

RELATIONS BETWEEN OTTOMAN CORSAIRS AND THE IMPERIAL NAVY
IN THE 16th CENTURY

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IN THE 16TH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis endeavors to present an analysis of the nature of the relations between ottoman corsairs and the imperial navy in the 16th century. Recruitment of corsairs as naval officers by Ottoman central authority to make up for the insufficient numbers of skilled seamen was presented as a fact in various works. However, there is no study to explain construction period of this relationship and to define the system. This thesis aims to construct a model to explicate this relationship.

As of the mid-fifteenth century, Ottoman seapower started to strengthen and Empire conquered several crucial harbors and islands in Black sea and Mediterranean until the end of this century. Ottoman Imperial navy gained a strong infrastructure thanks to these conquests. Apart from Imperial navy, Ottoman corsairs' attacks that were based on these harbors increased and they strengthened gradually. In 1495, an old corsair, Kemal Reis was taken into Ottoman service, thus he became a pioneer for the recruitment of corsairs to Imperial Navy. This was a turning point regarding relations between corsairs and imperial navy. Second and more important stage was promotion of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha as a Kapudan Pasha of Imperial Navy in 1534 and formation of *Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid* province as a province of Grand Admiral. Therefore, relations between corsairs based North Africa and central authority grew stronger.

In this study, a subjective periodization for purpose of analysis was used ; Pre-Kapudan Pasha Era, formation of Kapudan Pasha post and post-Lepanto era. On the other hand, both parts of this relation, Ottoman imperial navy and Ottoman corsairs were handled simultaneously. Corsairs could be independent as pirates, semi-dependent as privateers or dependent as naval officers and those were not opposite poles in early modern world. There was not a strict line between legal and illegal acts and this was considered as a part of early modern world in conceptualization of this relationship.

ÖZET

16. YY'DA OSMANLI KORSANLARI İLE MERKEZİ DONANMA ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ

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Tez Danışmanı: Y. Hakan Erdem

Bu tez, 16. yy'da Osmanlı korsanları ile Donanma-i Humayun arasındaki ilişkinin analizini yapmayı amaçlamaktadır. Osmanlı merkezi yönetiminin, korsanları donanma hizmetine alarak onların denizcilik bilgisinden faydalandıkları tezi çeşitli akademik yayınlarda sürekli tekrarlanırsa da bu ilişkinin nasıl kurulduğu ve sistemin nasıl işlediği konusu üzerine bir çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Tezin amacı bu ilişki üzerine bir model kurmaktır.

Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun deniz gücü 15.yy ortalarından itibaren yükselişe geçmiş, imparatorluk, yüzyıl sonuna kadar Karadeniz ve Akdeniz'de pek çok liman ve adayı ele geçirerek donanma için önemli bir altyapıya sahip olmuştur. Bu süreçte merkezi donanma dışında Osmanlı korsanlarının saldırılarında da artış görüldü. Korsanlar da Osmanlı'nın eline geçen adaları ve limanları üs olarak kullanarak saldırılarını gittikçe arttırdılar. 1495 yılında korsan bir reis olan Kemal Reis'in devlet hizmetine alınarak, donanmanın başına getirilmesiyle korsanların donanma hizmetine alınmasının önü açıldı. Bu korsan-merkez ilişki açısından bir dönüm noktası oldu. İkinci ve daha önemli aşama ise 1534 yılında Barbaros Hayrettin'in Kapudan-ı deryalığa getirilmesi ve Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid eyaletinin kurularak Kapudan Paşa'ya bağlanmasıydı. Bu tarihten itibaren Kuzey Afrika'yı üs olarak kullanan korsanlar ile merkez arasındaki ilişkiler güçlendi.

Çalışmada, konuyla ilgili olarak; Barbaros Hayrettin paşa öncesi dönem, kapudan paşa dönemi ve İnebahtı savaşı sonrası dönem olmak üzere öznel bir dönemleştirmeye gidilmiş, bununla birlikte ilişkinin iki tarafı merkez donanma ve korsanlar birlikte ele alınmaya çalışılmıştır. Donanma hizmetine alınan korsanlar, devletin izniyle düşman kıyılarına ve gemilerine “yasal” yağmada bulunan yarı-bağımsız korsanlar ve Osmanlı kıyılarına saldıran “harami” korsanların devlet açısından konumları tanımlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu değerlendirme yapılırken erken modern çağda yasal-yasadışı arasındaki çizginin çok net olmadığı vurgulanmış ve bu durum korsan-merkez arası ilişkilerin kavramsallaştırılmasında gözönüne alınmıştır.

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Ömürlerini beni adam etmeye adayan anneme, babama
ve doğdukları günden beri bana katlanan Fatih ile Ferda'ya...

Tez konumu seçmemde farkında olmadan bana yardımcı
olan İhsan Oktay Anar'a teşekkürlerimle:

“Kimdir bu Kırbaç Süleyman?”

“Korsanın teki işte! Geçmişini de geleceğini de, yedi ceddini de
bilsen ne çıkar, kerksen ne çıkar.”

(İhsan Oktay Anar, Amat, p 81)

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Introduction

...The thing happened thus: Uchali, king of Algiers, *a bold and successful corsair*, having attacked and mastered the flagship of Malta, in which there remained only three knights alive, and these desperately wounded, the vessel commanded by Giovanni Andrea Doria, in which my company was stationed, hastened to her relief, and I doing my duty on that occasion, leaped into the enemy's ship, which disengaging herself immediately from our galley that was grappled with her, my soldiers were prevented from following their officer, and I found myself alone among my foes, whom, by reason of their numbers, I could not resist; therefore was obliged to submit, after having been almost covered over with wounds; and Uchali, as you have heard, having saved himself with his whole squadron, I remained his prisoner. I was carried to Constantinople, where Selim the Grand Turk, created my master general of the sea, for having done his duty in the battle...¹

Uchali, afore mentioned, is Uluç Ali Reis who had managed to return to Istanbul with his squadron, in the war of Lepanto. This quote is not taken from a historical document, a prisoner's letter, or a memoir. It belongs to a fictional character, participated to Lepanto naval battle in Cervantes's masterpiece, *Don Quixote*. Cervantes was actually among the Christian warriors who fought at Lepanto in 1571. Told by a witness at first hand, there is a possibility that this scene roughly corresponds to reality.²

However, there is confusion about the rank of Kılıç Ali Reis in this short citation. As to the text, he was “King of Algiers” and a “brave and bold corsair”, then

¹ Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote*, trans. by Tobias George Smollet (Barnes & Noble Classics 2004) p 332

² Cervantes lost his left arm in this war but has not been captured. In 1572, as soon as he gets well, he again sailed to sea, and in 1575, traveling from Naples to Spain, he was taken prisoner by Memi Reis, a Turkish corsair who was often referred in the records of *Mühimmes*. Cervantes was then; brought to Algeria where he lived for five years, until his liberation, following the payment of 500 escudo gold by the Trinitarian order, as ransom.

he returned to the Istanbul with his squadron at the end of the war and became the Grand Admiral of Ottoman Imperial Navy. This poses us some questions about the position of Kılıç Ali Reis in historical context.

If he was a corsair, why did he participate in a naval battle between the Ottoman Imperial Navy and the Holy League? Was he a corsair and King of Algiers at the same time? What was the nature of the relationship between Algiers and Istanbul? Was the king of Algiers dependent to Istanbul and was he a naval officer³ of the Imperial Navy? If he was, how could he be both simultaneously? These are the difficult questions to answer. It is an even more formidable task to analyze the relations between Ottoman corsairs and the Ottoman Imperial Navy in the 16th century. This requires a close examination of the two sides of this relationship.

Before analyzing the relationship between Ottoman corsairs and the Ottoman Imperial navy, which has been usually seen as a blurred and dangerous area, a literature survey of secondary sources would help us to underline the controversial points of this multifaceted question. Before all we should mention that these two entities, closely associated with each other, should not be handled independently. In spite of this obvious link, many of the studies on Mediterranean corsairs and the Ottoman navy are limited in the scope they cover.

There exist several studies trying to understand this relationship within the wider framework of the formation process of European royal navies. During the 16th century maritime activities and naval warfare shifted from the Mediterranean to Western and Northern Europe. Consequently, Ottoman naval power turned into a “peripheral enemy.” Structuring of European royal navies, thanks to cooptation and integration of pirates/privateers is analyzed as a part of general state-formation process in early modern era. This view point view focusing on Atlantic warfare and North European navies precludes Ottoman naval structure, as well as the other Mediterranean navies. Besides, political, social and economical dynamics of the Ottoman Empire and the peculiar characteristics of the Mediterranean are usually neglected. On the other hand,

³ In this work, naval officer means seamen served Ottoman Imperial Navy.

Ottomanists have never focused on similarities and dichotomies between Ottoman naval structure and European navy systems of the 16th century. Comparison of the structures and consequences of the decline of the Ottoman seapower are dealt very superficially.

Despite the scanty number of studies, the topic of “the Ottoman warfare at sea” in reference to the Mediterranean world was approached with different perspectives by several scholars. This useful debate might give us an overall idea for sixteenth-century Mediterranean world. First, summary of this debate, then a literature survey about corsairs may provide us a general framework before focusing on Ottoman corsairs.

Ottoman Seapower in the 16th century has been always a controversial topic among modern scholars. First studies on the Ottoman naval activities were published in the first half of the 20th century. They were generally descriptive works rather than conceptual. Several scholars made the first contributions to Ottoman naval history with articles, books and publishing primary sources. As an example, the crucial one of these initial works was published by İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı.⁴ This study describes Ottoman naval organization in detail and provides crucial information for further investigations. However, this study does not aim to discuss Mediterranean naval conflict in a comparative perspective.

In 1949, Braudel's *magnum opus* on the Mediterranean civilizations was published.⁵ In this revolutionary work, Braudel tries to explain historical and cultural unity of the Mediterranean civilizations. Ottoman navy as an important actor in the *courte durée* of Mediterranean is handled under the subtitle, “Events, Politics and People”. Considering our research, Braudel examines pirates as instruments of a different type of war called “little war”. However, Piracy is analyzed in the *second duree* as one of the social groupings, constituting an integral element of civilization. He emphasizes the importance of piracy/privateer for Mediterranean history but he does not focus on relationship between corsairs and royal navies. Piracy is handled as a part of Mediterranean social history, rooted in antiquity. We should repeat here one of his main

⁴ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Merkez ve Bahriye Teşkilatı*, (Türk Tarih Kurumu basımevi, Ankara, 1948)

⁵ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the age of Philip II*, (University of California Press, 1995)

points about piracy. Braudel emphasizes that privateering in the 16th century was not the exclusive domain of any single group or seaport. There was no single culprit. He underlines that western historians have put forward corsairs of Islam but in fact, privateering was all over the Mediterranean.⁶ In this study, phenomenon of piracy/privateering will be discussed in a wider perspective as a crucial part of Mediterranean world in the 16th century. Going back to Ottoman Seapower, this work presents the conflicts in Mediterranean but he does not attempt to establish a framework about Ottoman naval policy.

This model presented by Braudel was challenged by Andrew Hess⁷. While Braudel draws the picture of an integrated Mediterranean world, Hess underlines the diversity in the 16th century Mediterranean world. He tries to explain Mediterranean as a world fragmented into different, well-defined cultural spheres. In his work, Ottoman Empire is defined as an anti-Iberian civilization, distinct in its ideological, structural and constitutional structures. In his view, even if Braudel shows the similarities between the experiences of these two cultures such as inflation, population increase, diseases or climatic change, the Mediterranean cannot be illustrated without accepted cumulative divergence of two civilizations characterized in distinctive features for the 16th century.⁸ He claims that the gap between the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburgs gradually widened during the 16th century. In this rivalry, Ottoman Empire was positioned as a land-based empire which could not adopt to new technologies and new economic tendencies. To explain this dichotomy between the Iberian and Turco-Muslim civilizations, Hess focuses on Africa-Iberian frontier zone as a dividing line between empires.⁹ This work was a reflection of “Europe and the Orient” vision. This conceptualization based on the sphere of politics established in the sixteenth century

⁶ Braudel, *The Mediterranean*, 867

⁷ Andrew C. Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier, A History of the Sixteenth-Century Ibero-African Frontier*, (University of Chicago Press, 1978)

⁸ op. cit 207

⁹ For an alternative attempt to Braudel and Hess, see Molly Green “*A shared world, Christians and Muslims in the early modern Mediterranean*” (New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2000) In this work, Green presents eastern mediterranean as a point of three civilisations; Latin Christiniy, Eastern Orthodoxy and Islam. She examines Crete in this context. This work concludes the continuity in the island under the rule of Venetians and Ottomans.

and several works are still influenced by this approach in the study of politics, economies and histories¹⁰ like Hess' one.

This study remained as a unique work about socio-political environment of 16th century Mediterranean until Palmira Brummet presented *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery*.¹¹ This work constructed a new Mediterranean world completely opposite of the one presented by Hess. Brummet interprets Ottoman expansion in a radically different way from that of Hess. Brummet's main argument is the following: "The objectives of Ottoman expansion in the sixteenth century were the same as those of European voyages of discovery: wealth, power, glory, religious legitimation."¹² In this study, Ottoman commercial interests and Ottoman navy's role in shaping Ottoman foreign affairs is analyzed. Brummet concludes her study with the illustration of the "inadequacy of Christian-Muslim or Oriental-Occidental polarizations for explaining the evolution and articulation of political and economic policy among the contender states in the Levantine world."¹³

Brummet's comparative perspective and critical approach to existing historiography of the Age of Discovery is criticized by Hess.¹⁴ According to Hess, Brummet's study covering only the first decades of the 16th century, leaves the following period out. According to him, Brummet does not attempt to make a comparison between Ottomans and their European counterparts. This work excludes the scientific developments and the naval technological differences between empires.

