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FACTORS IN THE FORMATION OF THE OTTOMAN SEA/MARITIME POWER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN IN THE 15th AND 16th CENTURIES

Theoretical

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Abstract

The needs that changed and diversified with the political, technological and scientific developments in the 21st century have brought about new risks and threats. New dimensions of security have started to be discussed against newly emerging risks and threats in international relations. Among the new security issues, the sea comes to the fore both as an area of expansion of states and as an area that gains importance in terms of military, energy, economic and ecological (environmental) security aspects. At this point, maritime policies, which have become a geostrategic need for states in regions that have become areas of power struggle due to their geopolitical positions, tend to change and develop too. Today, the Mediterranean is one of the regions where these power struggles take place just like in history. The necessities and basic factors that paved the way for the 15th and 16th century Turkish (Ottoman) domination in the Mediterranean basin, which is the cradle of Turkish seafaring, were evaluated within the framework of sea power theories and the decision-making model put forward within the scope of the study in terms of shedding light on the present day.

Objective: In this study, an evaluation from a historical perspective was made based on the analysis model of the maritimization policy, which was formed within the framework of philosophical, cultural and theoretical foundations in the Mediterranean. With this evaluation, the building blocks in the formation of the Turkish maritime policy were tried to be shown.

Methodology: In this study, a qualitative research method was used and a literature review was conducted on the subject. In the light of the historical and theoretical information that was obtained, an analysis of the period, which is the subject of the study, was tried to be made.

Findings: The necessities and opportunities arising from the external conjuncture in the formation of the Turkish (Ottoman) maritime policy in the 15th and 16th centuries were determined with this study, and accordingly, the abilities of the decision-makers to benefit from these opportunities were shown. In addition, the events that formed the basis of the Turkish (Ottoman) maritime domination and sea power in the period in question were handled from a different perspective; and in this context, the emergence of the Turkish pirates, who constituted the source of the Turkish sea power of the period, and the Christianization policies that Spain applied to the Muslim and Jewish peoples in the Iberian Peninsula were associated.

Originality: Within the scope of the study, a new decision-making model has been developed for the formulation of maritimization policies. In addition, the effect of the deportation policy implemented by Spain in the relevant period on the formation of the Turkish sea power was revealed for the first time.

Keywords: Mediterranean, Sea Power, Maritimization Policy, International Security

JEL Classification: F51, F52, F54, N90

INTRODUCTION

After the Cold War, with globalization, the importance of sea/seafaring is gradually increasing in the pendulum of the power calculations in the international system and initiatives. Experts emphasize this phenomenon by arguing that our time is almost a “Sea Age”. Indeed, in the classical, neo or post versions of Realist theories and approaches, the sea was already constantly being treated in the historical perspective both with the threats it contained and the opportunities that reinforced the dominance of the countries. However, today, the realist paradigm once again underlines the vital dimensions of sea dominance, this time from different angles.

First of all, it will be useful to note that dangers coming from the seas are increasing and diversifying; power struggles between states, piracy, human trafficking, smuggling, ecological destruction etc., are the first threats that come to mind in this context. On the other hand, it will be useful to remember that the seas (and oceans) are the regions where international trade is most concentrated. Moreover, the functionality of the seas for energy transfers, especially for submarine resources (for example, hydrocarbon deposits), has reached an unprecedented level.

At such a revolutionary crossroads, new research is added to the literature on sea/maritime power. Sea power has received increasing academic interest in international relations, security and strategy studies. In this article, acting upon this point, we will briefly focus on an issue that is only partially mentioned in the narratives of historians and that can be said to have been neglected and overlooked: the seafaring of the Turks.

While global powers are trying to increase their sea/maritime power in the 21st century, the Republic of Türkiye has started to focus on this sector with its military and commercial aspects so as not to fall behind this movement. However, in this context, it has started to be discussed whether the existence and philosophy of Turkish maritime power can be revived in a short time according to the needs of the age because sea/maritime power necessitates accumulated knowledge and experience. Not only the material equipment, but also the philosophical/even metaphysical fabric reflected in the national character need to be felt. In short, sea/maritime power, as a dimension of national power, is a bundle of experience combined with various elements.

