first complaints about their conduct go back to the mid-1860s. But already by 1870, they had managed to become moneylenders as the villagers became more and more indebted to them. The influx of various groups from eastern Anatolia, but most importantly merchants and moneylenders to Çukurova as, it became the center of commerce with a direct outlet to the Mediterranean, was a continuous phenomenon in our period. Indeed, from 1871 onwards more came from Kayseri and Mut and moved to the west of Mersin, namely to Ermenek, Gülnar and Edek Deresi. They allegedly charged outrageous prices and when they were not paid they confiscated the produce of the villagers. The authorities continuously sought to curtail their activities and placed additional price controllers in the area.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/10, 18 Şevval 1286 (21 January 1870).

¹¹⁵ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2215/12, 12 Rebiulahir 1287 (12 July 1870). These are the words in the report of the *Meclis-i Umumi* (General Council) that had gathered to do something about these merchants who damaged the equilibrium of the villages there. The council accused them for being “gaddar” i.e., cruel and decided to check their records periodically. They also had an idea of moving them closer to the center of the plain, as it was difficult to control them all the way in the west. The Council drafted several reports between 1862 and 1867 about the issue. But the central state did not do anything.

¹¹⁶ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/39, 18 Rebiulevvel 1288 (7 June 1871).

At the top of this mercantile hierarchy were merchants or trading agents commissioned by foreign firms that exported produce at Mersin. As export merchants, they engaged in big business, i.e., sold the purchased surplus to foreign markets. Mavromatis was the export merchant of Mersin, conducting business with world markets directly as well as collaborating with foreign firms as their much-sought-after link to the region.¹¹⁷ He started out with his services to the French but quickly founded his own trading agency, the Mavromatis Trading House.¹¹⁸ In his role as an intermediary his operations extended as far as the rural merchants, from the hinterland to Mersin, where he sold directly or to other trading agencies. He had his counterparts and business partners, so to speak, in other centers such as Adana, İçil (the district west of Mersin, mostly the southern zone), Tarsus and Misis, Payas, Kozan, Kadirli, and Ceyhan.

His networking beyond Mersin can be clearly seen in his activities in Tarsus, this principal town en route from Mersin to Adana. The most famous merchant of Tarsus was also a Greek, Elias Avantias, connected to the Mavromatis Trading House.¹¹⁹ It was no coincidence that Mavromatis's next investment took place in Tarsus where he established one of the earliest ginneries of Anatolia without foreign capital.¹²⁰ The rest of his counterparts in Tarsus and Adana, however, were indigenous to the region even if not to the particular location of their business. After all both towns had been old urban sites, not points of migration like the new port-town. Ethnic and religious ties, of Armenians in Adana and Tarsus, as well as long time involvement in trade, played a great role in these market centers. The largest mercantile population of Tarsus consisted of Armenians who were not only craftsmen but also traders. The Armenian community was also involved in the town's administrative apparatus. Most importantly the *Sandık Emini*, head of the local agricultural credit institution, was an

¹¹⁷ Favre and Mandrot, "Voyage en Cilicie 1874", p. 131. These travelers were Mavromati's personal guests.

¹¹⁸ Minas Christopoulos (1939) *The Communities of Cilicia* (in Greek), Crete, p. 12.

¹¹⁹ Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, p. 35. Also mentioned by Irini Renieri (2005) *Industries of the Greek Orthodox in the region of Çukurova (1880–1924)*, Paper presented at Mersin in Historical Perspective Colloquium and Exhibition, 22–24 September 2005, Mersin.

¹²⁰ *Neologos*, No. 5881, 15 February 1889, Istanbul, p. 3.

Armenian.¹²¹ Any member of this credit office, the *Menafi Sandığı*, was in direct contact with the producers. However, as is well known, these offices did not serve the purpose they were supposed to, i.e., they did not ordinarily provide credit for the small producer. Only the rich could get loans from them, due both to inefficient organization and the borrowing conditions. As a result, the poor had no choice but to go to the merchants for loans.¹²² Obviously the office of the *Menafi Sandığı* would provide its members with a ready clientele. Often the *Sandık Emini* would himself be the main money-lending merchant. These important connections meant two things for the Armenian mercantile community of Tarsus, this very advantageous point between the surplus produce and the export center: Easy access to the Adana-Tarsus sub-region where most of the cotton of the area was produced, and to the port of Mersin.

The merchants of Adana, the capital of the province, easily took advantage of this location, which also served as the main transit point between the cotton-cereal sub-region of Ceyhan and Mersin. The Armenians in Adana had been playing a major role in the inland trade of Çukurova even before the commercialization of cotton cultivation. As discussed in Chapter 1, before the 1860s they acted as intermediaries between the many tribes and the settled population of the Ceyhan sub-region in which most of the important settlements such as Misis and Sis (Kozan) were predominantly Armenian. Armenian merchants became the intermediaries for the export trade of Mersin as they traded everything and they lent money to the resourceless peasants.¹²³ This network made the Armenians rich, so much so that they ascended to more profitable levels of mercantile activity. Indeed, the prosperity of the town, that is to say, the wealth accumulated in the second half of the 19th century, was attributed to the Armenians.¹²⁴ The Armenian community was active in the administrative affairs of Adana as well; three out of the six members of the provincial council were Armenians. Two Armenians were among the members of the High Provincial Court.

¹²¹ *Adana Salnamesi*, 1296 (1878–79), p. 136.

¹²² FO 424/122, “Report on Adana by Ferdinand Bennet”, 1881, p. 189 (hereafter the Bennet Report). Money-lending as practically an occupation of Armenians is mentioned in all foreign consular reports.

¹²³ *Adana Salnamesi*, 1296 (1878–1879), pp. 157–165. Armenians in the Ceyhan sub-region also filled the administrative offices in charge of land tenure and commercial regulation.

¹²⁴ Favre and Mandrot, «Voyage en Cilicie», p. 18.

One of the members of the *Menafi Sandığı* was an Armenian. The head of this office was Yuanaki Efendi, a Greek.¹²⁵ Clearly, in Adana, these communities wielded the organizational and political power to exploit the emerging commercial opportunities, which they used to invest in industry. As we shall see in the next chapter, just like that of Tarsus, industry in Adana would also become a predominantly Greek and Arab Orthodox affair.

The mercantile world of Mersin also included caravaneers and storage people who were essential to networking on their own behalf or for merchants. Caravaneers assured safe transport between the hinterland and the port. Those employed in storage assured safe cargo space at staging points and at the port of Mersin. Men in these two categories could be hired at each interval point, or a single merchant in Mersin could commission them for the entire journey to the port. Transport people or caravaneers played an important role not only between the rural areas and urban centers but also for the carriage of goods between urban centers, particularly Adana and Tarsus, and Mersin. Storage people functioned similarly but obviously they were most important in the center, namely Mersin. Both the geography and the structure of the network dictated that the port-town was hierarchically at the top.

Indeed, the shopkeepers and the owners of the storage facilities were products of a similar background of capital accumulation. Some Armenians had, in the course of a few decades, ascended from being caravaneers in the hinterland to shop-keeping in major urban centers, including Mersin. Others were already urbanites in the few but important hinterland centers of domestic commerce, trading with the nomads. All these recent inhabitants of Mersin had amassed enough capital to become the owners of the shops as well as the storage facilities.¹²⁶ On the other hand, the caravaneers were Muslims, descendants of the Turcoman tribal population of the plain: "...the floating Turkish (sic) population is large, as almost the entire transport of the province is by means of camels, and the camel men are invariably Turks (sic)".¹²⁷ The absence of formal financial mechanisms such as banks, etc., fortified these ethnic orientations in the human network.

Adana Salnamesi, 1296 (1878–1879), p. 118. All members are cited by name.

¹²⁶ Not all Armenians were occupied with mercantile activity. The landholder Armenians—which made up the larger portion of the Armenian population—also went through a class change as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

¹²⁷ Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, p. 14.

The Greek community merchants of Mersin began with very little, but the absence of banks did not seriously inconvenience their trade in Mersin between the 1870s and 1890s, thanks to several mechanisms at their disposal which they were able to exploit fully. First of all, the shipment of merchandise was so safe in the small port-town that bills of lading were considered guarantee enough to ensure payment before unloading.¹²⁸ Smaller merchants in Mersin became notoriously successful at claiming payment for the merchandise they sold to Europe immediately after shipment, using these letters. Because European merchants appreciated that their counterparts in Mersin did not have enough capital for the transactions of the following year, they accepted such potentially risky methods on the word of leading merchants. Well-known merchants, Mavromatis for instance, honored these letters and thus paved the way for smaller merchants to have access to credit. In this precarious commercial network, such credit mechanisms were crucial. Needless to say, some did take advantage of the trust and discredited intermediary merchants, all the more necessitating communal ties and leadership like that of Mavromatis. This situation was also already greatly benefiting Mavromatis in the 1870s. Being the principal merchant of the area, he became wealthy enough to propose the irrigation of the plain between Tarsus and Adana. He was ready to invest in the plain in exchange for part of the taxation on the land irrigated for a period of 20 years. As the concession was not granted, Mavromatis did not become a major landowner but remained a merchant.¹²⁹

What were the sources that merchants could draw upon to accumulate money, or rather develop a money economy in such a seemingly informal network? Not all were Mavromatis and not all had ties to foreign firms like the Messageries Maritimes. Fairs and markets in Adana, Tarsus and Mersin as well as those in the hinterland centers proved immeasurably important for the network. Serving as important commercial organizations themselves since the 16th century, such fairs brought together not only Ottomans of Muslim, Armenian, Greek, Jewish backgrounds but also European merchants and agents.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria for the Year 1872, Province of Adana, p. 586.

¹²⁹ Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, pp. 17 and 56.

¹³⁰ For the 16th century see Suraiya Faroqhi, "Sixteenth century periodic markets in various Anatolian Sancaks: İçel, Karahisar-ı Sahib, Kütahya, Aydın, and Menteşe",

The Tarsus fair was one week before the Adana fair, the largest fair, which was called Çukurova Panayırı.¹³¹ Other markets were established permanently in certain towns of the area around Mersin and Sis (in Haçın, for instance).¹³² Merchants in Mersin particularly used the annual fairs of Adana and Tarsus in order to reach the internal markets and rural merchants.¹³³ Feeding into Mersin, these fairs helped the development of commercial activity in the port.¹³⁴ Just as important was their role in the establishment of a money economy in the transactions between the rural and urban populace. They not only provided the basis of commerce between the port and the hinterland, but also the means of exchange. In the absence of banks, this circulation of money was crucial for commerce.

Obviously, however, the money circulating at the fairs of the plain could not be used in long distance transactions. Bills of exchange, and various other forms of letters of credit were used to facilitate the flow of trade and funds between Mersin and beyond. As is well known, for bills of exchange to be secure in settling accounts, they had to be both reliable and negotiable. Yet in Mersin, bills of exchange could not be negotiated in different currencies.¹³⁵ They had to be sent to Izmir or Beirut for negotiation and the proceeds would return to Mersin in bullion. This meant much difficulty for all branches of local trade, as merchants in Mersin were obliged to have correspondents in Beirut, Izmir or Alexandria.¹³⁶ At this juncture as well, communal ties and personal ties like those of Hacı Konstantin Mavromatis and his family played pivotal roles; the grandson married into the Barbur family,

Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient, 22 (1978) 32–80. For the 18th and 19th centuries see Ömer Şen, *Osmanlı Panayırıları (18–19 Yüzyıl)*, Eren Yayıncılık, İstanbul.

¹³¹ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/39, 22 *Rebiulevvel* 1288 (11 June 1871).

¹³² BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/39, 22 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1288 (5 August 1871).

¹³³ The origins of these fairs date back all the way to the 16th century. They resurfaced as the centers of economic activity in the plain during the reign of İbrahim Pasha who had not only increased security measures to insure the safe travel of merchandise and people, but also paid great attention to their regularity. See Chapter 2.

¹³⁴ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/8, 18 *Şaban* 1286 (23 November 1869).

¹³⁵ Apparently, the negotiability of the bills of exchange only in one currency became the norm throughout the Empire in the 16th century. See Şevket Pamuk (1999) *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Paranın Tarihi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı) p. 92. However, in the 19th century, before its full-fledged development, Mersin was an anomaly compared to the other ports of the Empire such as İstanbul and Izmir where bills of exchange were negotiable in various currencies.

¹³⁶ AP: General Report, by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1871, Province of Adana, p. 286.

one of the most powerful Arab Orthodox families with roots in Beirut since the reign of Ibrahim Pasha. Beirut especially was very accessible for him as the Orthodox population of the town in general provided links with larger ports such as Beirut.¹³⁷ Also, effective communication was available with these correspondents since Mersin was one of the few places that possessed a telegraph office in the Empire. For a commission, these correspondents would remit to the Mersin merchants the necessary funds for the export trade. This was how bills could be drawn in Mersin to be sold at other ports for the purpose of cashing the proceeds of exports.¹³⁸ The associates in these flimsy arrangements were fellow members of the Greek community headed by Mavromatis. For the efficiency of foreign trade, especially in this first phase, rested solely on the merchant's successful delivery of the job/sum promised. Here rather informal local mechanisms of money lending or providing personal security were at work. The Greek community thus conducted the commercial transactions of Mersin when the town possessed a population of less than 2,000.¹³⁹ Hacı Konstantin Mavromatis carefully spread his family out through marriage alliances to fortify ties not only in Mersin, but Istanbul and beyond. One of his daughters married a German financier, Christmann, who was involved in almost everything else in Mersin, as we shall see. Another daughter married into a very influential mercantile family from Istanbul, the Tahinci, a branch of which was residing in Adana. One son married into another migrant family, the Siderikoudis from Chios Island, to be found in Mersin representing an Istanbul firm.¹⁴⁰

The administration of the port-town was for the most part in the hands of these communities as well. While Greeks were members of the Court of Trade as mentioned in the above section, the person in charge of the lighthouse was a Levantine. *Menaḫi Sandığı* (regional funds) members were mostly Christian Arabs.¹⁴¹ Clearly, however,

A still living member of another Orthodox family with ties to both Mersin and Beirut testifies to this relationship. Lady Cochrane, Yvonne Sursock, Round Table Discussion, in: Yenişehirlioğlu et al. (Eds.) (2002) *Mersin, the Mediterranean and Modernity: Heritage of the Long Nineteenth Century* (Mersin: Mersin UP). Also see Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu (1995) *Mersin Evleri* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları).

¹³⁷ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria for the Year 1872, Province of Adana, p. 586.

¹³⁹ Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, pp. 17 and 56.

¹⁴⁰ CAMS: Ioannis Kalfoglous (1899) *Mikra Asya Kitasının Tarihiye Coğrafyası*, Istanbul, pp. 156–160. Also see Irene Renieri, unpublished paper.

¹⁴¹ *Adana Salnamesi*, 1296 (1878–1879), pp. 145–147.

the Muslims, including Arab Muslims farmers (*fellahin*-‘peasants’), were in the majority but the Christian population composed of Greek Orthodox, Armenians, and Christian Arabs amounted to more than one-third of the total population.¹⁴² Religious institutions and schools reflected this multi-ethnic and multi-religious social composition. There was one mosque and a number of churches of different Christian faiths. In terms of educational institutions the town also had much to offer: two Islamic Higher Education Institutions, one high school (*rüşdiye*) and two primary schools for Muslims. Gregorian Armenians also had a school for Muslim, French and Armenian boys. The Catholic school was a small one of only 45 students who were instructed in Turkish and French. The Saint Joseph sisters had a school for girls.¹⁴³ Hacı Konstantin Mavromatis also established a Greek School for girls in the village of Hıristiyanköy and together with his sons Antonios and Andreas he donated regularly to the schools.¹⁴⁴ In the vicinity, the Greeks had two other schools, in one of which instruction was in Greek, French, and Arabic while in the other modern Greek was taught.¹⁴⁵

Mavromatis was heavily involved in other philanthropic activities for his hometown. The most interesting is his contribution to the construction of the Bezmi Alem Camii whose completion had been delayed due to lack of funds.¹⁴⁶ The one Greek Orthodox Church in the town of Mersin, St. Georges, Aya Yorgi, was first erected in 1870, but Hacı Konstantin Mavromatis contributed to its reconstruction in 1885 as a beautiful stone church in neo-Byzantine style with a dome and two bell towers. The community was so grateful that the Greek Council of Elders honored him by arranging his burial inside the precinct of the church.¹⁴⁷ Every time Mavromatis traveled outside Mersin, the bells of the church saluted his departure and return.¹⁴⁸

The merchants residing in Mersin took advantage of every opportunity that arose in Adana to further their business network. In 1872, for

¹⁴² The numbers are in Cuinet, *La Turquie d’Asie*, p. 50.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58.

¹⁴⁴ CAMS, interviewee grandchild of Hacı Konstantin Mavromatis, Alexandra Prezani, interviewer I. Loukopoulou, 29 May 1962.

¹⁴⁵ Michail Georgiadis (1896) “On the whole of Cilicia and Adana (in Greek)”, *Xenofanis*, Vol. 1, pp. 273–281.

¹⁴⁶ Gündüz Vartan (2002) “Round Table Discussion” in: Yenişehirlioğlu et al. (Eds.), *Mersin, the Mediterranean and Modernity: Heritage of the Long Nineteenth Century* (Mersin: Mersin UP).

¹⁴⁷ CAMS: Christian Association of Mersina, “Orthodoxia, Calendar of 1909”, p. 180.

¹⁴⁸ Balta, “The Greek Orthodox Community of Mersina”, pp. 39–44.

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Illustration 5. Mersin Orthodox Church repaired by the Mavromatis Family

instance, mercantile houses in Aleppo had been encouraged to open branch establishments in Adana. The purpose of the move was to avoid the inconvenient fluctuations in the exchange rate between the pound and the *kuruş*, due to the excess of imports over exports in Isken-derun. In Mersin exports exceeded imports, making the exchange rate more constant in Adana than Aleppo. As a result, doing business in Adana proved more beneficial for both Aleppo and Mersin merchants. Furthermore, these Aleppo firms in Adana often had branch offices in Manchester.¹⁴⁹ Manchester acted as the major financial center linking the merchants without intermediaries. Here cash for their cotton could be easily invested and money could be borrowed. The British consulate frequently aided the business of these branch offices with the Ottoman authorities.¹⁵⁰

When the foreign presence was becoming important problems could still erupt either for region-bound reasons or imperial political

¹⁴⁹ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria for the Year 1873, Province of Adana, p. 966.

¹⁵⁰ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria for the Year 1873, Province of Adana, p. 966.

crises like the 1877–1878 war.¹⁵¹ Yet, neither the famine of 1873 nor the 1877–1878 war had long-lasting negative repercussions on the plain. It is true that the immediate impact dealt a serious blow to a precarious commercial network, which was in its infancy. However, several developments put Mersin back on track, permanently. For one, the change in the channels of trade following the famine turned to the advantage of Mersin, perhaps at the expense of Aleppo. The gradual weakening of the commercial prominence of Aleppo in the second half of the 19th century meant renewal for Çukurova, as Mersin became the home for much of the Aleppine mercantile activity, particularly after 1876. Also, new houses of business opened in Mersin as the import trade also prospered.¹⁵² Import merchants in Mersin began to deal more with France than Britain, as French wares were cheaper. The same merchants, i.e., merchants engaged in imports, were almost exclusively commission agents who charged 2% on the total value of all transactions,¹⁵³ so imports, though of cheap items, could still be a profitable business. However, most importantly, the productive Çukurovan plain, where production began to increase as early as 1876, fed the trade of Mersin.

Through this mercantile network, Mersin was integrated into the world market. Even when available mechanisms for commercialization left much to be desired, rural merchants collected the surplus, and others financed it, while export merchants sold it. Even crises in the face of natural calamity or state intervention in trade did not stop

¹⁵¹ The famine caused by crop failures coupled with long winters and insufficient rainfall was the last great disaster of the 19th century, which affected all of Anatolia. But Çukurova was not hard hit except for a disruption of trade in the province. Indeed, many people were moved to less affected provinces from their hard-hit homelands so as to be able to help their subsistence. Adana was one of the towns that received a substantial number of people from Konya during the famine, to be returned afterwards. *BOA*, Bâb-ı Âli Evrak Odası, Mektûbi, 612, 590, 24 Kanunuevvel 1290 (5 January 1875). For the depression between 1873–1878 see Şevket Pamuk, “The Ottoman Empire in the ‘Great Depression’ of 1873–1896”, *Journal of Economic History*, 44 (1984) 107–118.

¹⁵² AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of the Provinces of Aleppo and Adana in the Year 1876, pp. 959–960. The report’s abstract sums up this increasing difference between Adana and Aleppo, and points to the grave consequence for Aleppo in the 1870s: “The results of the year 1876 have definitely demonstrated the utter and hopeless ruin of trade in the province of Aleppo, through the cessation of transit trade and the absence of adequate agricultural resources”, p. 969.

¹⁵³ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of North Syria for the Year 1874, Province of Adana, p. 1697.

these entrepreneurs. Merchants in Mersin served as intermediaries between the European wholesalers and the regional retailers, and they also acted as brokers between cultivators and foreign merchants; they spoke both local and foreign languages and they knew the needs and tastes of both sides. These traders should not be simply seen, as they sometimes are, as brokers charging unreasonably high interest rates and hence impoverishing the rural populace.

Thanks to their enterprises the prosperity of Mersin's trade continued to grow in the aftermath of the crises of the 1870s "owing to the vast extent and remarkable fertility of its arable land".¹⁵⁴ By the 1880s, a firmer commercial network had been re-established in the port-town, and coastal shipping to and from Mersin had become essential to daily life in the plain. This new Mersin with its connection to the world and the hinterland, and with its human potential, was becoming the center of a well-developed commercial network.

This network was both evidenced and fostered by the increasing foreign activity in the town. Although in the mid-19th century, the reputation of Mersin used to be so bad that travelers frequently wrote that no European could live there, the town's link to the world beyond was clear when most consuls moved their summer residences in the 1850s.¹⁵⁵ Next they moved their offices, as regular, rapid and secure communications put the town in continuous contact with Europe. Indeed, so many Europeans were pouring in from the ships that books and other printed matter they brought with them in various languages necessitated the creation of a special translation office for "investigation and interpreting".¹⁵⁶

The consular offices were of utmost importance and should not just be seen as foreign intervention. These offices played a crucial role particularly because of consular protection offered to Ottoman citizens. The 1838 Balta Limani Agreement with Britain, which was shortly after followed by agreements with other European countries, gave Europeans privileges given never before, including profits—this

¹⁵⁴ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of the Provinces of Aleppo and Adana in the Year 1876, p. 969.

¹⁵⁵ Charles V.F. Townshend (1910) *A Military Consul in Turkey: The Experiences and Impressions of a British Representative in Asia Minor* (London: Seeley) p. 112.

¹⁵⁶ BOA: *İradeler, Dahiliye*, 1267(99/25), 17 Muharrem 1312 (22 July 1894). Provincial authorities claimed that their budget did not allow hiring a translator, and so the central government allocated the money in 1894. Thus, some books were considered mischievous (*muzirra*), and were confiscated.

is why many local merchants tried to transact trade in the name of a foreign company. Local merchants like Mavromatis did not necessarily feel resentment toward the foreign presence; they owed their business to such protection. On the contrary, Europeans needed the locals even more if they wanted to take full advantage of these privileges. This is why they widely and even indiscriminately distributed consular protection. For Europeans, the granting of consular protection meant obtaining indispensable services from and ties with local people. In exchange, locals received privileges and exemption from taxes that they should pay as Ottoman subjects. As Mersin underwent rapid growth, many consular offices had to deal with a great deal of work that they had no staff to handle. This meant hiring locals for consular jobs, but without paying a penny. As payment, they gave consular protection. Although each consulate complained about the quantity of such protection ever increasing, nothing changed. In fact, one merchant could be a protégé and/or employee of several consuls at the same time. When the consuls were themselves away for long periods of time, especially during the long hot summers, they appointed locals as vice-consuls. The Americans opted for the most pragmatic solution as they never bothered to send anybody but at times used European merchants—one was Italian—and mostly Mersin merchants as their consuls.¹⁵⁷ With the exception of the Persian consul, all consuls lived in Mersin. For example, Mavromatis and his family helped fill these positions. One Mavromatis, the son Andreas, was the Spanish vice-consul, also acting as the American vice-consul during the absence of the consul.¹⁵⁸ The other son, Antonios served as the Russian consul while one son-in-law, Christmann, served first as British vice-consul and then German vice-consul.¹⁵⁹ Another son-in-law, from another local merchant migrant family, the Tahinci, was the Swiss consul while the father-in-law of Antonios Mavromatis was the vice-consul for Portugal.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ USCR: Daily Consular and Trade Reports, From Consul Davis at Iskenderun, October 1898. Viterbo was an Italian who was naturalized in 1890 and was given the post in 1896, Report of 22 May 1902.

¹⁵⁸ USCR: Daily Consular and Trade Reports. From Consul-General Dickinson at Istanbul, 23 January 1904.

¹⁵⁹ CAMS: Interviewee Miltiadis Agionnoglou, interviewer E. Tsalikoglou, 30 June 1959.

¹⁶⁰ Meltem Toksoz (2009, in press) "The Mavromatis Family in Mersin" in: Kechriotis et al. (Eds.), *Economy and Society on Both Shores of the Aegean* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Publications).

Table 3. Mavromatis Family Tree

	Haci Kristo Sedo	
	Yorgi	
	Antonios (Russian vice-consul)	Married to daughter of Siderikoudis, manager of an Istanbul based trading house and agent of Russian naval lines, vice consul of Portugal
		Son of Antonios marries into Barbur family from Beirut
		Other children— British or Greek citizens
Haci Konstantin Mavromatis	Andreas	Vice-consul of Spain and deputy vice-consul of the US
Migrated from Cyprus circa 1850s, married to an Arab Orthodox, died 1905 in Mersin	Eleni	Married to Fedon Tahinci of Adana, Swiss consul and also a commercial agent connected to Istanbul
	Kalyopi	Married to Gustave Christmann, Swiss citizen but German consul, first director of Ottoman Bank in Adana, agent of Deutsche Gesellschaft Baumwolle, investor
	Heremiyeri	
	Arjantin	

The relationship of migrant merchants such as Mavromatis with consulates and the foreign population of Mersin, cannot be understated. All of these merchants both benefited from their European counterparts whenever they did not have enough capital or credit and also competed with them. To be sure, they had the support of local authorities more often than not as the latter never made an issue of consular protection.¹⁶¹

Thus the merchants quickly learnt how to manipulate consular protection to their benefit, to overspeculate, to do dubious business deals, and in general operate under almost total immunity from the law. However, when it was to their advantage, they were quick to change their allegiances and often claimed that first and foremost they were Ottoman subjects.