These missing points in Brummet's study were completed satisfactorily by Giancarlo Casale. He justified and developed the original thesis established by Brummet.¹⁵ Casale takes his place in the recent revisionist trend in the Ottoman

¹⁰ Cemal Kafadar, "The Ottomans and Europe", in *Handbook of European History 1400-1600, Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation*, eds. By Thomas A. Brady Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, James D. Tracy (Leiden; New York: E.J.Brill, 1994) p.615

¹¹ Palmira Brummet, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994)

¹² Brummet, *ibid*, 2

¹³ Brummet, *ibid*, 179

¹⁴ Hess, "Book Review : Ottoman seapower and levantine diplomacy in the Age of Discovery, by Palmira Brummet," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 27/3 (1995), 377-380

¹⁵ Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration: Spices, Maps and Conquest in the Sixteenth-Century Indian Ocean*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 2004

historiography, by trying to place the Ottoman Empire within the context of the world history. He focuses on the conflict in the Indian Ocean between the Portuguese and the Ottomans. This study begins with the conquest of Egypt in 1517 and covers the entire century chronologically until the last naval expedition of the Ottomans in the Indian Ocean in 1589. Finally he examines thematically the similarities between Ottomans and contemporary Western intellectual life in the “Discovery Age” context.

Apart from this debate on the role of the Ottoman seapower in world history, several studies published provided a wealth of data and paved the way for new researches. An extensive article of Imber based on his Ph. D. thesis about the navy of Suleiman I¹⁶, Bostan's Ph. D. thesis about *Tersane-i Amire*, his articles¹⁷, and the publication of some papers presented in several symposiums¹⁸ are prominent works over Ottoman naval history. This accumulation of studies on the Ottoman naval history -even it is still limited- aided the construction of a new perspective on Ottoman seapower. However, none of these works focus on the effect of Ottoman pirates/privateers in the assessment of Ottoman seapower.

On the other hand, there is a great number of publications related to Mediterranean piracy. As mentioned above, the pioneer of this field was Braudel who mentioned the importance of piracy in the Mediterranean world of the 16th century. Some other works were published following Braudel's remark. Fisher handled Barbary corsairs as a side of diplomatic and trading relations between England and Barbary, despite their image as the bloody murderers of the seas.¹⁹ His work covering the period between the early 15th and 19th centuries focuses on English diplomatic relations with Barbary. Earle conceives piracy as a part of Mediterranean economy and studies the corsairs of Barbary and Malta together.²⁰ This work covers the 17th and the 18th

¹⁶ Imber, Colin, “The Navy of Suleyman the Magnificent,” *Archivum Ottomanicum* VI/1980

¹⁷ Bostan's phd thesis was published titled “*Osmanlı Bahriye Teşkilatı : 17. yy'da Tersane-i Amire*” (TTK Yayınları, Ankara, 1992) Bostan gathered major part of his articles in *Beylikten İmparatorluğa Osmanlı Denizciliği*, (Kitap Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2006)

¹⁸ Özlem Kumrular(ed), *Türkler ve Deniz*, (İstanbul, Kitap Yayınevi, 2006) and Elizabeth Zachariadou(ed) *Kapudan Pasha , His office and his domain: Holycon days in Crete IV*. (Crete Univesity Press, Renthymon, 2002)

¹⁹ Godfrey Fisher, *Barbary Legend; War, Trade, and Piracy in North Africa, 1415-1830*, (Clerandon Press, Oxford, 1957)

²⁰ Earle, Peter, *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*, (Sidgwick & Jackson , London, 1970)

centuries. The most attractive period for the studies on piracy is between 1575 and 1620. In this era, power of piracy reached its peak point and pirates became a leading actor of Mediterranean history. Especially, piratical activities in the Adriatic constitute the main theme of some publications. Alberto Tenenti showed the impact of piracy in the decline of Venice in his research.²¹ Subject of Bracewell's work was piratical activities of Uskoks in Adriatic for the same period.²² In a recent publication, Bostan focused on not only activities of Uskoks but also Ottoman and Venetian pirates.²³ Heers studied on the Barbary corsairs as well from 14th century to 16th centuries. He examined the internal affairs of Algiers²⁴ Pryor emphasized the importance of privateering in the balance of seapowers in Mediterranean and he assesses the corsairs as a crucial element of this rivalry. Yet, he does not mention the corsairs in the service of the navies.²⁵ Apart from these publications, an unpublished Ph. D. thesis prepared by Şenay Özdemir is available. This thesis covers almost the whole 18th century and includes rich data about Ottoman pirates/privateers²⁶ These are the prominent works on Mediterranean piracy.²⁷ However, these works generally focus on the last decades of 16th century and the following periods. Besides, none of them are interested in the relationship between corsairs and imperial navies.

Very few historians have tried to construct an analytical framework for the impact/support of corsairs in the formation process of Royal Navies. Jan Glete shows the integration of privateers to the navies in the foundation process of European royal navies. According to Glete, this process was an integral part of the state formation²⁸

²¹ Tenenti, Alberto, *Piracy and the Decline of Venice : 1580-1615* (London, Longsman, 1967)

²² Bracewell, Catherine Wendy, *16.yy'da Adriyatik'te Korsanlık ve Eşkiyalık*, (İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009)

²³ Bostan, İdris, *Adriyatik'te korsanlık, Osmanlılar, Üskoklar ve Venedikliler 1575-1620*, (Timaş Yayınları, İstanbul, 2009)

²⁴ Heers, Jacques, *Les barbaresques - la Course et la Guerre en Méditerranée, XIVe et XVIe siècle*, (Edition Perrin, Paris, 2001)

²⁵ John H. Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War : Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean 649-1571*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, 1992

²⁶ Özdemir, Şenay, *Akdeniz Hakimiyetinde Osmanlı Devleti ve Korsanlık 1695-1789*, Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Ankara Üniversitesi 2004

²⁷ My work does not include piracy of Atlantic. There are great numbers of work related Atlantic piracy as well. A rich literature survey based on Atlantic piracy written by C. R. Pennell could be find in introduction chapter of "*Bandits at sea : A pirate Reader*" (NYU Press, New York, 2001) p 3-24

²⁸ Glete, Jan, *Warfare at Sea 1500-1650, Maritime Conflict and the Transformation of Europe*, Routledge, New York, 2000.

Thomson presents an original framework about corsair-state relationship as well. He analyzed this process with regards to transition period between early modern state and modern state.²⁹ Even if these two crucial publications focused on the European cases and relatively late periods (especially Thomson focuses on the period between the 17th century and the 20th centuries) they provided me a broader perspective for the examination of the relationship between Ottoman corsairs and the Imperial Navy in the 16th century.

Even if all these studies on Ottoman seapower, corsairs and corsair impact on state formation, provide a ground for my thesis, there exists no academic publication on the relations between Ottoman corsairs and the Imperial Navy in the 16th century. However, Ottoman corsairs are attractive figures for novelists. Barbaros Hayrettin, Kılıç Ali or Turgut Reis were usually illustrated as brave Turkish seamen and enemies of infidels.³⁰ These stories are shaped around the theme of “Mediterranean transforming into a Turkish lake thanks to these corsairs.” These fictions take the corsairs and not the Ottoman imperial navy as the main actors of Mediterranean. Yet, both parts of this motto are totally wrong: Mediterranean was never transformed into a Turkish lake and if it would be realized, this would not be by the hands of the corsairs but that of the Ottoman navy. Analysis of nationalistic reflections on historical novels about Ottoman corsairs is beyond the scope of this study. Yet, the fact that there are several novels on the issue despite the lack of academic researches is worth to be mentioned.

Countless questions may be posed about this subject. However this study can not cover all the aspects. I will focus on the following question: “What was the nature of the relationship between Ottoman corsairs and the Ottoman Imperial Navy?” Trying to answer the question I tried to comprehend both parts of this relation; Ottoman

²⁹ Thomson, Janice E., *Mercenaries, pirates, and sovereigns. State-building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton 1994)

³⁰ Tülbentçi, Feridun Fazıl, *Şanlı Kadırgalar: Büyük Tarihi Roman* (İstanbul : İnkilap ve Aka Kitabevi 1963), *Barbaros Hayrettin Geliyor* (İstanbul, İnkilap ve Aka Kitabevi, 1974) , *Turgut Reis* (İstanbul: İnkilap ve Aka yayınevi: 1962) Halikarnas Balıkcısı, *Turgut Reis* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi: 1996), Uluç Reis (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi: 1997), For a recent example of this line, Alper Uygur, *Bizim Korsanlar: Akdeniz'i Köpürten Osmanlı Leventleri* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları ,2009) Murat Belge wrote an article about nationalistic tendency in these books of Halikarnas Balıkcısı as well; Belge, Murat, *Türklerin Anayurdu 'Anadolu' in Genesis: Büyük Ulusal Anlatı ve Türklerin Kökeni*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları: 2008)

Seapower and Ottoman corsairs. In general, this relationship is handled in three periods; before the kapudan pasha – the kapudan pasha era – the post Lepanto era.

In the first chapter, I tried to overcome terminological problem. Then I constructed a conceptual framework as a guide for my thesis. Finally in the last part of this chapter, I tried to deal with the history of Mediterranean piracy/privateering briefly until the emergence of Ottoman corsairs.

In second chapter, after a chronological presentation of formative period of Ottoman seapower, I tried to analyze the simultaneous rise of the Ottoman corsairs and the seapower. Following this part, historiography of Ottoman corsairs as sea *ghazis* was discussed. Last part of this chapter covers the reigns of Selim I and first decades of Suleiman I, until the formation of the province of Kapudan Pasha. The rise of the Ottoman seapower and the establishment of the Barbarossas in North Africa were also examined.

Third chapter is the main and the most intensive part of this work. This chapter presents the new structure of relationship between corsairs and the Imperial Navy in the Kapudan Pasha's era. This was a new era that has begun with the engagement of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha with the Ottoman navy as a Grand Admiral.

Fourth and the last chapter is on the “decline” of Ottoman Seapower. I tried to analyze the reasons of this “decline” and transformation of the relationship in post-Lepanto era was presented in this chapter, as well.

Finally, a few words about the scope of this study. Ransom and slavery were certainly a crucial part of piracy/privateering. However this study does not cover these topics. Naval technology of the 16th century was another determinant factor of this subject. Therefore, this could not be excluded totally but examining naval technology of the 16th century is not among the aims of this study, and it is given place only as far as it is related to our main theme.

CHAPTER I

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF PIRACY / PRIVATEERING

I. 1: Explanation of Terminology

Today piracy simply denotes illegal acts of pillage and plunder, and those who exercise such acts are called pirates in other words brigands at sea. However, in its historical course “piracy” conveyed two different meanings, as in the modern senses of piracy and privateering, as opposed to the single Turkish equivalent of *korsanlık*. Additionally the interchangeable usage of *levend* and *korsan*, as seen in historical sources, contributes to a general conflation of the distinct senses. Therefore it is necessary to overcome this terminological problem by analyzing the difference between piracy and privateering and by positing them against each other.

In terms of their activities and operations, there were no essential differences between piracy and privateering. Both were based on capturing a ship as their prey, seizing property or forcing ships ashore and then plundering them. The principle difference between these two notions was legal. While the first one was an act of robbery without any legal support and/or legitimate ground, the second was a form of plunder in the knowledge of and even supervision by the state, and were aimed at the ships and shores of hostile countries. In order to be recognized as a privateering ship, a privately owned ship required a special permit for privateering from the state. This license/permit, *lettre de marque / commision en course*, also granted the privateering ship the right to use that state’s harbors and logistical support if needed. In return, the privateering ship was obliged to pay a share of the booty to the state. Furthermore, the

ship had the option to join any battle along the navy of the king's ships it was attached to.

Privateers were distinguished from the navy ships in the ways that they were both privately owned and were under the command of non-officer private individuals; and from the pirates, in such a way that they took part in acts of pillaging with an official permit.³¹ Nevertheless, this license lacks a strict definition of borders and circumstances. The privateer had a commission from a recognized authority to take action against a designated enemy, but if the privateer were to attack a neutral or an ally ship, they are reprimanded in spite of the existence of a *lettre de marque*. On the other hand, a captain without a *lettre de marque* who only attacked enemy ships was not considered a pirate.³²

In European languages this distinction was generally compensated by two different words (piracy / *piratrie* / *private* and privateering / *course* / *corsaire*) but in its *modus vivendi* they were far from being distinct. Moreover, they are not institutionalized structures; in practice there is not an absolute difference between them. It is not possible to speak of clearly defined identities between pirates and privateers. Seamen were called after one or the other identity, but in fact while a plunder was directed against an enemy at a time, the next one could be against allies and/or coreligionists. Therefore it was hard to discern the difference between pirate and privateer, for their activities or operations. Guilmartin's example is useful to illustrate the difficulty of the concept.³³ A Spanish document from 1551 contains detailed information about Dimas de Gustaldo, who owned a *fusta* (a small oared warship); and his campaign to the Aegean Sea. Captain Gustaldo, after leaving Messina, first plundered small boats belonging to Turks and Armenians, then plundered a wheat carrying cargo ship coming from Alexandria. Later on, he boarded a Genoese ship that was in alliance with the Spanish. He enters a small harbor in the Morea and attacks

³¹ Seha L. Meray, "Bazı Türk Anlaşmalarına göre Korsanlık ve Deniz Haydutluğunun Yasaklanması," *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, v: XVIII (1963) 116

³² Kenneth R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering, English Privateering During The Spanish War 1585-1603* (Glasgow: Cambridge University Press 1964) p 5

³³ John Francis Guilmartin Jr. "Gunpowder and Galleys, Changing Technology and Mediterranean Warfare At Sea In Sixteenth Century" (Oxford : Cambridge University Press, 1974) p 23-25

small merchant ships, taking 40 captives. Of these captives he returns the Christians to the shore, keeping the Muslims. The same day, he robs a Venetian ship. Lastly, he captures a Florentine ship, again an ally of the Spanish. He sold back the ship he captured from the Turks for 500 ducats. Taking all these raids into account, are Gustaldo and his men a unit linked to Spanish navy and commissioned to raid enemy merchant ships, or simple thieves? This gray zone makes it hard to match the actual activities to neat categories and conceptual boundaries of piracy for historians, as the events and the operations of the pirates run their courses.