In this article, first of all, the definitions of seafaring, sea power and naval power will be given; then, evaluations will be made on the seafaring of the Turks. The 15th and 16th centuries were selected in terms of period. This period is the era when the Turks reached the peak of their dominance in the seas in their history. The study area is the Mediterranean, which hosted many civilizations in history and where many power struggles took place. The history of the Mediterranean has always been a subject of

academic focus at this level. Turks or Ottomans emerged in a period when power rivalry was most common in the Mediterranean, and they proved their superiority in seafaring and recorded it in history. The factors of this formation will be listed and handled in the historical flow or in a chronological line, but in the light of the thematic frameworks of sea power theories.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

It is known that the realist paradigm is built on the concept of power. Power is a tool to achieve goals in politics. This fact is also accepted by foreign policy decision-makers, and states try hard to develop their national power elements. Among the various branches of national power, which we do not regard necessary to list here, is also sea power. As mentioned above, the increase in the functionality of this power in the 21st century encourages coastal states to concentrate on and invest more and more in this field. The origins of sea power as a concept date back to the American admiral and theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan. In today's terminology, when sea power is mentioned, a triple classification comes to mind: maritime power, sea power and naval power. These concepts will be introduced briefly below.

The “maritime” power of a state is defined as the field that includes all kinds of material and spiritual power elements belonging to the sea and seafaring. (Gürdeniz, 2013). Sea power can be evaluated as the power applied to use the sea, on the one hand, and the opportunities and facilities that the sea provides to the national power, on the other hand. In Mahan's often-quoted generalization, “ *It is the total productivity of the intellectual, emotional, scientific, physical, economic, military and political efforts spent to use, evaluate, protect and evolve a nation's sea and maritime capabilities for the benefit of the nation.*” (Oran, 2012, s. 4) As seen in Figure 1, maritime power encompasses sea power and naval power.



Figure 1. Sea Power System
Source: (Oran, 2012, s. 5)

Sea power is the extension of the military and economic power, which are the national power components of a country, in the seas. Sea power is the ability of a country to establish its dominance in the seas in order to protect its national interests. It is the ability to have such an influence. In this context, the goals that can be thought of are; (a) commercial shipping, (b) navy passage, and (c) safe use of in-sea resources. In this context, merchant ships, port facilities, shipbuilding and maintenance-repair units, qualified personnel and naval forces are parts of the architectural structure of the sea power. In short, maritime power consists of the dynamic parts of the maritime power at sea and the coastal establishments to which they are directly affiliated.

There are certain elements that make sea power a national power. Mahan listed the elements of sea power under six headings as geographical position, physical confirmation, extent of territory, size of population, character of the people, and character of government. These six elements presented by Mahan are repeated by other theorists in our time with similar qualifications (Tutak, 2021).

Finally, as for the definition of the naval power, what is meant here is the ships, aircraft, vehicles of the war navy, the command and headquarters organized at various levels on the coast, and the coast and port defense unit facilities, bases, shipyards, and other logistics and administrative institutions (Sancar, 2006).

A MODEL PROPOSAL FOR THE MARITIMIZATION PROCESS

In this article, a generally accepted original model will be presented regarding our study object in the analysis of the Ottoman (Turkish) sea power though we are inspired by the aforementioned elements. This model is based on the “decision-making mechanism”, which is frequently used in social sciences within the framework of strategic management because the formation of a country’s maritime power consists of a process that almost overlaps with foreign policy making.

When we look at the presented input-output analysis scheme, it will be seen that the first thing to consider in such a process is the general cyclical structure of the international system. We called it the “external conjuncture”. What is meant within the boundaries of the article is the ‘Mediterranean’.

In present day’s context, the basins under the external conjuncture category can be listed as (a) global order, (b) regional/environmental subsystem and (c) bilateral relations line. Therefore, an input from the external conjuncture to the decision-making mechanism is transferred from one of these three basins. However, it can be stated that these basins overlap each other in time/space. The escalation of a local crisis towards the global system is an example in this direction.

To summarize within the scope and/or limitations of the article, after an input enters into the system, the unit or actor, in brief, the decision-makers of the state addressed by this input, will read this ‘signal’ as either a challenge or an opportunity. Perception of a threat, risk and danger is in question in the former,

and a possibility of progress in the latter. How the message is evaluated depends on the ‘communication’ system and - more importantly - the ‘prism of perception’ in reaching the decision-makers. In this diagram, the structural design of the prism of perception is named as (a) subjective and (b) objective internal factors.

The ‘filter’ of subjective internal factors contains normative elements such as national culture-character, ideology-philosophy of decision-makers and historical heritage. The deep sources of the Ottoman Maritime mentality in the 15th and 16th centuries will be focused on below. Subjective elements are the socio-psychological basis of the ‘intention/deed’ pendulum of the decision-makers. On this structure, the ‘objective’ criteria in the formation process of sea power are mentioned because this framework leads us to the issue of ‘capacity’, which is the main determinant of the state’s decision-making mechanism. Here, the geographical structure, geostrategic depth, economic necessity, training and technological readiness, and the military capability of the navy can be expressed among the concrete pillars/supports of national power. These elements will be evaluated in the context of the 15th and 16th centuries in the article.