Indeed, by the 1890s, there was a substantial foreign population of which the French formed the majority, having the advantage of the weekly stops of the Messageries Maritimes at Mersin. In addition, French merchants resided in the town for lengthy periods, conducting business directly. Indeed, there were two French commercial companies in Mersin belonging to Arthus and Guys, and the latter obtained the representation of the German trade.¹⁶² Thanks to such Frenchmen in Mersin, maritime insurance had also become a predominantly French affair. La Foncière had almost become a monopoly, insuring even the merchandise sold in the open on the seashore of Mersin to be delivered to Europe.¹⁶³ Insurance agencies became part of business life in Mersin at this time. The most important kind of insurance was, of course, for the merchandise bought at the port. Following the

In Beirut, for example, consular protection seems to have been the source of continuous complaint and intervention on the part of local authorities. See Fawaz, *Merchants and Migrants*. But I have not come across a shred of evidence for such problems in Mersin.

¹⁶² AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale*, Tarsous, 1875–1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersin et Adana, 5 July 1895. The vice-consul considered it necessary to assure the Minister that there was nothing unpatriotic in the business of this French firm whose clientele consisted of Germans, especially as the company received much of its capital from the Export Bank which put them in contact with German traders as many French trading houses refused to accept the offers of the Mersin company.

¹⁶³ AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale*, Tarsous, 1875–1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersin et Adana, 15 June 1896, p. 42. But after great losses, the company was shut down. RCL, No. 253, 30 April 1908, p. 700.

successes of La Foncière, others such as La Mannheim–Continentale, La Francfortoise, Les Assicurazioni Generali, and London Insurance established their businesses, with some modifications in methods and personnel. Increasing hauling services and the necessity of maintaining quality packaging required insurance companies. Insurance companies themselves paid any indemnity after close investigation of allegedly damaged merchandise.¹⁶⁴ The Austrians and Germans were known to have granted payment against any kind of damage, however small.¹⁶⁵ They led the overall insurance business in Çukurova, followed by the Americans, who were most active in Mersin.

The cost of living was considered cheap by European standards. A family of three or four could do quite well on 5,000 francs a year.¹⁶⁶ Actually the fixed population of Mersin kept changing as it attracted many travelers either just for a visit or for a longer stay or for traveling further in the hinterland. These visitors first came in via sail or steamships but the number increased immensely with the railroad. Visitors enjoyed the town that was “pleasing to the eye of a voyager who disembarked in a beautiful and quite popular place, adorned with a fountain of spurting waters”.¹⁶⁷ Foreigners’ residences and consulates occupied the waterfront, lined with villas.

In terms of the American presence in the town, things began to change at the beginning of the 20th century. So much so indeed, that the Consul General in Istanbul, Charles Dickinson, pleaded with the American government for the removal of the Iskenderun Consulate to Mersin. His reasoning was sound:

There are flourishing American schools at Mersina and Tarsus near Adana; there are between 30 and 40 American citizens at these places, mostly engaged in American work; there are none at Iskenderun. There is a Governor-General at Adana, one hour by train from Mersin, and only a *kaymakam* at Iskenderun, the Governor-General of that *vilayet* being in Aleppo. There is no American business at Iskenderun except that licorice root gathered in the interior is shipped from that port. On the other hand, perhaps our best market at present in Turkey for the

¹⁶⁴ RCL, No. 253, 30 April 1908, p. 701.

¹⁶⁵ RCL, No. 253, 30 April 1908, p. 704.

RCL, No. 253, 30 April 1908, p. 703. Also see Townshend, *A Military Consul*, p. 113.

¹⁶⁷ Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, p. 51.

sale of American agricultural tools and machinery is in Adana, Mersin and the rich plains stretching north into the heart of Asia Minor. By the close of this year the so-called Baghdad Railway will be finished to Ereğli, near the northern foothills of the Taurus range and in one or two years more the road will be through the mountains and down to Adana. If the State Department and the Commerce Department wish to capture that rich country for American business we should carefully plan and lay out our work before the Germans get through the Taurus mountains with their new Baghdad line. A Consulate at Mersin well equipped and acting under the advice of the Consulate general, could be extremely useful in blazing the way for American trade.¹⁶⁸

However, the consulate office remained in Iskenderun as the new consul at Iskenderun, Jackson, did not agree with Dickinson. According to Jackson, the move would not be worthwhile before the Baghdad railway connected Mersin with Anatolia and the southern provinces of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶⁹ However, American operations, which included the Standard Oil Co. of New York, the Vacuum Oil Co., Singer Sewing Machine Co., and even American Insurance Co for marine fires, could not be ignored.¹⁷⁰ By then, missionary work had also grown to include American and French missions.¹⁷¹

In these circumstances, many mercantile agents in Adana also managed to control sub agencies and ensure payment of debts. In other words, merchants increased their business either by representing several mercantile agencies or by working for different shipping lines. More successful merchants also stepped in for smaller merchants by paying or ensuring the payment of their debts as these could no longer do business directly with any agency or shipping line. Certain agencies represented not only their country's shipping line but those of other countries as well, giving a successful merchant the opportunity to make multiple deals. Such a merchant in turn accumulated enough capital to represent other merchants. This helped erase the smaller

¹⁶⁸ USCR: Daily Consular and Trade Reports. From Consul-General Dickinson at Istanbul, 23 January 1904.

¹⁶⁹ USCR: Daily Consular and Trade Reports, From Consul Jackson at Iskenderun, 14 October 1905. Consul Jackson apparently had personal reasons for his opposition to moving to Mersin: he would not be able to take his family to *Yayla* from Mersin.

¹⁷⁰ USNA: Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Turkey, 1910-1929, No. 353, Roll 62, 11 December 1922.

¹⁷¹ Townshend, *A Military Consul*, p. 113.

merchants, creating only a few leading merchants in the towns.¹⁷² This was also the only precaution to be taken against fraud which might occur when goods passed through the hands of the bigger middlemen to the smaller agents, finally to be sold without any consideration for the original merchant. Such fraudulent activity, according to foreign consular officers, was a daily practice. No legal mechanism helped recover payments if they were not willingly remitted. Therefore, getting rid of the middleman by leaving the entire transaction in the hands of a single merchant was the better solution. In addition, some foreign agents came to consider establishing themselves in Mersin or Adana permanently, or at least during the season when the commodity in question was sold, in order to eradicate the middleman; an Egyptian-Levantine trade company and an American agricultural factory agent were two examples.¹⁷³

This new town of mostly migrant people in fact needed the operational ease of such intricate webs of relations with foreigners, especially in the absence of formal commercial mechanisms, or any credit mechanism. They succeeded in a tremendously risky milieu where there was no bank and no credit office well into the 1890s. Yet credit was at the heart of all their speculations. What made it work for them was that they could sell merchandise at any price, even at a loss. A whole range of speculators began to do business in a hierarchy at the top of which were the export-import houses, like that of the Mavromatis, that advanced credit to large local merchants who then advanced it to smaller ones.¹⁷⁴ Through such speculation they turned from middlemen into manufacturers, bankers, landowners, and important merchants. They quickly traversed the distance between being brokers and getting the upper hand. In their hierarchical world of many dimensions, they managed to make the city rise above these hierarchies, and created a city in which socio-ethnic or religious differences did not create any bitter divisions. Neither did they accept state intervention without demur: for instance when they lost the timber trade. In 1889, the local governor arbitrarily stopped the timber trade in an effort to

¹⁷² Mr. Avania of Tarsus, for example, was the leading merchant of Tarsus doing business with those in Mersin. Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, p. 35.

¹⁷³ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana entitled "Suggestions for British Traders with Turkey in Asia", 1901, pp. 18-19. The British Vice-Consul could not keep from almost begging his government for the adoption of the same wise method by his countrymen.

¹⁷⁴ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1889, p. 9.

prevent abuses. Indeed, timber had become a profitable item as the construction business boomed in this growing town. Making excessive profits, however, meant speculations and abuses. But merchants, now apparently organized, took the issue to the central government that reversed the decision of the governor.¹⁷⁵ In the 1890s, for a whole decade, the central government seems to have tackled a ‘timber problem’ in trying to regulate a growing trade.¹⁷⁶

Indeed, the absence of banks was a puzzling situation for foreign consuls who repeatedly commented on the need during the 1870s. The British consul, for instance, expressed his bewilderment in his report of 1872: “...it really seems strange that so favorable a field for legitimate and safe business in advances on bills of lading should not attract the notice of the capitalists in places where there is more money than means of investing it with similar security and advantage”.¹⁷⁷

The full realization of the potential of Mersin then awaited two developments: the railroad and banking institutions. After the arrival of the rail, the merchants of Mersin proved all the more capable. They did everything they could to ensure the continuity of trade, they found new items to sell, they took more credit, and they ventured into domestic trade opportunities to make up for the loss in foreign trade. In case of crop failure, for instance, they found a new article for sale: cotton yarn that was manufactured at the Tarsus mill of Mavromatis. To be sure the item was not sold to Europe but sent from Mersin to other Ottoman ports.¹⁷⁸ Apparently, despite a critical situation in 1889, exports exceeded imports by one-third.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1889, p. 10. The forests around Tarsus in particular were apparently being destroyed as construction of not only buildings but also repair of quays and the erection of telegraph lines meant much usage of timber.

¹⁷⁶ The government created and renewed posts of forest control many times in this decade in an effort to regulate the sale and usage of timber. A good example of these government orders is the 1894 order of creating a military post at the Tarsus forestry for protection; BOA: *İradeler, Orman ve Meadin*, 5 (37)/1, 5 *Muharrem* 1312 (10 January 1894). In 1900 the inspection office for the forestry in the area from Tarsus to Anamur was extended, employing further officers because of increased need; BOA: *İradeler, Orman ve Meadin*, 316/548-1, 3 *Rebiulevvel* 1318 (2 July 1900).

¹⁷⁷ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria for the Year 1872, Province of Adana, p. 586.

¹⁷⁸ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1889, p. 8.

¹⁷⁹ JCCC, 23 February 1889, p. 90. Export value was 470,000 sterling, as opposed to 392,000 of imports.

This up-turn in trade coincided with one of the most important developments in the history of Mersin: the opening of a branch of the Ottoman Bank in 1888. Within 2 years the bank opened a branch in Adana as well.¹⁸⁰ The Ottoman Bank had been established in 1863 for three reasons: to help organize the fiscal mess that the imperial government was in (by acting as a central bank), to establish a money system in order to recover the losses endured after the Crimean war, and most importantly to act as a reliable guarantor for the government in acquiring loans, or in short, to attract foreign money.¹⁸¹ But it was first and foremost a private bank that had to share the burden with the Public Debt Administration (PDA) after the bankruptcy of the Empire.¹⁸² As a private bank, it served everybody, but most importantly merchants.¹⁸³

At the time of the opening of the Adana (1889) and Mersin (1892) branches, commercial banking had just become one of the new activities of the Ottoman Bank. In 1889, the new General Director, Sir Edgar Vincent, showed his determination to change the bank by diverting it toward commercial activities. It was he who increased the number of branches and paid great attention to personal credit activities.¹⁸⁴

Commercial institutions and all kinds of merchants used the bank for deposit accounts and benefited from these in addition to credit and commercial transactions.¹⁸⁵ The son-in-law of Mavromatis, and vice-consul of various countries at times, Christmann, also served as the first manager of the branch in Adana.¹⁸⁶ Among the customers of the bank were stores such as the Orosdi-Back that had a store in Adana.¹⁸⁷ The bank had such an impact on life in Çukurova that its

¹⁸⁰ Edhem Eldem, personal communication.

¹⁸¹ Edhem Eldem (1997) *135 Yıllık Bir Hazine: Osmanlı Bankası Arşivinde Tarihten İzler* (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası) pp. 16–17.

¹⁸² A. Biliotti (1909) *La Banque Impériale Ottomane* (Paris: H. Jouve) pp. 100–104.

¹⁸³ Eldem, *135 Yıllık Bir Hazine*, p. 144. Translation is mine.

¹⁸⁴ The third branch in Ceyhan opened in 1911 completely in line with the historical commercialization of the Ceyhan sub-region and the overall region as argued in the next chapter. André Autheman (1996) *La Banque impériale ottomane. Histoire économique et financière de la France* (Paris: Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances, Comité pour l'Histoire économique et financière de la France) pp. 123–138 and 274–275; Eldem, *135 Yıllık Bir Hazine*, p.121.

¹⁸⁵ Eldem, *135 Yıllık Bir Hazine*, p. 147.

¹⁸⁶ *Neologos*, No. 5881, 15 February 1889, Istanbul, p. 3.

¹⁸⁷ Meltem Toksöz and Emre Yalçın (1999) “Modern Adana'nın Doğuşu ve Günümüzdeki İzleri” in: Çiğdem Kafescioğlu and Lucienne Thys-Şenocak (Eds.), *Essays in Honor of Aptullah Kuran* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları) pp. 435–453. For more



Illustration 6. Adana Orosdi-Back Department Store

role as speculator in times of crisis superseded that of the bankers (*sarrafi*) it criticized.¹⁸⁸

Çukurova branches frequently gave advances for short term against all kinds of security, including life insurance. Almost one-third of its advances were based entirely upon the reliability of the person, which was established with the good opinion of other ‘reliable’ people.¹⁸⁹ These advances and credits for mercantile activity and related commercial investments increasingly made up the majority of the bank’s

on the Adana Orosdi-Back see Uri M. Kupferschmidt (2007a) *European Department Stores and Middle Eastern Consumers: The Orosdi-Back Saga* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Center). For the Orosdi-Back operations throughout the Ottoman Empire see Uri M. Kupferschmidt, “Who needed department stores in Egypt? From Orosdi-Back to Omar Effendi”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 43/2 (2007b) 175–192; Yavuz Köse (2006) *Istanbul: vom imperialen Herrschersitz zur Megapolis* (Munich: Martin Meidenbauer Verlagsbuchhandlung).

¹⁸⁸ An ample example is the 1895 crisis that will be discussed in the next section. Eldem, *135 Yıllık Bir Hazine*, pp. 147–150 and personal communication.

¹⁸⁹ Eldem, *135 Yıllık Bir Hazine*, p. 207.

activities, especially after the end of the 1890s.¹⁹⁰ The Imperial Ottoman Bank, extending to remote parts of the Empire, facilitated the activity of foreign commercial travelers from France, Germany, and even Belgium, who traveled not only in Çukurova but in inner and eastern Anatolia as well. Employees of the bank in every district spoke English. The vice-consul of Britain urged the United Chambers of Commerce of England to send 'ambitious' agents to Mersin to increase direct ties particularly because he saw the advent of the Ottoman Bank as a great facilitator for English merchants.¹⁹¹

The efficient management of the Mersin and Adana branches, and the Ceyhan branch after 1911, made the bank the most reliable channel for all commercial payments. The bank provided the merchants with means of guaranteeing liquidity, and considerably simplifying the question of credit. The workings of the credit mechanism in Mersin and Adana were somewhat different than in Europe. For one thing, credit guarantees were unknown. A merchant who possessed little capital, or a novice in need of credit, or a commission agent who received merchandise on consignment, all obtained unsecured credit.¹⁹² All that was required of a credit-demanding client was some capital. If a merchant in need of cash presented certain resources, there was no danger in giving him credit in proportion to his resources.

In addition, long-term credit was easily provided. Merchants in retail business usually demanded long-term credit because selling retail merchandise required a period of time. If such a merchant could cover his own expenses, which could be considerable, he then tendered the exchange value of the merchandise that he had received on consignment and thus paid back his credit.¹⁹³ Also many producers had to work with merchants' dealings such as requiring merchandise on consignment or sending in fictive orders. In these situations, often

¹⁹⁰ Ethem Eldem (1999) *A History of the Ottoman Bank* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Historical Research Center) pp. 145-163.

¹⁹¹ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Dillon at Adana for the Year 1893, pp. 12-13. The consular agent was indeed weary of not having access to his own country's products in Mersin: "It is distressing to see the want of foresight on the part of English merchants. Sitting in my office, I have not a single thing English on me save my flesh and bones, and yet the remedy is so easy as aforesaid."

¹⁹² RCL, No. 198, 30 September 1903, p. 419.

¹⁹³ RCL, No. 198, 30 September 1903, p. 419.

a good word from the local Ottoman Bank bureaucrat would be all that was required.¹⁹⁴

Therefore, the Ottoman Bank was the backbone of this fragile but dynamic commercial system. The presence of the bank gave security to the network, which now commanded the confidence of foreign merchants. It became the invaluable channel for all financial transactions. The rate for commercial loans was 9% with expenses, which brought the rate up to 11% or 12%. These were all commercial loans not granted to farmers or other holders of real estate property. Agricultural credits were for only 3 months and were not easily available.¹⁹⁵ In Mersin, the bank gave out insurance policies for all kinds of merchandise. The Ottoman Bank and several large merchants like Mavromatis made arrangements for insurance coverage for damaged cargo between ship and shore because of bad weather.¹⁹⁶

Indeed, the opening of the Ottoman Bank had spurred such commercial dynamism in Mersin that it became 'the port' of the northeastern Mediterranean. In other words, the Ottoman Bank effectively helped the growth of Mersin, and not other ports of the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean. Indeed, the Iskenderun branch would not be opened until 1901 as commercial life in Iskenderun became attached to that of Alexandria and did not have a force of its own. Mersin, on the contrary, became a commercial center in its own right.¹⁹⁷

Other banks followed suit and opened branches in many parts of Çukurova such as Sis and Haçin, both predominantly Armenian towns. These banks acted on behalf of foreign firms conducting commercial business in the area. La Banque Française de Syrie had branches in both of the aforementioned towns as well as in Mersin. As early as 1881, the Banque d'Athènes, with French and Greek capital, had begun to work in a similar fashion with branches both in Adana and Mersin.¹⁹⁸ These banks became the main linkage between non-Muslim

¹⁹⁴ The French Vice-Consul advised producers to deal directly with a merchant who had either established himself or had credit from the Ottoman Bank. He thought that producers should check on their representatives each year. *RCL*, No. 198, 30 September 1903, p. 420.

¹⁹⁵ AP: Report on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908 by Major C.H.M. Doughty-Wylie, His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul, p. 10.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁹⁷ *AMAE: Correspondance Commerciale, Alexandrette*, 1898–1901, Tome II, Vice-Consulat à Alexandrette, 25 October 1901.

¹⁹⁸ *JCCC*, 10 August 1888.

merchants and firms abroad. These had branches also in Sis (Kozan), Payas and Haçin, where most commercial activity took place managed by the non-Muslims.¹⁹⁹

They indeed changed trade methods. European powers considered establishing banks in the area as one of the most secure and lucrative form of business. The foreign residents of Mersin, believing in its commercial dynamism, invited their countrymen to open banks in the town. They understood the crucial role of banking in a region where even 25,000 francs was considered to be a great sum for any merchant to possess.²⁰⁰ The interest rate of the banks excluding the Ottoman Bank, usually 9% per trimester, was a somewhat heavy burden. Instead, the French vice-consul in Mersin argued that any loan at 1% lower interest would realize 10–12% profit per year. Such a profit would be at least as much as that of the Ottoman Bank, if not higher.²⁰¹ So smaller banks had much space and reason to engage in short term credits, with a lower interest rate than the Ottoman Bank offered. In fact, this kind of potential profit capacity for small credit establishments advancing short-term loans to lesser merchants and/or despite unreliable conditions, showed what a thriving town Mersin had become at the end of the 19th century.

With these banks, obtaining commercial credit became easier both from local sources and foreigners. Short-term local credit—for 3 months—was available with a 3% discount.²⁰² Such informal mechanisms of credit proved all the more indispensable at the turn of the century when the volume of trade rose considerably. Absence of cash and capital constituted a dire threat to this active commercial life.²⁰³ Under these circumstances the merchants needed support, especially for starting business. The risks entailed in doing business with a merchant who did not have anything but his word to offer against the

¹⁹⁹ AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale*, No. 109, Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et des colonies. "Situation commerciale de Mersina en 1892", p. 5.

²⁰⁰ RCL, No. 211, 31 October 1904, pp. 419–420.

²⁰¹ RCL, No. 211, 31 October 1904, p. 420. He reported that smaller banks would benefit in this area. Especially as, the vice-consul argued, the Ottoman Bank did not often give loans on a three-month basis or advance money on the merchandise without good documentation. The RCL corrected his information on the Ottoman Bank in the following issue, very apologetically. See RCL, No. 212, 30 November 1904, pp. 656–657.

²⁰² AP: Report on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908 by Major C.H.M. Doughty-Wylie, His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul, pp. 10–11.

²⁰³ RCL, No. 217, 30 April 1905, p. 474.

sale of merchandise did not exceed the loss of not doing any business at all.

The establishment of the bank of the family Mavromatis that quickly assumed a pivotal role in the commercial life of Mersin shows the kind of network his family achieved. In fact, the *Banque Mavromatis et Fils* became the second most important banking institution after the Ottoman Bank.²⁰⁴ In fact, with the Germans, the Mavromatis Bank came before the Ottoman Bank as the Deutsche Levantinische Baumwoll-Gesellschaft (the German Levantine Cotton Company) first used the services of the Mavromatis for banking and then switched over to the Ottoman Bank.²⁰⁵ Having acted as the main creditor of the town, and having secured strong ties with the Ottoman bank, the Mavromatis established a strong institution that continued to function well into the 20th century. But upon his death, the sons did not continue with the bank after the opening of the Deutsche Bank in which his son-in-law, Christmann, was involved.²⁰⁶ The presence of his bank, I believe, attests better than anything else to the stability of the commercial network stemming from the family. In less than 20 years a merchant accumulated enough capital to turn into a respectable banker.

Another link of his family was in connection with the Chamber of Commerce, as members of the executive board. The initiative from the imperial Ministry of Commerce, Agriculture and Public Works had come in 1889, on the advice of the governors of important towns in Anatolia.²⁰⁷ In Adana and Mersin, Chambers of Commerce were established only in 1894 and 1898 respectively.²⁰⁸ 1890 was also the year the journal *La Revue Commerciale du Levant* acquired a full-time correspondent from Mersin. A firm named Georges Artus & Co., an Armenian mercantile house, provided the correspondence.²⁰⁹

In the 20th century, nobody could talk of credit difficulties thanks not only to these banks but also to the branch of the Deutsche Orient-

²⁰⁴ RCL, No. 149, 31 August 1899, p. 332.

²⁰⁵ Hilmar Kaiser, *Local Entrepreneurs and the German-Levantine Cotton Company in the Çukurova: The Limits of Foreign Economic Penetration*, Paper presented at *The Social and Economic History of Adana and its Districts Workshop*, Boğaziçi University, November 2008.

²⁰⁶ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie at Adana for the Year 1908, p. 16.

²⁰⁷ JCCC, 4 May 1899, p. 210.

²⁰⁸ There is no record of the Chambers before 1894. See *Adana Salmesi*, 1309 (1891–1892).

²⁰⁹ RCL, *Compte-rendu des Travaux*, 1891, Tome I, p. 43.

Bank in Mersin (1909). Other branches in Tarsus and Adana followed shortly.²¹⁰ By then this bank, the largest in Germany, had already become a strategic actor in the world economy, combining many different financial functions domestically and abroad.²¹¹ In Çukurova as well, it became very active, bought almost half of the cotton produce, and provided further mercantile credit. More importantly the bank became the most important investment partner for both governmental and private enterprise: It began business by lending 30,000 Turkish liras at 6% interest to the city of Adana to be used for drainage works and for construction of buildings for charity work.²¹²

By 1908, Mersin had clearly become the most important trade outlet of this large area. It was now home to some 22,000 people who conducted trade with Adana's 70,000 people, and with the 30,000 residents of Tarsus.²¹³ Turkish, Arabic, Armenian, Greek, French, Italian, German, English, Kurdish, and Spanish were all spoken daily. By 1918, some 15 languages were reportedly spoken in the area between Mersin and Tarsus.²¹⁴ Considerable trade also flowed in from the Cilician Gates, through the Taurus. The populace of the interior comprising settlements all the way to Kayseri (60,000 people), Niğde (23,000), Bor (9,000), Aksaray and Ürgüp were all linked to Mersin as it had become the outlet not only of Çukurova but also of southern and central Anatolia. This meant that Mersin was no longer critically affected by the failure of harvests in Çukurova.²¹⁵ But the port had become essential to the daily life of the plain. The other ports of the area, namely Ayas, Silifke, Karataş and Anamur, served to connect their respective districts to Mersin. In other words, the division of trade was complete between markets, offering different goods at various distances from Mersin, depending on their accessibility to the railway. Specialization of markets of course meant the full functioning of a commercial

²¹⁰ RCL, No. 272, 30 November 1909, p. 485.

²¹¹ For the Deutsche Bank, see David A. Moss (1997) "The Deutsche Bank" in: Thomas K. McCraw (Ed.), *Creating Modern Capitalism: How Entrepreneurs, Companies, and Countries Triumphed in Three Industrial Revolutions* (Cambridge: Harvard UP) pp. 229–263. For the bank's other operations in the Ottoman Empire see Halil Ege Özen, *The German Involvement in Ottoman Economic Development: Banking, Railways and Other Investments, 1888–1914*, M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2008.

²¹² RCL, No. 272, 30 November 1909, p. 486.