As previously noted, in Ottoman Turkish there weren't two different words for the pirate/privateer distinction; the word *korsan* was used for both of terms. The word *korsan* has passed to Turkish from Arabic *kursan*. The etymological root of the word is based on Italian *corsaro*.³⁴ But even though there weren't two different terms, in practice the pirate/privateer distinction did exist. Privateers, or exchangeable, corsairs, as long as they raided the enemy ships, were called sea *ghazis*; however in the event that they raided Ottoman ships, shores or privileged ships they were called as *harami korsan* (bandit corsair).³⁵ At this point it should be pointed out that in this chapter piracy is only deciphered terminologically. The debate concerning the historical use of the word "ghazi" and its religious and other connotations will be analyzed in the following chapters.

The word *korsan* was also used in Ottoman Turkish, in addition to its meanings of pirate and corsair, for experienced seaman.³⁶ For example, Seydi Ali Reis relates his survival of a great storm in Mirat'ül Memalik to his experience in seamanship and there proclaims himself as a *korsan*. As told by Seydi Ali Reis, Muslim people of Gujarat says that;

Such a great storm has never seen since Noah's era, but from the era of Adam to this time, never has a corsair, that is, a captain versed in the

³⁴ C. H. Pellat, "Kursan" *Encyclopedia of Islam*, C.V, p 502

³⁵ İdris Bostan, "Adriyatik'te Korsanlar ve Deniz Gazileri," *Toplumsal Tarih* 127 (July 2004)

³⁶ Henry and Renée Kahane, and Andreas Tietze, *The lingua franca in the Levant: Turkish nautical terms of Italian and Greek origin*, (İstanbul: ABC Kitabevi , 1988) p 194

science of navigation, come from the Land of Rumi to these parts of India.³⁷

Additionally, even though Seydi Ali Reis called himself a corsair, it should be noted that he was a seaman educated in the dockyards and never operated as a pirate in a way that resembles above described senses. Both his grandfather, originally from Sinop, and his father were dockyard custodians (*kethüda*) in Istanbul.³⁸ We encounter a similar example in Katip Çelebi's chronicles. Katip, while narrating the Battle of Lepanto (*Inebahti*), describes Kapudan-ı Derya (Fleet Admiral) Müezzinzade Ali Paşa as "in fact, Kapudan Pasha was an eager and serviceable man but he has not experienced at naval battle and did not know the science of corsair."³⁹

Another word in Ottoman sources to counter corsairs/pirates was *levend*. *Levends* were divided into two as land and sea *levends* and in seamanship, it was used to represent seamen who operated with corsairs and corsair captains (*korsan reisleri*)⁴⁰. In contemporary sources of the time *levend reisleri* were generally used, meaning corsairs⁴¹; but some entries in *mühimme* records illustrate that *levend*, *korsan levendler*, *eşkiya levendler* were other usages that stood for pirate.⁴² Even in its earlier usage, the word *levend*, which started to appear in historical sources from the second half of the 15th century onwards, denoted only corsairs / pirates in the senses we mentioned above. After *levends* were incorporated into the navy and became a combatant force, the term *levend* was also used for the navy personnel.⁴³

³⁷ Seydi Ali Reis, *Mirat'ül Memalik*, transcribed by Dr Mehmet Kiremit (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurum Yayınları, 1999) p 90

³⁸ Cengiz Orhonlu, "Seydi Ali Reis," *İ.Ü.E.F. Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* v.1 (İstanbul :1970) p 39-56

³⁹ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr Fi Esfâri'l-Bihâr* (İstanbul: Kabcacı Yayinevi, 2007) p 115

⁴⁰ Mustafa Cezar, *Osmanlı Tarihinde Levendler* (İstanbul : İstanbul Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi Yayınları : 1965) p 17

⁴¹ İdris Bostan, *Adriyatikte korsanlık, ve deniz gazileri*, p.64

⁴² Several examples;

MD, H951-952 tarihli (1544/1545) E 12321 hüküm no:386

MD, 5 numaralı mühimme defteri, (973-1565/1566) (*Ankara :T.C. Başbakanlık devlet arşivleri genel müdürlüğü, Osmanlı arşivi daire başkanlığı 1994*) hüküm no: 215, 244, 1318

MD, 7 numaralı mühimme defteri (975/976 - 1567/69) (*Ankara :T.C. Başbakanlık devlet arşivleri genel müdürlüğü, Osmanlı arşivi daire başkanlığı 1997*) hüküm no:1431, 1515

⁴³ Cezar, *Levendler*, p 173

I. 2: The Conceptual Framework of Piracy / Privateering in the Early Modern Era

Outlining a framework, at this point, for piracy on the one hand and relationship between pirates and states on the other, will surely contribute to the development of the chapters ahead.⁴⁴ Above all, the economic aspect of privateering should be underlined. As Braudel mentions, “privateering was a means of making of living”,⁴⁵ therefore, the corsair⁴⁶ is someone who is engaged in trade. The corsair must report to people who invested money, equipped necessary ships, provided necessary supplies for corsairs. Even though the ship belongs to the corsair captain, he has to share his spoils with the authority that lets him use ports. Additionally, privateering was not an occupation one could do for a whole year. Considering the maritime technologies of the 16th century, within certain logistical limits some raiding activity could be carried out in winter months too. But the vast bulk of the raids were in the spring and summer months when the ships were at sail. Consequently, in this short time period the corsairs had to earn enough to last a year. In short, the principal aim of the corsair raids was to seize commercial goods and take captives and later to sell them.⁴⁷ If handled the economic aspect of the privateering in the specificity of the Ottoman corsairs, the treatise (*risale*) of Koçi Bey seems to confirm Braudel’s assertion, “Algerian ships include *levends*. These ships sail to the domains of Christians and capture Christian ships when they come across. Their livelihood is in this way.”⁴⁸ Briefly, privateering and armed ships were a type of investment and were an inseparable part of economic system. They had permits, were supported and presided by the political authorities who provided these

⁴⁴ For the backbone of this part, see; Halil Berktaş and Tosun Terzioğlu, “Osmanlı Denizcilik Tarihinin Evrensel, Karşılaştırmalı ve Teorik Çerçevesi”, in *Türkler ve Deniz*, ed. Özlem Kumrular (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2007) p 118 – 122.

⁴⁵ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (University of California Press, 1995).

⁴⁶ The terms of corsair and privateer will be used interchangeably in this work. Beginning from 17th century “Privateer” was used as a term in European documents instead of “corsair.” Both of them have same meaning.

⁴⁷ Miguel Angel de Buenes Ibarra, “Osmanlı berberi korsanlığı ve İspanya sahilleri,” *Toplumsal Tarih* v:127 (July 2004) p 74

⁴⁸ Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey Risaleleri* (İstanbul : Kabalıcı Yayınevi 2009) p 142 – my translation

privileges in exchange of a share from their spoils.⁴⁹ Because of these reasons, Rhodes, one of the most important corsair harbors in the beginning of the 16th century, became a rich port town. In Rhodes, every type of smuggled goods and slave trade were available; and the knights and their folk not only joined the ranks of the corsairs but their religious leaders gladly opened the harbors, sometimes even by invitation.⁵⁰ On the Ottoman side, the markets for booty were corsair bases such as *Seferihisar*, *Milet* and *Antalya*.⁵¹ In the period, which saw a growth and enlargement in piratical activities, seized goods from Alexandria-Istanbul, Istanbul-Venice and Marseilles-Barcelona routes were auctioned in markets of Algeria, Tunis, Malta and Leghorn. The prices these goods fetched were naturally considerably less than the price that they would have had at their port of origin. That's to say, "privateering was thus another system of exchange".⁵²

Therefore, corsairs' means of subsistence was based on booty. The routes which saw a rise in ship traffic at certain times of the year, intersections of difference routes or places within were all suitable hunting grounds, or convenient spots for raiding. It was more of a necessity than a luxury that the corsair bases were in close proximity to these areas. Basically, there were two important variables for the cruising range of the light galliots that the corsairs used in Mediterranean. The first one was the speed of the galliots. Since they were oared ships, they could reach high speed in short distance in relation to sailing ships however they could not keep on this speed for a long time. Therefore average speed of oared ships was low unlike sailing ships. The second variable that brings out the importance of the first variable was that the galliots had serious limitations of stowage capacities for provision. Taking into account that corsairs could not enter many ports as the commercial ships could, they had to be loaded with supplies that would last longer; also they had to store arms and had to keep decks of their ships clear in case of a sea battle. Additionally the galliots had a greater crew considering their weight. In these circumstances, water reserves for a normal light galley or galliot were sufficient for two or three weeks in maximum. This logistical

⁴⁹ John H. Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean 649-1571* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992) p 154-155

⁵⁰ Nicolas Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar: Doğu Akdeniz'de Savaş, Diplomasi ve Korsanlık* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları: 2000) p 55-56

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁵² Peter Earle, *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1970) p 16

limitation, in addition to their speed, limited the galleys' cruising range to a maximum of 960 sea miles.⁵³

Because of these reasons, the maintenance of convenient bases was an integral part of raiding operations. The proximity of these bases to target areas was making the raids more effective and reducing the costs; thus, modest though, the raids could be carried on in winter. Also, fortified ports offered protection against enemy warships.⁵⁴ The survival for corsairs depended on their ability to use some ports and being protected by the port authorities under a minor prince or a greater sovereign.

As we mentioned above, pirates / corsairs existed where commerce is active. But it was not the only condition. Lively commerce was only one of the necessary preconditions. Besides that throughout history, piracy / privateering has arisen in periods in which the political realm has changed. In naval history, corsair attacks have arisen in frontier regions where no single authority could have outdone the rest of the contenders, or if an emergent power had claims about a trading zone and a struggle ensued between two powers. The prize of the piracy is economic, the dynamic that drives it is political.⁵⁵ Ottoman corsairs appeared in the Aegean when the Ottomans began to settle in the Aegean islands and Eastern Mediterranean coastline from the mid-15th century onwards. In the first decades of the 16th century, after Eastern Mediterranean became under the control of the Ottoman rule, the axis of corsair activities had shifted to Central and Western Mediterranean, and Algeria became the main base of corsair raids. After Rhodes, the Christian center of corsairs in the Mediterranean, was captured by the Ottomans, the new area of struggle became Central Mediterranean and Malta happened to be the most important corsair base, together with Sardinia, Tuscany, Sicily, as other corsair ports of importance.

The privateering was an integral part of the maritime activities in the ocean, as well as Mediterranean. Even though navy fleets did sail in the Mediterranean besides the pirates, it is misleading to talk about great royal navies in the sixteenth-century

⁵³ Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*, p 71 - 86

⁵⁴ Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys*, p 97

⁵⁵ Anne-Purotin Dumon, "The Pirate and the Emperor: Power and The Law on the Seas, 1450-1850," in *Bandits at Sea: A Pirate Reader*, ed. C. R. Pennell (New York: NYU Press, 2001) p 26

Atlantic. Inability of the states to build large navies of their own was the greater part of the reason. To summarize the way Anderson quotes from Thompson, sea war means for Atlantic “was a war not of states but of subjects, not of navies but privateers, corsairs and armed merchantmen”.⁵⁶ As early as 1523, one of the Norman captains, Jean Florin, had been raiding the Spanish ships coming back from Mexico in the vicinity of Canary Islands and the Azores.⁵⁷ It was with the help of these corsairs that the English started to disrupt the Spanish hegemony in the Atlantic. Queen Elisabeth’s privateers, as epitomized by Captain Drake, caused much damage to Spanish by organizing raids to the islands under Spanish rule such as Caribbeans, New Cartagena, Cape Verde. After 1580, English and Dutch privateers entered the Mediterranean and altered the commercial patterns and the balance of power in the Mediterranean, notably forcing the Venetians out of business. The Dutch corsairs, who took the stage in the second half of the 16th century, started to raid Spanish ships under the protection of William, Prince of Orange, after Philip II directly intervened in the Dutch administration that was under Spanish rule. They co-operated with French-Huguenot and English privateers with French letters of marquee, and together they could use English and French ports, as well as Emden in Germany, as bases. Between 1568 and 1572, this coalition from North Sea to Azores and Canaries was influential in this area.⁵⁸

From the end of the 16th century, English corsairs used Ottoman ports too for their operations. *Divan-ı Hümayun* had been receiving complaints about the English corsairs from the French consul and the Venetian *bailo* in Istanbul, reporting that some English corsair ships disguised as commercial ships were raiding the French and Venetian commercial freighters they encountered at sea or in some ports. The English privateers, since they were far off from their homelands, visited the nearby ports of their allies, the Ottomans, offering gifts and selling the booty to Ottoman administrators.⁵⁹ But privateering, was a peculiar combative strategy like a double-edged blade that could

⁵⁶ M. S. Anderson, *The Origins of the Modern European State System, 1494-1618* (London and New York: Longman, 1998) p 27-28

⁵⁷ Dumon, “The Pirate and the Emperor,” p 30

⁵⁸ Jan Glede, *Warfare at Sea 1500-1650: Maritime Conflict and the Transformation of Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2000) p 153

⁵⁹ İdris Bostan, *Adriyatik'te korsanlık: Osmanlılar, Üskoklar ve Venedikliler 1575-1620* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2009) p 50

hurt its wielder, too. Queen Elizabeth ordered the English ports to be cleared out of the Dutch pirates, also known as Sea Beggars, who began to raid English ships⁶⁰. A similar decree regarding Ottoman ports was issued by Suleiman in the middle of the century. After the Ottoman control in the Aegean was ensured, Ottoman government attempted to control the activities of corsairs, forbidding the construction of privateer vessels without special permission.⁶¹ However, that was not a solution and Muslim pirates never disappeared from the Aegean.