To emphasize briefly, the inputs are filtered from the two frameworks mentioned above and flow into a concrete policy following the discussion of the decision-makers according to the hierarchy in the political structure and public order of the relevant state. The application principles are determined. In which channel it will be applied is decided together with its timing. Maritime power has become an ‘output’. This process is a graphical segmentation of a flow leading to maritimization.

What should not be forgotten in this context is that the outputs are transferred to the system again, this time as ‘inputs’ at a further stage. In other words, allied/enemy countries realizing that such a maritime power has formed will take their own measures against it, and their decisions will affect the functioning of the system like a spiral. In fact, the theory of aggressive realism underlines the cycle of self-renewing threats and measures in this respect. The Spanish-Ottoman conflict, which is handled in the article, also depicts this mutual escalation up to the breaking point in the 17th century.

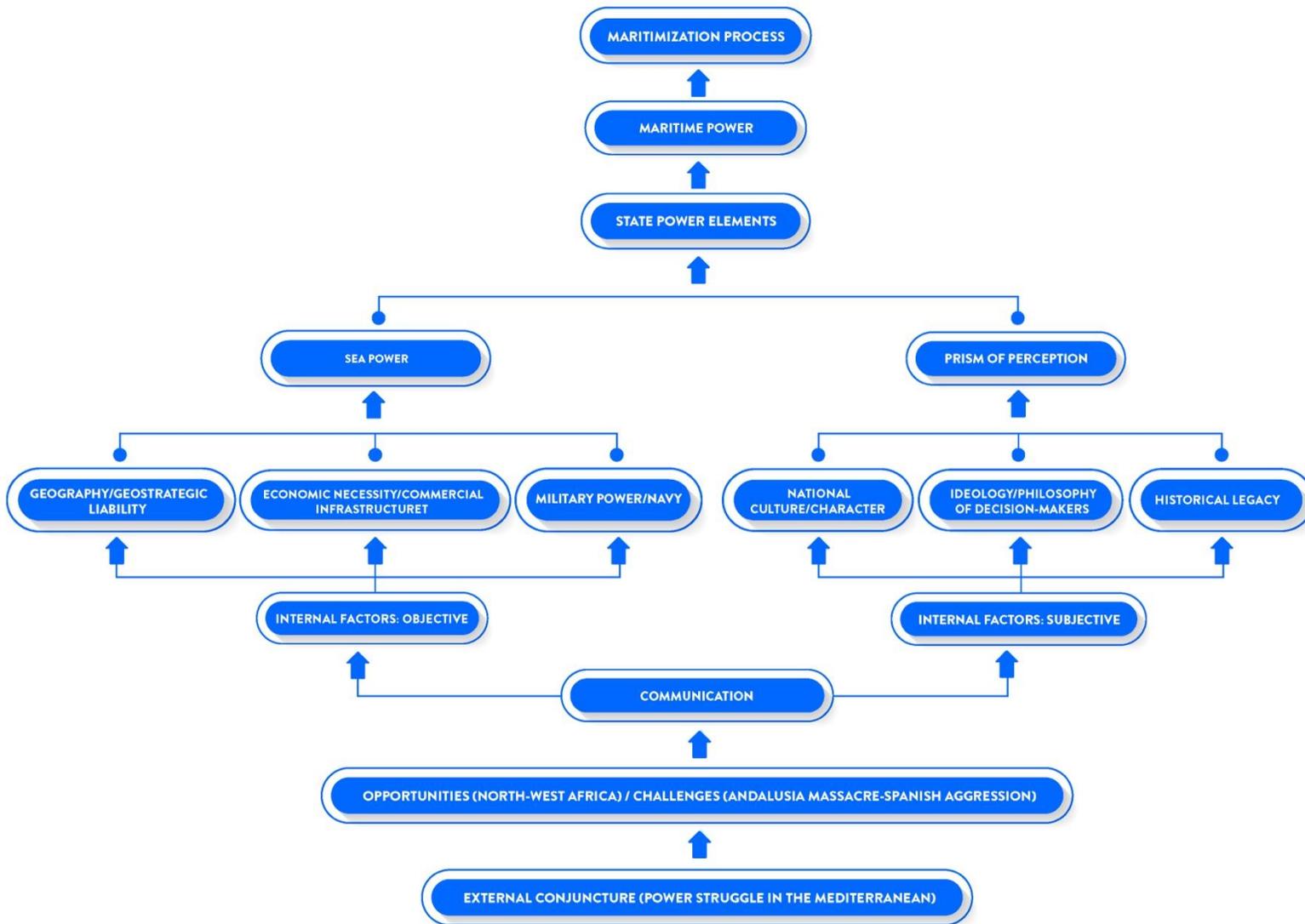


Figure 2. Analysis Framework of Maritimization Policy (A Decision-Making Model)
Source: (Yılmaz, 2023, s. 196)