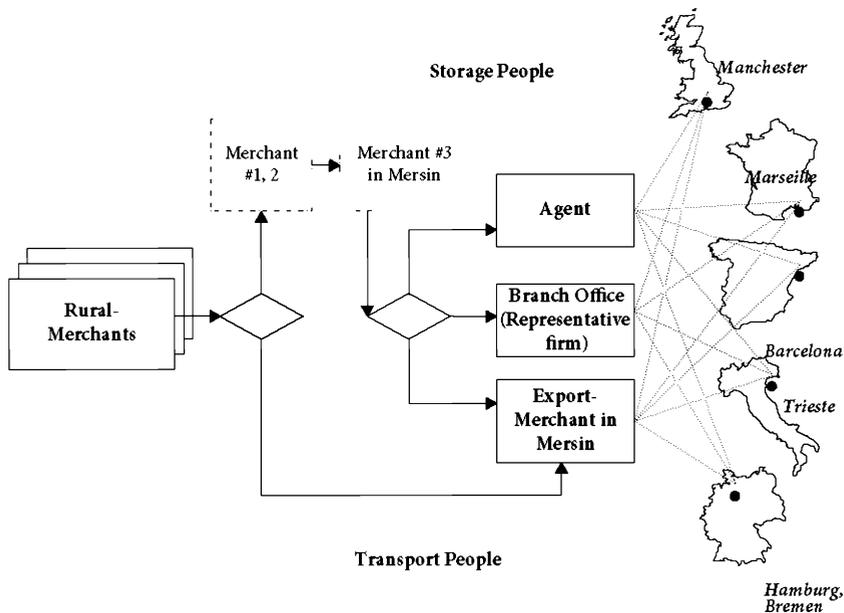
²¹³ *Adana Salnamesi*, 1309 (1891–1892); See Tables 1 and 3.

²¹⁴ USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 97, 20 February 1918, p. 2.

²¹⁵ RCL, No. 239, 28 February 1907, p. 262.

network of private traders, independent merchants, banks, shipping agencies, foreign firms, and consular offices. The emergence of people and then institutions advancing funds in this last quarter of the 19th century had, by the first decade of the 20th century, created a highly charged economy. Competing with Beirut if not surpassing it, Mersin was “no longer the out-of-the-world place it was a few years ago.”²¹⁶ The cotton trade of the Mavromatis family and other energetic traders brought an average export value of 256,000 sterling between 1898 and 1902.²¹⁷ In sum, one migrant family in this cosmopolitan place rose to great wealth as the region was made, with specific patterns of exchange as well as concrete practices of property, as we shall see in the next chapter. Such an analysis of the region connects its metamorphosis to a family whose history in the region can be fully traced. In other words, the linkages between the Mavromatis’ family network and the changing regional dynamics demonstrate clearly the complexity of the scales of relations for the temporal and spatial analysis of Ottoman transformation in the 19th century.

Table 4. Global Networks



²¹⁶ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1901, p. 13. The words of the passionate British consular agent at Adana.

²¹⁷ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1902, p. 27.

A NEW REGION: LANDHOLDERS AND INDUSTRIALISTS

*Around Adana and Tarsus, almost every acre is utilized.*¹

The increase in cotton cultivation in Çukurova in the 1870s attracted the attention of foreign observers like Davis, who had expected to find only marshlands but in actuality observed drained fields of cotton. A decade later others would remark on the emergence of large landholdings in Çukurova as unique to the region. Consul Bennet of Britain reported that the province differed from others “the land being, to a great extent, owned by the large land-owners, and farm buildings, instead of villages”.²

Two human networks had created this unique region of cotton cultivation: laborers and merchants. Both were migrants, the first seasonal, the latter permanent. With these migrants, the configuration of the human geography of the area would change and accelerate the settlement of the native nomads.

Merchants whose networks had created Mersin matured into entrepreneurs investing in this unpopulated land with little resistance from the state that throughout its history had stood by the side of the small peasantry. In the Çukurova of abundant land, the existing small peasantry did not face any dispossession against which the state would need to act. As a result, mercantile capital investment in large-scale landholdings did not meet any serious opposition. Furthermore, the legal and bureaucratic framework provided by the Tanzimat reforms that had facilitated the rise of a port-city as closely connected to the world as to the imperial realm, helped the growth of agrarian programs by the last quarter of the 19th century. To be sure, these programs constituted a partial stimulus to the development of commercial agriculture, but they certainly did not obstruct the investments of entrepreneurs. As a matter of fact, tribal chiefs benefited most notably

Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, p. 148.

² FO 424/122, Bennet to Goschen, Adana, 15 December 1880, p. 18. Bennet came to the area at the end of 1880 and stayed through the following year.

from land registration in the aftermath of the 1858 Land Code. Their investments hastened the commercialization of agriculture.

Wage labor was employed seasonally, recruited from among the tribal populations of eastern Çukurova and beyond. Many people from as far away as Urfa flocked to the region from April to October. Cotton required intensive labor only two times a year, for plowing in the spring and for picking in the fall. Seasonal labor suited the semi-nomads well, allowing them to continue their migrations during the remainder of the year.

The extension of cultivable lands during this period resulted in large-scale landholdings based mostly on sharecropping. The system formed the backbone of large-scale agriculture in Çukurova and prevailed in the Ottoman Empire, wherever peasant labor did not suffice.³ The commercialization of agriculture first took place in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region between the 1870s and the 1890s. It was no coincidence that Mersin emerged as the principal port, that Tarsus became the first town in which swamps were drained, and that the first factories in Çukurova were established in Adana, the provincial capital. For development in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region the challenge involved draining the swamps. Increasing the productivity of the land through fertilizers and insecticides was not a major concern in Çukurova where abundant fertile land could as yet be found. Other methods such as seed improvement and irrigation followed with partial success until the very end of the period under consideration.

The real break came, however, with cotton cultivation in the Ceyhan sub-region in the 1890s. The Ceyhan sub-region, the latest settled area of Çukurova, turned to growing cotton in addition to grains.⁴ The now-rural populace became convinced of the benefits and ease of growing this cash crop and hence wealthy people proceeded to establish the largest landholdings of the region, and of Anatolia as a whole. As a result, the area of cotton cultivation reached unprecedented dimensions. Cotton production increased some 20%; in about two decades the cotton lands had increased to cover an area equal to about a quarter of

³ Quataert argues that in fact share-cropping helped peasants maintain their own small-holdings without having to resort to indebtedness or other hardship; see his "The age of reforms", p. 874.

⁴ The volume of grain cultivation in the Ceyhan sub-region decreased in the early 1890s as floods caused significant failures in these crops, which accounts partly for the increase in the cotton fields. All low-level grain fields were destroyed in 1892. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1892, p. 11.

all the cultivable area in Çukurova: 5,000 square kilometers of the total 20,000 square kilometers. In the first decade of the 20th century the annual increase in the cultivated area rose to about 5%.⁵ Cotton production increased four times between 1897 and 1913 because of these new large landholdings, the natural outcome of all the infrastructure works and the use of agricultural machinery.⁶

Agriculture had come a long way from the usage of primitive methods only two or three decades before the advent of scores of reapers, threshers and especially steam plows. The soil, fed from the Taurus and Amanus by every winter torrent, and deeply plowed with steam plows, produced 200 kilograms per dönüm without artificial fertilizers.⁷ Çukurova's cotton production surpassed that of western Anatolia from the last decades of the 19th century, as cotton fields in Izmir gave way to grains, tobacco and fruits.⁸

While the region as a cotton producer and exporter was being re-fashioned, many other developments affected the local agrarian regime as well. These developments in agricultural taxation, mechanisms of agricultural credit, irrigation methods, and registration of land are crucial to the consequent growth of cotton cultivation during the three decades before the 20th century. As a result, a new set of relations of production emerged in Çukurova with fully commercial agriculture.

This increase in the agricultural output also meant the creation of an impressive textile industry as the cotton produced in the region began to be processed in the region itself. In other words, the development of the sphere of production extended from agriculture to industry. The

AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 3.

⁵ 48,000 tons were produced in 1909. T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, Osmanlı Dönemi Tarım İstatistikleri, 1909, 1913 ve 1914. Tarihi İstatistikler Dizisi, 3 (prepared by Tevfik Güran, Ankara, 1997). The 1909 figures, p. 53. These statistics were prepared for the administrative division of modern Turkey. There are two separate entries for Adana and İçel (the modern name of the administrative unit that includes the town of Mersin and environs) which give this amount together. In 1909, the province of Adana included the modern unit of İçel. In any case, my definition of Çukurova before 1913 includes Mersin and environs. Vedat Eldem calculated comparable figures between 1897 and 1913, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İktisadi Şartları, p. 33.

⁷ USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 97, 20 February 1918, p. 7.

⁸ AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled "Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation", Vol. 107, May 1908, pp. 7-9.

agricultural boom in the 19th century meant industrialization at the beginning of the 20th.

In 1915, Çukurova spun and wove textiles worth 33.8 million kuruş, approximately 307,000 sterling. This amounted to one-third of the Empire's entire cotton textile industry and surpassed the industry of Izmir and Istanbul, valued respectively at 24.5 million kuruş (\approx 222,000 sterling) and 22.1 million kuruş (\approx 200,000 sterling).⁹

Producing Cotton: Setbacks and Prospects

*Extension of Cultivation: Cotton, "everybody's concern"*¹⁰

The concentration of lands in the hands of a powerful few was a slow process that had its beginning in land reclamation and draining marshes in the 1870s. The first land reclamations began in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region in this decade. In 1871, one of the largest quantities of cotton in decades was produced: around 60,000 bales.¹¹ At the time, all observers looked to a productive sub-region where "boundless tracts of idle and neglected land" were lying which could be "converted to a garden and its products would occupy the markets of India and Europe".¹²

In the early 1870s, efforts to bring under cultivation the remaining swamps of the Adana-Tarsus sub-region gained momentum. The Governor, Mehmed Takiyeddin, had arranged for engineer M. Riz of France to clear the swamps "as done in Europe". He conducted a thorough investigation of the swamps between Mersin and Tarsus and those west of Mersin, but the imperial decree (*ferman*) to begin the operation did not come. The Governor became insistent and wrote a letter to the Porte asking for the necessary amount for at least the

⁹ *Ticaret ve Ziraat Nezareti*. "1329 ve 1331 Seneleri Sanayi İstatistiki", İstanbul, 1333/(1915-1916).

¹⁰ FO 424/169 Jago to Salisbury, Aleppo, 18 April 1891, p. 71.

AP: General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1871, Province of Adana, p. 284. Two-thirds of this amount was exported. (These bales have been calculated at different weights by each source the average of which can be said to have been 100 *okes* or 128 kilograms.)

¹² AP: General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1871, Province of Adana, p. 290.

portion between Mersin and Tarsus. The Sublime Porte consented and Riz began work.¹³

One of the first attempts at irrigation also took place in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, again in the 1870s. The rivers to the east and west of Mersin had dikes that needed repair. The expense was to be met by the income of the irrigated lands. As the costs turned out to be too high, only a temporary repair job was done although without extensive repairs future problems could be anticipated.¹⁴ Owing to the great cost involved, most of the irrigation schemes underway in the 1870s remained limited and uncompleted, often planned but not carried out.¹⁵ It seems however that Çukurova produced sufficiently without extensive irrigation. It was usually possible, despite irregular rainfall, to grow cotton without resorting to artificial watering.¹⁶ That is why, until 1905, almost all irrigation works remained limited to putting up dikes and preventing floods. In fact, larger irrigation projects gained importance later, when new varieties of seed were tried on a large scale. As we will see, these new varieties, such as the Egyptian and American seeds, produced high yields when properly irrigated.

Other incentives helped increase production. The state provided exemption from certain taxes for producers of cotton. However, not all taxes were included. For example, the exemption of import duty for cotton seed that came from abroad apparently was not applied in Adana once they arrived in the town. That is to say, the exemption did not cover the villagers that came down to Adana for the seeds; they had to pay the import duty at the gates and bridges on their way back home. But the provincial authorities intervened on behalf of the merchants and asked the central government to re-define what the

¹³ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2116/14, 6 *Şevval* 1288 (19 December 1871).

¹⁴ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/21, 9 *Muharrem* 1287 (11 April 1870).

¹⁵ AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled "Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation", Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 3. Dunstan was Officer of the Imperial Institute and had gone to Anatolia to report specifically on the situation of cotton production in order to save Britain from depending almost entirely on the USA. Britain was expending major efforts and significant amounts of capital to develop cotton growing in many of her possessions in West Africa. Part of this scheme was to check on the likelihood of doing the same for less cost in Anatolia. This was the reason behind the report of Dunstan.

¹⁶ In the words of the British consular officer Skene, "even the worst season did not leave the rural populace hungry." AP, Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of the Provinces of Aleppo and Adana in the Year 1876, p. 964.

exemption meant for the interior of the country. Consequently, in 1871, the exemption for cotton seed was extended to include all purchasers at any point during their travel.¹⁷

In the 1870s, the state helped to provide agricultural capital for would-be cotton producers. As mentioned before, large producers benefited from this agricultural capital that came out of the local funds of Adana (the *Menafi Sandığı* or *Memleket Sandığı*). The funds (*sandıks*) consisted of collections from 1% of the tithe (*aşar*). Therefore, each *sandık*'s capital was calculated according to the average amount of produce. Apparently, the collection of funds invoked many complaints. Likewise, the calculation of the capital in each *sandık* did not function very efficiently.¹⁸ Nonetheless, the increase in the capital of Adana and Mersin *sandıks* was almost exclusively due to the increase in the tithe collected from cotton. The new *sandık* at Kozan included the cotton tithes of Kars-ul Zülkadriye (Kadirli), Haçin, and Bilanköy. The capital for the Payas *sandık* also rose as a result of the increase in the tithe collected from cotton. Officially, one-fortieth or one-fiftieth of cotton production went into the collections.¹⁹ It is true that peasants could get credit at a very low interest rate, only 1%. However, it usually turned out that the peasant had to give up almost half of his produce because of back payments of the tithe he owed. As a result, the *sandık* proved to be an obstacle instead of an incentive for small producers.²⁰ This state of affairs, that is the indebtedness of the peasantry, did cause concentration of land in the hands of a few, but this was only one of the causes of large landholdings in Çukurova.

As early as 1869, producers of medium and large holdings preferred to use the credit from the *sandık* capital for moneylending, not on improving their lands. The fact that they used what they had for moneylending annoyed the Adana Governor, who wrote to the Sublime Porte asking advice. The state deemed it harmful to let these

¹⁷ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2116/28, 10 *Cemaziyevvel* 1288 (28 July 1871).

¹⁸ There was a complaint against the amounts in the *sandıks* of two neighborhoods of Adana, namely Şeyhzade and Ağa Mehmed Mahalleleri during the governorship (*mutasarrıflık*) of Halil Pasha when the province was part of Aleppo. It was investigated and the complaint was declared unfounded. BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/27, 29 *Zilhicce* 1287 (22 March 1871).

¹⁹ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/6, 5 *Rebiulevvel* 1287 (5 June 1870).

²⁰ AP: General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1871, Province of Adana, p. 287.

people misuse the *sandık* since they had the potential of accumulating large sums. Yet the state did not decree any punitive measures, beyond defining the limits within which capital could be used and ordering that the expenses for constructing ditches be met from the *sandıks*. If *sandıks* provided for such works of infrastructure, producers would have one less reason for seeking capital from moneylenders. On the other hand, those not in need of the capital easily got their ditches constructed for them out of the *sandıks*. As a result, the *sandıks* did not turn out to be a major source of agricultural capital for small holders, and money lending remained important.²¹

All of the foregoing led to the expansion of lands under cultivation. In other words, the availability of agricultural capital, however limited, and the competition to obtain tax-farming rights, point an unprecedented increase in agricultural output at the end of the 1870s. Such an increase obviously came with an increase in labor due to the security of these previously unsafe lands. As peasants from the interior could now come down to the plain safely, they did so in great numbers at very cheap wages.²² But prices did not remain low for long, as the increase in cotton cultivation caused changes in labor prices. The price of unskilled labor rose three times in the two short years between 1870 and 1872, as the demand was so much higher than the supply.²³

Another indication of the growing importance of cotton cultivation was the general tendency among cultivators to grow cotton at the expense of other crops, even wheat.²⁴ At the beginning of the 1870s, when the cotton crop did not turn out to be of very high quality because of natural factors, wheat would be exported to compensate. Still wheat brought considerably less profit.²⁵ It is true that Çukurova produced important amounts of wheat, but from the late 1870s onwards

²¹ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/7, 18 Receb 1286 (24 October 1869).

²² AP: General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1871, Province of Adana, p. 287.

²³ The total yield of cotton in 1872 was 6,830,000 *okes* ($\pm 8,800$ tons). AP: General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1872, Province of Adana, p. 586.

²⁴ Often wheat and cotton were sown together in the same year; cotton followed the wheat harvest which increased the quality of both crops.

²⁵ For instance in 1873, exported wheat brought 341,640 sterling as opposed to 426,744 sterling that cotton brought. AP, General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1873, Province of Adana, p. 963.

it was not the value of wheat that changed the agrarian structure of the area. Therefore, cotton meant a lot more than wheat even in a year when it was of inferior quality.²⁶ In such years, the able merchants of Çukurova did everything to find ways to export the cotton of inferior quality; they took it to Izmir where it was mixed with a better quality and then sold to France and Italy.²⁷

In short, cultivation began to expand in the 1870s despite limited improvements on the available land and insufficient mechanisms of capital and credit. The increase in cotton cultivation is easily discernible from the rapid development of a new problem in the region: tax abuse. Indeed, the increase in the amount of tithes went hand in hand with tax abuses. Such abuse became frequent as production increased and the value of cotton augmented, pointing to new wealth accumulation as a direct result of the increase in production. To be sure, the Ottoman state had frequently struggled against abuses in tithe collection throughout its history, but it became a problem in Çukurova only when there accumulated much tithe to collect. The now-valuable surplus could not be easily shared between the producers and the tax-farmers. There was a much bigger cake at stake, and fights for sharing it became inevitable. Indeed, consular officers reported on such accumulation of wealth and complained that if all that were extracted were the legal tithe, there would be no problem as the peasant could well afford it. But speculators who purchased the right to collect the revenue reaped the benefit without any interference from the authorities. They easily collected amounts twice or three times the tithe.²⁸

Not surprisingly, the first tax-farming abuses took place in a newly developing area around Mersin. In 1871, one of the areas to the west of Mersin, in the district (*sancak*) of İçil close to the developing port-town, had begun producing cotton for export. Mersin thus became the first place where measures were taken against tax-farming abuses. In

²⁶ The amount of cotton produced in 1873 was 12,199,763 pounds (±5,600 tons). AP, General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1873, Province of Adana, p. 967.

²⁷ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of North Syria for the Year 1874, Province of Adana, p. 1704.

²⁸ AP: General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1871, Province of Adana, p. 287. The cultivators would, at sowing time, become indebted to the tax-farmer at 3% or 4% per month.

1871, two witnesses, one a producer and one from the local council, accompanied the tax-farmer (*mültezim*) in order to prevent abuses.²⁹ In the late 1870s, the same measure was taken in the first region of commercialization of cotton agriculture, the Adana-Tarsus sub-region where abuses in tithe collection previously had increased.³⁰

For other areas in Çukurova, the number of witnesses involved in tithe collection was increased to four—two producers, and two from the local council.³¹ These new control mechanisms targeted cotton tithes.³² Cotton cultivation, on the other hand, wherever it developed, brought rising corruption. For example, the person in charge of the tithe collection of Tarsus tried to bribe the Adana governor, claiming that he only collected half the amount, but he went unpunished.³³ In some cases, the provincial authorities and the central government clashed in their dealings with corruption, because the locals often complained about corruption in their midst while the central administration refused to take notice. Central authorities granted one Zenginoğlu Agop, an important tax-farmer of the fields covering a large part of Adana, a 3-year payment plan for the tax arrears of 50,000 kuruş as he had spent this amount on improving the land.³⁴ In exchange, however, he had to show his own holdings as security. Obviously, tithe payments could be delayed for the sake of private investments in land especially when some security could be offered.

Perhaps tax-farming, money-lending and indebtedness reflected the negative sides of the extension of cultivation, indicating unjust accumulation of wealth. Yet such wealth also facilitated investments in land reclamations and non-agricultural enterprises. At the beginning of the 1890s, cotton harvests proved a great success, producing the

²⁹ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/45, 13 *Cemaziyelahir* 1288 (30 August 1871).

³⁰ For example, three tax-farmers had increased the tithe rate of 10% to 30% for their own benefit. Albanian Talib, Greek Yorgaki and Abdülkadir from Baghdad were immediately arrested for their action that had continued for three years. BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2117/57, 6 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1293 (30 May 1876).

³¹ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/48, 28 *Rebiulevvel* 1288 (17 June 1871).

³² BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2117/17, 6 *Şaban* 1289 (9 October 1872).

³³ Apparently, he was not punished because the bribe money was used in the repair of the Governor's Office (*hükümet konağı*). BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/25, 7 *Muharrem* 1287 (9 April 1870).

³⁴ Provincial authorities wished to imprison him but the central state granted him time. BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/31, 27 *Safer* 1288 (18 May 1871).

highest amounts ever.³⁵ The 1890s marked the culmination of these investments clearly as a series of good years and prices after 1893 put the development of agriculture back on track.³⁶

Foreign observers immediately noted this versatile turning point in Çukurova's cotton production but attributed it chiefly to the Armenians and Greeks. According to the British consular officer, these two groups engaged in agricultural enterprises to the extent that they were "slowly but surely, ousting the apathetic Moslem element".³⁷ Most such observers frequently misinterpreted the dominance of large landholdings in the hands of non-Muslims, by determining that such holdings must have evolved at the expense of the Muslim peasantry. As I have indicated before, dispossession was not at the root of the large landholdings in Çukurova. The assumption was common among European contemporaries as it constituted the only possible model for them. Clearly, however, Muslim or not, any landholder who had the capital to invest in large landholdings could readily do so.³⁸ One reason I can think of for such misinterpretation might be the predominance of Muslim share-croppers, as they formed the majority of the region's population. In any case, Consul Jago compared Aleppo with Adana and found Adana far more impressive where, he admitted, "cotton agriculture was everybody's concern".³⁹ Indeed, the share-cropping system involved many different groups. The landowner provided the seed and the oxen, and paid the taxes, while the share-croppers received half of the produce in return for their labor.⁴⁰ There were two groups of cultivators: the Turcoman and the Nusayri, who had migrated from Lataqia during the reign of Ibrahim Pasha. The Nusayri, industrious farmers, had settled along the coast of Mersin, Tarsus and

³⁵ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1892, pp. 10–11.

³⁶ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Dillon at Adana for the Year 1894, p. 4. In 1894, the lands around the town of Adana alone produced some 45,000 bales one-third of which was exported to Trieste and Marseille.

³⁷ FO 424/169 Jago to Salisbury, Aleppo, 18 April 1891, p. 67.

³⁸ If anyone was ousted, that was certainly the nomad whose nomadism, not his religion, might have seemed 'apathetic' to the Consular Officer, a prejudice all settled people held against nomads and still do.

³⁹ Consul Jago argued that insecurity in Aleppo confined the Jewish, Christian and few European merchants to the towns which did not engage in agriculture. As a result, agriculture had to be 'trusted' to the Muslims. FO 424/169 Jago to Salisbury, Aleppo, 18 April 1891, p. 71.

⁴⁰ FO 424/169 Jago to Salisbury, Aleppo, 18 April 1891, p. 69.

Adana. They stayed along the coast during the summer while the Turcoman farmers abandoned their villages to spend time in the hills.⁴¹ Immigrants, consisting of the Nogay and refugees from the emerging kingdom of Bulgaria, also worked as cultivators, from the Crimean War onwards. The share-cropping system meant that Muslims and Christians worked together: The large farms possessed by the native Armenian, Greek and Muslim holders cultivated them jointly with the Turcoman or Arab (Nusayri) share-croppers.⁴²

The continuous growth in commercial production is most evident from the impressive stability of agricultural production in the 1890s. Neither political crisis nor natural calamity shattered commercial production. The events in 1895 and 1896 provide telling examples. These were unusual years for two reasons. The first was the outbreak of cholera in mid-1895. The epidemic that hit the Konya plain most severely did not penetrate Çukurova deeply and caused fewer deaths compared to the rest of Anatolia. By this time, considerable progress had been made in combating illness, especially malaria. Continuous drainage and the extension of cultivation in the preceding decade paid off, as the swamps and marshes no longer existed at the pre-1860s level.⁴³

The second example was the 5-month long 1895–1896 insurrection in Zeytun (a district of Maraş), a town in the frontier zone of the Taurus to the northeast of Çukurova.⁴⁴ The so-called Zeytun affair, resulting from the Armenian protest against the new administrative regime of the town imposed by the settlement arrangements of the Forced Settlement, disrupted life around Maraş in the foothills of the Taurus.⁴⁵ The Armenian populace of Zeytun had been exempted from

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁴² AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled “Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation”, Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 12.

⁴³ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Years 1895–1896, p. 11.

⁴⁴ The affair revolved around several armed insurrections of Armenians in the predominantly Armenian town of Zeytun, in Maraş, between October 1895 and February 1896. The events began as a reaction to the newly appointed district official (*kaymakam*). For the history of Armenians in Zeytun, see G.T. Aghassi (1897), *Zeitoun depuis les Origines jusqu'à l'Insurrection de 1895: avec une Carte, des Reproductions de Dessins et de Photographies* (Paris: Édition du Mercure de France); P.L. Nalbandian (1963) *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press) pp. 68–78.