On the other hand, for early modern states the corsairs were sources that could not be dispensed with. As we noted, at this time the struggle in the Atlantic was essentially based on privateers and privateering. The high costs of shipbuilding and scarcity of resources in some periods were major barriers for states to reserve a navy. For example, in late sixteenth-century England, the Queen had to expend the limited resources to continental fronts and maritime operations. In the same period, Elizabethan England was at war, to suppress Tyrone's Rebellion in Ireland, known as the Nine Years War (1594-1603) that kept the Queen under pressure.⁶² Therefore Elizabeth did not have an opportunity to build a imperial navy. As a consequence, in the Battle of Cadiz, that has an important place in the Spanish-English struggle between 1585-1603, among the 150 ships that took part in the attack on Cadiz in 1596 only about a tenth were owned by Queen Elizabeth.⁶³ In addition to the temporary recruitment of private ships by states, it is qualified seafarers' employment by the state that is arguably more significant. Even in those states which were economically able to build big navies, e.g. the Venice and the Ottomans, there weren't any schools available in the early modern period that would provide the necessary personnel for those ships.⁶⁴ Therefore, the maritime *savoir-faire* could only be transferred via social reproduction, transfer of skills and lore through apprenticeship. There were no other ways than coming from a mariner family, doing sea commerce for long years or being a pirate to acquire maritime

⁶⁰ Bülent Arı, "Akdeniz'de Korsanlık ve Osmanlı Deniz Hukuku," in *Türkler ve Deniz*, ed. Özlem Kumrular, p 270-274

⁶¹ "Kursan," *EI*, p 506

⁶² Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering*, p 10

⁶³ Anderson, *The Origins of the Modern European State System*, p 29

⁶⁴ Berktaş and Terzioğlu, "Osmanlı Denizcilik Tarihinin Evrensel, Karşılaştırmalı ve Teorik Çerçevesi," p. 120

lore. Because of these reasons, the pool of private entrepreneurs, or corsairs, who were just a particular sort of entrepreneur common at the time, were invaluable for the navy fleets as manpower. Spain, whose control in the northern seas was in decline, began to mobilize a large fleet in northern Spain in early 1574, through the traditional method of requisitioning armed merchantmen. In the Spanish-English struggle, mentioned above, the composition of the parties was similar. The Invincible Armada that left Lisbon for Channel operations in May 1588 was again mobilized in a traditional Spanish way, with armed merchantmen hired from Castile's Biscay provinces and Andalusia, Italy, Ragusa and Venice.⁶⁵ The Dutch Republic, which had the most important maritime economy of the time, inevitably recruited private entrepreneurs to compensate for the lack of skilled and experienced seafarers.⁶⁶ Spain, Dutch's long time adversaries, followed the suit. As in the Dutch navy, officers were recruited from men with long seafaring experience that made the Armada of the Flanders unique in the Spanish navy.⁶⁷ At the end of the 17th century, Louis XIV created the last great galley fleet of maritime history and enlisted Maltese corsairs. In 1672, Jean Baptiste Colbert, French Minister of Finance from 1665 to 1683 under the rule of Louis XIV, decreed that all the officer candidates should be experienced men that "should have served on Maltese and should be members of the Orders."⁶⁸

Starting from the end of the 15th century, the Ottomans also employed corsairs for being experienced seamen in their official navy as captains. In the first half of the 16th century the corsairs in the Aegean, and later in the century the Algeria-based corsairs served in the Ottoman navy as official sailors. These seamen were not solely employed as captains, but some like Barbaros Hayrettin and Uluç Ali Reis rose to the post of Grand Admiral. Similar to the process of incorporating English privateers, Dutch privateers and armed merchants, Spanish armed merchants and Maltese corsairs into greater navies, the same can be witnessed in the relationship between the Ottoman imperial navy and the Algerian corsairs which we will be described in detail in the

⁶⁵ Glete, *Warfare at Sea*, p 154-158

⁶⁶ Ibid., p 43

⁶⁷ Ibid., p 179

⁶⁸ Paul W. Bamford, *Fighting Ships and Prisons: The Mediterranean Galleys of France in the Age of Louis XIV* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1973) p 99

following chapters. In effect, predatory activities of Algerian corsairs served as a naval school in training seamen.⁶⁹

But this course did not run forward in a linear fashion. As Imber notes, even though these predatory attacks provided training for corsairs, it would be misleading to assume that the corsairs were unconditionally loyal to the Ottoman navy, and to describe the maritime structure of corsairs as a quasi-Ottoman naval school. Without doubt, a symbiotic relationship between the Ottoman court and the corsairs did exist. The corsairs were providing maritime information, and some were enlisted, and in return they made good use of the Ottoman logistics and ports, and were protected. Additionally, for the corsair to serve the imperial navy as an officer, without a doubt, was less risky than being an independent pirate and offered a more luxurious life. It was within possibilities to rise to the very top like Barbarossa. Still, in this “trade”, on some occasions the wants of the two sides, the Ottoman court and corsairs, could clash. In these cases, either the Ottoman navy proclaiming the corsair as a bandit, began to hunt down the pirate; or made compromises and tolerated the corsair, to be able to use him again or because it simply did not want to clash with him. In short, it did not mean that a corsair would die as an officer if he were to enter the Ottoman Imperial Navy. It is sufficient to give a short identification of this process here, since in the upcoming chapters it will be analyzed in detail with regards to Thomson's⁷⁰ and Barkey's⁷¹ framework.⁷² As to Thomson's work, inside a particular territorial space violence is legitimized and monopolized by the modern state. However, in the early modern era, interstate borders were not clear like in modern interstate systems. Sovereignty could not be established by states “in modern meaning” in this era so non-state violence like privateering -as well as mercenaries- was began authorizing by rulers. Thomson argues that was a transition process from early modern state to the modern state; “European

⁶⁹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire , 1300-1650* (New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) p 299-300

⁷⁰ Thomson, Janice E., *Mercenaries, pirates, and sovereigns. State-building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994)

⁷¹ Barkey, Karen, *Bandits and Bureaucrats, The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1994)

⁷² Importance of these frameworks was emphasized by Berktaş and Terzioğlu. op.cit 122

state rulers first encouraged non-state violence, then delegitimated it, and finally eliminated it.”⁷³

In early modern era as our research, borders between legal and illegal were not so clear. But in this process of transformation it did not work with the same efficiency and changes from privateering to piracy, from mercenaries to bandits and vice versa were seen. The process had a similar course for the Ottomans. According to Barkey, central authority followed a negotiation strategy with these bandits (*celalis*) during the *celalis* uprisings in the beginning of 17th century. These bandits gained posts in Ottoman service. Barkey analyzed this practice as an alternative centralization process unlike Europeans. This analytical framework fits for Ottoman corsairs throughout of 16th century. Thus, annexation of corsairs to the Imperial navy could be analyzed in this context.

Privateering and piracy was not peculiar to the 16th century Mediterranean; these notions continued their existence until 19th century. While it is not the intention of this essay to cover such a long period, in the following chapters it will be analyzed how this relationship was in the 16th century.

I. 3: A Brief History of the Mediterranean Corsairs until the Era of Ottomans Corsairs

It is not possible to conceptualize Mediterranean piracy and then use it as a common notion to represent all periods of the Mediterranean in a linear way. As Braudel notes “piracy in the Mediterranean is as old as history”.⁷⁴ Therefore even from the time when men has sailed Mediterranean until the 19th century, piracy has been an integral part of “the middle sea”; there have been changes in its form and frequency from period to another period. Therefore before analyzing sixteenth-century Ottoman

⁷³ Janice, Thomson, op. cit. p.,19

⁷⁴ Fernand Braudel, *The mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the age of Philip II* (London : Harper Collins 1992) p 627

piracy, the stages of the piracy in Mediterranean until Ottomans came in 14th century, should be taken into consideration.

Maritime technologies of the Ancient Era confined maritime exploits to sea shores. The geographical conditions of Mediterranean were also encouraging piracy. Numerous Aegean islands, indented Greece and Illyria shores, North Africa, Sardinia and Corsica offered shelter for pirates in different periods. Primitive examples to pirates serving governments were being seen in the Ancient Era. This practice, as opposed to the legalized version of privateering in the 17th century, was developed more or less as politics of vengeance. From 5th century BC, states were inviting pirates to undertake raids against their enemies. For example, in 421 BC, though they had signed a pact, Athens' raids against Sparta were still continuing, and Sparta, without breaking the pact, proclaimed that its citizens were free to attack Athenians both on land and sea. But, after these corsairs started to raid neutral or allied ship, it was decided to sign an official treaty with them.⁷⁵

Piracy activities in the Roman Empire were also frequent. Especially in the 1st century BC, the attacks grew even more frequent. An anecdote concerning this period belongs to Gaius Julius Caesar. In 75 BC, when Julius Caesar set sail to receive lessons of rhetoric from Apollonius Molon who had also taught Cicero, he was captured and was freed only his ransom was paid 40 days later.⁷⁶ The senate was desperate against the pirate attacks. Because the large wheat cargo ships went consistently missing, Rome's granary was under serious threat. In this situation, in 67 BC, the Senate appointed Pompey the Great to cleanse the Mediterranean of pirates. Starting from Gibraltar, during a systematic nine month long operation, approximately thousands of ships (even the number looks exaggerated for the time) were destroyed, a couple hundred ships brought to Rome and thousands of pirates were killed. After operation the grain prices gained stability and Mediterranean was clear of pirates for a long time.⁷⁷ Piracy could

⁷⁵ Şenay Özdemir, *Akdeniz Hakimiyetinde Osmanlı Devleti ve Korsanlık 1695-1789* Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Ankara Üniversitesi 2004, p 78

⁷⁶ Philip de Souza, "Ancient Rome and The Pirates" *History Today*, Vol:51 / 7 (July 2001) p 48-53

⁷⁷ Ernle Bradford, *Akdeniz :Bir Denizin Portresi* ; Translated by Ahmet Fethi (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2004) 190-191

only find a space to live beginning from 3rd century AD, after Rome's authority in the Mediterranean grew weaker with its subsequent disintegration.

In 649, the first Umayyad Caliph Muawiyah attacked Cyprus and started to pose a threat to Byzantine hegemony in the Mediterranean, and in 655 in Lycia Umayyad's won their first victory against the Byzantines. In the following centuries, Muslims captured most of the islands and some of the important areas and strongholds on the main routes. In the 9th and 10th centuries piracy gained a religious identity for the first time in Mediterranean history. In this century, raids by Muslims corsairs against Christian ships and shores began to be seen as *ghaza*. Because of the bases located in the Abbasid Caliphate, Umayyad's in Cordoba, Aglebis in Tunis and Sicily, Fatimids in North Africa and Sicily, Balear Islands, Crete and other islands, this became the period in which the attacks against Christians were most frequent. From 10th century onward, the Christians were recapturing the bases on the main routes. This also laid the groundwork for the future Western hegemony along these routes.⁷⁸

In the 12th and 13th centuries the Islamic lands were between Granada, Valencia, Balear Islands and Antalya and Alanya. After the first Crusades, Christian princedoms were founded in Syria and Palestine, in 1091 Richard the Lionheart captured Cyprus, after the fourth Crusade, the Venetians and Genoese settled in the Aegean and the Black Sea. In this period, Western pirates could settle in the Aegean islands, because the Byzantine navy was disbanding. Muslims lost the strategic bases of Valencia and Balear Islands in 1230. As a consequence, losing all strategic bases to make raids, fleet of Muslims and corsairs had a limited area of operations. Therefore, the Mediterranean was now ruled by Christian fleets, but more importantly for commerce, by Christian corsairs.⁷⁹

The last centuries of the Middle Ages were times in which the difference between pirate and corsair started to be discernible. In the fragmented political structure of the 14th and 15th centuries, there were many, small and large, maritime powers in Mediterranean. Since there were no large fleets of great kingdoms or empires to speak

⁷⁸ Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*, p.102-111

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 158-159

of, and also that the Crusade mentality was in decline, prepared the necessary conditions for the re-emergence of piracy. In this long and complex transformation process initiative corsairs started slowly to become units of the central authority.⁸⁰ This process was seen in the Northern seas in same way as well. English privateers were first seen in the 13th century and the king ordered the vessel on the shores to attack France. It was in 1295 that the first letters of marque were issued by the English monarchy against Portugal.⁸¹

In Mediterranean, Venetians were the first ones to use this method. Venetians, even they are often portrayed as victims instead of perpetrators in academic works, incorporated pirates as corsairs into the central authority. In the 14th century, the Venice played an important role in the construction of new foundations for the professions of pirates and corsairs. The Republic wanted to be the greatest sovereign power in Adriatic against its enemies and planned to stop the piratical raids. Therefore, central authority defined “enemies” rather broadly. Venice deployed its own captains to attack and seize all the armed vessels without any consent under the pretext of “defense purpose”. Even if this practice seems as a measure to prevent piratical attacks however ally and neutral merchant ships were armed to protect themselves. Later on, pirates started to apply to Venice for sailing as corsairs and joined Venetian captains. In final, the duties of corsairs and the captains of the royal navy combined protection and aggression. Like the captain of the gulf, the corsair worked to defend Venice's security; like the corsairs the captain was to destroy the enemy as he chose. In this way, Venice, benefited from modifying the system instead of recruiting pirates or mercenaries as its contemporary adversaries. When charged with an improper attack, the Venetians could argue that their captains had been innocently engaged in guarding Venice’s interest. Defensive measures slipped easily into offensive maneuvers, and Venice was well prepared to incorporate plunder as a regular part of its naval operations.⁸²