In the light of the information and documents we have, and in line with the examination of the historical data, which we think is important and striking, in the light of the models that are presented, a) we will focus on below two important sources in the formation of a considerable maritime power in the Mediterranean of the Ottoman State, which was considered a land nation. They are b) necessities arising from the external conjuncture, in other words, the challenges faced by the secure survival of the Ottoman land empire. Following that part, again in terms of the opportunities arising from the external conjuncture, c) Andalusia syndrome arising from the internal factors of Spain, the main rival of the Ottoman State, and the maritimization potential provided by the Turkish pirates stationed in North Africa with forced migrations as a result of this syndrome will be handled. Finally, d) the ability of the decision-makers of the Ottoman State to seize this opportunity and to source for maritime power will be dealt with.

HISTORICAL CRITICISM; LAND NATION

The main issue that brought the historians who focused on the Ottomans' adventure on the sea into conflict with one another, is the 'Seafaring of the Turks'. Since strategic elements such as sea power and sea domination are thought to be dependent upon the physical (material) equipment of a nation as well as its national character (temperament/mentality), experts could not help emphasizing this point. Strictly speaking, we see serious disagreement in the relevant literature though it is not very sharp.

Those who have a critical approach regard the maritime activities of the Turks, especially the Ottomans, with suspicion: According to them, the Ottomans had well guessed that the empire could not 'live' without sea power (Akad, 2018). However, the Ottomans did not have a sea power strategy. It is said that it focused on land power and that sea power was its continuation, (Akad, 2018).

Tarakçı, who argues that the Turkish national character does not include maritime culture, claims that the Ottoman maritime superiority was reduced to the security of the coast(s) only by protecting the coasts of the Empire: *"Unless the Ottoman lands were attacked from the sea, the navy had no other function than to show its strength by sailing towards the Mediterranean in summer and attacking and plundering some coastal cities and castles for financial gain.* (Tarakçı, 2009, s. 125) Tarakçı mentions that the institutionalization of the Ottoman navy could not be realized by any means, and that it did not give any place to the commercial dimension of the maritime strategy of the empire. However, sea politics is not a static policy based on borders like land politics. Erbaş also agrees with Tarakçı's findings:

"It is seen from historical examples that the states that understood the importance of the sea and maritime power directed their regions, economy and technology, and became influential while the states that did not understand the importance of sea power or that could not attach the necessary

importance due to other priorities or economic and political reasons even if they understood it were affected by other states, lost their advantage in the world and the struggle. Due to these reasons, the Ottoman State could not be a hegemonic state though it became an influential worldwide land state because it could not adequately grasp the meaning and importance of the sea, or did not do what was necessary on time, or because it could not maintain this value, which it understood, to express it in the most innocent way” (Erbaş, 2019, s. 40).

NATIONAL IDENTITY: THE ‘RED APPLE’ OF THE SEA

National character, which is mentioned by Mahan and other naval strategists as an important dimension of sea power, is actually described in cultural anthropology as the combination of a civilization’s personality/identity and spirit. This philosophical and even theosophical fabric is an aspect of the sea power of states that cannot be noticed at first, but cannot be done without it. According to this approach, the sea has a civilization-building feature, as seen in the history of the Mediterranean. In the projection of this logic, nations were categorized by some authors in the “Land/Sea” pendulum. Attali, one of the advocates of this theory, argues that the sea reflects a nation’s passion for freedom and provides dynamism for exploration. According to him, mythologies, epics and folk tales are “*culturizing*” narrative texts that pass on the spirit of mariner from generation to generation (Attali, 2017).

“In Vikings, the sea is a symbol of power that needs to be tamed. In Upanishads, the sea is a symbol of tranquility, contemplation, and a mystical introspection. In the epic of Gilgamesh ... the themes of the first flood of history and the freedom of the survivors are seen. In Celtic stories, the sea is an escape zone that allows the hero to change his identity and rebuild his life. Likewise, in Siberian and American cosmogonies, one universe ends in the sea, and a few people cross into the next world through the sea. (Attali, 2017, s. 175)