⁴⁵ BOA: *Yıldız Esas*, 9/2639–72, Section 4, 1313/(1896). The time of the clash indicated a correlation with the Armenian Nationalist movement under the Hınçak, but their scene was really Istanbul. In October of 1895, they had organized a protest rally

taxation since the reign of Mehmed IV in 1648, but in 1865 Cevdet Pasha's frontier line cut across the town and put an end to its privileged status, at least on paper.⁴⁶ Apparently, the people did not immediately mind Cevdet Pasha's arrangement as no incident took place until 1896. But administrative prescriptions turned into reality by the mid-1890s as the tribes began to settle and engage in agriculture, and the town revolted in response: all hell broke loose between the now-settling tribes and the already settled Armenians. The Ottoman forces quickly suppressed the rebellion and the whole affair ended in January 1896. The rebels were pardoned by the Ottoman government and exiled to Marseille on 12 March 1896. They embarked on their journey from the port-town of Mersin where no incident was recorded, but the clash between the town and the Ottoman forces meant the loss of confidence in security. Immigrant populations and tribal people, who usually descended from the mountains for the spring sowing of grains and the subsequent plowing of cotton in Çukurova, failed to do so. Indeed, in the spring of 1896 there was almost no labor for cotton plowing.⁴⁷ Uneven rainfall and a diseased cotton crop topped all these problems that helped reduced productivity. Within one year, however, all traces of the incident had been wiped away and there remained no indication of a breakdown in commercial activity.⁴⁸ The question of security did not resurface and in terms of agriculture, the situation became highly satisfactory.⁴⁹ The British vice-consul specifically noted the great numbers of townspeople inquiring about farms near the towns. He summarized the situation in the province well:

“A greater prosperity reigns and agriculture and trade are thereby given an impetus unknown for several years past. Order exists owing to the naturally quiet disposition of the population. Safety to life

in Kumkapı. Ultimately of course the 1895–1896 events were a culmination of a long history of Armenian majority in the area.

⁴⁶ Cevdet Pasha had argued that the Armenians wanted to establish an autonomous principedom of sorts in the same town. Cevdet Pasha, *Mâruzat*, p. 123.

⁴⁷ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Years 1895–1896, p. 9.

⁴⁸ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1896, p. 9. In both 1894 and 1895, Austria and Britain were the principal buyers when one-fifth of the total exports was cotton. The total value of exports in these 2 years was around 15 million francs, of which approximately 3 million francs was from cotton. *AMAE: Correspondance Commerciale, Tarsous, 1875–1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersin et Adana, 15 June 1896, pp. 37–40.*

⁴⁹ *AMAE: Correspondance Commerciale, Tarsous, 1875–1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous et Mersine et Adana, 15 June 1896, pp. 42–43.*

and property throughout the province may be said to be everywhere complete.”⁵⁰

The French vice-consul of Adana noted a renewal of agricultural work.⁵¹ The political events at the imperial or international level, such as the Armenian insurrection or the Greco-Ottoman War, did not keep the French away as they believed that the province with its “very rich soil and abundant water for irrigation” still had land left uncultivated. As such it was considered a perfect place for colonization. Its ‘imagined proximity’ to France encouraged the French to consider it as a location of agricultural enterprises.⁵²

As we shall see this foreign interest in cotton landholdings in the area remained lively, following commercial interest and even including infrastructural investments. Competition among foreign mercantile circles fiercely continued and transportation to and from Europe kept fostering. Navigation companies increased and so did the quantity of ships. In fact, British and French lines had to deal with Swedish, Russian, and Belgian companies beginning regular service, in addition to yet another company from Marseille, namely Luchou Doris.⁵³ British shipping increased as well; Newcastle-on-Tyne provided ships for direct trade between England and Asia Minor, stopping at Mersin twice a month. Bell’s Asia Minor from Glasgow gave weekly services between Egypt and the Syrian coast including Beirut, and Mersin.⁵⁴ This was the time when Tarsus was being used as a secondary port, mostly as the port Ottoman shippers favored. This was also due to the

AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1899, p. 12.

AMAE: Politique Intérieure, Arménie, Cilicie, Anatolie, Tome III, No. 140, 29 June 1897.

⁵² AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale, Tarsous*, 1875–1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersine et Adana, 15 June 1896, p. 36. The words of the French vice-consul demonstrate this perceived proximity of Çukurova to France “naturally rises our national desire to establish agricultural enterprises abroad, but we cannot do it as long as the current government and the administrative system lasts”

⁵³ AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale, Tarsous*, 1875–1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersin et Adana, 15 June 1896, p. 41. By 1900, an Italian line, the Florio et Rubattino, began direct service from Leghorn and Naples to eastern Mediterranean ports including Mersin. Having thus overcome the expense of transportation, Italy became a main purchaser of cotton in a short time, to feed her recent leap in industrial production. *RCL*, No. 157, 30 April 1900, p. 602; *RCL*, No. 197, 31 August 1903, p. 352.

⁵⁴ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1896, p. 10.

fact that Mersin, being a very busy port, had to meet more demand than it could handle with its capacity at the time.⁵⁵

The real competition for both the British and French, however, came from Barcelona, Bremen and Trieste as they became the main customers for cotton.⁵⁶ Trieste even entered the cotton markets with a higher price for cotton.⁵⁷ This new market initiated the beginning of a period when cotton prices in European markets showed a steady increase.⁵⁸ Cotton went from Mersin all the way to Bremen as a Bremen company became the center of cotton commerce for all of Germany.⁵⁹ German manufacturers signed an agreement with German mills and the Bremen stock market, creating the company to divert the exclusive purchase of cotton from London. As this center began buying cotton from Mediterranean ports, exports from Mersin to Bremen steadily increased.⁶⁰ Trade with Barcelona had begun much earlier, as more and more cotton went from Mersin to this town.⁶¹ Indeed Barcelona was one of the best customers of Mersin, and even the most important cotton buyer in some years.⁶² In addition to direct trade with these countries, Mersin received much merchandise secondhand, import trade with Britain, for instance, still continued by way of Izmir, Beirut, or Alexandria.⁶³

⁵⁵ In 1897, 529 Ottoman sailing vessels stopped at Mersin. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1900, p. 12.

⁵⁶ *RCL: Compte-rendu des Travaux*, Tome II, 1891, p. 481. In 1891, the total commercial movement of the port increased to some 29 million francs, 15 million of which was with France.

⁵⁷ *AMAE: Correspondance Commerciale*, No. 109, Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et des colonies, "Situation commerciale de Mersina en 1892", p. 4.

⁵⁸ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1892, p. 8. This was well-reflected in the export value of cotton from Mersin. Imports showed rise as well. The total value of imports was 7,623,200 francs as opposed to 17,773,500 francs, the total value of exports.

⁵⁹ *JCCC*, 9 April and 2 July 1887.

⁶⁰ *JCCC*, 9 April 1887.

⁶¹ *JCCC*, 2 July 1887. The bale, as will be seen throughout this volume, was by no means a uniform weight. Vedat Eldem gave the approximate weight of a bale as 187.5 kilograms; see his *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İktisadi Şartları Hakkında Bir Tetkik* (Ankara, 1994). In Çukurova a bale weighed 140 kilograms in the 1850 and reached 200 kilograms at the turn of the 19th century. See Quataert, "Ottoman reform", p. 471, note 31.

⁶² *JCCC*, 7 January 1888. Cotton was the second most important item of exportation following grains of 3,900 tons.

⁶³ Manufacturing goods from Manchester comprised a good half of this import trade, so only a small part of merchandise reached Mersin directly, namely coal and machinery. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1892,

Next in line in this game of fierce competition were the Austrians who in the 1890s came to consider Mersin an important port and started having the Lloyd line call there twice a month. They also established regular services between Alexandria, Iskenderun and Mersin, as opposed to a single line they used to maintain between Alexandria and Mersin. The Austrian Lloyd now extended its trips as far as Istanbul.⁶⁴ After this networking, Austria-Hungary was able to purchase the largest amount of cotton, topping all other European powers buying from Mersin.⁶⁵ This success spurred others; a new line of steamers belonging to a Greek company began service to and from Mersin in 1891.⁶⁶ So now in 1892, the Austrian Lloyd, Messageries Maritimes, Compagnie Khedivie and the Cypriote Fabre Company all had regular weekly maritime services to Mersin.⁶⁷

The Germans had already been active with the trade of Bremen, but they reaped further benefits after the direct line they established between Hamburg and Ottoman ports in 1891, the Deutsche Levant Line. In 1900, the line began to call at Mersin regularly.⁶⁸ France had from the start led the way in direct imports, followed by Britain, Austria, and Germany.⁶⁹ In the 1880s, Britain gained the leading role.⁷⁰

p. 9. In times of crisis in any of these ports that furnished Mersin, trade still continued via alternate indirect routes: Malta and Gibraltar had emerged as alternative ports when a cholera epidemic broke out in Beirut in 1891. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1891, p. 12. In two years, import trade with England was carried out directly by the bimonthly service of the Knott's Prince Line, thus avoiding risk of damage during transshipment. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Dillon at Adana for the Year 1893, p. 11.

⁶⁴ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1891, pp. 12-13.

⁶⁵ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1899, pp. 13-15.

⁶⁶ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1892, p. 10.

⁶⁷ AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale*, No. 109, Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et des Colonies. "Situation commerciale de Mersina en 1892", p. 7. In 1891, the Cyprus Fabre Company began an even more frequent service than the Lloyd and the Khedival lines.

⁶⁸ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1900, p. 11. Hamburg and Trieste became regular destinations for Mersin's exports. RCL, No. 185, 31 August 1902, p. 221.

⁶⁹ AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale*, No. 109, Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et des Colonies, "Situation commerciale de Mersina en 1892", p. 3. The French, in the eyes of the British too, seemed to fare better in trade with Mersin. For one thing, thought the British, the price and class of French products suited the needs of Mersin better. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1896, p. 10.

⁷⁰ This was the case despite a considerable decrease in the returns of British shipping in the value of both imports and exports. AP: Report by Consul Jago at Aleppo on the Trade and Commerce of the Adana Vilayet for the Year 1887, pp. 1-2.

But both the French and British imports gradually declined.⁷¹ The two European countries obviously began to be affected by the German encroachment.⁷² The French, for example, could not beat the prices offered by Austria-Hungary and other European countries.⁷³ Nearly all luxury items and paper came from Austria-Hungary while some of these were of German origin and were imported via Trieste.⁷⁴ As a result, imports from Italy doubled from 1892 to 1897. Imports from Germany rose 25 times between 1880 and 1896, such a high increase in German-Ottoman trade that it alarmed not only the British but the French as well, who in the end reassured themselves by not being so far behind Germany.⁷⁵ The British vice-consul of Adana complained that none of the commercial businessmen who visited the province in 1900 stopped to see him but went "... straight to the German Consulate [...] They represented German or Austria-Hungarian houses as well as British and it can be easily imagined which interests they were pushing".⁷⁶ The French Foreign Commerce Agent at Mersin complained in a similar fashion. He suggested that the French merchants facilitate trade for the indigenous merchants by taking their needs into consideration and according them credits. He attributed the success of the Germans to

AMAE: Correspondance Commerciale, Tarsous, 1875-1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersine et Adana, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersin et Adana, 15 June 1896.

⁷² The British vice-consul who was dismayed at the British lack of success in the port-town attributed his country's inadequacy chiefly to the absence of English commercial travelers. There was one English merchant as opposed to ten German and French ones. Massy complained that "the same article will not do for all. Just as we barter cheap beads in some parts of Africa in return for valuable products, so we must send cheap goods to the Levant to compete with the inferior stuffs of other countries and satisfy the oriental desire to have as much show as possible for a small sum." AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1897, p. 11.

⁷³ *AMAE: Correspondance Commerciale, Tarsous, 1875-1897, Tome III, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersine et Adana, Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersin et Adana, 15 June 1896, p. 35.*

⁷⁴ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1892, p. 10. AP: Report on Mersin from Consul Barnham at Aleppo for the Year 1898, pp. 12-14.

⁷⁵ *RCL*, No. 143, 28 February 1899, pp. 322-330 and 361-364. For France, the great difficulty at the turn of the century was mainly due to the ongoing strike in Marseille which paralyzed the commerce of the port for more than a year. *RCL*, No. 168, 30 March 1901, p. 642 and *RCL*, No. 173, 31 August 1901, p. 318. The 1890s were the years Austria and Germany were outstripping the British and French in the sale of agricultural machinery and hardware. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Dillon at Adana for the Year 1894, p. 5.

⁷⁶ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana entitled "Suggestions for British Traders with Turkey in Asia", 1901, pp. 3-9.

the ease with which they provided credit for short terms, from 6 to 9 months.⁷⁷ Indeed, the Germans had even penetrated into most of Asia Minor, where the commercial agents were usually Levantines and the commercial travelers Germans. Many German commission agents had opened offices in Mersin in a matter of a few years, becoming far more successful in engaging smaller merchants through their credit operations, which gave them great bargaining power as they could negotiate with any indigenous merchant for any product at any price.⁷⁸

The American share of imports, particularly those of agricultural machinery rose, indicating capital accumulation in commercial agricultural production. At the time, the American presence was very much part of daily life in Mersin. The American vice-consul in Mersin, Italian-American Viterbo, a civil engineer and formerly a sugar planter in Louisiana, also became the manager of the Mersin-Adana railroad.⁷⁹ After that he became influential in the import of crude oil, which came from America to Italy first, where it was refined and mixed with Russian oil, and then reshipped to Mersin. He established the Italo-American Company that handled most of the petroleum imports to Mersin.⁸⁰

At the turn of the 20th century, commerce between Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Mersin had increased considerably, in line with the new international relations of the Ottomans and the success with which these countries had been able to penetrate into the area. The British tried to find a remedy in exports; one of their lines, the Prince of Manchester, founded a syndicate that advanced money on goods shipped on their vessels.⁸¹ This credit, per se, facilitated fresh purchases for the merchants immediately after the harvest. This was undoubtedly the most favorable season to buy, as prices still remained low. Such help proved all the more important for the merchants who found the prices of freight quite high. For heavy merchandise the price ranged between 6 and 15 francs, and for light merchandise between 15 and 25 francs in imports, while the fixed price in exports was 15–45

RCL, No. 173, 31 August 1901, p. 258.

⁷⁸ *RCL*, No. 229, 30 April 1906, p. 522; *RCL*, No. 217, 30 April 1905, pp. 473–475.

⁷⁹ USCR: Daily Consular and Trade Reports, From Consul Davis at Iskenderun, 28 May 1900. 1900 was also a year when imports of agricultural machinery from the United Kingdom, Germany, and Belgium, respectively, following the United States, became significant. *RCL*, No. 173, 31 August 1901, p. 258.

⁸⁰ BAA, HA, Jahreshandelsberichte des Konsulats in Mersina (6707), 53, 30 July 1908, p. 16.

⁸¹ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1899, p. 11.

francs per ton.⁸² Many foreign firms entered into such credit transactions, which induced many more merchants to do business. All such transactions, including those from India in the trade of jute via Port Said, still took place despite the absence of any mechanism, within legal means, to address potential problems.⁸³

As a rule, shipping agents did not get paid at the port of Mersin. Only the agents of the French Messageries Maritimes and the Austrian Lloyd took 5% on freights for export, and differing percentages for imports. For the rest of the companies, representatives of head offices in Beirut and Alexandria acted as the shipping agents. The sub-agents often had to refer to their bosses in these two ports, which at times caused loss of shipments.⁸⁴

At the turn of the 20th century, 1,000–1,200 ships stopped at Mersin annually, two-thirds of which were large steamers.⁸⁵ The British, the Italian, and the Russian postal boats also stopped regularly although their cargo amounts were not very significant. The Moss and Papayani lines at Alexandria handled Mersin's transshipment to Asia Minor.⁸⁶

The imperialist rivalry between Europeans and Americans turned out, in some ways, to be to the benefit of the people of Çukurova. As no single power could exclude its competitors, there was much space for merchants to do business. The 1870s had begun with the supremacy of the British and French involvement in the trade of Çukurova. After all, both countries had invested in the railway. But in the 1890s, competition intensified as Germany entered the scene. German commercial agents penetrated the commercial networks themselves, without waiting for indigenous intermediaries. As they paid great attention to local conditions in the 1890s, by the 20th century they began to change the nature of imperialist rivalry. When they could not compete, for example, with the Americans in the sale of agricultural machinery, they changed venue and invested directly not only

⁸² RCL, No. 149, 31 August 1899, pp. 331–332.

⁸³ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1897, p. 12. The British came into more profit in these years as the Khedivial Line passed into their hands. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Loiso at Mersin for the Year 1905, p. 8.

⁸⁴ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 7.

⁸⁵ BAA, HA, *Jahreshandelsberichte des Konsulats in Mersina (6707)*, 53, 30 July 1908, p. 25; RCL, No. 178, 31 January 1902, p. 114.

⁸⁶ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, pp. 6–7.

in railways but also in agricultural production. In 1906, the German Cotton Society of the Levant (Deutsche-Levantinisische Baumwoll-Gesellschaft) began operations under the patronage of the Deutsche Bank and Deutsche-Levante Line.⁸⁷ Established initially to help develop cotton cultivation in the area, this company also encouraged the sale of cotton to the Germans. The company bought the merchandise directly and expedited it to Hamburg. Many German engineers, merchants, wholesalers, and industrialists came to work and reside in Mer-sin in connection with the organization of this commercial activity.⁸⁸ Indeed from the banks to the factories, from the industrialists and merchants to the companies of both rail and naval transport, the Germans worked together in close association. This was how they penetrated Çukurova.⁸⁹ They came up with products for other markets as well; they mixed the domestic kind of cotton (*yerli*) with wool and sold it to Americans.⁹⁰ The Deutsche-Levantische Baumwolle-Gesellschaft quickly became an important buying center by following the example of the British Cotton Growing Association in the British colonies.⁹¹

As a result, the Germans became the largest buyer of cotton thanks to the company, and its enthusiastic director, Richard Stöckel.⁹² Yet the Germans still complained about their own success: Deutsche-Türkische Vereinigung (German-Turkish Association) and the Dresden Landtag (Provincial Council) frequently protested before and during World War I that many German buyers did not pay enough attention to the produce of Çukurova. The *Deutsche-Levante Zeitung* kept publishing articles addressing this problem and calling on Germans to do more trade with Çukurova.⁹³ The Deutsche-Levantische Baumwolle-Gesellschaft and the new Deutsch-Orientalischen Handelsgesellschaft, in order to be more active in the purchase of cotton from the Empire at large, wanted to establish a central import bureau in Berlin which would control prices and help ensure that cotton

⁸⁷ RCL, No. 237, 31 December 1906, p. 782.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 783.

⁸⁹ RCL, No. 217, 30 April 1905, p. 475.

⁹⁰ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, pp. 12-13.

⁹¹ AP: Report by Wydhm Dunstan entitled "Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation", Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 7.

⁹² BAA, PA, *Die wirtschaftliche Auskunftstelle der deutsch-türkischen Vereinigung*, (6733), February 1915, p. 54. From the report of Dr. Berolzheimer in Berlin.

⁹³ BAA, PA, *Die wirtschaftliche Auskunftstelle der deutsch-türkischen Vereinigung*, (6734), 31 August 1916, p. 208.

from Çukurova would reach Germany without intermediary buyers. Although this did not materialize,⁹⁴ it, however, did not impede German commercial activity, the volume of which surpassed that of all other Europeans in Çukurova. Italy ranked right behind Germany as Italian commercial activity rose some 76%. A union of Italian capitalists and industrialists established the *Société Commerciale d'Orient* in Istanbul in 1907, indicating the growing importance of Italy. This company handled all banking affairs for Italian-Ottoman commerce.⁹⁵ The French, on the other hand, lost some of their trade with the Ottoman Empire. The French consul-general in Geneva, while agreeing that the French had nothing to be proud of, seemed to think that Ottoman exports to France compensated for the fall in French shipments to the Empire.⁹⁶ Indeed, by 1908, France became one of the chief importers of cotton from Çukurova.

The prospect of the Konya extension of the Baghdad railway had its effect on further infrastructural improvements. Notable were new irrigation projects, not all of which had been successfully completed by the first decade of the 20th century.⁹⁷ Germans led the task of irrigation. In 1905, the Deutsche Bank directed and controlled only the Konya plain irrigation scheme and was pleased with the progress made in this first section of the Baghdad Railway. The Ottoman government requested that the Bank make surveys for a similar undertaking on a larger scale in Çukurova. In Konya, some 50,000 hectares were to be irrigated with water from a fresh water lake 93 kilometers away, at a cost of 4 million dollars. In Çukurova, 500,000 hectares awaited German irrigation.⁹⁸ The Bank considered its task to be making Çukurova another Egypt as it was already “producing considerable quantities of cotton

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

⁹⁵ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 16.

⁹⁶ *AMAE: Correspondance Politique et Commerciale*, 401, Affaires Commerciales avec la France, de Consul-Général à Geneve au Ministère de Commerce, 26 January 1908.

⁹⁷ A French project for an extensive irrigation scheme, originally initiated by the director of the Mersin-Adana line and the General Director of the Railways in 1894, had every prospect of completion in 1904 but in the end did not. Frenchmen from Istanbul and Paris volunteered to come up with the capital of some 7 million francs for the canalization of the three main rivers of the Adana-Tarsus sub-region. But the project never materialized. *RCL*, No. 209, 31 August 1904, p. 290.

⁹⁸ “Irrigation”, *Levant Trade Review*, 1/1, June 1911.

for export besides supporting a local cotton manufacturing industry, which was rapidly expanding⁹⁹.

In addition, four pumps for the irrigation of the Seyhan and Ceyhan Rivers were received in 1906. The payment for these came from the Agricultural Bank.¹⁰⁰ Preparations for the canalization of the Seyhan, Ceyhan and Tarsus Rivers began in 1908. This canalization project aimed at preventing spring floods and making steam navigation possible on the Seyhan up to Adana and on the Ceyhan up to Misis.¹⁰¹ The Agricultural Bank sponsored a group of engineers who conducted a feasibility study in the Çukurova plains.¹⁰² These engineers concluded that such irrigation would make growing Egyptian cotton possible at a cost of 17 million dollars.¹⁰³ They calculated that the completion of the project required 8–19 years.¹⁰⁴ In 1908, the Department of Public Works employed another group of European engineers headed by a French specialist to supervise all irrigation and river navigation projects in Çukurova. These projects for recovering valuable land were only partly completed by World War I.¹⁰⁵

In these years, diseases such as cholera no longer threatened the people of Çukurova and the cattle disease that had had devastating effects on agriculture in the previous century had totally disappeared.¹⁰⁶ Such circumstances prompted the Ottoman state to spend some effort on developing other crops, for example vegetables and grapevines in Çukurova.¹⁰⁷ Sugar cane and beets had already been introduced on a large scale. Şakir Pasha and Baghdadizade Abdülkadir Efendi had

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, cited from the annual Report by the Deutsche Bank for 1910.

¹⁰⁰ BOA: *İradeler, Ticaret ve Nafia*, 441/430–7, 26 *Safer* 1324 (21 April 1906).

¹⁰¹ The Rivers Seyhan and Ceyhan had once been navigable but later all navigation on the rivers had halted.

¹⁰² BAA, HA, *Jahreshandelsberichte des Konsulats in Mersina* (6707), 53, 30 July 1908, p. 18.

¹⁰³ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ USCR: Inquiry Documents, Report by O.J. Campbell on the *Vilayet* of Adana, 24 September 1914, p. 36.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁰⁶ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 8.

¹⁰⁷ The Adana model farm included a vegetable area for which the government had even purchased mulberry saplings. BOA: *İradeler, Orman ve Meadin*, 3296(338)/1, 8 *Muharrem* 1319 (28 April 1901). Vineyards around Mersin although rejuvenated during the Egyptian rule had since been abandoned. In the 1880s, new interest in vineyards resulted in a total of 14,000 acres cultivated. However the problem of insects and disease continued and prompted the state to intervene in 1905, by sponsoring any

secured exemption from the tithe for 10 years on their 10,000 dönüms where they produced the two crops.¹⁰⁸

By 1908, there was a steady supply of agricultural workers through migration, but cotton production had also increased to the extent that incoming labor proved insufficient. This caused a rise in their wages to between 75 kuruş and 1 lira per week.¹⁰⁹ The tribes usually provided the labor, going back to their nomadic life in the mountains after the harvest. The price of labor was fixed each week in the markets of Adana and Tarsus.¹¹⁰ Laborers also received food. In the early 20th century as well, in fact to this day, the headman (*elcibaşı*) who share-cropped with landholders, engaged and marketed gangs of laborers. Egyptian and American cotton required additional labor for separating the crop from the pod. Usually women and children performed this task, right at the field of picking.¹¹¹ The local variety of cotton (*yerli*) on the other hand did not require this labor as it was picked with the pod. Making utmost use of the existing supply of labor remained a chief concern and partly accounts for the predominance of the *yerli* crop.

American cotton and sesame seeds had been tried in order to raise the quality of the final product. In the first decade of the 20th century, more and more American cotton seeds reached¹¹² Çukurova thanks to the model farm established in Adana in 1893. The construction of necessary buildings and the land itself cost about 108,700 kuruş. The Agricultural Bank could not pay the entire amount, so the Ministry

attempt for curing the disease that threatened the vineyards. *BOA: İradeler, Orman ve Meadin*, 1457(474)/1, 12 *Receb* 1322 (23 September 1905).

¹⁰⁸ *BOA: İradeler, Ticaret ve Nafia*, 58/2660-5, 13 *Zilhicce* 1315 (6 May 1898). They also wanted to establish a factory to produce sugar for which they also received the necessary permits from the Ministry of Commerce, Public Works and Industry. The government initially did not want to grant the exemption from tithe for 10 years but the Ministry argued that any potential development of the sugar industry was a valuable effort and that other countries such as Germany and Russia not only encouraged the sugar industry but also provided cash incentives. Sugar cane production continued but Şakir Pasha and Bağdadi Abdülkadir Efendi failed to establish their factory.

¹⁰⁹ AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled "Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation", Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 9.

¹¹⁰ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 14. In this source, the price of labor was between 30 kuruş or 0.3 sterling and 70 kuruş or 0.6 sterling (1.5 and 3.5 *mecidiyes* per week.) The *mecidiye* is 20 kuruş in Pamuk, *Paranın Tarihi*, p. 236.

¹¹¹ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 21.

¹¹² *BOA: İradeler, Orman ve Meadin*, 1203(499)/1, 7 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1323 (11 July 1905).

of Forestry and Mines and Agriculture made up the remainder.¹¹³ But it took another 5 years for the Minister of Agriculture, Mines, and Forests to finally appoint an agricultural inspector as a director for the model farm.¹¹⁴ Until the German experiment with American cotton in 1906, the model farm experiment remained the most important experimental cultivation of long-staple cotton.¹¹⁵ In 1906, the farm received 10,000 Egyptian and American cotton seeds. The same amount of seeds was to be provided free of charge for 10 years. Also, any machinery this crop required received an annual subsidy of 15,000 kuruş for 5 years.¹¹⁶ The model farm management deemed it necessary to keep trying out the American seed, despite its failure in other areas during the first year of trial. Foreign, mostly British purchasers, required the American type of cotton.