⁸⁰ Micheal Fontenay and Alberto Tenenti, “Course et piraterie méditerranéennes de la fin du moyen-âge au début du XIX^{ème} siècle” in *Revue d'histoire maritime, Les Français Dans La Pacifique no:6* (Paris: Sorbonne Press 2006) p 189-190

⁸¹ Janice E. Thomson, *Mercenaries, pirates, and sovereigns*, p 22

⁸² Irene B. Katele, Piracy and the Venetian State: The Dilemma of Maritime Defense in the Fourteenth Century, *Medieval Academy of America, vol:63 no:4 (Oct. 1988) p 865 - 889*

The 13th and 14th centuries were also the first centuries in which Turkish corsairs were seen in the Mediterranean. In the late 13th and the early 14th century, with the establishment of Turkish emirates in Western Anatolia, Turkish corsairs started to emerge. But, in this period, the most important event was, seeing it as an unnecessary expense, the Byzantine Emperor's decision to disband the naval fleet in 1284. This way, burgeoning Turkish corsairs found a habitat and more importantly, unemployed Greek sailors defected to the Turks. In this period, Turkish maritime emirates, Aydın, Menteşe, Saruhan and Karasi, engaged in sea-borne raids. These corsair raids were most harmful to the Venetian and Latin trade.⁸³ Beginning from 1318, because of the cooperation between the Catalans under Don Alfonso Fadrique and Anatolian Turks of Aydın and Menteshe, Turks' area of operation against Venetians was as far as Euboea and Crete. In this period, especially sea ghazis under the rule of Umur Bey became serious threats. Though Genoese and Rhodian allied fleet defeated fleet of Aydın emirate in 1319 this was not an end for the threat of Turkish corsairs. Following this, in 1334, a coalition of Venice, Rhodes, Cyprus, Byzantium, the Pope and the King of France clamped down on corsairs, inflicting disastrous damage and defeating the fleet of Karasis in Adramys(*Edremit*). After the death of Aydınoğlu Umur Bey in 1348, the attacks slowed down but corsair based Turcoman maritime principalities continued their attacks until the annexation of these emirates by Bayezid I in 1390.⁸⁴ Even the threat against the Western ships was serious, Genoa, Venice and Rhodes could defend themselves with the help of Knights Hospitaller and Crusade alliances. Consequently, until swallowed by the Ottoman Empire they could not win any sea-battle against the Christian Western powers. Their ships, small oared galleys were suitable for predatory attacks but they could not hold against large sizable ships like gallia sottile of Christians in naval battles.⁸⁵

⁸³ Pellat, "Kursan," *Encyclopedia of Islam*,²

⁸⁴ Halil İnalçık, "The Rise of the Turcoman Maritime Principalities in Anatolia, Byzantium, and the Crusades," in *The Middle East and The Balkans under the Ottoman Empire: Essays on Economy and Society* (Bloomington : Indiana University Turkish Studies, 1993) p 309-341

⁸⁵ Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*, p 169

CHAPTER II

THE RISE OF OTTOMAN SEAPOWER

AND

THE FIRST PERIOD OF THE RELATIONSHIP

BETWEEN THE IMPERIAL NAVY AND THE

OTTOMAN CORSAIR UNTIL THE ERA OF THE

KAPUDAN PASHA

II. 1: The Formative Period of Ottoman Seapower

Parallel to our limited knowledge regarding the formative years of the Ottoman policy, it is quite uncertain whether in the fourteenth century the Ottomans established their naval institutions and became a sea power in the region. İdris Bostan maintains that the first seeds of the Ottoman sea power were planted through the use of Karasi naval power after the annexation of the principality by the Ottoman forces in 1347-8 and construction of shipyards in Edincik, Gemlik, Karamürsel and İzmit. He also refers to the small oared ship which named after its inventor, Karamürsel Bey and used in Ottoman seas for centuries, as an evidence of the fact that these first Ottomans efforts were quite permanent.⁸⁶ However, Colin Imber says that a man named Kara Mürsel had not ever existed. To Imber, this man is a literary creation based on the toponym Kara Mürsel, a coastal town in the Gulf of İzmit; and it is difficult to talk about an effective

⁸⁶ İdris Bostan, *Beylikten İmparatorluğa Osmanlı Denizciliği* (İstanbul; Kitap Yayınevi :2006) p 14

Ottoman sea power during the reign of Orhan. Imber thinks that it is the absence of Ottoman ships that led Orhan to ask for help from the Byzantines for his son enslaved by the corsairs.⁸⁷ This striking event is the first recorded encounter among the Ottomans and the Christian corsairs. In 1357, Orhan's eleven year old son Halil was kidnapped by the Greek corsairs of Old Phocaea. Orhan appealed to the Byzantine Emperor and made an agreement with him. Halil was brought to İstanbul a year later after the payment of the ransom fee. Nonetheless, the prince died the following year in İznik⁸⁸

In 1352, the Ottomans settled in Tyzmpe, located to the north of Gallipoli, as Cantacuzenos's allies. Afterwards, they seized the entire hinterland, thereby disconnecting Gallipoli from Thrace. Right after the earthquake in 1354 that caused the demolition of the Gallipoli fortress, they took hold of the land. In 1366 the Duke of Savoy attacked Gallipoli with a Crusader fleet, captured it and handed it over to the Byzantines. In 1376, Gallipoli was captured for the second time by the Ottomans, and became the principal base for the Ottoman navy from this time onwards.⁸⁹

In 1390, Bayezid annexed the emirates of Western Anatolia. A maritime force was required to defend the coast and secure the safety of trade from its ports. Moreover, Bayezid was intending to close the strait. Hence, he began to establish an Ottoman fleet composed of newly constructed vessels in Gallipoli along with the corsairs and their crafts.⁹⁰ However, Bayezid's navy could not turn into a salient sea power. Although the vessels used Gallipoli as a naval base for attacks to Venetian territories and merchant ships, this became only possible in the absence of the Venetian navy at sea. The attacks of Ottoman vessels intensified between 1390 and 1402, and became a severe threat for Venetian coasts and merchant ships. Yet, Venetian merchant ships maintained their transit along the strait under the warships' safeguarding. Although Ottoman naval power diminished during Interregnum in 1402-1413, it became again a threat for the northern Aegean from 1413 onwards. In 1415, the Venetian and Genoese merchant ships were in

⁸⁷ Colin Imber, "Before The Kapudan Pashas : Sea Power and The Emergence of the Ottoman Empire" in *Kapudan Pasha , His office and his domain: Holycon days in Crete IV* (Renthymon : Crete Univesity Press 2002) p 50

⁸⁸ Halil İnalçık, "Batı Anadolu'da yükselen denizci gazi beylikleri" in *Türk Denizcilik Tarihi* ed. Bülent Arı (Ankara : T.C. Başbakanlık Denizcilik Müsteşarlığı, 2002) p 87

⁸⁹ İnalçık, "Gelibolu" *Encyclopedia of Islam*,²

⁹⁰ Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*, p. 174

need of warships' safeguarding not only for transit along the strait but also the entire Marmara sea.

Within this process, the number of Ottoman vessels increased, though the quality remained more or less the same. In this regard, in 1416, the Captain of the Gulf, Pietro Loredan assaulted Gallipoli and sank and/or took possession of the Ottoman vessels there as a response towards the assaults of Mehmed I's vessels on Euboes in 1415. The Ottomans no more became a serious threat in the Aegean following this attack. The siege of Thessaloniki by Murad II, which began in 1423 and lasted for seven years, could not be aided from the sea, for the Venetians closed the strait and hindered the Ottoman navy to depart from the straits.⁹¹ As a result, despite the fact that the shipyard constructed in Gallipoli in 1390 laid the foundations of the Ottoman navy, the Ottoman navy could not be effective except 1390-1402 and 1414-1416. In fact, it became effective not as an alternative naval power against Genoese and Venetians but rather by sudden attacks and corsair activities. Until the reign of Mehmed II, it did not have a range beyond the Northern Aegean.

That's why, maybe, Katip Çelebi began his account on the Ottoman sea wars by the reign of the Conqueror. In his own words:

Be it known that before the time of the late illustrious and victorious Sultan Mehmet II, the Ottomans had not ventured to undertake naval expeditions, or to engage with European nations. It is indeed related that in the time of Sultan Murat the Second, they occasionally made excursions to the neighboring shores and islands; but these expeditions are not worth enumerating. After the taking of Constantinople, when they spread their conquests over land and sea, it became necessary to build ships and make armaments, in order to subdue the fortresses and castles on the Rumelian and Anatolian shores, and in the islands of the Mediterranean.⁹²

⁹¹ Colin Imber, *Before the Kapudan Pashas*, p 51-59. This process, siege of Thessaloniki, is a controversial subject. According to Imber, Venetian ships not only prevent to Ottoman fleet from entering the Aegean, but also prevent to his troops crossing Asiatic to the European side of Straits. Bostan claims the opposite. As to Bostan, Ottoman fleet sailed to Aegean and sacked several islands, then sieged Thessaloniki from sea in 1429 (*Beylikten İmparatorluğa Osmanlı Denizciliği*, p 16), Pryor also states that 50 ships left from Gallipoli for Thessalonica to join the growing Ottoman pressure on that city in 1427 (*Geography, Technology and War*, p 74)

⁹² Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr Fi Esfâri'l-Bihâr* (İstanbul: Kabaılcı Yayınvevi, 2007) p 29. For translation see, "History of the Maritime wars of th Turks" translated by James Mitchell, chapters I to IV (New

Even though Katip Çelebi was inattentive to the Ottoman navy established before Mehmed II's reign, he seems quite apposite about the level of its effectiveness. During the siege of Constantinople, there are numbers of stories about the navy of Mehmed the Conqueror. The story of the hauling of the vessels over the land to the Golden Horn is central to all conquest narratives. However, this haul cannot produce evidence about the strength of the Ottoman navy. With regard to the evaluations pertaining to the strength of the navy, the battle between the Ottoman vessels and the Genoese galleons that came to the city to help the Byzantines can provide more insights about the Ottoman sea power in the middle of the fifteenth century. Among these four galleons, one that owned by the Emperor was carrying food, wine and war equipments whereas each of the remaining ships which were owned by the Genoese, were carrying 400 soldiers. When these galleons, which found no resistance along their trip through Gallipoli⁹³, reached Constantinople, they became motionless, for the wind had stopped. Although each galleon was besieged by several Ottoman vessels, these Ottoman vessels were not able to board the large Genoese galleons had high broadsides. During this battle that happened in the vicinity of Yenikapı, the Ottoman navy lost thousands of men, and the Genoese galleons entered by the evening the Golden Horn without having lost any of their manpower. Upon this event, the captain of the Ottoman navy, Baltaoğlu Süleyman Bey, who had been assigned to stop the potential assistance to the Byzantines, was dismissed.⁹⁴

Even though the idea of haulage of ships over land was a brilliant idea, this could not produce a substantial outcome for the siege. The only remarkable outcome was to weaken the Byzantine defense in land walls by leading some of those soldiers to

York: Johnson Reprint corp.,1968) p 12

⁹³ Idris Bostan claims that Mehmet II built two fortress, Sultaniye and Kilitbahir, on opposite sides of the Strait towards the Eagean end to control the Strait of Gallipoli before the siege of İstanbul. *Osmanlılar ve Deniz* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları: İstanbul) p 6.and *Beylikten İmparatorluğa Osmanlı Denizciliği* p 17. However these fortresses were built in 1463 because of Ottoman-Venetian war. Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London : Phoenix, 1994) p 26, IE, Gelibolu,

⁹⁴ Mahmut Ak & Fahameddin Beşer, *İstanbul'un Fetih Günlüğü* (İstanbul : Tatav yayınları) p 51-52, Nicolo Barbaro Konstantiniyye Muhasarası Nuznamesi, haz. Şemsettin T. Diler (İstanbul : İstanbul Fethi Derneği Yayınları) p 38-39

go the ramparts in seaside. These vessels were not for attacking; instead they were used as a bridge as being tied together. Cannons and militias were loaded this vessels and these vessels used as mobile bastions.⁹⁵

After the conquest of the city, the functions of the navy expanded. Two important requirements were to manage the sea trade for provisioning the population, and to protect the sea routes. From the conquest of Constantinople onwards, the navy aided by the land(ed) troops, captured several castles and islands in the coasts of Black Sea and Aegean Sea, all of which were important to keep the sea routes to Istanbul secure. Although the Ottomans embarked on open sea in Black Sea and Aegean, it is of great difficulty to speak of a great Ottoman sea power vis-a-vis the Genoese and the Venetians. Nevertheless, the Ottoman navy was developing in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Yet, keeping sea routes under security became true not through short-term open sea warfare; but rather through long-term warfare for obtaining the islands and the bases on the sea routes. This warfare began right after the conquest of Istanbul, and the Ottoman navy first captured Tenedos(*Bozcaada*) in the Aegean Sea by 1456. In his *Künhü'l-Ahbar*, Mustafa Âli of Gelibolu says that Tenedos and Samos were the first islands the Ottomans decided to conquer, since these two islands were hosts for the corsairs who were attacking and destroying the ships of pilgrims and merchants.⁹⁶ Another piece of evidence for the conquest of Tenedos and its significance for keeping sea routes under security comes from Piri Reis in his *Kitab-ı Bahriye*. When talking about the history of the island, Piri Reis says: " ...Frequently too, pirate ships would come and conceal themselves in the sheltered places of Tenedos and when ships passing that way in commerce arrived they would attack them, seizing their goods and commodities;..." With regard to seizure of the island during the reign of Mehmed the Conqueror and the construction of a castle there, Piri adds:

....When the late sultan Mehmet the conqueror ascended the throne and began busying himself with the affairs of state, he considered it reasonable and appropriate for a fortress to be constructed on Bozcaada