In this context, the important debate is based on whether the Turks are a land or a sea nation. Some scientific opinion circles note the superiority of the Ottoman maritime abilities. The Ottoman State was not perhaps a ‘merchant state acting with economic interests’ like England but the Ottoman overseas strategy was designed with the aim of reaching commercial sources of income as well as imperial assertion and religious service. Ahmet Tabakoğlu states that the importance of the Mediterranean for the Ottomans was largely knitted with economic expectations (Tabakoğlu, 2019). His son, Hüseyin Serdar Tabakoğlu, who is a historian, writes the following: “... *The main factor that put the Ottomans in front in their sea power rivalry with Spain was a developed maritime organization and a developed military and financial bureaucracy that was able use the available resources in the most efficient way”.* (Tabakoğlu, 2019, s. 316)

There are those who oppose the thesis that the Turks and Ottomans were a nation far from the sea and neglected the seas in Turkish maritime history. Turks frequently used the word ‘sea’ in their language even though there was no sea in their homeland, Central Asia. For example, in *Divan-ü Lügati’t-Türk* written in 1090, the word ‘tengiz (sea)’ meaning all waters (including rivers) is used in many places. (Kaşgarlı, 2005) There are stories and aphorisms about the sea in literary works and advice books. Oghuz Khagan named his sixth son Tengiz, i.e., sea (Togan, 1972). Most importantly, in the epic, after Oghuz Khagan was declared the ruler at the ceremony, his following address showed the direction of the conquest: *“The sun is our flag, the sky is our tent... More towards the seas, more towards the rivers”* (Kafesoğlu, 1984, s. 242). As a matter of fact, it should be remembered in this context that Atatürk ordered his armies: *“Your first target is the Mediterranean! Forward!”*. So, reaching the seas was almost a Red Apple (ideal/goal) for the Turks. As Bostan states in the article he wrote with Özkaran, Turks will go down in their epics as *“a nation that longed for great waters”* (Bostan & Özbaran, 2009, ss. 11-13).

It is accepted by those who examine Turkish philosophy of history that the Turkish national character combined ‘heroism’ and ‘sainthood’ and that Sufism (mysticism) gave a spirit to this nation within this framework (Köprülü, 2020). In Sufism, which is a school of knowledge and culture, the metaphor of the sea and/or ocean is used primarily as the road of ascension and ships as the ‘vehicles’ on this road. There are frequent references in the hymns to the love of Allah like this: *“This love is a sea, an ocean; there is no boundary of it”*. There are patron saints of the seas. Abd as-Salam al Asmar, who lived in Tripoli in the 16th century, is an important example of these guides (saints) in terms of our subject because Abd as-Salam raised the awareness of the local people in order to facilitate the Turkish conquest of Tripoli and encouraged Turkish pirates, especially Turgut Reis (Öke, 2020). In the discourses of the Ottoman sailors, the terminology of Sufism is pronounced intertwined with maritime idioms. It is possible to come across the clearest and most fluent example of this approach in *Kitab-ı Bahriyye* (Book of Navigation) written by Piri Reis. Piri Reis, who was the nephew of the famous Turkish sailor Kemal Reis, used the following expressions in the preface of his *Kitab-ı Bahriyye*, which is one of the most scientific books of Turkish seafaring.

“Be determined in seafaring/Maybe God will give you the conquests/ Every road needs a perfect guide (saint)/ A sailor needs to practice what he knows.../ Because everything is from God, O pure-hearted/ Whoever is close to Him will find the conquest/ When a person attains a perfect guide (saint)/ Maybe all his hard work will be finished...”(Piri Reis, 1973, s. 37)

GEOGRAPHICAL AMBITION: STRATEGIC OBLIGATION

If we focus on other concrete/physical dimensions after the philosophical potential of sea power, we will naturally encounter geography. The serious acceleration of the Turks in seafaring started when they came to Anatolia, which is surrounded by seas on three sides, and made it their homeland. This takes us to the Seljuk period. The Seljuks reached the Aegean and the Mediterranean after the 1071 Malazgirt (Manzikert) victory. Seljuks' interest in maritime were limited to coasts; they operated only on their own coasts. The first sailor of the Turks to be mentioned in this context is Çaka Bey, the conqueror of İzmir and the founder of İzmir principality (1081-1097). He established his navy and dominated Foça (Phocaea), Midilli (Lesbos) and Sakız (Chios) with this power consisting of 50 ships. He surrounded Byzantium and proved his power. He was martyred while besieging the enemy in Çanakkale in 1097 (Hatipoğlu, 2005).

Among the Seljuks, Alaeddin Keykubad (1220-1237) was one of the khans who paid special attention to the sea. He cared about the protection of the Mediterranean coasts. He had a shipyard built in Alaiye (Alanya) and had a war fleet built there. His power was limited but this initiative gained him the title of "*Sultan of the Two Seas*". Following him, during the period of Anatolian principalities, the maritime activities remained under the control of the principalities of Menteşe, Aydın, Saruhan and Karesioğulları, who had coasts to the Mediterranean. Among them, Gazi Umur Bey, the ruler of Aydınoğlu, dominated the Aegean Sea with a strong navy. He returned victoriously from his Greek campaigns. However, the Crusades started meanwhile. He was martyred while fighting to expel the Crusaders from İzmir in 1348. (İnalçık, 2009).