However, during the period under consideration here, Çukurova mostly produced the (*yerli*), short staple cotton.¹¹⁷ Originally, the state had brought in the Egyptian variety, a long-staple crop (*iane*), in the second half of the 1890s to help cotton cultivation. However, by 1909 these seeds brought via Izmir had become acclimatized. The *iane* did reach the markets of Çukurova every year before the indigenous cotton seeds of the hinterland, facilitating early sowing. However, autumn usually came early to Çukurova, at the very beginning of September, by which time these seeds had not ripened enough. Also, the Egyptian cotton seemed to require irrigation. The *yerli* kind never really required irrigation but it could give poor yields with irregular rain. The American cotton, on the other hand, gave very good yields and had more value because of its quality, but it had to be picked just as it ripened, requiring during a very short time—2 or 3 weeks—more labor than Çukurova could provide. Also American cotton usually took longer to mature, requiring early planting which did not suit the farmers of Çukurova as they implemented an intensive crop rotation between cotton and grain.¹¹⁸ In addition, American cotton hybridized

BOA: *İradeler, Orman ve Meadin*, 1041(10)/1, 10 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1311 (20 November 1893).

¹¹⁴ RCL, No. 145, 30 April 1899, p. 836.

¹¹⁵ US: Daily Consular and Trade Reports, 14 September 1914, p. 1600.

¹¹⁶ BOA: *İradeler, Ticaret ve Nafia*, 441/430-7, 26 *Safer* 1324 (21 April 1906).

¹¹⁷ US: Daily Consular and Trade Reports, 14 September 1914, p. 1600.

¹¹⁸ Also mentioned in Quataert, "Ottoman reform", pp. 293-294.

rapidly and deteriorated in a few years.¹¹⁹ Two large landholders near Adana planted 3,000 dönüms with these seeds in 1908 but reduced the amount of land to 1,000 dönüms after their first attempt failed because of insufficient labor.¹²⁰ Another landholder who wanted to try the American seed complained of the ignorance and lack of skill on the part of his workmen and stated that he would gladly plant it if skilled personnel were available to help him through the cultivation process.¹²¹ The British Consular Officer then assisted him by sending samples of all kinds of cotton grown in Çukurova to the Director of the School of Agriculture in Egypt.¹²² Apparently, lack of labor and skill, not of capital, land or will, prevented increased cultivation of the more valuable American cotton. The domestic type (named *yerli*) thus remained the easiest and cheapest to grow. It was sown together with sesame as the *yerli* proved resilient against the damages usually caused by the sesame picking.¹²³ Nonetheless, Çukurova produced some American cotton for export and for the spinning factories of the plain. In any case, despite the predominance of the *yerli*, in 1908 Çukurova provided half of the total cotton exports of the Empire.¹²⁴

In sum, the Forced Settlement of 1865 had enclosed Çukurova, separating the sedentary zone from the eastern Amanus Mountains and turning the Ceyhan sub-region into a frontier zone. In this frontier zone, tribal and immigrant settlements took rather long to take root and commercialization of agriculture did not take place before the 1890s, except in a few areas. By the 1890s, the human geography of this part changed greatly and cotton became a very profitable crop; the Ceyhan sub-region began to turn to cotton production in, for in-

¹¹⁹ AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled "Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation", Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 3.

¹²⁰ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 13.

¹²¹ Quataert indicates that the cultivators of Çukurova might have been prejudiced against the American variety because of fraudulence in the earlier experiments that had failed. See his "Ottoman reform", p. 293.

¹²² AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 13.

¹²³ AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled "Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation", Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 4. Dunstan implies that planting cotton with sesame was still very largely practiced. But numbers show that this is an exaggeration on the part of the Imperial Officer, as the sesame production and export had lost importance in the last years of the 19th century.

¹²⁴ AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled "Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation", Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 4.

stance, the Anavarza plain. In the 1880s, the Adana-Tarsus sub-region already produced and exported large quantities of cotton. The example set in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region prompted the same development to take place in the Upper plain which continued well into the 20th century, because most of the cultivable land in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region had already been exhausted. There was no land available to the newly commercially minded unless they had great capital resources to take advantage of the remaining marshes. In other words, for the capital available, the Adana-Tarsus sub-region had reached its natural limits for further commercialization. But the Ceyhan sub-region, with all its fertile lands, was available to both the newly settled and the older indigenous population to reap the benefits of commercial cotton agriculture in the 20th century.

Table 5. Steamship lines that stopped at Mersin, 1902–1915

English	Khedivial Mail, every week direct from Lataqia and Alexandria The Prince Line, every 14 days direct from Manchester Bells' Asia Minor Line, irregular to and from Alexandria Ellerman, irregular from Manchester Egypt, weekly from Manchester and Alexandria Levant, every week via Izmir and the Syrian Coast
French	Messageries Maritimes, bi-monthly via Alexandria and Izmir
German	Deutsche Levant Line, weekly via Izmir and the Syrian coast
and Austrian	The Austrian Lloyd, weekly via Alexandria and Izmir
Italian	Societa Italiano di Servizi Marittimi, weekly direct from Brindisi and every other week from Pireaus Societa Marittima Italiana, weekly direct from Leghorn Societa Nazionale de Navigaziano, (established in 1913) 3 times a month direct from Naples
Greek	Pantoleon, every week via Izmir and the Syrian coast Cozzika, bi-weekly via Izmir
Russian	Russian Navigation and Commerce, every week direct from Odessa and via Alexandria
American	Archipelago American Steamship Company, every week via Izmir, Iskenderun, and the Syrian coast
Dutch	The Royal Nederlandais
Belgian	Adolf Deb
Tunisian	The Tunis Line
Ottoman	Hacı Davud

Source: USCR, Inquiry Documents, Report by O.J. Campbell on the Vilayet of Adana, 24 September 1914, p. 37.

Registering Land and Importing Machinery: Wealth in Çukurova from the 1870s to the 1890s

The cultivation of cotton, already in 1871, had increased to an extent never seen before and cultivators fiercely competed for the available cotton seed. Who were the early beneficiaries of this new Çukurova that produced large amounts of cotton for export?¹²⁵ In this section, I investigate who reaped the benefits and where in Çukurova, the combination of which, that is people and geography, began to change the area in the 1870s and turned it into a socio-economic whole at the end of the 1890s with mechanization and estate formation.

Throughout this period of the last quarter of the 19th century, increase in production was directly related to the registration of land. It could even be said that the most important incentive for the extension of cultivation came with land registration which first began in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region in the 1870s and had resulted in estates in the Ceyhan sub-region by the end of the 19th century. Indeed, land registration, one of the key purposes of the 1858 Land Code, did not mean much in Çukurova before the 1870s.¹²⁶ But the 1870s marked the beginning of a new period in Çukurova, particularly as the Forced Settlement and settlement of immigrants began to pay off. Settled population had increased and the non-settled worked as seasonal agricultural workers.¹²⁷ In these years, immigration to the plain was increasing as well, preparing Çukurova to “rise to a high place among the

¹²⁵ In the first years of the 1870s, annual export ranged between approximately 38,000 and 60,000 bales. AP: General Report by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, in the Year 1872, Province of Adana, p. 579 and 583.

¹²⁶ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim, Arazi Atik Defterleri*. There are a total of six sets of registers (*defter*). The first set is on Adana. The first registers of this first set numbered from 3052 to 3056 were registrations beginning in 1264 (1847–1848) when the Office of Land Registration (*Defterhâne-i Amire*) was established, and ending in 1280 (1863–1864) when local land registration offices were established under the Provincial Code of 1864. In these the pattern of land usage was recorded. The first registration set, *Defter* No. 3056 which began in 1281 (1864–1865) was for Adana itself.

¹²⁷ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of North Syria for the Year 1874 Province of Adana, p. 1706–1707. In 1874, the famine forced many to come down from the mountains in search of work as they were having food shortages; ironically providing for much needed seasonal labor.

cotton-growing shores of the Levant".¹²⁸ Therefore, the records of land registration in cadastral archives reflected the contemporary situation rather than creating a new land regime according to the Land Code. Secondly, as Gould asserts correctly, these records gave no indication as to the registration of lands given to the tribes under the orders of Cevdet Pasha.¹²⁹ This is probably one reason behind the confusion in terms of the ownership of a certain landholding in the Republican Period when land registrations were renewed. In the 1870s, once officials began to record the lands sedentarized through the Forced Settlement campaign, arbitrary registration became common without much reference to the original land grants of Cevdet Pasha. It is very probable that these lands granted to the tribes and not registered in the Land Registers (*Arazi Atik Defterleri*) of the General Directory of Cadastral Survey of Turkey, were actually leased to Muslim and non-Muslim farmers, depending on the ethnic composition of an area.¹³⁰ It might also simply have been that these lands were used—or pre-empted—by the settled population as the grantees showed no interest in the lands. There were cases where these settlers were Muslims who, in the Republican period, became the rightful owners of such lands originally granted to tribes in 1865.¹³¹ For example, the Bozdoğanlı tribe originally from western Anatolia acquired the deed in 1871 for a vast portion of land stretching from north of Adana all the way to Karataş in the south. This is an area where today stand several large cotton estates, indeed the most productive ones of current Çukurova, including the Sabancı family farm. Now the owner of 3,000 dönüms of several well-managed cotton farms there, a descendant of the tribe—a large part of which ended up back in western Anatolia—told me that his family did not settle in the land until after the Republic. He complained that his family could only obtain rights to a small part (his current estate) of this vast land, since the rest of the land was claimed

¹²⁸ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of the Provinces of Aleppo and Adana in the Year 1876, p. 964. British Consular officer Skene's words.

¹²⁹ Gould, *Pashas and Brigands*, pp. 182–184.

¹³⁰ Mübaccel Kıray is of the opinion that the reason behind the smooth transfer of land in the Republican Period was this very difference between the users and holders of certain lands. Personal Communication, September 1996.

¹³¹ I myself have seen one title deed dated 1871 in the name of a branch of the Bozdoğanlı tribe. The statement of the deed went as follows: from Adana gate (*kapusu*) to a village in Karataş.) My thanks to Mehmet Saka, the owner of the farm for showing me the Ottoman deed, although he did not allow me to copy it.

and thus divided by those already settled there and the family's Ottoman title deed was annulled.

In the first area to change, the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, when title deed registrations began to intensify two-fifths of the arable land was already cultivated. As the land was 'marvelously productive' yielding about 300 pounds per acre, there was great interest in getting titles.¹³² Initially, the officers in charge of registration kept busy by registering already cultivated land.¹³³ That is why they were first concerned with Adana and its environs, the heart of the Adana-Tarsus sub-region. Indeed, by the end of the 1870s, there was no cultivated land left without title in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region.

In this sub-region, two tendencies in the registration of landholdings can be observed. In Mersin and Tarsus, new investments in land came from the wealth accumulated through trade. In the vicinity of these towns, where no cultivable land was left for new reclamation, non-Muslims prevailed. These were clearly wealthy merchants. Some of the Armenians had strong ties with Kayseri; one such person, Serkes Efendi from the vicinity of Mersin, had become the largest landholder in Ermenak thanks to the fortune he made from his trade in Karaman, another important point of trade with the interior.¹³⁴

In Adana, we observe a different tendency in the registration of land. Newly settled tribes took up agriculture. During the late 1870s, changes in the economy of the Adana-Tarsus sub-region began to have an effect on the political power structure. Old powers that could not adapt to the new economic structure based on agricultural surplus began to lose both money and power. The once mighty ruler of Çukurova, the Ramazanoğulları, now had only a foundation (*vakıf*) in the town of Adana, with lands that did not produce enough surplus. The tithes (*aşar*) from these lands could not even pay for the management

¹³² AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of North Syria for the Year 1874, Province of Adana, p. 1706. The words belong to the British consular officer.

¹³³ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim: Arazi Atık Defterleri*. Defter No. 3059, dated 1287 (1870-1871). With this set of registers, we see that registrations now proceeded at an accelerated rate.

¹³⁴ Unable to compete with Serkes Efendi, merchants of Karaman accused him of selling the *mecidiye* for far more than its value. The local authorities, particularly the Administrative Council of Ermenak, his official seat of business, came to the help of this powerful landlord and merchant, and defended his case vis-à-vis the central authorities. The charges against him were dropped. BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2120/6, 21 Ramazan 1296 (8 September 1879).

of the mosque and the educational institution, the *medrese*. The *vakıf* was under threat of losing these to the Imperial Foundation Administration, the *Evkaf-ı Humayun*. This time the state intervened and gave the institution time to pay back taxes.¹³⁵ But it was clear that a new type of production, coupled with a new pattern of landholding, had begun to replace the old structure. Newly settled Muslim families such as the Çamurdanoğlu, the Karafakizade, and the Koçandarlar emerged as large landholders in the vicinity of Adana and Sarkıntı. The Koçandarlar accused the Adana Administrative Council of not doing enough against the Avşar and Tecir who kept trying to occupy the family's 40,000-dönüm holding in Sarkıntı.¹³⁶ The new large landholders still had to protect their lands from the tribes of the area. Increasing clashes, which by now usually ended in favor of the landholders, were a direct result of the commercialization of agriculture. Extensive cultivation in this sub-region left no room for the nomadic tribes. Consequently, several large holdings (*çiftlik*s) of 3,000 acres and upwards were registered in the immediate vicinity of Adana, chiefly owned by Muslim pashas.¹³⁷

In the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, where the first land reclamation took place in the 1870s, large holdings emerged as early as 1882.¹³⁸ In these years the practice began of granting land to important bureaucrats; Abidin Pasha who was the governor of Adana between 1881 and 1885 received a grant for some 50,000 dönüms around Yumurtalık, beginning from the port area up to Misis, for the purposes of 'reviving and improving'. Thus he became a large landholder himself. British Military Consul Bennet recounted rumors about how he got possession of these lands.¹³⁹ Abidin Pasha also owned some 10,000 dönüms around Silifke where he had Kurdish laborers from Diyarbakır drain the marshes.¹⁴⁰ A later governor, Hasan Pasha, wrote to the Sublime Porte about the sale of some of 19,500 dönüms of this land by the former

¹³⁵ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2118/12, 26 Cemaziyelahir 1295 (27 June 1878).

¹³⁶ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2120/9, 27 Zilhicce 1296 (12 December 1879).

¹³⁷ AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled "Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation", Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 12.

¹³⁸ FO 424/132, Dufferin to Grainville, 7 March 1882. Dufferin did a geographic survey in the area after which he concluded that large-scale landholders mostly cultivated the western part of the plain whereas the eastern part lay idle. This eastern part was what I call the Ceyhan sub-region where land reclamation and cultivating cotton along with wheat was a development just starting.

¹³⁹ FO 424/132, Bennet to Dufferin, Adana, 6 February 1882, p. 65.

¹⁴⁰ FO 424/132, Wilson to Dufferin, Antalya, 20 February 1882, p. 76.

governor to a citizen of France from Lebanon, asking that the land to be transferred to the *Emlak-ı Humayun* (state lands) on account of the debts incurred by Abidin Pasha.¹⁴¹ The land in its original and cultivated state had a value of 800,000 kuruş. What alarmed Hasan Pasha was that the area actually covered at least 100,000 dönüms—not 19,000 or so dönüms as recorded on the tithe deed—and that warships used to anchor at the port of Yumurtalık. Not only its size but also the fact that such a port might be transferred to foreign hands worried Hasan Pasha. Besides the prospect of losing the port, losing such an agriculturally prosperous region including a forestry industry that delivered 300 liras of profit annually, the governor argued, would strike a great blow to the well-being of the region. Abidin Pasha owed 130,000 kuruş to the government of Adana; for the annulment of this debt the land could be confiscated by the state authorities. But it never was.

Other large-scale holdings appeared in Karataş and its environs to the south of Adana. Consul Bennet visited a farm owned by an Ottoman Christian. The farm, 15 miles south of Adana (en route to Karataş), was around 6,500 dönüms. This well-managed farm consisted of 3 plots of 2,000 dönüms each, two producing wheat and barley in the winter, cotton and sesame in the summer, and one fallow. Fruits and grapes took up the remaining 500 dönüms. The farm had 12 horses, 60 oxen, 20 buffaloes and milk cows.¹⁴² As expected, the number of permanent employees was small: 25 in the winter and 20 in the summer. The winter laborers were sharecroppers with 8 dönüms each. The summer laborers plowed for wages and did not share in any crop. For the annual harvest, 120 immigrants were hired from among the 40,000 to 50,000 who came down not only from the mountains to the north and east of Çukurova but all the way from eastern Anatolia-Harput and Musul. In addition to these seasonal workers, there were threshers who came down with their horses for 10% of the threshed produce.¹⁴³ Apparently, at the time there was no agricultural machinery in use, as was the case in most large landholdings.¹⁴⁴ Indeed this very area around Karataş was where some of the largest and best managed farms of Çukurova continued to prosper well into the 1950s.

¹⁴¹ BOA: *Yıldız Mütenevvi Mâruzat*, 29/21, 23 *Rebiulevvel* 1305 (9 December 1887).

¹⁴² FO 424/122, Bennet to Goschen, Adana, 28 April 1881, pp. 182–184.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 184–189.

¹⁴⁴ FO 424/123, Bennet to Goschen, Adana, 28 April 1881, p. 284.

One of them later became the property of the Turkish state (*Devlet Üretim Çiftliği*), established under the order of Mustafa Kemal during his first visit to Adana in the early phase of the Republic. Also, one of the first farms of the famed Sabancı family, and the Tanrıverdi family farm—also from Kayseri—were around Karataş, both acquired in the 1930s. A member of the Tanrıverdi family relates that today's Tanrıverdi village was established there with the tribal population under the auspices of her great granduncle. The farms were abandoned and left to ruin—she does not know by whom and when—but somehow passed onto the family to “save the farms and maintain agriculture” The farm's title deed was given only after the family took their last name after the 1934 Code.¹⁴⁵

Nusayris, Çeçen, Nogays, Armenians and Arabs also owned lands in this sub-region. Many Kurds provided the labor as they came down from as far north as Çorum and as far east as Urfa, Sivas, and Bitlis.¹⁴⁶ There were also Greeks among the large landholders who took up commerce after the Crimean War and began to invest in land.¹⁴⁷ These were probably lands auctioned by the tribal groups that had been assigned to them for settlement but on which the grantees did not settle.

In terms of land registration in the area around the Ceyhan sub-region in the 1870s, examples were few and far between. These registrations involved the already settled Armenian villagers and the Circassian refugees. Cotton cultivation increased in Kadirli because Armenians began to cultivate previously uncultivated land. In particular, those who lived in the mountainous zones came down to the plain in the Ceyhan sub-region where land was available for registration. Small farmers at the foothills also received offers to register land in Kadirli. For example, the populace of Haçın, a commercial town on route to Konya and Kayseri, were given larger land areas in Kars-ul Zülkadriyye (Kadirli). Some took up the offer, and settled down in Kadirli in the early 1870s.¹⁴⁸ Such settlements, a purpose of the Forced Settlement Project then in its early stages, directly resulted from land registration.

¹⁴⁵ Interview conducted with a member of the Tanrıverdi family in Adana, September 1994.

¹⁴⁶ FO 424/132, Wilson to Dufferin, Adana, 31 December 1881, pp. 32–33.

¹⁴⁷ FO 424/132, Wilson to Dufferin, Antalya, 20 February 1882, p. 78.

¹⁴⁸ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2115/39, 18 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1288 (15 August 1871).

A second campaign of land registration in the area around the Ceyhan sub-region, simultaneously with the Adana-Tarsus sub-region, took place in the vicinity of Sis (Kozan). The already-cultivated part was considerable and the registration of land began in 1870, just a few years after the registration in Adana. Part of the Anavarza plain around Kozan was registered at this time, the title holders being Armenians. The considerable remainder remained unregistered.¹⁴⁹

In the remainder of the Ceyhan sub-region, in the north, other early reclamations were mostly distributed among the local tribal elite by state order. Derviş Ağazade of Sis, from the Kozanoğlu tribe, was given the Harmancık and Satı holdings (*çiftlik*s), which were actually within the area allocated to some of the Avşar tribe during the same period for his services during the Forced Settlement. The Harmancık holding (*çiftlik*) was right by the border of Kayseri, along the River Zamanti. The Satı, in Rum Nahiyesi, was farther from the Kayseri border. As Derviş Ağazade began construction of his farm buildings, it occurred to some of the Avşar to obtain the title deed and demand rent from him. Apparently, he did not wish to yield anything, claiming full rights to the *çiftlik*s. It was he who took the issue to the Sublime Porte, to secure his rights or get his money back. But the state decided only that the Harmancık was his and that Satı was indeed a holding of the Avşar who had paid 4,000 kuruş for it. The state ended up pleasing both the Avşar who had partly settled but not taken up agriculture entirely, and the notable who had indeed begun to establish a farm.¹⁵⁰ This was typical of the state's attitude toward new extensions in the Ceyhan sub-region, causing commercialization to begin late but in keeping with the larger interest of securing the zone from any tribal intervention.

The attitude of the state toward other tribes in the remainder of the Ceyhan sub-region, the area of the Forced Settlement Project, varied according to the degree of their consent to settlement and/or the pressure they were able to exert on the settled populace. When a matter arose between a tribe that had hardly settled and the Kozanoğlu, a mighty tribe already settled with great commercial links, the state had a hard time following a balanced policy. Another case involved a small *çiftlik* next to Satı, just outside of Sis. A native of Haçın, Ahmed Bey

¹⁴⁹ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim: Arazi Atık Defterleri. Defter No. 3201 for Kozan and Sis, Mali 1287 (1871), p. 31. All dates in these registers (defter) are in a different version of solar calendar (mali).*

¹⁵⁰ *BOA: Şura-yı Devlet, 2117/20, 11 Şaban 1289 (14 October 1872).*

managed the estate in Satı where Muslims were newcomers and did not engage in agriculture. This time the Kozanoğlu claimed rights to this *çiftlik* because they paid the tithe.¹⁵¹

The Circassian involvement in agricultural activity on newly reclaimed lands of the Ceyhan sub-region took longer. Circassian refugees came to the sub-region in 1878 in the aftermath of the war with Russia. New settlement units were created for them along the river.¹⁵² Apparently they did not prove very productive or resilient, as they could not adapt to the floods of the Ceyhan. Also, as a result of living in a climate to which they were not accustomed, a great number of them contracted tuberculosis. Provincial authorities suggested that, like the Nogays, they should be dispersed over existing villages and be allowed to go to the mountains (*yayla*) in the summer to avoid disease. The answer of the central authorities was interesting. In the existing villages there remained no land without title deed (*ba-tapu*) and the state could not provide both good weather and good land.¹⁵³ Obviously, the existing balance of power established in Çukurova could not be risked for the benefit of the incoming refugees. After this initial trouble, the Circassians, along with the Armenians who now took up commodity production, became the backbone of agricultural development in the Ceyhan sub-region, truly changing the human geography of the area from a place under tribal threat to a cultivated land. The Circassians made use of every state incentive and stayed in the Ceyhan sub-region. For example, the public funds (*Menafi Sandığı*) provided them with initial capital for seeds and implements. More importantly, they received exemption from paying the tithe.¹⁵⁴ Those who did not take up agriculture preferred to roam the mountains, but they did so in Maraş, outside of the productive zone.¹⁵⁵

A decade later in the 1880s, when land registration turned to newly cultivated areas, the record increased in the Ceyhan sub-region. Lands in Islahiye were registered between 1870 and 1895, with a clear increase in the size of holdings, the smallest being 250 dönüms.¹⁵⁶ Osmaniye followed suit. Most of the lands, almost all of which were larger

BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2117/31, 29 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1290 (25 July 1873).

¹⁵² See Chapter 2.

¹⁵³ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2118/4, 13 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1295 (15 May 1878).

¹⁵⁴ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2118/45, 15 *Rebiulahir* 1296 (8 April 1879).

¹⁵⁵ BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2118/41, 12 *Rebiulahir* 1296 (5 April 1879).

¹⁵⁶ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim: Arazi Atik Defterleri*, Defter Nos. 3244 and 3245, 1286–1308/(1871–1893).

than 500 dönüms, were registered in a short period of time between 1882 and 1885.¹⁵⁷ The last lots of registration in the Ceyhan sub-region were in Bulanık between 1870 and 1886.¹⁵⁸ Almost all the new reclamations in the rest of the Ceyhan region were in the hands of Muslim families.¹⁵⁹

Large landholdings clearly became the dominant feature of cotton cultivation in Çukurova in the 1880s. In 1883 and 1884 all kinds of land transactions were recorded according to the nationality of the parties involved, the kinds of land, and their value. A total of 47,305 dönüms of cultivated land changed hands, for a total value for amounting to 51,636 lira, almost 50,000 sterling. The transactions took place between 2,685 persons including about 50 foreigners ranging from Greeks to Austrians, British, French, Americans, Italians and Iranians.¹⁶⁰ A dönüm of these cultivated lands was then valued at 660 liras.¹⁶¹

Mechanization

The Adana—Tarsus sub-region had its wealthy classes who, now in dire need of intensifying, could begin to invest in technological improvement. These classes began to adopt agricultural machinery in the early 1880s. One of the incentives provided by the Ottoman state for cotton cultivation during the cotton famine was in the import of agricultural machinery. As Quataert stated “the Ottoman government had purchased modern equipment, offered demonstrations, and exempted from all customs duties the tools which were imported by private parties. With the collapse of the cotton boom after 1865, these programs

¹⁵⁷ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim: Arazi Atik Defterleri, Defter Nos. 3244 and 3245, 1297–1300/(1882–1885).*

¹⁵⁸ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim: Arazi Atik Defterleri, Defter Nos. 3270 and 3271, 1285–1301/(1870–1886).* Since I was not allowed to thoroughly study these registers (*defter*), I do not know the size of the lands registered.