⁹⁵ Feridun Emecen, *İstanbul'un fethi olayı ve meseleleri*, (İstanbul: Kitabevi 2003) p 38-43

⁹⁶ Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli, *Künh'ul-Ahbar: c.II, Fatih Sultan Mehmet devri* (Ankara: TTK 2003) p173

so that those engaged in maritime commerce might enjoy safety and security when in passage here. For that reason, he issued orders and had a fortress built on the island. In this way he prevented foreign ships from entering the harbor...⁹⁷

After the conquest of Imbros(*Gökçeada*), Samothrace(*Semadirek*), Thasos(*Taşoz*) and Samos(*Sisam*) in 1455-6, the Ottomans began to dominate the northern Aegean. It was equally important to keep safe the sea routes in the Black Sea. In this regard, along with capturing the islands near Gallipoli, the same strategy was put in order for the Black Sea, thus the coastal regions, which could become a threat for the safety of the sea routes, were occupied. For this reason, first Sinop was invaded in 1458. Then, a year later, another campaign set forth towards Amasra. About this campaign Aşıkpaşazade reads: "All those captives running away from all over Anatolia were seeking refuge in the castle of Amasra. In addition to this, these infidels of Amasra were often involved in piracy. When they were questioned, they said 'they were foreign ships.'"⁹⁸ In those campaigns towards Amasra, Sinop, Kastamonu and Trabzon, Mehmed II took part as the commander of the land troops. These campaigns, which happened as a cooperation of the land troops and the navy, brought victory owing to the siege from both sea and land. Following these conquests, Sultan Mehmed II attempted to construct a greater ship, though this first attempt was a failure.⁹⁹

After two campaigns in 1458 and 1460 to the Morea, Mehmed the Conqueror annexed this region, and thereby came face to face with the Venetians.¹⁰⁰ In 1462, Mytilene was taken by the Ottomans. Opposed to the Venetian sea empire, which had been strengthened by the end of the Byzantium through the Venetians' seizure of islands in the southern and western Aegean, the Ottoman navy became a threat by taking possession of various islands of strategic importance. The same Ottoman threat was also true for the Genoese in the Black Sea.

⁹⁷ Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye* (Ankara: Ministry of culture and tourism of the Turkish Republic 1988) v 1 p 211

⁹⁸ Aşıkpaşazade, *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman* (İstanbul : Gökkuşbu Yayınları 2007) p 427

⁹⁹ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-kibar*, p 31

¹⁰⁰ Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London : Phoenix, 1994)) p 27

The long Ottoman-Venetian war of 1462 and 1479 is a turning point with regard to the wars of supremacy in Mediterranean. During this combat, the Ottoman galleys could not triumph in any battle against the Venetian galleys, though the Ottomans seized several important locations thanks to the amphibian campaigns that the land troops accompanied.¹⁰¹ One of the most important bases was Euboea. By the conquest of Euboea in 1470, the Venetian ships lost one of the largest harbors in the Aegean Sea. Moreover, the Ottomans acquired a stepping stone for their further attacks towards minor neighboring colonies. In addition to these, the Venetian merchants that had been operating between mainland Greece and the Dardanelles, were forced to go to Modon and Coron at the end of south-western Peloponnesia in order to manage their business.¹⁰² According to the peace settlement between the Ottomans and the Venetians, the latter renounced their claims of lost territory and recognized the Ottoman sovereignty over these lands, whereas the Ottomans took possession of major harbors facing islands and Adriatic like Vlöre. Vlöre, locating counter to Otranto in the mouth of Adriatic, was an important harbor whose seizure by the Ottomans paved the way to the Ottoman presence in Adriatic. Yet, the Venetians were still holding pivotal places in the coasts of Peloponnesia and Albania.

The number of galleys in the Ottoman navy by the 1470s is said to have been more than ninety¹⁰³. In 1475, an Ottoman fleet led by Gedik Ahmed Pasha captured the Genoese colonies of Kefe and Azak. By 1480, Mehmed II had such an important sea power that he could send Mesih Pasha to Rhodes, and Gedik Ahmed Pasha to Otranto together with their own fleet.

II. 2 : The Simultaneous Rise of Ottoman Corsairs and the Seapower

At the beginning of the reign of Bayezid II, the Ottomans had crucial ports and islands in the Aegean and the Adriatic. Even if Ottoman naval power debatable qualitatively, Imperial navy had a great power quantitatively and its efficiency rose

¹⁰¹ Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*, p 177

¹⁰² John Julius Norwich, *Venice The Greatness and the Fall*, (London, Allen Lane : 1981) p 95

¹⁰³ Halil İnalcık, *The Classical Age*, p 26

gradually in region. Conquest of these islands provided important bases for not only Ottoman Imperial navy but also Ottoman corsairs. Ottoman corsairs started to plunder the Adriatic coasts of Italy. Grottomare(1479), Montemarciano, Marzocca, Mondolfo (1485) and Sinigallia (1488) came under attack.¹⁰⁴ Raids of Ottoman corsairs increased around Euboea(*Eğriboz*), Chios(*Sakız*), Anatolian coasts around Milet and Seferihisar in Aegean sea. *Guerre de course*¹⁰⁵ was seen throughout the entire reign of Bayezid II; however it was limited because of the captivity of Cem Sultan by Rhodes at the hands of St John Knights and then in Europe. After death of Cem Sultan in 1495, raids became intensified in Aegean.¹⁰⁶

Bayezid II led a new naval policy. Beginning from 1492, he followed a new strategy to improve Ottoman naval power. The Venetian *balio* prepared a report about these activities and sent it to the Venice to warn against the rising danger.¹⁰⁷ Bayezid II increased the number of ships in the navy; the construction of new type of ships was undertaken; and as the most important innovation of this era, he created a model to make up for the insufficient numbers of skilled seamen by the employment of corsairs. In 1495, Kemal Reis, an experienced corsair, was engaged by the Imperial navy. After this time, pardoned corsairs were enlisted among the regulars of the Imperial Navy.¹⁰⁸ In 1470 Kemal Reis had participated in the Euboea expedition as a corsair in collaboration with the navy; then returned to his predatory attacks with his own ship¹⁰⁹ Kemal Reis had also received some other missions from the Ottoman government before his assignment to the Imperial Navy. In 1487, Bayezid II sent him to the western Mediterranean in reply to help request of Muslims who lived in Granada. Bayezid provided ships and equipment to Kemal Reis and shipped off him as a reconnaissance party to collect information about the region. Kemal Reis and his crew made first

¹⁰⁴ Maria Pia Pedani, *Ottoman Merchants in the Adriatic. Trade and Smuggling*, Acta Histaria v:16 / 1-2 2008 p 157

¹⁰⁵ Synonym of privateering

¹⁰⁶ Nicolas Vatin, Rodos Şövalyeleri, p 118-120

¹⁰⁷ Hans Peter Alexander Theunissen, '*Ottoman-Venetian Diplomats: The Ahnames: The Historical Background and the Development of a Category of Political-Commercial Instruments together with an Annotated Edition of a Corpus of Relevant Documents*', *EJOS, I (1998)*, unpublished phd. Thesis, p139

¹⁰⁸ Op. cit 125

¹⁰⁹ H. J. Kissling, Sultan Beyazıd'ın deniz politikaları üzerine düşünceler, in *Türk Denizcilik Tarihi* ed. Bülent Arı(Ankara : T.C. Başbakanlık Denizcilik Müsteşarlığı, 2002) p 111

contact with Hispano-muslims of Granada. In this period, Kemal Reis and other corsairs made successful attacks on the Spanish coasts and ships. They used North African ports for these raids. These ports provided some possibilities to them to maintain their ships. They could spend winter there with their ships and they could sell their loot in North African markets easily. After familiarization with the region, these facilities attracted Ottoman corsairs to this region and these region the became principal base for Ottoman corsairs in the first decades of 16th century.¹¹⁰ Following years of this mission, in 1495 Kemal Reis was “officially” put into Ottoman naval service. That was the milestone of Ottoman naval history. Role of Ottoman corsairs in Navy rose gradually during the 16th century.

Who were these Ottoman corsairs? Nicola Vatin has taken an inventory of some prominent corsairs emerged at the end of 15th century and the beginning of 16th century in Aegean sea.¹¹¹ One of the most important corsairs, Kemal Reis was from Karaburun, located in İzmir province and he sailed with his nephew, another famous-to-be seaman, Piri Reis. The Barbarossas, Aruj ve Hızır brothers were natives of Mytilene, ancient Lesbos, a Greek island in the Aegean. Kara Hasan and Kara Durmuş brothers, took part in the battle of Zonchio in 1501 between Ottomans and Venetians, were from Seferihisar, another town around Izmir. Muslihiddin Kurdoğlu used Seferihisar and Milet, coastal towns in Aydın province, as a base for his corsair activities with his cousin and nephew. Sinan the Jew was a convert from Izmir and Turgut Reis was born in a town of Muğla. Even if it seems that the origins of a major part of these corsairs were “Turkish” and “Muslim,” Tenenti and Fontenay emphasizes that the roots of the rising corsairs in this period were Greeks, Dalmatians and Albanians.¹¹² As Hess mentions, the major part of the coastal Aegean population in the second half of the 15th century consisted of Christians who had the technical knowledge of navigation.¹¹³ Therefore, the ethnic origins of the Ottoman corsairs in the beginning of the 16th century is not a promising debate. This seafarer community should be defined as Ottoman

¹¹⁰ Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier*, p 60-61

¹¹¹ Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri*, p 77-79

¹¹² Tenenti & Fontenay, “*Course et piraterie*” p 177

¹¹³ Andrew Hess, *The Evolution of the Ottoman Seaborne Empire in the Age of the Oceanic Discoveries, 1453- 1525*, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 75, No. 7 (Dec., 1970) *The Ottoman Seaborne Empire*, p 1901

corsairs based on the legacy of the Christians with a naval history who had lived in the coastal Anatolia for centuries, thus ethnic-confessional markers like Christian, Muslim-Turk, convert Greek, are redundant.

As we have seen in several examples above, there was a kinship between corsairs. This kinship between Aegean corsairs, like brotherhood or uncle-nephew, gives us some clues about this “profession”. Even if we cannot reach a clear judgment, we assume that piracy was a family business. Members of a family sailed with a small boat for piracy and they strengthened with their skills and their chance. After a while, they became powerful seamen. After this time, they have several paths; being a captain in Ottoman Imperial Navy, privateering or illegal piracy. Mustafa Âli of Gelibolu gives us the thorough information about roots and career stages of corsairs. As he wrote;

Adventurers at sea, the sailors from Tripoli in Libya, Tunis, and Algerias who are fond of plunder, are mostly Turks from the Kaz Mountain region. After laboring to learn to art of shooting arrows, they become skilled at it and rather well known. First they gather five or ten men together. They attack a little boat owned by haraç-paying infidel, board it, and take it to the islands. With that one boat, they launch their important career in plundering, severing family lineages, capturing men, filling out their stores of articles of war. They tie up the non-muslim sailor subjects of the Ottoman state and put them to working the oars. At first, they think they have but acquired galley slaves, then they attack whatever vessels transporting day laborers that strike their fancy, they set off on the pursuit of wealth.¹¹⁴

As Mustafa Âli mentions, in the first period of their sea life, corsairs sailed with a small boat captured in an attack or a ship granted by a patron. Aruj Reis constructed his first ship with his own money in Antalya. However, this ship was captured by the Rhodes Knights. Then he requested support from Sultan Korkut and Sultan Korkut provided a new ship to him. During this process, Piyale bey, treasurer of Korkut,

¹¹⁴ Gelibolu'lu Mustafa Âli , The Ottoman gentleman of the sixteenth century : Mustafa Âli's Mev'aidu'n-Nefa'is fi kava'idil-mecalis : "Tables of delicacies concerning the rules of social gatherings" / annotated English translation by Douglas S. Brookes (Cambridge, Mass. : Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 2003) p 34

ordered another new ship for himself. He assigned a captain named Yahya Reis to his ship and sent him with Aruj Reis to plunder.¹¹⁵ Adventure of Aruj started with these two ships, then new corsairs joined this group and number of ships increased with the addition of captured boats to this fleet.

This case shows us different ways of sailing process for corsairs. Patronage was one of the essential ways for pirates and corsairs. For instance, in 1496, Bayezid II launched an operation against pirates. In this operation, four rich Turks were convicted because of patronage to the pirates. Besides, Venetians claimed that the *Sanjakkbey* of Euboea supported pirates.¹¹⁶ Kara Durmuş continued his predatory attacks under the patronage of Celal Bey, *sanjakkbey* of Manisa.¹¹⁷ In this era, the most prominent patron of corsairs was Sultan Korkut, son of Bayezid II. Korkut supported not only Aruj Reis but also several corsairs and involved closely to the sea. Korkut has a small corsair fleet thanks to his patronage. Apart from the ships of corsairs, he had his own ships; in 1509, he journeyed to Egypt with his own five ships.¹¹⁸ Ottomans could counteract Rhodes Knight's raids flexibly with this local fleet. Selim I, son of Bayezid II, gained the fight for the throne against Bayezid in 1512. Following this incident, lots of Ottoman corsairs under the patronage of Korkut sailed to North Africa for fear of Selim I. This new base had already been used by Kemal Reis and corsairs around him.¹¹⁹ This migration was the turning point for the Ottoman corsairs based west coast of Anatolia.