The Ottomans benefited from the navies of the principalities. The concern of the Ottomans during their establishment years was to protect the Aegean coasts of Anatolia and the Çanakkale peninsula, which they had conquered, from the harassment of the warrior merchants of Venetians. That is why they activated the shipyard in Gallipoli. It was not in compliance with the interests of the Ottomans at that time to test the power of Venice and Genoa, the maritime republics of the Mediterranean. On the contrary, they tried to be harmonious with them; moreover, they preferred to pay the freight by obtaining their maritime needs from them.

Ottoman expansion made it an imperative strategic obligation for the Ottoman State to be interested in the sea. The Black Sea, Marmara, Aegean and Mediterranean had to be made safe for the Ottomans. An important turning point of the Ottomans in this direction was the conquest of Istanbul in 1453. Istanbul is the meeting point of the three seas. The expansion of the Ottoman Empire to the West had to be carried out in a way to include the Mediterranean. Sultan Mehmet II, who was one of the sultans who

read the Mediterranean geo-politics well, revived the Golden Horn shipyard and accelerated the construction of warrior boats. It was not enough but Sultan Mehmet II was determined.

The Sultan, who made the ships move over the land when he conquered Istanbul, decided that the Ottoman State could not be dependent on the mercy of Venice in the Eastern Mediterranean and took the risk of fighting with this republic in the Aegean Sea. After Istanbul, which was the center of the Eastern Roman Empire, Sultan Mehmet II wanted to capture the center of the Western Roman Empire too (Bostan, 2009). He ordered Gedik Ahmet Pasha to organize an expedition to Italy of the time. The Ottoman navy anchored in the port of Otranto, which was subject to the Kingdom of Naples. Otranto surrendered and lived under Ottoman rule for a year and a half. Europe and the Vatican were alarmed. With the suspected death of Sultan Mehmet II, the Ottomans withdrew from Italy. Although the commercial dimension of the maritime activities was limited during Sultan Mehmet II period, the Rhodes and Puglia expeditions announced to the coastal states that the Ottomans had an assertive future in the Mediterranean (Akad, 2018).

ANDALUSIA GENOCIDE AND NORTH-WEST AFRICA (ALGERIA, TUNISIA AND LIBYA)

The real dynamic behind the rise of the Ottoman Empire to the level of dominant actor in the power struggles in the Mediterranean was its cooperation with Turkish pirates who were “based” on the North West African Coast, which was well-known as the “Barbary Coast”. The Turkish pirates in question settled in North Africa driven by various individual causes or social influences, which we cannot go into details here, and made their living by plundering the Mediterranean, the riparian settlements and merchant fleets, transforming piracy into a profession with its own rules and ethics. It was not banditry, but a civilized economic activity area with legal status at that time (Gürkan, 2020).

Indeed, with the entry of these Turkish (Ottoman-BSY) pirates, who levied a tribute on the Mediterranean, into state service, “the Ottoman sea power made a great improvement and it enabled the Ottomans to operate (even-BSY) in the open seas (Sancar, 2006).

The life of the sea without pirates is unthinkable. However, the origins of the emergence of Turkish piracy in the relevant period must be traced back to 1492, when the Spanish destroyed the Muslim Andalusian State in Iberia. As it is known, the Spanish land lived in peace, prosperity and an advanced level of civilization for 781 years, from its conquest by the Muslim forces under the command of Tariq bin Ziyad in 711 AD to the collapse of the last Emirate of Granada in 1492. The Holy Roman Empire led by the Inquisition in 1492 destroyed the model that Braudel claimed to have a common cultural fabric of the Mediterranean with the religious (Christian) fanaticism that overshadowed the Crusades. This basin became the scene of the clash of rival civilizations between the Crescent and the Cross and was divided into two different/hostile camps from then on (Hess, 2010).