¹⁵⁹ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim: Arazi Atik Defterleri, Defter No. 3217 for Kozan and Kars, 1299 (1883) and Defter No. 3262 for Osmaniye, 1300 (1884).*

¹⁶⁰ *BOA: Yıldız Esas, 21/140–16, Section 36, 1301/(1883–1884).* This *defter* entry includes all kinds of immobile property such as houses, baths, rooms, harvest areas, vineyards, mills, and vegetable gardens. I have isolated the transactions on cotton cultivated lands and found that 1,300 people, a majority Muslims, were sellers.

¹⁶¹ FO 417/99, Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance, London, 1888, pp. 4–5. The average expense of cultivating an acre of cotton apart from the cost of seeds and threshing was 18 pennies. Contractors were hired for threshing and were paid 10% of the amount. Another 5% was paid to the cleaners.

were discontinued.”¹⁶² Because there was no follow up on these programs, the usage of agricultural machinery in Çukurova before the 1880s was too minimal to mention.

The first machines for reaping the grain harvest came from the United States.¹⁶³ Threshing machines followed shortly after and arrived in Mersin from London. The London company had produced a machine that fit the needs of the area for straw cutting.¹⁶⁴ Thereafter Europeans involved in selling agricultural machinery to Çukurova began to learn to adapt to specific needs. As a result, threshers increasingly became part of agricultural life by the end of the 1880s.¹⁶⁵ As we shall see, this first phase of mechanization signaled a remarkable beginning for the overall extension of cultivation at the end of the 19th century.

State support for mechanization came as early as the private entrepreneurial importation. From the 1880s onwards, there were no custom duties for the import of agricultural machinery.¹⁶⁶ The governor also tried very hard to buy agricultural implements from Europe. He used mostly the income of the municipality to buy plows. These first examples proved inefficient as the cultivators had not been taught how to use them, so that they were often out of order.¹⁶⁷ In 1883, the Governor Abidin Pasha brought from Bedford two locomotives and a threshing machine. He then ordered four locomotives for his own lands along with two threshing machines.¹⁶⁸ The importation of agricultural machinery increased every year.¹⁶⁹ The state also experimented with

¹⁶² Quataert, “Ottoman reform”, p. 157.

¹⁶³ The firm of Richard Hornsby and Sons from Britain made the next sale of reaping machines but these were very heavy and difficult to use for the farmers with few cattle at their disposal. Thus the New Yorker Harvester Company became the chief provider of reaping machines, and sold 50 of them in just 1 year. By the end of 1887, a total of 600 reaping machines operated in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region alone. AP: Report by Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1887, p. 3.

¹⁶⁴ They were equipped with special apparatus for cutting and crushing the straw into small pieces as this was the custom of Anatolian straw cutting. AP: Report by Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1887, p. 4.

¹⁶⁵ In 1 year, five more of these threshers came to Çukurova. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1888, p. 3.

¹⁶⁶ First, only the cultivators were exempt but in 1882 merchants were included as well. Quataert, “Ottoman reform”, p. 161.

¹⁶⁷ AP: Report by Consul Henderson at Aleppo for the Year 1881, p. 1135. Quataert also mentioned lack of trained operators, *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ AP, Report by Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1887. p. 4. Also in Quataert, “Ottoman Reform.” p. 158.

¹⁶⁹ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1892, p. 11. By 1892, 25 steam threshers were put to use in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region.

methods of cultivation and machinery in its model farm in Adana. The farm operated regularly using agricultural machinery on newly purchased land with larger facilities.¹⁷⁰

The initial attempts at mechanization at the end of the 19th century turned into a significant endeavor by the first years of the 20th century. This endeavor proved very important for the process of commercialization in Çukurova in three ways. Obviously, it meant advanced agriculture, but it also meant further foreign interest as the import of various kinds of agricultural machinery became a vital part of the expansion of world trade. Finally, many cotton merchants of the towns of Adana and Mersin quickly directed their accumulations to the trade of machinery and thus became the leading commercial figures of Çukurova in the 20th century. In a way, for these merchants the sale of agricultural machinery became the ultimate commercial activity. I believe the changes in all three aspects of mechanization in Çukurova proved important, but it was the import of textile equipment, which, at the turn of the century, turned Çukurova into the land of industry.

The most important breakthrough for the mechanization of cotton agriculture came when land could be deeply plowed thanks to steam plows, securing higher yields. But agricultural equipment used for grains also proved important for the extension of cultivation. First of all, cotton was a summer crop. Those who began to favor producing cotton over grains, a growing tendency especially after the 1890s, could cultivate both crops. With the adoption of threshing and plowing machinery, methods of tillage advanced notably and a more cotton-intensive rotation (a mixture of 2-field and 3-field systems) prevailed under which grain and cotton were planted together. The third year the land was either left fallow or planted with cotton again in the summer, depending on the availability of labor and the size of the fields. Leaving the field fallow in both the winter and summer was detrimental to the land, filling it with weeds the plowing of which required additional labor. While large landholders could afford the higher costs of labor, they could also rely on much available land. But the steam plows eliminated the difficulties of leaving the land fallow, allowing some large landholders to practice the 3-field system which increased

BOA: *İradeler, Orman ve Meadin*, 1041(10)/1, 10 *Cemaziyelevvel* 1311 (20 November 1893). RCL, No. 145, 30 April 1899, p. 836.

their yields.¹⁷¹ As a result, any improvement in grain cultivation directly affected cotton yields. That is why mechanization in threshing can be considered an important force behind the process of commercialization of cotton agriculture.

In terms of demand, steam threshers and steam plows came next. By 1908, there were a total of 66 steam threshers in Çukurova, while the total number of threshers was around 3,000. Shortly afterwards, steam plows became popular as labor was always scarce. An Egyptian landowner, educated in Germany, ordered the first machine for his large landholding. Others followed his example to raise the total number of steam plows to five in just a year.¹⁷² By 1909, the number of steam plows with two tractors (locomobiles), rose to sixty while there were twelve with one tractor each almost all of which came from England with a few exceptions, imports from the United States.¹⁷³

In 1907, 102 threshers had been imported. British firms fared best as they sold machinery in the price range of 300–1,000 liras with a very small down payment at the time of the order. Another installment would be paid at the time of delivery while the rest of the amount would be collected at harvest times, in installments spread over 3–4 years. The Germans still asked for half the price at the time of order and the second half at delivery. But things changed quickly, as the Germans adapted to local conditions soon enough, especially in terms of steam plows.¹⁷⁴ For instance, the best-known example of the steam plow came from the Rudolf Sack firm in Leipzig. The biggest provider of the machines, especially the German ones, was still the *Anatolische Eisenbahngesellschaft* which worked closely with the *Anatolische Handels & Industrie-Gesellschaft* of Dresden which had a branch in Konya.¹⁷⁵ These firms sent machinery to the branch in Adana for exhibition. In Adana the toughest competitor of the Germans was Kalmis, a Greek subject who represented British firms, and to whom the British owed

Ener, *Adana Tarihine*, p. 189; Soysal, *Die Siedlungs*, pp. 125–127; W.F. Bruck (1917) *Vorläufiger Bericht über Baumwoll-Erzeugung und -Verbrauch der Türkei v. Dr. W.F. Bruck* (Augsburg-Berlin: Liebheit & Thiesen) pp. 79–80.

¹⁷² BAA, HA, Jahreshandelsberichte des Konsulats in Mersina (6707), 53, 30 July 1908, p. 17.

¹⁷³ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1901, p. 16.

¹⁷⁴ BAA, PA, Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei (6725), 1907–1914, 16 July 1907, p. 79.

¹⁷⁵ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), Report to the Standing Exhibition of Machinery Commission in Berlin, 23 April 1912, pp. 129–131. See also Quataert, “Ottoman Reform”, p. 167.

their success. Kalmis had begun his career in this trade only a decade before and had amassed by 1912 a fortune of 2 million marks. He had succeeded in selling almost 130 steam plows, and 200–300 threshers.¹⁷⁶

In addition, the British had a warehouse right in Adana to store every kind of machinery ready for sale in case any of the agencies would place orders. The Germans, however, only sent catalogues. Showing British-made machines to prospective purchasers was a business strategy that allowed a Christian Arab whose family had arrived in the region during the reign of Ibrahim Pasha to become the main machinery merchant in Adana. In fact, the rise of George Lütfullah's family exemplifies the phenomenal growth of commercialization from the 1830s to the beginning of the new century. George Lütfullah earned handsomely from the sale of agricultural machinery, threshers, plows, etc., which had become a very lucrative business by 1909. He had amassed a fortune selling mostly British and some American machinery while the only German-made machinery he sold was kerosene lamps, safety locks, and other small items.¹⁷⁷ Other successful merchants of agricultural machinery were Armenians and Greeks: Ohannes Danelian, Miltiades Nomidis, and Kalmis, representing respectively George Chisnell and Sons in Istanbul, Davidovic in Eskişehir, and Paul Pallador in Izmir.¹⁷⁸

The fierce competition among the British, German and Americans in the sale of machinery became part and parcel of the 20th century expansion of world trade into Çukurova. For example, the British reacted to the growing American success in the sale of reapers by having a firm of theirs, the McCormick firm, establish a permanent agency in Adana at the turn of the century.¹⁷⁹ The rather slow sale of such

¹⁷⁶ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), From the Consulate in Aleppo to the Ministry, 24 April 1912, p. 134. The consul in Aleppo attributed the success of the machinery trade in Çukurova to the area's early integration to the world economy because of the railway and the port of Mersin. According to him, the opportunity that Germans as latecomers had lost to the British in Adana was now open with respect to Aleppo.

¹⁷⁷ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725). From the Consulate in Aleppo to the Ministry, 24 April 1912, p. 134.

¹⁷⁸ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), 31 January 1908, p. 48.

¹⁷⁹ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1900, p. 12. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Townshend at Adana for the Year 1904. In the sale of harvesters, Americans easily surpassed the British as they produced inexpensively for local needs. The Americans captured the leading role in the sale of reapers and threshers as well.

agricultural machines, and the opposition of the laborers who did not want to lose their jobs, seemed to have furthered the competition. In the words of the British Consul there was considerable "hostility on the part of the thousands of laborers who are (were) in the habit of coming from the interior to work on the Cilician plain (the plain of Çukurova) during the harvest".¹⁸⁰ Such intense hostility is quite interesting in a land of labor scarcity. It can only mean that labor availability had stabilized so that there were enough laborers who did not want to lose their livelihood. This is an important development of the 20th century: constancy of labor supply.

The demand for agricultural implements and machinery for cotton factories and mills also rose.¹⁸¹ Most of the implements for the textile industry brought a profit of at least 50% that a middleman in Istanbul and the selling agency shared.¹⁸² Apparently, Çukurovan merchants could not catch up with this important commercial business as successfully as those in Istanbul. Very soon, however, the Germans and Americans changed this situation with the help of the credit mechanism of the Ottoman Bank in favor of the indigenous merchants. Through German help, machinery for a textile factory in Tarsus and materials for the railway reached Çukurova in 1907.¹⁸³

Indeed, German involvement in the agricultural investments of the plain rapidly increased in the first decade of the 20th century.¹⁸⁴ The consulate in Istanbul sent a letter to all agricultural machinery producers in Germany such as those in Weinheim and Baden, with a list of German firms already established in the Ottoman Empire. These firms were to be the intermediaries between the machinery exporters of Germany and the Ottoman authorities, in order to ease the way for the newcomers. The firms of Otto Scheffels, Kaupisch, Singer, and Walter Berghaus could be contacted directly via the Deutsche-Post operating from Istanbul.¹⁸⁵ The manufacturer in Baden acted quickly on this opportunity and asked from the Konya vice-consulate the designs of

¹⁸⁰ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Townshend at Adana for the Year 1904, p. 7.

¹⁸¹ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1901, p. 16.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18.

¹⁸³ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), 1907–1914, p. 79.

¹⁸⁴ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725) 19 April 1907, p. 15.

¹⁸⁵ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), 2 September 1907, p. 26, and 19 April 1907, p. 15.

the machines produced by Kalmis & Cie, to reproduce them for the Çukurova market.¹⁸⁶ They aimed at producing inexpensive and light machinery with easily available spare parts. Such conditions met, German firms calculated that plows, reapers, and threshing machines that could work on animal power would sell easily. They even foresaw that the use of kerosene in any engine-operated machine would turn more profit than those operating on coal, since coal cost much more.¹⁸⁷

Another kind of machinery first imported by Americans, and then partly taken over by the Germans, was the water pump operating on wind power. This pump helped draw water into the canals of irrigation. But soon the American water pumps failed because of miscalculation of the wind power on which these machines operated. Upon this information, the Anatolische Eisenbahngesellschaft re-measured wind power in the several locations where they were planning to sell German-made ones. These kinds of machines were to be produced in Rhineland. However the end-product turned out to be too expensive for the markets in central and southeastern Anatolia. So the Germans switched to other kinds of machinery.¹⁸⁸ Wells also continued to provide much of the water used in the irrigation of gardens and in the cattle business. Animal power cost time and money. A horse or a mule cost about 1–1.5 liras per month. Water pumps, established at the foot of the mountains where wind blew abundantly, were cheaper and more efficient. The Americans had established the first water mill in Konya. The Germans became very interested in the sale of these and one firm, Schlesinger & Co., became the major importer for Çukurova.¹⁸⁹

The Germans attempted to educate the peasantry in the use and repair of agricultural machinery. The center for this education was in Konya. The German workshop connected to the state-run *Sanat Mektebi* (School of Arts and Crafts) would turn, the Germans hoped, the “Turkish (sic) farmer into the representative of German success”.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), 23 July 1907, p. 22. A Greek-Italian firm.

¹⁸⁷ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), 26 July 1907, p. 24.

¹⁸⁸ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), 2 September 1907, p. 27.

¹⁸⁹ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), 13 September 1906, p. 28.

¹⁹⁰ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), 16 July 1909, p. 71.

Indeed, German success in Çukurova was clear by 1909, as a total of 30 different companies served the needs of the region in terms of any conceivable machinery.

The role of the government in mechanization remained limited. Nonetheless, the involvement of the Agriculture Ministry under Abdülhamid II and then of the government of the Committee of Union and Progress attested to the maturation of the agrarian bureaucracy in the empire in the 20th century.¹⁹¹ For example, the government purchased machines for the model farm in Adana. Indeed in 1907, one of two tractors (locomobiles) was purchased for the Adana model farm.¹⁹² More important government action involved the waiver of custom duties for the import of machines needed in cotton gins, mills, and presses for olive oil. The 10-year exemption was renewed in 1907 and indefinitely extended in December 1909.¹⁹³ This was part of the new Committee of Union and Progress government's plan for the promotion of agriculture. The plan included direct purchase and sale of machinery by the government without intermediaries. It also stipulated that the newly established 'agricultural warehouses' all over the Empire should sell machinery to producers at cost and that the Ministry of Agriculture should cover import duty.

Despite difficulties in financing and staffing them, these warehouses and agricultural institutions served to encourage and assist farmers by providing cheap machinery, seed, and cattle for breeding as well as agricultural training. However no such warehouse was opened in Çukurova. Instead, the stores of major merchants who themselves engaged in the machinery trade exhibited the machinery brought in by the government. Obviously, they had no reason to encourage the sale of these machines that competed against their own. The most important machine exhibited by traders was the plow. In Adana, traveling teachers selected from among the Armenian population, instead of permanent agricultural professionals, conducted training in its use.

¹⁹¹ For the limitations of the governmental support for mechanization, see Quartaert, "Ottoman reform", p. 156.

¹⁹² BOA: *İradeler, Orman ve Meadin, 1518 (578)/4*, 24 *Cemaziyelahir* 1325 (16 August 1907). The other machine went to the Halkalı School of Agriculture in Istanbul.

¹⁹³ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), From the Consulate in Istanbul to the Ministry, 1 January 1911, p. 92.

Their knowledge of the usage of the machinery made them substitutes in the absence of training personnel.¹⁹⁴

In short, the central state was unable to take a serious part in the mechanization of agriculture in Çukurova. It was the indigenous merchant community and foreign firms—and a foreign government in the case of Germany—that facilitated mechanization for the ambitious landholders who now had the necessary means.¹⁹⁵

Through such private initiatives, by 1910 steel plows had largely replaced the wooden ones. The total agricultural machinery in the province of Adana excluding Mersin and environs amounted to 60 threshers, 300 steam plows, 1,000 reapers, 200 pumps, and 50 steam and gas engines.¹⁹⁶ Clearly, the landholders of Çukurova had adapted remarkably to modern implements by the end of the first decade of the 20th century. Indeed, "...on a per capita basis, the Adana region imported more than double the amount of agricultural equipment disembarked at Izmir".¹⁹⁷ The large landholders of Çukurova who had begun production for export in the 1870s had, in a quarter of a century, become "the major force behind widespread adoption of modern, often steam-powered, machinery in the Adana area".¹⁹⁸

Estate Formation: The Ceyhan Sub-region

Clearly, then, the increase in the cotton output in the 1870s and 1880s stemmed from the extension of cultivation and some intensification in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region. However, by the 1890s the Adana-Tarsus sub-region had reached its limits for the extension of cultivation. In this sub-region, commercial agriculture had already culminated in large landholdings and a developing cotton industry. Indeed, the last phase in land registrations in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region had begun in the 1890s, and further solidified the large-scale holding patterns of the sub-region. From 1885 onwards, the Land Code was re-applied as the areas already covered were re-registered in the new books (*defters*).¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), From the Consulate in Aleppo to the Ministry, 11 June 1912, p. 151.

¹⁹⁵ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), Excerpt from the newspaper *Deutsche-Levante Zeitung*, 20 August 1911, p. 104.

¹⁹⁶ USCR: Daily Consular and Trade Reports, 29 October 1913.

¹⁹⁷ Quataert, "Ottoman reform", p. 167.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

¹⁹⁹ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim: Arazi Atik Defterleri, Defter No. 3067, 1300-1305/(1885-1890); No. 3076, 1310-1311/(1895-1896); No.*

This time the size of plots was no less than 1,000 dönüms, with frequent cases of more than 10,000 dönüms. Re-registration of tithes reflected the maintenance of large-scale landholding. The tithes were payable by the actual managers of the farms, not by the tribes that had originally received the lands as grants. Surveying the actual status of cultivation once again ended any remaining confusion, and resulted in the registration of some of the largest lands in this sub-region. Around Tarsus alone, a total of 280,000 dönüms were registered.²⁰⁰ Further proof of stability and confidence in commercialization can be observed in the increase in land transactions: In the years 1896–1897, some 61,569 dönüms of cultivated land changed hands. A sizeable number of Muslims, some 6,550, sold their lands while only 650 non-Muslims did so. Foreign involvement in land purchases and sales remained minimal.²⁰¹

All of the changes in crop rotation, seed, and the usage of agricultural machinery, favored large landholders. As a result, the ratio of cotton land to cultivated land increased. All sources indicate that smallholders changed neither the 2-year crop rotation system nor the percentage of their land planted in cotton.²⁰² Large landholders, on the other hand, switched to the more cotton-intensive rotation. On many large farms in the neighborhood of Adana, steam plows were intensively used as more and more landholders took advantage of the modern methods of cultivation.²⁰³ Improved American Upland cotton had been tried while the quality of the *yerli* had improved considerably. Under the circumstances, American cotton produced good results on the larger farms (*çiftlik*s) where it received careful and skilled cultivation.²⁰⁴

3083, 1316–1317/(1901–1902); No. 3098, 1327–1328/(1912–1913). All of these registers (*defters*) were for the Adana-Tarsus sub-region.

²⁰⁰ *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim: Arazi Atik Defterleri, Defter No. 3083, 1316–1317/(1901–1902).*

²⁰¹ BOA: *Yıldız Esas*, 22/140–22–23, Section 36, 1314/(1896–1897). The transactions took place among 7,200 people at a total value of 101,685. The value of one dönüm amounted to 583 liras.

²⁰² AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled “Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation”, Vol. 107, May 1908; USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 97, 20 February 1918; and Bruck, *Baumwoll-Erzeugung*, p. 58.

²⁰³ USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 97, February 1918, pp. 11–12.

²⁰⁴ AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled “Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation”, Vol. 107, May 1908, pp. 11–12. The imperial credit system by means of the Agricultural Bank also favored the rich, as it did not give sufficient access to the smallholders. Similarly, the Deutsche Bank,

According to one estimate, the large holdings that all together covered one-third of the area under cotton averaged between 1,000 and 5,000 hectares. In the remaining two-thirds of the cotton-cultivated area, medium-size holdings comprised the largest group. The medium-size averaged around 500 hectares, which was quite large in comparison to the holdings in the rest of Anatolia. In addition, there were numerous smaller holdings which averaged around 100 hectares. Holders with more than 100 hectares usually possessed their own machinery. Those with 50 or so hectares often shared a pool of agricultural machinery, established with the help of the German enterprises in Çukurova.²⁰⁵

The largest estates of Çukurova were in the Ceyhan sub-region, direct outcomes of the later development of this area. The Hamidian Plain at the heart of this sub-region extended approximately from Misis to Sis in the north. Watered by the Ceyhan River, it had the local reputation of being even more fertile than the Adana-Tarsus sub-region. At the end of the period under consideration, however, the Hamidian Plain did not have adequate means of communication, with the roads remaining inferior. But in the west of the Hamidian Plain, an area of several hundred square miles was totally adapted for agriculture.²⁰⁶ These lands near the small town of Hamidiye became some of the most productive tracts of Çukurova after the opening up of the area to cotton cultivation in the last quarter of the 19th century. The northern part remained rather marshy and little cultivated even with the new reclamations. In the southern part lay the private estate of Sultan Abdülhamid II, one of the largest landholdings in the area, which in 1908 comprised an area of 45,000 dönüms (4,500 hectares). Laborers on this estate mostly consisted of Circassians.²⁰⁷ The history of this estate went back to 1871 when a group of Circassians from Sis settled there and a new unit akin to a village was established for them. A director appointed from Istanbul governed this artificial adminis-

a major credit provider, helped only those with medium and large-scale holdings. Armenian and Greek holders benefited most from the Deutsche Bank BAA, PA, *Die wirtschaftliche Auskunftstelle der deutsch-türkischen Vereinigung* (6734), 31 August 1916, pp. 251–252.

²⁰⁵ Bruck, *Baumwoll-Erzeugung*, pp. 15–16.

²⁰⁶ USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 97, February 1918, p. 10.

²⁰⁷ AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled “Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation”, Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 13.

trative unit called Anavarza.²⁰⁸ By 1890, the entire area was cultivated with both wheat and cotton, and was the personal possession of the Sultan.

Germans aimed to increase the production of cotton by establishing an estate through the Deutsche-Levantinische Baumwoll-Gesellschaft.²⁰⁹ The purpose of the company, partnered by the Deutsche Bank and the Deutsche-Levante Line, was to develop cotton production in Izmir, Aleppo, and, most importantly, in Çukurova. As mentioned above, the Deutsche-Levantinische Baumwoll-Gesellschaft established mechanized farms, provided low-interest credit to cotton farmers, conducted training courses on cotton production for the villagers, and tried to increase the quality of cotton. As we have seen however, the German-Levantine Cotton Company first required the aid of the local entrepreneurs the Mavromatis Bank, both for banking services, and for purchasing cotton. After the company thus penetrated into Çukurova through links with important industrialists in Adana, Mersin and Tarsus, it began to plan leasing a farm of 1,000 hectares near Osmaniye.²¹⁰ The planning of the so-called 'Musterfarm' continued until 1913 as the search for suitable land took a certain amount of time. By 1913, as the Ottoman Empire no longer permitted the sale of land to foreigners, a 'Turkish' landowner was needed.²¹¹ The 4,035 dönüms that were finally chosen belonged to the Sursok family. Two neighboring farms belonging to Alaybeyzade Mahmud (5,000 dönüms) and Boghos Khoubesserian (2,001 dönüms) were also leased for cash to Selim Butrus, the German representative, member of another migrant family of Christian Arab background. The establishment of the 'musterfarm' is thus a telling example of three very important mechanisms of change in the region's agrarian regime. By the 20th century, all large farms, or rather estates, were established in the Ceyhan sub-region. Muslims

²⁰⁸ BOA: Şura-yı Devlet, 2115/43, 20 Cemaziyelahir 1288 (6 September 1871).

²⁰⁹ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), 13 July 1909, pp. 70–71.

²¹⁰ After purchase, the cotton went directly to Hamburg to be processed in a big ginnery. The same factory had established highly sophisticated workshops for pressing, cleaning, and loading in Adana. In these workshops, cotton that used to be packaged by hand in small amounts was packed in 200 kilogram packages ready for export. In order to speed up export, another firm, Anatolische Baumwoll-Dampfpresse-Gesellschaft had also been established. BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), Special Report on the Anatolische Baumwoll-Dampfpresse-Gesellschaft, 1 July 1909–30 June 1910, 26 September 1910, p. 81.

²¹¹ BAA, PA, *Teil I*, R 901/2268, From Hoffmann (Istanbul) to German Consul-General Schroeder (Beirut), Special Report on the Deutsch-Levantinische Baumgesellschaft, 11 June 1913.

and Christians, former nomads (Alaybeyzade Mahmud), immigrants (Butrus and Sursock) and indigenous Armenians (Khoubesserian), could own them. Finally, whenever these people desired, foreign capital could come into play. If necessary, these local players were adept at thwarting the land laws of the central state. The Deutsche-Levantinische Baumwoll-Gesellschaft also financed cotton production in similar ways at some holdings in the Adana-Tarsus sub-region.²¹²

The Company of the Imperial Farms of Çukurova (*La Société des Fermes Imperiales de Tchoucourova*), established in 1912, envisioned one of the largest estate projects in Çukurova, the only foreign agricultural enterprise of its size ever attempted. Situated around the village of Mercimek in the Ceyhan sub-region, to the north of the Anavarza Çiftlik, the holding was to include all of the Ceyhan sub-region and some of Area II, from Adana toward Karataş. On each plot of 5,000 hectares, the French planned to employ 500 of the more progressive families from around the region. The immigrants, scattered in the 34 villages of the area and Arab peasants, *fellahs*, in the Arab villages, would provide the labor. The French calculated a profit of 22.5% on the engaged capital of 12 million francs, for 40,000 hectares.²¹³ After the first signing, the area was to be enlarged to 72,000 hectares by including southern Çukurova all the way through Iskenderun and the Gulf area; the holding would thus be situated along the line of the Baghdad Railway.²¹⁴ But the Ottomans never honored the contract for fear of German objection.