Apart from patronage system, corsairs could obtain their own sizable galleys when they acquired sufficient wealth. Mustafa Âli explains that how corsairs laid hands on their galleys;

Sometimes, on the coast of the Morea and Levkas (Ayamavra) with the collusion of one of the sea captains there, they build the kind of boat they want. Or they find one already built and buy it. But sometimes they don't trust those captains, and when the captains give safe quarter they do not believe the agreement is truthful, so they up anchor and head for Samos

¹¹⁵ Seyyid Muradi, *Gazavat-ı Hayrettin Paşa* (Tercüman Yayınları 1970) p 73-77

¹¹⁶ Vatin, Rodos şövalyeleri p 81

¹¹⁷ Palmira Brummet, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994) p 94

¹¹⁸ Vatin, Rodos Şövalyeleri, p 296

¹¹⁹ Brummet, *Ottoman Seapower*, p 105

island. Or they conceal themselves on some similarly wooded island. Incorporating within it a thousand fears and precautions, they construct a ship.¹²⁰

Similar informations in the *Gazavatname* about the emergence process of corsairs/pirates in justifies Mustafa Âli's explication. Hızır Reis decided to buy a ship following the ascend of Selim for migration to Djerba (Cerbe) and to join Aruj as a corsair. Then he bought a ship in Santa Maura (Aya Mavra).¹²¹ Three years later, he returned to Mytilene and spent that winter there. He was a richer corsair compared to what he had been three years ago, and he could order there new ships to a shipwright who had constructed Hızır's old ship in Santa Maura.¹²²

To sum up with a citation from Gelibolu'lu Âli; “They all came from one of the villages or towns on the Anatolian straits and rose up the ladder first through banditry, secondly through piracy, and thirdly through ownership outright of a galiot, and supremacy over others in what is known as being a *reis*.”¹²³

If we would return to our main theme, naval strategies of Beyazıt II and rising Ottoman seapower, we should stress that the Ottomans continued to advance their naval technology and to increase the total number of ships the navy might use. It seems that technical skills were acquired through outsourcing to Venetian shipwrights. When the Ottoman government decided to attempt the construction of two¹²⁴ new type of ships never experienced before called *göke*, they assigned this mission to a Venetian shipwright named Gianni. Kemal Reis and Burak Reis became masters of these ships and the 1499-1502 Venice – Ottoman war was an important test for the Ottoman naval power. The mission of the Imperial Navy was to stop aid by the Venetian navy to Lepanto fortress besieged from land by the Ottoman troops. In other side, Venetians aimed to prevent this amphibian siege by intercepting with the Ottoman Imperial navy before the harbor. In Zonchio island (*Burak Reis adası*) region around Lepanto, the

¹²⁰ Mustafa Ali, *Mevaidün nefais*, p 34

¹²¹ Seyyid Muradi, *Gazavatname*, p 87

¹²² Ibid, p 119

¹²³ Gelibolu'lu Ali, *Mevaidün Nefais*, p 35

¹²⁴ As to some different sources, the number of this new type of ship was three.

Ottoman navy defeated Venetians thanks to its defensive strategy. At the end of this battle, the Ottoman navy reached Lepanto and landed cannons at the entrance to the harbor. In this way, communication between the fortress and the Venetian Navy was cut, that is to say, the mission was accomplished. The defeat of the Venetian navy can be explained by its complicated command structure, financial problems and difficulties of co-ordinating sailing and oared ships in offensive actions.¹²⁵ Furthermore, the Ottomans' formidable firepower could be consequential upon the result of the war. The usage of superior siege-craft enabled the conquest of major fortresses located on the Greek coastline, in a short time.¹²⁶

As a result, the Ottomans won a victory over their main enemy in the Mediterranean and captured Lepanto, Modon and Coron at the beginning of the 16th century. The recruitment of corsairs as naval commanders was one of the crucial factors of this victory. This practice quickly advanced the technical competence of the the navy.¹²⁷ In this process, supported corsairs gained power. After the war, one part of this group remained engaged in the Navy or returned to sea as privateer. Another part of these corsairs used their power against Ottoman ships and coasts as pirates.¹²⁸ During the important sea wars like 1499-1502 Ottoman-Venetian wars, 1515-1517 conquest of Egypt and 1521 conquest of Rhodes, corsairs supported by government and they were unleashed categorically. However, later on, Ottoman central authority was confronted with control of these supported corsairs.

Among these pirates, the most powerful one was Kara Durmuş. Following the engagement of his brother, Kara Hasan, into the Imperial Navy as an officer in 1498, Kara Durmuş joined the Navy with the starting of Venetian-Ottoman war. In 1499, his brother Kara Hasan died in the Zonchio naval battle and Kara Durmuş left battlefield with his own ship. He returned to Seferihisar, his previous base, and constructed new ships. He gathered hundreds of *levends* among coastline people and started piratical

¹²⁵ Jan Glete, *Warfare at Sea*, p 94

¹²⁶ John F. Guilmartin, *Ideology and Conflict: The Wars of the Ottoman Empire, 1453-1606*, Journal of Interdisciplinary History, Vol. 18, No. 4, The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars (Spring, 1988) p 739

¹²⁷ Hess, *The Evolution of the Ottoman Seaborne*, p 1905

¹²⁸ Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri*, p 282

raids. He assaulted Anatolian coasts and Ottoman ships. Whereupon, Bayezid II sent Kemal Reis with 10 galleys and 500 janissaries against Kara Durmuş in 1504. They attacked the home of Kara Durmuş in Seferihisar, seized his ships and armaments. Even if Kara Durmuş could save his skin on this occasion, the *Sanjakbey* of Aydın captured and sent him to Istanbul.¹²⁹ Kara Durmuş was surely not a unique example. Besides, Hoca Saadettin Efendi writes that just two years after this operation, pirates (*harami levends*) were seen again in the Ottoman seas.¹³⁰ Ottoman pirates always attacked Ottoman ships, Aegean islands or Anatolian coasts. In some cases, these pirates were forgiven by central authority and coopted. Otherwise, like in this case, “old” corsairs previously recruited were set upon these bandits.

Destruction of piracy/privateering throughout the Ottoman waters was impossible. Those pirates/corsairs could provide their needs from local populations. Relations between local people and pirates were based not only on voluntariness but also on coercion. For instance, Piri Reis wrote about the peninsula of Athos Mountain situated in Northern Greece: ”Monks never give information to Turkish pirates about infidel ones or to infidel pirates about Turkish ships, nor do ever hesitate to provender either.”¹³¹ Furthermore, there were thousands of convenient bases in countless islands and coastline for this seamen. Disposal of piratical activities for ever could not be possible in this geography considering the naval technology of the 16th century, even if a state had a permanent navy to secure its seaways,.

Struggle against piracy was the common problem of Venetians, Ottomans and the Rhodians Knights having permanent navies. These states tried to prevent hostile piracy with treaties; however, they could not succeed. In this struggle, pirates had always found a niche thanks to geographical advantage and local support/extortion.

¹²⁹ Palmira, Ottoman Seapower , p 94-95, Seha Meray, *Bazı Türk Anlaşmalarına göre Korsanlık*, p 136, Vatin, *Rodos şövalyeleri ve Osmanlılar* 78

¹³⁰ Hoca Saadettin Efendi, *Tacü't-tevarih*, (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları; 1979) v:3 p:348

¹³¹ Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, ibid 257

II.3: Ottoman Corsairs: Holy Warriors of Islam?

The description of corsairs in historical context is a controversial topic among historians. Conceptualization of corsair activities had different approaches by several historians. Andrew Hess and İdris Bostan suggest that the corsairs were equivalent to the fifteenth century Balkan *ghazis*, and that they were stimulated by religious duty and the military traditions of Holy War. According to Hess, the incorporation of Muslim corsairs to the Ottoman navy which was an important factor in the rise of its technical competence, took its roots from the Jihadist literature.¹³² During the reign of Bayezid II, the Holy War against the infidel was carried from land to sea. In Hess's terms, "The Ottoman Empire expanded along the shores of the Mediterranean, as Muslim warriors on the sea frontiers responded to the call of the Holy War in increasing numbers".¹³³ Bostan has similar thoughts alike. In Bostan's view, the corsairs acted in accordance with the Islamic law. The legal status of the corsairs was sea *ghazi* and the corsairs were engaged in a war of faith between *dar'ül islam* and *dar'ül harb*. For Bostan, the fact that they handed to the Sultan one fifth of the booty and of the war prisoners they captured, validates the argument that the corsairs acted in the spirit of *gaza* and that they served the religion of Islam.¹³⁴

In *The Forgotten Frontier, A History of the Sixteenth Century Ibero-African Frontier*, Hess focuses on the frontier that divided the 16th century Mediterranean world. According to him, the rivalry and interaction on the frontier between two distinct civilizations, namely Latin Christian and Turco-Muslim, shaped Mediterranean history. The former was characterized by radicalism whereas the later by conservatism. In the 16th century, with the rise of the state power and increasingly defensive attitudes adopted by empires, the old zone of mixed cultures was replaced by a thin line between well-organized societies.¹³⁵ Under differing social and cultural forces, Iberian and Ottoman civilizations followed distinctly different paths, and particularly after 1580,

¹³² Hess, *Evolution of the Ottoman Seaborne*, p 1905-1906

¹³³ *Op.cit.* p1906

¹³⁴ İdris Bostan, *Adriyatik'te Korsanlık*, p 19-21

¹³⁵ Hess, *Forgotten Frontier*, p 207

both of them contributed to the formalization of a border structure which reduced the level of exchange and conflict.¹³⁶

Another military historian, John F. Guilmartin suggests that the ideology of this era was principally based on religion. He argues that wars of the Ottoman Empire against Christendom between mid-fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries derived from pre-Islamic Arab and Turco-Mongol traditions, and relied on the rhetoric of Holy War. Guilmartin insists that religion was a causal factor in the Ottoman wars, even though its influence should be examined within the overall social fabric and operational context. According to Islam, only Jihad, war against the infidels aiming to expand the Muslim territory, was recognized as lawful. Based on the Koran and elaborated in the *sharia*, this concept of Holy War created a permanent state of war between *dar'ül islam* (land of Islam) and *dar'ül harb* (land of infidels). In the Ottoman case, two kinds of war were waged in this framework: Imperial campaigns and *gaza* warfare, perpetual war of raid and counter-raid on the borders. The main purpose of Ottoman wars against Christian states was to expand and defend the *dar'ül islam*. In this respect, a major difference occurs between Ottoman state and Christendom: “The concept of perpetual war to defend the faith and expand its boundaries was inherently compatible with the Ottoman world view, it was not, however, consonant with the outlook of their Christian enemies.”¹³⁷

Kafadar presents an alternative approach to views on *gazis*. In *Between Two Worlds*, he challenges the ‘gazi thesis’ of Köprülü and Wittek, arguing that the raiders were not guided by religious animosity, even though in the religion-based worldview of the time they were ready to see and present themselves as fighting for a religious cause. They were, before all, a socially unstable element fighting for its lofty and untarnished ideals, finding itself a legitimation, and a chance for mobility through military activity in the frontier regions sanctioned meaningful within the framework of a higher cause.¹³⁸ Material returns of *gaza* warfare was an essential point. ‘*Gaza*’ was a way of gaining

¹³⁶ Op.cit p 211

¹³⁷ John F. Guilmartin, *Ideology and conflict*, p 727

¹³⁸ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995) p 56

one's livelihood, and the pursuit of wealth and glory was a principal motivation for the raiders.¹³⁹

Kafadar underlines the role of shifting boundaries, loyalties, and identities on the frontiers. At any given moment, some of the populace on either side of the frontier warriors and others, would have been recent arrivals –converts, slaves, or recently subjugated people- who were steeped in the cultural traditions of the other side but were now in a position to contribute, voluntarily or forcibly, to this one.¹⁴⁰ There was always the possibility that individuals from the other side would join you and fight for the same cause. Cooperation with or toleration of 'infidels' and symbiosis were common phenomenon. The ethnic mixture was an important element contributing to this environment of intermingling. In brief, there were complex relations between the peoples of the frontier, which cannot be reduced simply to a war of religion.¹⁴¹

In opposition to Hess, Brummet has similar arguments with Kafadar. She argues that the ways in which territory, peoples, identity, exchange, sovereignty, and borders were imagined in the early modern era were radically different from the modern counterparts of these notions. In the discussion of space in the early modern era, neither the 'state' nor large isolated socio-spatial groupings around a common history and culture should be taken as departing points, because they do not coincide with early modern representations.¹⁴² Projecting of national boundaries and identities back upon the 16th century historical space is an anachronistic attitude. In this respect, it would be inappropriate to speak of a definitive border between Europe and Ottoman Empire, since this border was *broad, porous and impermanent*. Similarly, a relatively homogeneous citizenry or identity did not exist in the 16th century. Islam was not the definitive cultural element that has shaped the Ottoman world, and separated it from "Europe".¹⁴³ Instead, identities crossed state lines in many ways and mixing of cultures, porous borders, and the circulation of ideas and goods characterized the early modern

¹³⁹ Op.cit. P 86

¹⁴⁰ Op.cit p 81

¹⁴¹ Op.cit 82-83

¹⁴² Palmira Brummet, "Imagining the Early Modern Ottoman Space from Piri Reis to World History," in Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman, eds. *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, Cambridge U. Press, p 56

¹⁴³ Palmira Brummett, *The Ottomans as a World Power*, p 8

Mediterranean world.¹⁴⁴ Besides, border formation in the early modern era concerned mainly the division of the territory into administrative units and it did not mark the Ottomans off from “Europe”.¹⁴⁵

In this context, historians are confronted with a problem of drawing lines; with a question of multiple allegiances: “The men who traveled the sea, merchants and corsairs did not confine themselves to one state, one nation, or even one religion.” It was not a question of identity. They acted over multiple allegiances and did not hesitate to violate them whenever they saw necessary.¹⁴⁶ As a matter of fact, pirate and corsair crews were cosmopolitan. Captains of all ethnic groups roved the seas in the service of anyone who would pay or license them. Examples are numerous: Genoese, Pisan, Frank, and Muslim corsairs were in the service of Byzantium in the 13th century; Greeks serving *gazi emirs* in Aydın in the 14th century, renegade Christians in the ranks of Barbary corsairs in the 16th century.¹⁴⁷ Besides, Pryor suggests that even though the interreligious character of the *guerre de course* was emphasized, at certain times and at certain zones the intra-religious framework has dominated while religion provided only a very limited degree of protection. Christian pirates and corsairs did not hesitate to plunder their Christian competitors’ ships, as well as those of Muslims. There is evidence that Muslim corsairs also attacked Muslim ships.¹⁴⁸

Several kinds of motivations stimulated the corsairs, and religious duty was obviously not the most significant among them. Therefore, the rhetorical use of Jihad for the purpose of legitimization should not be taken for granted.¹⁴⁹ If *guerre de course* has often appeared as an interreligious struggle between Christians and Muslims, it is because capturing slaves was one of the main objectives of corsair activities, and selling co-religionist slaves was difficult and rare in practice. This shows that the main motivation was not religious, and that the corsairs acted out of practical concerns.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁴ Brummet, “Imagining the early modern Ottoman” pp 56-57

¹⁴⁵ Brumett, op.cit , pp.23-24

¹⁴⁶ Brumett, Ottomans as a world power, p 8

¹⁴⁷ Pryor, *Geography, Technology and War*, pp 153-154

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 155.