The process that the Spaniards called “Reconquista” (reconquest) included the enthusiasm and determination to “re-Christianize” the Jewish and Muslim populations residing in the Iberian Peninsula. The kingdom made it obligatory to convert with the first edicts published in 1526. However, it was not enough; it subjected those who did not give up their religion to various pressures and harassments. Taxes were levied and places of worship were destroyed; in short, their living spaces were narrowed. Eventually they were demanded to leave Spain. Forced exile and deportation began. Those who remained in Spain lost their lives in the tortures of the Inquisition (Şeyban, 2021). Historians describe this event as an “ethnic cleansing” in today’s terminology. In terms of Spanish history, it left a black mark along with the following outcomes:

“The result is seen in the poverty and frustration that squandered the endless opportunity brought by the new 17th century. While the rest of Europe was running eagerly in the race for progress despite wars and revolutions, Spain sacrificed everything in the name of religious unity, sinking into poverty and destitution... Spain sacrificed its material well-being and intellectual development to this end.” (Lea, 2011, s. 360).

The Turkish pirates helped the immigrants without discrimination of race and religion and transported them to North Africa with their ships. We know that this transfer started with the leadership of Kemal Reis and continued with intervals. (Piri Reis Araştırma Merkezi, 2007). Kemal Reis drew the hostility of Spain with this “humane intervention”. He sought opportunities of cooperation by applying to the Ottoman State. Besides, the immigrants he had helped to settle in North Africa were trying to reach the Sultan and ask Istanbul to take care of their compatriots and co-religionists who remained in Spain. The sultan of the period Bayezid II managed to seize this opportunity of alliance against Spain, his most important rival on land and at sea. Taking Kemal Reis under his protection, he accelerated the transfer of the immigrants. Support to the Andalusians continued in the following years too. This aid was realized to a limited extent during the Alpujarras uprising (1568-1570). The Ottoman-Barbary pirates partially tried a landing operation similar to the Otranto expedition during the reign of Mehmet II but they did not take risk because they did not see a chance for success.

From another perspective, the settlement of Andalusian immigrants on the southern shores of the Mediterranean contributed to the economic revival of North Africa.

“They contributed greatly to North Africans (and Turkish Pirates-BSY) in reconstruction, craft, art, trade in the Maghreb cities where they settled, in areas such as defense, correspondence and warfare, which facilitated state administration” (Şeyban, 2021, s. 352). Not only in civil pursuits, but also in military terms, immigrants joined the pirates and became competent sailors; they were also elevated to the rank of principality of the sea. Abulafia writes that the consequences of the Andalusian immigrants’

reaction to the tyranny of the kingdom are read in the final analysis as follows: “...they lent their energies to the corsair raids on the Spanish coastline...” And he adds the following: “Alongside the spirit of vengeance, there persisted nostalgia for a romantically remembered past, which was also influential”. (Abulafia, 2012, s. 535). Kumrular makes a similar statement: “Piracy was, in a way, a harsh response to the unjustified expulsion of these Muslims from the peninsula... Revenge was combined with the struggle for survival “ (Kumrular, 2009, s. 156). This, in turn, increased the power of the Barbary Pirates and created an advantage in favor of Istanbul’s sea power in the balance of power in the Mediterranean, as this power was on the Ottoman side.

The contributions of the North-West African maritime principalities, which went down in history with the phrase “Garp Ocakları”, were deliberately neglected by the Ottoman chroniclers. For example, Katip Çelebi generally preferred to narrate the victories of the state navy in line with the official historiography (Çelebi, 2007). This attitude, which was maybe necessary in order to be liked by the Palace, hid the source of Ottoman sea power in the Mediterranean. However, the Barbary pirates had superior maritime knowledge and experience, which was accepted as the best even by their rivals, their contemporary sailors. With their shipyards, well-trained personnel and the war experience of their chiefs, they proved to be a transnational actor in these waters. They were known as corsairs, not sea brigands or pirates. In other words, they were an integral part of the Mediterranean economic region, a part of the system. The founding “father” of this accumulation was Oruç Reis, the elder brother of the legendary Barbarossa brothers. He gathered and organized the most skillful warrior sailors of the Mediterranean around him. He was called “The King of Barbary”.

CHARACTERISTICS AND FORESIGHTEDNESS OF ADMINISTRATORS

For the Ottoman Empire, this cooperation started with the support it gave to Andalusian immigrants, as stated above. It had progressed and developed through informal channels since the reign of Sultan Bayezid II. The pirates protected the Turkish trade ships and trade routes, joined the navy when requested, went on expeditions, and took sides with the Ottomans in open sea wars. At other times, they performed their main occupations in accordance with their own strategies; however, they never touched the Muslim ships, and the Christian commercial and/or warships that the sultan had given permission. The integration of the pirates into Istanbul was ensured by the entry of Barbarossa Hayrettin Pasha into the bureaucracy of the Ottoman State, with the title of Chief Admiral. Thanks to them, the Ottoman State completely took the south and east of the Mediterranean under its geopolitical control (Tarakçı, 2009). The pirates’ base, Barbary became a province called Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid (the Mediterranean Islands) in 1534 (Bostan, 2017).