It would indeed have been a profitable endeavor; the price of an acre had gone up to 5 sterling in 1912 while it was less than 1 sterling in 1908. But in these years, it did not seem possible for European colonization to take place. Attempts to introduce foreign labor had also been unsuccessful, the presence of foreigners being usually resented by the native population.²¹⁵

²¹² BAA, PA, *Teil I*, R 901/2268, From Hoffmann (Istanbul) to German Consul-General Schroeder (Beirut), Special Report on the Deutsch-Levantinische Baumgesellschaft, 11 June 1913; and AP: Report by Wydham Dunstan entitled "Report on Agriculture in Asia Minor with Special Reference to Cotton Cultivation", Vol. 107, May 1908, p. 5.

²¹³ Jacque Thobie, "Les Intérêts", pp. 77–83.

²¹⁴ AMAE: *Correspondance Politique et Commerciale*, 1897–1918, Affaires Commerciales avec la France, "Les Intérêts Financiers de la France dans l'Empire Ottoman", July 1919, p. 33.

²¹⁵ BAA, PA, *Die wirtschaftliche Auskunftstelle der deutsch-türkischen Vereinigung* (6733), February 1915, pp. 50–51. Also see Quataert, "The age of reforms", p. 870.

The end result was a differential geography²¹⁶ of production modes such as estate management, and share-cropping. Çukurova up until World War I remained a land of shared hegemony. It went through its own peripheralization with its center in Mersin, and multiple peripheries which consisted of smaller plains, and differentiated economic processes appeared. The plains of Çukurova thus ended up in distinct zones ranging from the mono-culture of cotton to the agricultural capitalism of grain production to nomadic mountain zones.

Table 6. Cotton production of Çukurova

Year		Amount (Bales)	(Tons)
1871		60,000	
1872		80,000	
1873			5,600
1874		30,000	
1875			2,310
1876		80,000	
1879			3,500
1894		45,000	
1898			5,000
1900		50,000	
1901		50,000	
1903	1	40,000	
1904	1	45,500	
1905	1	50,600	
1906	1	56,000	
1907	1	64,000	
1908	1,2	75,000	
1918	3	110,000	

¹ The figures between 1900 and 1908 are from Quataert, "Ottoman Reform", p. 291. Production figures are converted at the rate of 440 lb./bale.

² AP, 1909, Vol. 98, pp. 16-17 gives the production amount of 1908 as 62,000 bales. The difference most probably stems from the conversion rate used by Quataert, *Ibid.*

³ USNA, Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 97, 20 February 1918.

²¹⁶ Fernand Braudel (1992) *The Perspective of the World* (Berkeley: University of California Press) p. 47. The term belongs to Braudel.

Industrial Production

Production had developed so impressively in the last quarter of the 19th century that many observers in the 1910s believed “The area around Adana is to be made another Egypt. Already it is producing considerable quantities of cotton for export beside supporting a local cotton manufacturing industry which is rapidly expanding”.²¹⁷

Capital accumulation in cotton production also helped the development of industry in the 1870s. The industrial development of Çukurova was just as remarkable as the agricultural development, if not more. Indeed, industrial output quickly expanded with the increase in agricultural production in the age of European industrial hegemony.²¹⁸ By the turn of the century, Çukurova constituted one of the four regions of the Ottoman Empire in which industrial activity boomed.²¹⁹

It was private entrepreneurs that had accumulated their wealth in cotton production and trade that led this industrial development of Çukurova. These enthusiastic entrepreneurs ready to invest in industry tried to establish factories in diverse sectors. One of the first factories established in Adana produced bricks. The factory, which was located near Camus Lake, used the soil of the surrounding lands. It was a successful endeavor that supported the construction business in the growing urban sites of Çukurova.²²⁰ Local authorities also attempted to invest in industry. In the 1870s, the governor Mehmed Takiyeddin asked the state to establish a sugar factory. His attempt failed despite the considerable effort he spent and the sugar industry did not develop in Çukurova until the 20th century.²²¹

²¹⁷ *Levant Trade Review*, 1/1 (June 1911).

²¹⁸ The story of industrial development in Çukurova is well known. The most recent and most comprehensive work on the region's textile industry belongs to Quataert who argued against the assumption that in the 19th century the Ottoman realm was de-industrialized: *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, 1993) pp. 1–43. A contrary argument, analyzing the decline of Ottoman industrial activity can be found in Şevket Pamuk, who also pointed to the industrial development of Çukurova as he described it an exceptional case in the 19th century. See his *Osmanlı Ekonomisinde Bağımlılık ve Büyüme, 1820–1913* (Istanbul, 1994) pp. 124–151.

²¹⁹ Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, p. 1.

²²⁰ BOA: Şura-yı Devlet, 2114/42, 11 Rebiulahir 1287 (11 June 1870).

²²¹ In 1870, sugar cane and beets were already produced in the area, especially in the environs of Adana and Tarsus. Mehmed Takiyeddin asked for an investigation to look into the feasibility of a sugar factory. The General Director of Factories, Rüstem Bey, who conducted the investigation, refused the proposal on the grounds that the

Obviously, the most important industrial sector that developed in Çukurova in the 19th century, was that of textiles.²²² In fact, one of the first examples of any industrial establishment in Adana was the ginnery of Ekercioğlu Hoca Neşet who secured permission to run a ginnery from the Ministry of Public Works in 1864. For each boiler that such ginning machinery necessitated, there was a one-time tax of 11 gold liras.²²³ The management of the factory had to abide by the Ministry's Regulations on Factories, as the Ministry stipulated. Other than regulating industrial operations, the state neither established industrial enterprises nor provided credit. The governor at the time, Ali Pasha, helped the entrepreneur and supervised the operation of the factory to make sure that it did not cause any harm to its surroundings.²²⁴

British and American gins also operated in Adana, Tarsus, and Mersin in the 1870s. Each cleaned respectively 10 tons, 13 tons, and 4 tons in 1871.²²⁵ By the early 1870s, the number of cotton ginning establishments in Adana and Mersin had increased. They cleaned about 20 tons of cotton for a price of 1 kuruş per *oke* (2.8 pounds).²²⁶ In 1873, another one in Tarsus joined those in Adana and Mersin in the growing numbers of ginneries. The number of handlooms in Adana in these years was around 1,000.²²⁷

In 1875, the number of handlooms began to decrease as the once numerous looms of Adana were now only used for weaving home consumption stuffs. However, cotton gins increased proportionately

factory would prove too expensive as he found the canes and beets were not of high enough quality. The governor then considered a factory for producing a syrup akin to molasses (*pekmez*) and convinced the Ministry of Public Works to bring a foreign expert to investigate the productivity of the cane. BOA: *Şura-yı Devlet*, 2114/19, 21 Muharrem 1287 (23 April 1870). The first sugar factory was established in 1900. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1901, p. 16.

²²² For the development of textile industry, see also Eldem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İktisadi Şartları*, pp. 74–75; and Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, pp. 43–44.

²²³ BOA: *Cevdet Nafia*, 39, *Receb* 1281 (November 1864).

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ AP: General Report, by Consul Skene, of the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, Province of Adana in the Year 1871, p. 284.

²²⁶ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, Province of Adana for the Year 1872, p. 587.

²²⁷ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Public Works of North Syria, Province of Adana for the Year 1873, p. 968.

with the production of cotton. Almost 200 gins in the area operated utilizing the best available methods from the United States and Britain. Hydraulic presses for cotton also increased in 1875; 24 pressed only cotton, in addition to another 28 presses for both sesame and cotton seeds.²²⁸

Textile enterprises gained momentum in the last years of the 1880s. Mavromatis made large investments in the textile industry. He established a cotton spinning mill at Tarsus where he already owned a cotton cleaning factory of 60 gins.²²⁹ The new spinnery had 2,700 spindles but could be enlarged to hold twice this number. As the first of its kind in the area, this spinnery was the largest industrial enterprise at the end of the 1880s. No rival enterprise was established for another decade or so. All of the machinery was imported from Britain. The mill worked so satisfactorily that within a year it sold yarn worth 12,500 sterling to the province and other ports of the Empire.²³⁰ Tripani and his sons also established a spinning mill in Adana that worked on steam power and would thus compete with the Mavromatis workshop in Tarsus.²³¹

By the end of the 19th century, 19 hydraulic presses, 45 oil presses and 33 tanneries served the needs of the area. Two steam flour mills in Adana produced 490,000 *okes* (629 tons) of flour.²³² Clearly, all kinds of industrial production showed a steady growth, but the most flourishing ones were cotton cleaning, ginning and spinning.²³³ In 1892, an important cotton spinning mill in Mersin worked approximately 2,000 tons annually, mostly for local markets. The remainder was expedited through Silifke and Anamur to Antalya and the interior, Konya and Karaman. In this manufacture alone, 250 women and 300 children worked. Fifteen gineries separated the cotton.²³⁴ More cotton mills

²²⁸ AP: Report by Consul Skene on the Trade, Navigation, Agriculture, Manufactures, Public Works, and Revenues of the Provinces of Aleppo, Adana, and the Desert, in the Year 1875, p. 997.

²²⁹ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1888, p. 2.

AP: Report of Vice-Consul Christmann at Adana for the Year 1889, pp. 9–11.

AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale, Tarsous, 1875–1897*, Tome 3. Vice-Consulat à Tarsous, Mersine et Adana, 15 June 1896, pp. 42–43. Tripani mill is also mentioned in Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, p. 43.

²³² AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale*, No. 109, Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et des Colonies. "Situation commerciale de Mersina en 1892", pp. 7–8. Signed by Vice-Consul M. Geofroy.

²³³ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1900, p. 11.

²³⁴ AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale*, No. 109, Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et des Colonies, "Situation commerciale de Mersina en 1892", pp. 7–8. Signed by Vice-Consul M. Geofroy.

had been established in Adana and Tarsus by 1896, mostly by Greeks. At the same time, Armenians began to take up cotton weaving, because of funds they received from European charities money they received.²³⁵ The factories that cleaned cotton and spun cotton yarn by steam and hydraulic power also did well; they had no problem of labor as they paid more than any other sector.²³⁶

However, private capital, not state initiatives, played the greater role in the development of these establishments. Such private capital became powerful enough to manipulate even foreign capital. Recent migrants and entrepreneurs like Mavromatis established and managed many of the ginning, pressing, spinning and weaving establishments. For example, in 1906, Simonoglu Aristidis, who used to be a local official (*mutasarrıf*), established one of the largest textile industries in Adana, including both a yarn and clothing factory in the vicinity of the railway station. Land measuring 56 dönüms, originally categorized as state land (*miri*), became private property as Aristidis Efendi purchased it for 50,000 liras. This establishment, which included many warehouses as well, turned great profits. The Republican regime later took over and named it the National Textile Factory (*Milli Mensucat Fabrikası*). The factory, now empty, still stands today.²³⁷

In 1907, a ginnery was established in the same vicinity. The owners Kosti Tripani, a Greek subject and Kaliopi, the Greek wife of Kara Yakub, had leased the land of the ginnery to a German national, George Muis. The total area was 18,600 square meters and the part turned over to Muis covered 700 square meters. A pressing station and a baling station had been erected next to the ginnery. The complex was extended to include two sales offices and space for the incoming cotton carriers. Muis obtained building permits for his establishment without a problem, paying the appropriate taxes.²³⁸ After Tripani, Simonoglu, and Mavromatis, the fourth largest industrial investor in the region was a Muslim, by the name of Rasim Bey.²³⁹ Strong entrepreneurs like the Mavromatis and others such as Rasim Dükur in Tarsus and

AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Years 1895–1896, p. 10.

²³⁵ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1899, p. 12.

BOA: *İradeler, Ticaret ve Nafia*, 466/2332–2, 9 Şevval 1324 (26 November 1906).

Also see Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, p. 43.

²³⁸ BOA: *İradeler, Ticaret ve Nafia*, 3 Cemaziyelahir 1325 (14 July 1907).

²³⁹ BAA, PA, Teil I R 901/2269, *Anatolische Baumwoll-Dampfpresse-Gesellschaft* Annual Business report for the years 1907–1908, 15 September 1908.

Bağdadizade in Adana also worked with foreign capitalists and manipulated companies like the Deutsche-Levantine Baumwolle-Gesellschaft to the benefit of their own cotton industries.²⁴⁰ By 1908, there were fourteen ginning factories in Adana with 300 gins, 3 in Tarsus with 110 gins, 2 in Mersin with 25 gins, 2 in Hamidiye with 30 gins and one in Yenice with 15 gins; 70 additional gins were scattered all over the villages of the region.²⁴¹

In the meantime, by 1908, cotton pressed in Adana was receiving special shipping rates. Any house that guaranteed the export from Adana to Mersin of 1,500 tons of pressed cotton received a rebate on raw cotton carried to them along the railway for pressing. Thus cotton carried raw from Tarsus to a press in Adana received a rebate of 81% and cotton from Yenice (halfway) a rebate of 69% on the rates from Adana. But there was no rebate on the rate for the pressed cotton from Adana to Mersin. The German press in Adana thus benefited considerably, as it was the only one working in this town at the time. Its smaller bales gave it a further advantage in shipping cotton by the Deutsche-Levant Line.²⁴²

The railway management also encouraged cotton pressing. Indeed, German enterprises worked closely with and benefited greatly from the collaboration between rail management, industry and maritime lines as they established Anatolische Baumwoll-Dampfpresse-Gesellschaft.²⁴³ The huge establishment did not work at full capacity in the first 2 years, pressing in 1908/1909 only 3,500 tons into 14,000 bales, and in 1909/1910, 2,800 tons into 11,000 bales. The Deutsche-Levantine-Baumwoll-Gesellschaft sacrificed its own business in Çukurova to the new establishment (Anatolische Baumwoll-Dampfpresse-Gesell-

²⁴⁰ Hilmar Kaiser argues that such locals had such a hold over the cotton produce that they raised cotton prices to the level of Liverpool prices with which foreign purchasers had to contend. See his "Local Entrepreneurs".

²⁴¹ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 12. By 1913, these numbers had gone up considerably: 21 factories and 150 gins in Adana, 5 factories and 150 gins in Tarsus, 4 factories and 50 gins in Mersin, 2 factories and 40 gins in Hamidiye, and 20 gins in Yenice. USCR: Daily Consular and Trade Reports, No. 5374, 1913, p. 28.

²⁴² AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 9.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

schaft)and thus saved them from losing money.²⁴⁴ The press included a baling mill. The output of the press amounted to 6,000 bales a year all of which was sent to Dresden and Chemnitz.²⁴⁵

By 1908, Çukurova had many spinning and weaving facilities. In 1907, a new spinning and weaving factory had been established in Tarsus to work with steam. Most of the machinery for this factory, which cost 80,000 sterling, came from Britain. The plant had a capacity of 20,000 spindles and 400 weaving looms.²⁴⁶ A second spinning and weaving factory in Tarsus started operating in 1908 with 22,000 spindles and 1,400 looms and 1,500 workers. The factory was lighted electrically, a great novelty at that time and the whole enterprise cost 60,000 sterling. The factory brought in many Armenian workers from the mountainous Haçin of Çukurova and others from Antep and Zeyton for whom residences were built.²⁴⁷ Two spinning factories in Adana also worked successfully. One of them had 10,000 spindles with 550 employees; the average output in 12 hours stood at 800–1,000 bundles of 10 lbs each. One-third of this output went to the weaving department of the factory where 180 looms produced 250–280 pieces, each 40 yards long and 35 inches wide. This factory also had electric lights and worked 24-hour days. Another factory in Adana had 3,000 spindles and raised its capacity to 5,000 spindles in 1909. In the latter half of 1913, these four factories produced 1,053,000 lbs of yarn which was about one-third of the total output of all mills in the region.²⁴⁸

The 20th century also brought the development of other industries in Çukurova. It took a long time, but a sugar industry, in preparation ever since the 1870s, was finally established. Indeed by 1901, sugar cane and beet culture had developed enough for several sugar factories to work efficiently.²⁴⁹ Grinding mills also developed. By 1908, there were

²⁴⁴ BAA, PA, *Einfuhr landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen in die Türkei* (6725), Special Report on the Anatolische Baumwoll-Dampfpresse-Gesellschaft, 1 July 1909–30 June 1910, 26 September 1910, p. 80.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

²⁴⁶ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Loiso at Adana for the Year 1907, p. 20.

²⁴⁷ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 11.

²⁴⁸ USCR: Daily Consular and Trade Reports, 30 September 1915, p. 8. Also see Eldem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İktisadi Şartları*, p. 74.

²⁴⁹ The initial attempts at establishing this industry in the 1870s is discussed above, pp. 257–258. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1901, p. 16.

26 in Adana, 16 in Tarsus, and 4 in Mersin; they now used cylinders, a more advanced technological item. A French firm had just constructed an iron bridge for the transportation of iron from the Anamur mine directly to the Mersin port.²⁵⁰ Another flourishing industry had to do with development in the construction sector, as urbanites now lived in better houses. In Mersin, a factory that worked producing roofing tiles had been established in 1903 for which most of the machinery was imported from Britain and Germany.²⁵¹ Mersin had a soap factory, also established with imported machinery.²⁵²

Industrial output continued to exhibit impressive growth throughout the 20th century. Indeed, the local spinning mills generally consumed 10% of the total cotton output of the province.²⁵³ These developments altered the basic structure of the economy of Çukurova, no longer dominated by subsistence agriculture and the nomadic way of life.

²⁵⁰ BAA, HA, *Jahreshandelsberichte des Konsulats in Mersina* (6707), 53, 30 July 1908, p. 18.

²⁵¹ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Townshend at Adana for the Year 1903, p. 17.

²⁵² AMAE: *Correspondance Commerciale*, No. 109, Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et des Colonies, "Situation commerciale de Mersina en 1892", pp. 7–8. Signed by Vice-Consul M. Geofroy.

²⁵³ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Loiso at Adana for the Year 1907, p. 20.

CONCLUSION

Settling nomads, Armenians, many other migrants such as Arabs, and Greeks, turned this difficult geography of mountains, swamps and marshes into a region of wealth and power in the last few decades of the Ottoman Empire. Their keen awareness of the potentials of this landscape and their ties to it developed through the process of creating a semi-autonomous regional economy, which did not run against developing important and necessary ties to the Ottoman imperial center. On the contrary, centralization policies of the modernizing Empire helped shape this autonomous fashioning as much as the demands of the world economy did. The making of Çukurova entailed very complex political and economic processes that worked not against or despite one another, but together; this was not simply part of the story of the peripheralization of the Ottoman Empire by the European center. If anything it became detached from the Ottoman economy and all by itself, turned into a periphery of the world economy, this status constantly being realigned against various forces of the late 19th-early 20th century world economy. At the same time, this confrontation with the world economy strengthened and shaped the region's relative autonomy vis-à-vis the Ottoman center. In turn, this autonomy was crucial in facilitating investment and accumulation which owed much to close links, cooperation, and various credit and trade relations, accommodated by the central reforms and based primarily and initially on trust fed by newly founded social networks. What shaped this autonomy in Çukurova, or rather what is special about Çukurova, was that this accumulation found its way back to investment in land.

Once Çukurova producers began to invest in the agriculture of an exportable crop on a large scale, the rate of growth stunned the consular agents: "Any money saved or gained is at once invested in land".¹ As a result, by the end of the 19th century, Çukurova had become one of the most productive areas of the Empire, both in cotton cultivation and the textile industry. The rise in agricultural and industrial production by the 1910s pointed to the exceptionally speedy formation of a

AP: Report by Acting Vice-Consul on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 3. The quotation is from the Acting Vice-Consul, p. 11.

regional economy. Çukurova had become the greatest cotton-producing region of the Empire, with 100,000 bales of short-staple cotton in addition to lesser amounts of the long-staple kinds.² The total area under cotton now amounted to 100,000 hectares, with around 30,000 hectares as estate-like *çiftlik*s,³ and the highest number of landholdings larger than 50 dönüms (5 hectares) in the Empire.⁴ The average size of these large landholdings was five times the overall Anatolian average. In addition, the development of the textile industry in Çukurova during the two decades prior to World War I was by no means minor. The textile mills of only Tarsus and Adana “contained an aggregate 42,000 spindles that used 10,000 bales of cotton.”⁵ In terms of textile production, Çukurova was also a leading Ottoman region.

Situating this radical transformation of Çukurova between the central and the global is not achieved, however, simply by studying local dynamics in an effort to understand how these hindered or helped integration either to the Ottoman center or the world capitalist system. After all, measuring local dynamics in the various processes of integration to the world economy only adds to the earlier crude model of economic domination between center and periphery. It does not move us much further than conceptualizing the Ottoman Empire as a whole within the world economy and its hierarchical categorization. In the same vein, we neither move toward a thorough understanding of the locals themselves nor can we completely historicize our understanding of the world economy as a static institution.⁶

² USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 97, 20 February 1918, p. 7.

³ Bruck, *Baumwoll-Erzeugung*, p. 14. Not all *çiftlik*s were registered by one person, fragmentation was frequent. *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Kuyud-ı Kadim: Arazi Atık Defterleri*. Registers No. 3067, 1300–1305/(1885–1890) and No. 3083, 1316–1317/(1901–1902).

⁴ T.C. *Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, Osmanlı Dönemi Tarım İstatistikleri*. The 1909 figures, p. 28. The largest landholding in this category is 50 dönüms.

⁵ Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, p. 44.

⁶ The challenge is in Huri İslamoğlu (1987) “Oriental despotism in world system perspective” in: Huri İslamoğlu-Inan (Ed.), *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy (Cambridge: Cambridge UP [Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme])* pp. 1–26. The tone of the discussion is set in the now-classic Immanuel Wallerstein, Hale Decdeli and Reşat Kasaba (1987) “The incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the world economy” in the same volume. For other sophisticated approaches to the study of the peripheralization of the Ottoman Empire see Çağlar Keyder (Ed.), “Ottoman Empire: Nineteenth century Transformations”, *Review, Special Issue*, XI/2 (1988) 120; Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*.

On the other hand, studying Çukurova's own dynamics through the process of regional formation can help us in realigning the extent and scope of the imperial center's transforming mechanisms and power in creating modern statehood in the provinces. For assessing a region beyond provincial manifestations of state presence is the only way to capture economic prosperity and regional consciousness beyond the inscriptions of the imperial project. Similarly, not focusing singularly on a provincial capital or a port-city spatially mediates regional analysis between central and global presences. As much as the regional history of Çukurova is not readily comprehensible through the workings of world trade in the port-city, it is also meaningless if viewed only in the context of a provincial capital emerging out of Ottoman reforms. The direction of regional analysis however does provide answers in a reverse way, that is to say, Çukurova's history can help us making sense of Ottoman reforms.

In this sense, the discussion of property relations in Çukurova is particularly warranted for a series of reasons. Investment in land at unprecedented levels and holding sizes in Çukurova came at a time when the Ottoman state codified private holdings; this conjuncture necessitates an evaluation of Ottoman agrarian history.⁷ The nature and the impact of the Land Code has occupied a large part of the discussions on Ottoman agrarian history, producing a variety of opinions. One argument is that the primary concern of the Code was the elimination of local notables in the age of re-centralization after the Tanzimat. According to another argument, the Code recognized private property rights for the first time in Ottoman agrarian history. The debate has also revolved around the issue of the legal basis of the emergence of large estates (the *çiftlik* debate) which was an anomaly in terms of the Anatolian landholding patterns.

Yet this was also the time when settlement in Anatolia reached ever higher rates, not unlike large settlement and population movements elsewhere in the world, especially along the rivers. If anything, the nineteenth century codifications can be seen as part of the 'great

⁷ For a summary of the development of the debate, see Meltem Toksöz, "Osmanlı'da Toprak and Tarım: Çağlar Keyder ve Faruk Tabak'tan Osmanlı'da Toprak Mülkiyeti ve Ticari Tarım Üzerine" (Review Article of the book by Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (Eds.), *Osmanlı'da Toprak Mülkiyeti ve Ticari Tarım* (Istanbul, 1998) in *Cumhuriyet Kitap*, 463 (31 December 1998). See Quataert, for his summary of the debate, in his "The age of reforms", pp. 856–861. One of the most discussed contributions is from Huri İslamoğlu, see her "Property as a contested domain".

transformation' as one of multiple state formations that signaled the reordering of social realities".⁸ Islamoğlu herself indicates that the establishment of property rights in the aftermath of 1858 meant entitlements that were negotiated among different power groups, including the state. Furthermore, the Code of 1858 stood as only one such signal that the 'social realities' in Çukurova resulted in the formation of large landholdings. This outcome alone shows that we must re-evaluate our understanding of Ottoman agrarian history from the point of the imperial political power. From Gerber who placed central liberal policies in the core of rural life, to Islamoğlu who put the re-ordering of multiple state formations in the transformation to modernity in the Ottoman Empire, any realignment of property relations is treated as peripheral to the imperial center. But the actual integration of production processes to the codifications of the imperial state showed such great differentiation among different regions of the Empire that it neither fits into a formula of empire-wide peripheralization nor can it be captured in re-orderings of the state, however much they may have been negotiated. Instead, settled peasants and farmers as well as nomads and migrants that relocated throughout the century "changed and shaped the lands and areas that they farmed and settled in rather particular and significant ways".⁹ Therefore, the 1858 codification cannot be treated as the only medium of property formation either in Çukurova or anywhere else in Anatolia. What mattered most was the struggle of the farmers and landholders in establishing their rights: "Before the institutional *personae* framing property relations stand the individual parties to the dispute".¹⁰ In this struggle, a multitude of legal relations and legal categories appear. In Çukurova, different registrations of landholdings spread over the last two decades of the 19th century and the largest estates appeared in the newly reclaimed Ceyhan sub-region. Throughout the second half of the 19th century Çukurova competed with Izmir and Aydın, in terms of the accumula-

⁸ Huri Islamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain", p. 14.

⁹ Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, "Eleni Hatun'un Zeytin Bahçeleri: 19. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da mülkiyet hakları nasıl inşa edildi?" *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, 4 (2006) 123. The particularities in Ottoman agrarian history before the 19th century must not be overlooked either. See Suraiya Faroqhi (1991) "Wealth and power in the Land of Olives: The economic and political activities of Müridoğlu Hacı Mehmed Ağa, Notable of Edremit (died in or before 1823)" in: Keyder and Tabak (Eds.), *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East* (Albany: SUNY Press) pp. 77-96.

¹⁰ Mundly and Smith, *Governing Property*, p. 2.

tion of capital in the former, and the volume and relations of production in the latter. Clearly, in Aydın agricultural capital accumulation was high, in fact overall cultivation per hectare brought almost twice as much income as cotton did in Çukurova.¹¹ The first difference to note is in the diversity of crops in Aydın bringing this commercial success as opposed to a single crop in Çukurova. The production processes of the two areas also greatly differed: Aydın enjoyed skilled labor while Çukurova continuously struggled with lack of labor and unskilled seasonal laborers. Relatedly and yet most importantly, Aydın farms remained much smaller as estate formation took place only sporadically.¹² It is well known that in the mid-19th century, the British in particular acquired large tracts of landholdings, but the extent of their success in cotton estates is still highly debated.¹³ The development of cotton mono-culture in the province awaited the later Republican years when capitalist agriculture in Söke, a major district of Aydın, reached the Çukurovan levels of the 1950s. In addition, there were other West Anatolian areas that enjoyed and profited from commercial agriculture, such as Muğla. In fact, Muğla appears to have owed its large landholdings to the 1858 Land Code. One of the largest estates there even had Egyptian involvement; Abbas Hilmi Paşa established the farm later called Dalaman Çiftliği through not only the capital he brought but also the labor. However, Muğla never turned into a region in the way Çukurova did, as no particular crop attracted export trade and whatever accumulation was possible remained in agriculture.¹⁴

Comparison of cotton production levels in the rest of Anatolia and northern Syria can easily substantiate the preeminence of Çukurova in cotton agriculture. As of the 1890s, Çukurova clearly became the leading region; Izmir followed Çukurova as the second producer and Aleppo came in only third. At the end of our period here, in 1909, Çukurova produced 110,000 bales while Izmir produced 30,000 and Aleppo's production could not surpass 10,000 bales. Actually, part of Çukurova's gain was Aleppo's loss; prior to the 1890s Aleppo had

Halis Akder (2008) "Yirminci Yüzyılın Başında Çukurova'da Pamuk Ekmenin Maliyeti" in: Onur Yıldırım (Ed.), *Osmanlı'nın Peşinde Bir Yaşam* (Istanbul: İmge Kitabevi) p. 252.

¹² Nüket A. Sirman (1988) *Peasants and Family Farms: The Position of Households in Cotton Production in a Village of Western Turkey* (London: University of London).

¹³ Orhan Kurmuş (1982) *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi* (Ankara: Savaş Yayınları).

¹⁴ Sevgi Aktüre (1993) "19. Yüzyılda Muğla" in İlhan Tekeli (Ed.), *Tarih İçinde Muğla* (Ankara: ODTÜ Mimarlık Fakültesi Yayını) 34-113.

produced around 25,000 bales but as landholding patterns changed there, cultivating cotton lost profitability for the farmers.¹⁵

From the days of Ibrahim Pasha onwards, the plain welcomed many different people from all sorts of classes, including migrant labor. The attempts of Ibrahim Pasha, who followed the example of his father in the land of cotton, Egypt, served as the basis of commercial cotton production. Between 1840 and 1865, however, nomadism again prevailed in Çukurova and the Tanzimat reforms did not penetrate into the area until the 1860s. The 1865 Forced Settlement project following the cotton famine triggered by the American Civil War comprised the most important state action resulting in a greater participation of the plain in world trade. But forcibly settling the tribes without enabling them to make a living other than in cotton production formed only the first step in the transformation of the region. The impact of the administrative reforms between 1839 and 1900 on the organization of the political and commercial network in Çukurova mostly derived from the legal framework that facilitated the region's opening up to the world beyond and provided for local government mechanisms for the inhabitants of the port-city in particular, to carry out trade in a predictable environment.

Merchants and now-settled nomads, despite the limitations of labor scarcities, gained control over the land and the production process. From the 19th century onwards, Çukurova witnessed growing commercialization of the agricultural sector and became involved in international trade of commodities. Mersin became the location of accumulation. A valuable cash crop produced in Çukurova reached further afield via this port-town which had not even existed before the 1830s. The particularities of this exchange very much depended on the migrant population of Mersin. The emergence of this eastern Mediterranean port-town set the stage, first, for infrastructural changes, second, for the establishment of a commercial network with its center at Mersin, and finally, for the development of a new agrarian system in the plain. As inexpensive and efficient transportation, the Adana-Mersin railway connected the plain to the port; foreign interest in the cotton trade crystallized as many banks, branches of trade companies, and naval lines as well as consulates opened in Mersin. European imperial-

¹⁵ BAA, PA, *Die wirtschaftliche Auskunftstelle der deutsch-türkischen Vereinigung* (6734), 31 August 1916, p. 207.

ist rivalry provided the merchants of Mersin with great maneuvering room to take every opportunity to accumulate capital. The result was a lively Mersin with a network of its own by the 1890s.¹⁶

In the meantime, the development of Mersin between the 1860s and 1908 had a great impact on the sphere of production. Commercial agriculture quickly developed as more and more productive capital was being invested in agriculture, i.e., in the extension of cultivation, in the means of production and labor power. In other words, the administrative changes and settlement efforts only paid off when the development of the port-city prompted the extension of cultivation, and registration of land. The 1858 Land Code, which defined the rights and obligations of the landholders, had organized the system of registering title deeds for the right of cultivation on state lands (*miri*). The Code extended the formerly limited right to title deed to all cultivators to insure continuous production. However, the right to possession could lapse when cultivation was discontinued for three consecutive years. There is no indication that there were any such lapses in Çukurova.

By the end of this last decade of the 19th century, cotton agriculture in Çukurova was solidly commercialized, so much so that annual fluctuations no longer harmed the process of commercialization.¹⁷ Investments in land and means of production carried on as usual, if not more than before. Indeed, no epidemic, no political crisis, no lack of rain stopped the cultivators in believing in producing cotton now. By the end of the decade traveling from the east and north to the center of the plain was no longer a great risk and wages for seasonal labor kept increasing.¹⁸

At the beginning of the 20th century, the new government, the Committee of Union and Progress government (CUP), did not want to stray from this road of capital accumulation. On the contrary, the CUP attempted to establish a national economy based on capital accumulation. The difference was in its attempt at “a more direct intervention in the economic life of the Empire”.¹⁹ Foreign consuls were

¹⁶ RCL, No. 239, 28 February 1907, p. 262.

¹⁷ For instance, in the years when trade took a downturn, the levels of production continued to grow. So although much of the surplus did not go abroad, production kept increasing in these last years of the decade. AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1899, pp. 9–10.

¹⁸ AP: Report by the Vice-Consul Massy at Adana for the Year 1899, p. 11.

¹⁹ Çağlar Keyder (1987a) “The political economy of Turkish democracy” in: E.A. Tonak and I. Schick (Eds.), *Turkey in Transition: New Perspectives* (New York: Oxford



Illustration 7. Adana Train Station (1917)

delighted with the prospect of that intervention.²⁰ The French vice-consul even romanticized: "... we have immediately forgotten the past, for, the future, which we can see without difficulty and without shying away from imagining as we like, full of success, will finally mean revenge and hopes of coming true!"²¹

The fact that the CUP attempt at regulating the imperial economy failed did not mean much change for the agrarian structure of Çukurova until at least World War I. Even the 1909 clash between Armenians and Muslims did not disrupt the process for more than a year. The clash that erupted in April with the attack of Muslims on Armenian stores and shops upon rumors concerning the deaths of two Turkish women was provoked by Bağdadizade Abdülkadir, who had embezzled money belonging to his boss Abraham, an Armenian tax-farmer and textile manufacturer.²² Although this violence that coincided with the counter-revolution (so-called *31 Mart Vakası*) is highly complicated and not easily situated within Ottoman Armenian history, it is still safe to say that it was one of the examples of growing resentment by Muslims against Armenian wealthy entrepreneurs who had rejoiced over the new liberalism of the CUP government. After the state forces suppressed the killings on both sides, in 1910 export rates again reached the high levels attained in the period between 1900 and 1905 and even surpassed them.²³ Until 1915, there was no other ethno-religious tension indicating serious changes in the social and economic situation in the region. Indeed, the dissolution of the Empire and the creation of the Turkish Republic did not change the methods or the

UP) p. 29. In the words of Keyder, "The success of such an endeavor... was prevented on at least two accounts: first, the foreign indebtedness of the empire. [...] Second, the faction of the would-be bourgeoisie selected for promotion had also been nurtured in the peripheral structure of commerce, and was far from controlling an independent base of economic power."

²⁰ AP: Report by the Acting Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie on the Trade of the Province of Adana for the Year 1908, p. 3. The foreign press printed the overall positive feelings about the new government at every opportunity, praising the CUP government, even when many strikes broke out throughout the country, for the speed with which the government put an end to the strikes: "We have seen these gentlemen, their work and ideas that we sincerely admired. In such gentlemen, we can have complete confidence and can consider the pessimists erroneous and thus deeply nuisant..."; RCL, No. 257, 31 August 1908, pp. 233 and 235.

²¹ RCL, No. 261, 31 December 1908, p. 798.

²² Karabet Çallıyan (1335/1916) *Adana Vakası ve Mesulleri* (Istanbul: Dersaadet Reforme Hınçak Cemiyeti) pp. 40–41.

²³ See Table 3 in Chapter 3, and Table 4 in Chapter 4.

mode of production.²⁴ The interests of merchant capital dictated this continuity.

In fact, I firmly believe that this process culminated in capitalist mono-agriculture in Çukurova in the period from the 1950s to the 1970s. In what follows I would like to finish by emphasizing this continuity despite conjectural fluctuations, and despite the disappearance of the wealthy non-Muslim classes, which were replaced by Muslims. With the Republic, the predominance of non-Muslim merchants ended and their Turkish counterparts took their place and their role in the integration of the region with the Republican economy. I conclude by describing Çukurova at the end of the first decade of the 20th century. By 1908, this was a land of shared hegemony between foreign capitalists, the burgeoning indigenous classes, and the state. There was a new social and economic stratification, which caused clashes between Muslims and Armenians. The first clash in 1909 disrupted life in Çukurova for about a year after which the economic recovery was remarkable. The second blow was dealt by the expulsion and massacre of Armenians during World War I, and the consequent French Occupation between 1918 and 1922. However, the concern of this study is not the disruptions of the process, but the continuities. It does deal with the burgeoning classes that were both the makers and the product of the process of integration into the world economy until 1908. The study of the period between 1800 and 1908 only reveals the contribution of these classes to the making of the process, not to its dissolution. Therefore, the above-mentioned clashes are touched upon only insofar as they disrupt the process. Because, despite all of this, the Republic inherited a very rich Çukurova where the process continued, albeit with different participants.

By Way of an Epilogue: World War I and After

During the war, buying raw material, including cotton, from the Ottoman Empire turned out to be a complicated business for European merchants. The war conditions caused the Ottoman state to place all

²⁴ The continuity of the relations of production in Ottoman/Turkish history has been addressed by Zafer Toprak (1988) "Türkiye Tarımı ve Yapısal Gelişmeler, 1900-1950" in: Zafer Toprak and Şevket Pamuk (Eds.), *Türkiye'de Tarımsal Yapılar, 1923-2000* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınevi) pp. 19-37.

the trade advantages on the side of the banks rather than the merchants themselves. That is to say, the government allowed the banks to purchase and store all kinds of raw materials, which was a simple enough precaution for want of cash of the government. That meant there was nothing left for the merchants to buy directly from Mersin, as most of the cotton would already have been purchased by the Deutsche Ottoman Bank. This forced merchants, Germans included, to buy indirectly via the bank and be subject to all kinds of wartime speculations of the money market. Almost three-fourths of the cotton would remain in the warehouses to be resold. This meant very high prices but also guaranteed the sale of the produce of Çukurova.²⁵ Having seen the rising opportunity, Austria-Hungarian capitalists opened banks to begin operations as the war began.²⁶

By 1916, there clearly was a labor problem. This was not only because of the war but also because of the absence of the Armenian population. Most of the large landholdings had been left vacant, at least briefly, after the 1915 expulsion of Armenians from Anatolia according to the order of the Ottoman Supreme Command to remove all Armenians from the Eastern Provinces of Anatolia and from other areas where they were concentrated. The order was followed by the enactment of the Provincial Law of Relocations in May 1915.²⁷ The same year, from May to September, most Armenians already had been forcibly removed from Çukurova under police orders.²⁸ Their absence meant

²⁵ BAA, PA, *Die wirtschaftliche Auskunftstelle der deutsch-türkischen Vereinigung* (6734), 31 August 1916, pp. 209–210.

²⁶ This was a threat to Germany's plans on opening small banks called People's Banks which aimed to serve local merchants and provide credit for their businesses. BAA, PA, *Die wirtschaftliche Auskunftstelle der deutsch-türkischen Vereinigung* (6734), 31 August 1916, p. 225.

²⁷ A press release on how the military was authorized to take measures "against those who opposed the government during war" referred both to the order and the law of May 26–27. *Takvim-i Vekayi*, 18 Receb 1333 (1 June 1915).

²⁸ USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries, MC 1107, Roll 39. Report by Harriet J. Fischer, with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at Adana, signed 13 April 1918. Recorded 21 June 1918, p. 1. The Armenian deportation as the Ottoman and Turkish officialdom calls it, or the Armenian Genocide, as the Armenian community in diaspora calls it, is still a greatly disputed event. There is a huge literature on the event from both sides, and considerable disagreement among the scholars of either ethnicity. Professor Richard G. Hovannisian of University of California at Los Angeles is in the opinion that the Armenians of Çukurova escaped death for the most part, because deportation was orderly and the place of deportation was near enough for Çukurova Armenians to suffer less during the travel. Personal communication, Istanbul, June 2000.

that Çukurova lost almost half of its cotton production: now down to 60,000 bales.²⁹ In fact, producing that much was difficult enough especially as finding labor meant dealing with unskilled workers and runaway conscripts.³⁰ The immediate future of cotton looked bleak, as there was not much hope of producing even this reduced amount.

Prices did not seem to fare better either. The average price of cotton sold to the merchants was 4–5 kuruş and the governments of Germany and Austria paid two or three times that. This meant that the going price of cotton was 150–200% higher than the amount the producer received. This certainly did not make things easy for the producers. These wartime speculations were matters that the Germans continually complained about, taking the issue all the way up to İsmail Hakkı, Minister of Agriculture and Talat Bey, Minister of Interior Affairs.³¹

At the same time, there was hope for future progress in cotton cultivation. At least in 1916, the government did not oppose the settlement of European farmers on model farms, plantations, and the like. According to the Germans as well, the reduction in the population of the Empire, shrinking after the departure of the Armenians and Greeks, caused a big shortage of labor. They likened the situation to that of the Russian Jews who were allowed to settle in Palestine. Without the non-Muslim element, they argued, the economy would shatter if Europeans could not replace them.³²

The French continued to pursue their earlier attempts at the development of cotton cultivation during the occupation of the area between December 1918 and January 1922. Along with the French, Moroccan and Armenian volunteers came to Adana.³³ According to one estimate, the population of the entire region before 1914 included 130,000 Armenians, 30,000 Greeks and 18,000 other minorities.³⁴ Indeed, many

²⁹ BAA, PA, *Die wirtschaftliche Auskunftstelle der deutsch-türkischen Vereinigung* (6734), 31 August 1916, pp. 207–208.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

Ibid., pp. 222–223.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 256.

³³ For the French occupation and the Armenian co-operation for the continued development in the area, see G. Gautherot (1920) *La France en Syrie et en Cilicie* (Paris: Courbevoie (Seine) Librairie indépendante); and Paul du Véro (1954) *La Passion de la Cilicie, 1919–1922* (Paris: Librairie orientaliste P. Geuthner). The most recent work is Sam Kaplan *Territorializing Armenians: geo-texts, and political imaginaries in French-occupied Cilicia, 1919–1922* *History and Anthropology*. 15. 4 (2004): 399–423.

³⁴ According to the Armenian census published by the Patriarchate in Istanbul, the total population of Armenians in Çukurova in 1914 was 407,000. There is great

of the Armenians who had been forced out to Syria and Lebanon and survived came back. They had established themselves mostly in Beirut and Aleppo.³⁵ Once having returned to Çukurova, it was back to business.

In the aftermath of the Turkish War of Independence, the cotton industry made considerable progress in the region: The area of plowed lands in 1913 was 1,115,209 dönüms, and in 1924 1.5 million dönüms. In 1913, 830,000 dönüms, and in 1924, 900,000 dönüms of this area was cultivated with cotton. In 1925, this crop was attracting attention in Lancashire. Samples had been tested in England and approximated Egyptian standards of quality.³⁶ By the end of 1921, peace was restored in Adana, routes were repaired and the floods of the Seyhan River had been brought under control. Chambers of Commerce were created in Mersin and Adana, as well as agricultural and trade committees in all the cities, and agricultural stock markets. A Commerce Tribune and an Economic Office were added. An international exhibition of agricultural products was organized in Adana in 1920. Le Crédit Mobilier Français, and La Banque Française de Syrie opened stands in the International Exhibition as well as branches in Mersin in the old location of the Deutsche Orient Bank and another one in Adana. These allowed the cultivator to benefit from high prices. The Italian Commercial Bank and the Bank of Rome opened agencies next to the French ones following the Italian–Kemalist pact. These gave large credits easily. So even when the French left, foreign capital did not. But many Ottoman Christians left the day the French did: 20,000 Greeks and Armenians moved to Cyprus, Chios, Izmir, Greece, Lebanon, and Syria.³⁷

The Republic inherited a well-defined pattern of commercialized agriculture, which proceeded along transportation lines and ports. The network was there to such an extent that even when Turkey lost

disagreement over the non-Muslim population of any region of the Ottoman Empire, including Çukurova. *USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries*, MC 1107, Roll 8, No. 90, 1914.

³⁵ *USNA: Special Reports and Government Inquiries*, MC 1107, Roll 39, No. 813, June 21, 1918, p. 7.

³⁶ Arnold J. Toynbee and Kenneth P. Kirkwood (1927) *Turkey* (New York: Scribner) p. 217.

³⁷ For the Armenians in Lebanon see Hratch Bedoyan, “The social, political and religious structure of the Armenian community in Lebanon”, *Armenian Review*, 32 (1979) 119–130. For Greeks see *Exodos/Athina:Kentro Mikrasiatikyn Spoudyn* (in Greek), Vol. 2: *Eisagygi-epopteia Paschali M. Kitromilidi, epimeleia Gianni Mourelou*, Athens, 1982.

most of its commercial class, business was directed from Beirut and Syria, especially because foreign capital continued in its role of organizing export-oriented agriculture. The fundamental processes came from trading activities, concentration of production, and the mid-19th century global incorporation of Ottoman economic life. Within these processes, the commercial classes were constant actors. In the 1890s, a new landholding class also emerged. Between 1908 and 1923, the area faced wars and occupation. In the meantime, political loyalties shifted, the social and ethnic composition of the bourgeois elements changed. But in the end, the Kemalist regime successfully allied with the landholding class, an alliance that continued during the subsequent Turkish governments.

Having won in Anatolia, Mustafa Kemal made a journey through the hinterland in 1923.³⁸ This journey signified his vision of the Republican Party basing its strength on a certain social class. He visited such places as Adana, Mersin, and Tarsus where market relations were most developed. In Adana, he sought and got the support of Mutki Tribal Leader Hacı Musa Bey, Şeyh Abdülbaki Kufrevi, Çelebi Cemalettin Efendi, and Niyazi Salih Baba. Former tribal families easily became members of parliament after the Republic.³⁹ Moreover, despite the disappearance of the former bourgeoisie, the network that allowed the flow of international capital remained. To compensate for the lost bourgeoisie, Kozan received Turks from Salonica in 1923. Some years later Arabs came from Algiers and were settled by government order. Arabs from Libya came upon Mustafa Kemal's invitation.⁴⁰ Between 1925 and 1930, Muslims arrived from Romania and Bulgaria but they did not become farmers. Osmaniye also received immigrants from the Balkans, especially Bosnia. Ceyhan was a conglomeration of very different ethnic and cultural groups, the result of many migrations. Rich merchants from Kayseri also settled in Ceyhan.⁴¹ In addition Christian

³⁸ *Yeni Adana*, 29 Receb 1341 (15 Mart 1923).

³⁹ Damar Arıkoğlu tells this tale of alliance between certain local leaders and the national leader in a most enlightening but diplomatic fashion in his *Hatıralarım* (Istanbul: Tan Gazetesi ve Matbaası, 1961). These first members of the Parliament are listed in *T.C. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Albümü*, 1920–1991, Ankara, 1994, pp. 1–39.

⁴⁰ *Adana Ticaret Odası, Cumhuriyetin 50. Yılında Adana*, Ankara, 1973, p. 21.

⁴¹ All of these migrations were vividly reflected in the interviews with heads of villages (*muhtar*) conducted by the Directory of National Education in cooperation with local historian Cezmi Yurtsever of Adana Fen Lisesi (the Science High School) during 1992–1995. I have had the privilege of analyzing the interviews from 1200 villages in

merchants, especially those with ties to Syria and Lebanon did manage to stay.

Throughout 1925, increasing attention was given to Çukurovan cotton. A well-attended conference was held on the spot for the purpose of studying its growth and production. The new regime took an active interest and promised aid to the producers. Banks were to extend loans to facilitate the use of agricultural machinery. Sometimes, the new regime directly appropriated industrial establishments in Çukurova. For example, the Simonoglu Factory in Adana was turned into the National Textile Factory, Milli Mensucat Fabrikası, with the credit allotted from the Ministry of Commerce.⁴² But most importantly, the new Republic granted private property rights facilitating new claims to land ownership. Thus, the new Turkish citizens replaced the landholding classes of 19th-century-Çukurova, particularly after the Surname Code of 1934 that required re-registration of land according to the new identification papers.⁴³

Foreign interest was no less during this period, and indeed was encouraged by the new regime as well. A Manchester firm built a large new ginnery near Adana to reduce the cost of cleaning the cotton. During the summer of 1924, more than 100 Fordson tractors were sold in the cotton belt of Çukurova, that is the Adana-Tarsus sub-region. By contrast only 28 had been sold during the two preceding years. In 1924, about 30 big German steam plows were sold.⁴⁴ This foreign interest continued through the 1930s, as German investors again were on the rise in Turkey, and they operated the largest power plant, the one in Seyhan.⁴⁵

Italy was in the forefront of Turkey's trade between 1924 and 1929. A major reason was the relocation of some Greeks from Turkey to

Ceyhan, Kozan, Adana, Kadirli and Osmaniye in terms of the composition of population in these villages since the 1930s. (My thanks to Cezmi Yurtsever for graciously sharing these with me.) Also see *Cumhuriyetin 50. Yılında Adana*; Ahmet Çamurdan (1973) *Cumhuriyetin 50. Yılında Kozan'ı Tanıyalım* (Ankara: Önder). Cezmi Yurtsever (1999) *Kadirli Tarihi* (Osmaniye: Kadirli Hizmet Birliği Kültür Yayınları).

⁴² Toynebee and Kirkwood, *Turkey*, p. 228.

⁴³ The migration of merchants from Kayseri who appropriated many of the manufacturing plants in Çukurova is discussed by Tekeli, İlhan and İlkin, Selim, "Savaşmayan Ülkenin Savaş Ekonomisi: Üretimden Tüketime Pamuklu Dokuma," paper presented at *Türk Tarih Kongresi*, Ankara, 22–26 September, 1986.

⁴⁴ Toynebee and Kirkwood, *Turkey*, p. 215

⁴⁵ Lilo Linke (1937) *Allah Dethroned: A Journey through Modern Turkey* (New York: A.A. Knopf) p. 239.

Trieste who continued to conduct their trade in Turkey from this Italian city. They tried to control the cotton trade of Çukurova. An Italian firm, Sicmat, originally a cotton-textile industrial and trade company from Trieste, opened a branch in Adana in 1924. The Italian government supported this. In a few years, it became almost a monopoly in the trading of cotton in Adana and Mersin. It controlled production directly. In a short time Çukurova became an area that fed the Trieste factories.⁴⁶

European capital continued to play a major role in the 1930s and early 1940s. Indeed, Turkish capitalists emerged only after World War II when they greatly benefited from the 1942 wealth tax levied on predominantly non-Muslim minorities, collecting more than 350 million liras, the total budget of the state at the time.⁴⁷ From Adana, 8.5 million liras and from the rest of Çukurova 4.2 million liras was collected with this tax, making the region the fourth richest area of Turkey.⁴⁸ Marshall Plan in 1948 signaled a new era, that of American involvement. By then a 'national' bourgeoisie was being born from the experiences of the 19th century. In 1950, 19% of the large landholdings and 33% of the total cultivated land in Turkey was in Çukurova. The region also possessed 30% of all the tractors in Turkey, and the largest number of seasonal wage laborers.⁴⁹

In short, trends in commodity production, mechanization, urbanization, land area, and output continued into the Republican period and underwent dramatic increases. The 19th century process of commercialization in fact culminated in the 1950s, and cotton became acknowledged 'the white gold (*ak altın*)' in the Turkish vernacular. Turkish large landholders of Adana, building on a century of development, had established the *Ağa* (landlord) image of wealth stemming from agricultural surplus for the first time in Anatolian social history.

⁴⁶ Keyder (1982) *Dünya Ekonomisi İçinde Türkiye (1923-1929)*, Ankara, p. 171.

⁴⁷ Some of the minority capitalists had to sell their enterprises and lands to Muslim profiteers in order to come up with the requested sums. They mostly left Turkey after the war. Keyder (1987b) *State and Class in Turkey: A Study of Capitalist Development* (New York: Verso) p. 113.

⁴⁸ Faik Ökte (1951) *Varlık Vergisi Faciası* (Istanbul: Nebioğlu) pp. 102-103.

⁴⁹ Yahya Tezel (1994) *Cumhuriyet Döneminin İktisadi Tarihi* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları) pp. 342-343.

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