After this date, the pirates were sea principals in the eyes of the Ottoman State; As Bostan puts it, they were “sea akinjis (raiders)” (Bostan, 2017). In this context, it will be useful to state that the pirates of the Maghreb themselves and their provinces managed to maintain their partial freedom in all conditions and periods. Gürkan states it as follows:

“As long as they did not cause trouble, gave the state the share of the booty and contributed to the Ottoman navy as much as necessary, it was obvious that Istanbul was not very keen on managing these poor provinces. The Istanbul administration appeared as a wise grandfather whose advice was sought and who played the role of an arbitrator in the conflicts among provinces, rather than a master with a stick (Gürkan, 2020, s. 491).

The Ottoman state, which had the strongest navy in the Mediterranean, achieved absolute dominance primarily in Syria (1516) and Egypt (1517) thanks to the shipyards established by the transfer of knowledge of the Turkish pirates and the skilled sailors coming from North Africa. (Bostan, 2009) With the initiative, encouragement and support of the Turkish pirates, Algeria (1529), Tunisia (1534) and Tripoli (1551) joined the Ottoman lands. In addition, the islands of Rhodes (1522) and Cyprus (1571), which had a strategically vital position in the Aegean-Mediterranean axis, were conquered. Thus, the Ottomans consolidated their superiority over the Mediterranean, from Anatolia to Morocco in the 16th century.

The Europeans tried to balance the Ottoman navy, which set out on a campaign in the Mediterranean starting from the spring months every year with its powerful navy, with the search for various alliances against it. Although they wanted to break the Ottoman domination in the Mediterranean forever with such an effort in Preveza in 1538, they could not succeed. The united European armada could not resist the light and fast Ottoman ships with high maneuvering abilities and the dexterity of the chiefs who commanded them. Moreover, the strategic genius of Barbarossa played a great role in this victory. Hayrettin Pasha applied the ‘wolf trap’ strategy used on land to the sea. At the hottest moment of the war, Turgut Reis made a surprise and surrounded the enemy from behind with his boats, which he had kept in reserve, ensuring the victory. Preveza was a turning point in this respect. As Öztuna argues, *“In Preveza, Barbarossa won the greatest naval victory in history by defeating the United European Navy and realizing Turkish domination in the Mediterranean”* (Öztuna, 1965, s. 9).

CONCLUSION

In this study, the formation phenomenon/process of the Turkish-Ottoman sea power and its elements are briefly summarized. The literature on maritime power has been explored. In the light of conceptual/theoretical expansions, attention has been drawn to the internal (physical and metaphysical)

and external motives behind the Ottoman State's creation of a primary 'sea power' in the Mediterranean in the 15th and 16th centuries since it is a good example regarding the issue.

Firstly, it is seen that in the Mediterranean of the Ottoman Empire, geography led the initiative of transforming Anatolia into a homeland, proving the validity of the neo-realist paradigm. Secondly, the effects of the historical heritage of the Turkish states - the Seljuks - residing in Anatolia, which gave the Ottomans a superior sea power, are underlined. The third element of the composition of the Ottoman sea power is undoubtedly the challenge of the conjuncture of the period. Migrations from Andalusia combined with the presence of Turkish pirates in the Mediterranean and created a unique sea power potential in these waters. The fourth and most important point is that this potential was discovered by the Ottoman State administrators. The Ottoman spirit of conquest saw farsightedly that these developing factors should be used, and they knew how to institutionalize this cooperation and put it under the command its sea power and naval forces. This made the Ottoman State a hegemonic actor not only on land but also in the seas.

In order to 'conclude' the subject, mentioning the dissolution of this process beginning from the 17th century clearly indicates the validity of the model in terms of displaying its disintegration: Disintegration started with the return of the ruling elites, who could not grasp the importance of 'sea power' in the Ottoman state to the identity of the land nation again, and the unqualified sea personnel to dominate the maritime activities. The resulting official corruption triggered the regression of the North-West African power into the predatory cultures of the sea raiders who had become the principals of the sea. The power gap led to the shift of this important dynamic to undisciplined piracy. It became difficult to adapt to the requirements of the age, and the maritime power could not renew itself. The Ottomans were unable to influence the Mediterranean in line with their imperial interests. In this environment, the power gap was filled by foreign powers - Russia, England and France. There was a revolutionary 'transition of power' in maritime domination in the Mediterranean.

To sum up, the rise and fall of the Ottoman sea power theoretically includes important initiatives in present-day conditions. It makes it possible to observe from our historical case study that the principles of the neo-realist paradigm contain important lessons in terms of determining the strategies of regional and global states that want to reinforce their sea power today.

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