¹⁴⁹ Brummet, The Ottomans as a world power, p 9

¹⁵⁰ Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*, p 156

Especially, interborder seafarer community has a mixed structure regarding seafarer's origins. Casale emphasizes the 'Mediterranean origin' of the seafarers of both Ottoman and Portuguese fleets during the sixteenth century confrontation in the Indian Ocean. The Ottomans' *self-confident cosmopolitanism* was manifested through the composition of the manpower of the Ottomans' Indian Ocean fleet. The group of 'Turkish-speaking Muslims from Anatolia' formed only a small minority of the whole. The same was true for the Portuguese fleet. Yet, commanders and highest-ranking officers were always recruited among the Portuguese nobles whereas no such rule applied in the Ottoman case. He argues therefore, this struggle cannot be described as a struggle between "indigenous Muslims" and "European intruders".¹⁵¹

Concerning frontiersmen like frontier raiders or corsairs, there were not reducible to a certain identity, obviously. Those groups could be integrated easily to different types of structures. Bracewell mentions that several Christian groups in Ottoman military service were put in charge of a variety of tasks from internal security to guarding of the frontier garrisons. Beginning from the first conquests in the Balkans, Ottomans integrated raider gangs of frontier region to their military systems. *Martoloses* were the prominent group among those groups. Their mission was harassing the in enemy defenses and providing proper conditions for new conquests. *Martoloses* were consisted irregular Christians and migrant *Ulah* populations. This mission provided them with an opportunity to gain wealth. Organizations and operation technics were similar with the raider gangs of other side of frontier so they were called *Turkish Uskoks*.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Casale, Giancarlo. "The Ethnic Composition of Ottoman Ship Crews and the 'Rumi Challenge' to Portuguese Identity." *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007)

¹⁵² Catherine Wendy Bracewell, *16.yy'da Adriyatikte korsanlık ve eşkiyalık*,(İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi yayınları, 2009) pp 48-54 *Uskoks* used as a term to define armed refugee gangs emerged in Christian part of frontier between Ottoman and Habsburg in Croatia. Following period of conquest of Herzegovina by Ottomans in 1480, refugees that had migrated to Dubrovnik and Venice started to attack Ottoman lands with the aim of booty. Their main motivations were booty and avenging. They attended the regular Venetian army during the Ottoman-Venetian wars. Refugees' raids were institutionalized under the Hungary-Croatia kingdom and Habsburg monarchy. Commanders of frontiers and land-owners used this military potential and they tried to creat an institutional defense organization against Ottomans.

After the battle of Mohacs (1526), the frontier of Bosnia became relatively stable and the Ottoman government decided to reduce the privileges of frontier raiders composed of Christians and converts who lived in the frontier region. They were obliged to pay the same tax with peasants. They lost their social status and incomes. In response, they migrated to the Habsburg lands. They transferred their traditions and expectations, and they involved in the Habsburg military system in the same way. They started to fight against Ottomans in this time for the same purposes. Institutional frontier organizations of Ottomans and Habsburgs came to resemble each other under the effect of these mutual refugee's raids.¹⁵³

Needless to say, those raiders and converts were not just Christians. Bracewell gives us some examples of Muslims who joined the Uskoks. Rising taxes and other economic pressures drove some Muslim peasants to the other side of the frontier. Even if conversion came to be religious terminology, in Bracewell's view, escape from Ottoman lands and participation in the Uskok resistance based on principally material causes. "In 1599, a Muslim prisoner, captured in a raid, converted to Christianity and became Uskok and –*apparently because of tradition rather than beliefs*- was baptised instantly."¹⁵⁴ Muslim roots and connections were not a barrier to acceptance or promotion among the Uskoks. For instance, this convert got a quick promotion and became the leader of a raiding gang.

Friedman, like Guilmartin, explains the confrontation between the Ottomans and the Europeans in the 16th century Balkans and Mediterranean in religious terms. Within this general framework, privateering becomes a religious activity. The situation in North Africa aided the Ottomans in their struggle against Spain. From the late 14th century pirates of the coastal regions of North Africa had stepped up their organized privateering against Christian vessels and coastlines. The chief motivation behind this privateering was religion. The Barbary corsairs regarded themselves as soldiers in the holy war against Christendom.¹⁵⁵ According to Friedman, the defeat of the Moors in

¹⁵³ Bracewell, 16. yy'da Adriyatik'te korsanlık, pp 55-59

¹⁵⁴ Bracewell, *ibid*, pp 96-97

¹⁵⁵ Ellen G. Friedman, The Exercise of Religion by Spanish captives in North Africa, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Apr., 1975) p19

Granada in 1492 consolidated the anti-Christian and anti-Spanish feelings in North Africa. Many Moors leaving Spain took refuge in the Barbary states and became corsairs. These exiles reinforced the ranks of the ‘*Moslem side*’ at the moment when the intensity of Spanish-Islamic confrontation heightened in the Mediterranean. With the establishment of Turkish suzerainty in the eastern Maghreb, these alliances gained importance.

On the other hand, she emphasizes the wide variety of privileges of captives in North Africa. Prisons named *bano* were constructed in Algiers for captives in the 16th century. In these “comfortable” prisons, captives had several facilities. There were taverns managed by Turks and Moors in the open areas of these prisons, and captives could purchase wine and brandy here. These taverns served captives who were not residents of the prisons as well.¹⁵⁶ During the second half of the 16th century -first time in 1551-, churches were established in many of these prisons.¹⁵⁷ Clerics served in these churches as well; “they held daily masses, organized the processions for Holy Week and other feast days, and buried the dead.” In 1579, forty or more clerics served in *bano grand*. Especially, religious celebrations reached peak in holy weeks. In general, the Turks and Moors of North Africa showed great respect for the Spanish friars and their faith.¹⁵⁸ The attitude of the North Africans was based on practical reasons. They wanted their slaves to remain in Christian faith. The governor of Tunisia would not accept conversion of slaves. In Algeria, conversion of Christians were discouraged.¹⁵⁹ This was not a general rule for all Christians. Seamen, artisans or some militias were encouraged to apostatize. Women whose masters wanted to marry them and young boys as good candidates for the janissary corps were another convert group. However, slaves were broadly seen as investments by their masters and churches did not pay ransom for Muslim slaves so masters' aim was possession slaves in their own religion rather than diffusion of Islamic faiths among infidels.

¹⁵⁶ Op. cit p 22

¹⁵⁷ Op.citp 23

¹⁵⁸ Op.cit. p25-30

¹⁵⁹ Op.cit 32

To sum up, there were no alternative way to legitimize their raids for corsairs or *ghazis* except religious war. They had to use this rhetoric as a tool even if they were devoutly religious or nonreligious. Besides, this rhetoric presents several occasions to the corsairs. For instance, as we mentioned before, Aruj obtained his first ship for predatory attacks thanks to this rhetoric from Şehzade Korkut. Piyale Bey, treasurer of Korkut, who knew Aruj Reis, described his relationship to Sultan Korkut in the following way: “A fighter of Islam is your humble servant. The assistance of your Majesty, with a ship is demanded.” Korkut who accepts the demand of Piyale bey, orders to Kadı of Izmir: “Make build a ship to our son *Ghazi* Aruj Reis, as he wishes for him to take revenge in the name of religion. Our fathers rest in peace.”¹⁶⁰

As Mustafa Âli notes, corsairs did not acted like *ghazis* in accordance with the Islamic law until they had acquired their own galiot. As pirates, they attacked not only “infidels” but also Muslim towns, Ottoman merchants and ships of vassals. However after they had gained sufficient power and a suitable boat, they joined to North African corsairs as *ghazis* and they swore to give up surely piratical attacks.¹⁶¹ Mustafa Âli trusts their adjure and their sincerity. Clearly, this was a purely pragmatic practice. Being an Algerian corsair provides not only social status and relatively security but also material facilities of corsairs. In his chronic, Naima Mustafa Efendi mentions this material contribution concerning Algerian corsairs “...in the western coasts of Algeria, the corsairs are protected. Powder, bullets, canvas, and similar means are given to them...”¹⁶²

In conclusion, *ghazi* ethos was surely used as rhetoric and it was a part of war at sea. However, this rhetoric should be assessed together with other variables in the 16th century context. Corsairs fought for one side and apparently for one religion but this should be kept in mind that those sides, those identities could change easily depending on conjuncture like economic or political developments so this rhetoric need not to be accepted verbatim as an absolute truth of that era.

¹⁶⁰ Seyyid Muradi, *Gazavatame*, p 75-79

¹⁶¹ Gelibolu'lu Mustafa Ali, *Mevaidün Nefais*, p 288

¹⁶² Naima Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Naima: Ravzatü'l-Hüseyn Fi Hülasati Ahbari'l-Hafikayn* (Ankara : Türk Tarih Kurumu yayınları 2007)Tarih-i Naima, p 379

II.4: Ottomans as “a Seaborne Empire”

The Ottomans continued to benefit from sea power after their early victory over Venice at the beginning of the 16th century. After the battle, in 1502 the navy was renewed. The ships were repaired, new ones were built, and sailors and oars men were recruited. Bayezid charged his sons and some sanjakbeys with financing such construction. Besides a supplementary tax was collected from the merchants. As before the war, Venetian craftsmen were responsible of the construction work.¹⁶³ The assistance brought by Kemal Reis to Memluks in 1507 and 1510 was both a measure against the Portuguese threat over the trade and a strategy to establish a naval base in the Africa.¹⁶⁴ However, the real breakthrough in the empire’s sea power took place during Selim’s reign. In the aftermath of Çaldıran, Selim was aware of the necessity of a navy to provide logistical support in his Egyptian expedition. According to the report of the Venetian *balio*, on the first of April, a great navy were ready.¹⁶⁵

In the spring of 1516, Selim did not hesitate to recruit experienced Muslim corsairs with their ships. The most important was Kurdoğlu Muslihiddin.¹⁶⁶ Selim conquered Egypt with the logistic support this navy provided. The duty of the navy during the expedition was limited to transportation and logistics. It did not play any offensive role. With this conquest the East Mediterranean passed under Ottoman control. Ottomans established themselves in the Red Sea, and thus acquired a passage to Indian Ocean. As a result, the Ottoman-Portuguese rivalry began. Next target for the Mediterranean security was Rhodes.¹⁶⁷

In 1519, Selim ordered for the preparation of the navy for an expedition against Rhodes. Yet, upon his sudden death, his son Süleiman chose to attack Belgrade at first. Next year, in 1522, he besieged Rhodes. The Rhodes expedition took place under the guidance of Kurdoğlu Muslihiddin. The castle of Haraki (Harke) on the east shore of the island was taken by Kara Mahmud, an ancient corsair who had entered service in the

¹⁶³ Brummet, Ottoman Seapower, p 92-93

¹⁶⁴ Palmira Brumett, Kemal Reis and Ottoman Gunpowder Diplomacy, p 1

¹⁶⁵ Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont, Soutien Logistic et Présence naval Ottoman en Mediterranée en 1517, p. 9

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. 10

¹⁶⁷ Katip Çelebi, Tuhfet, p 41

navy a year ago. While some of the heavy ships were left behind to defend the Bosphorus, with the other ships the castle of Rhodes was besieged. Soldiers and cannons were disembarked. After a long siege, the island was conquered. The Knights of Rhodes left the island and were relocated by Charles V to Malta.

In this way, the last threat in the eastern Mediterranean was destroyed. Whether Rhodes was conceived by the Ottomans as a real threat or a secondary danger is matter of debate. According to Vatin, the Knights of Rhodes together with Venice and the Ottoman Empire were one of the three important actors in the Mediterranean. Even during the siege, despite the Ottomans' numerical superiority, the Knights dominated at sea. All through the siege, the assisting forces managed to enter the port until the last minute. The conquest of Rhodes following a siege of five months was a great military success after the conquest of Belgrade had lasted just one month.¹⁶⁸ According to Brummet, Rhodes was an "overrated" enemy. While Ottomans were in a competition with Safavides and Memluks in order to control the Eastern Mediterranean and to enter the Indian Ocean, Rhodes was struggling for survival. At the beginning of the 16th century, the Ottomans were already dominating the eastern Mediterranean. Rhodes had no means to challenge the Ottoman navy without assistance.¹⁶⁹ No matter how powerful Rhodes was, it was no more than a corsair base and a Christian outpost. Thus, its conquest reduced the risk of Christian corsairs' attacks on Ottoman ships and shores.

We have mentioned before that the navy was covering its need for experienced mariners through the recruitment of corsairs. Another advantage the corsairs brought to the navy was their knowledge about long distance areas. Corsairs' wide raiding activities provided Ottoman navigation a sound knowledge about the Mediterranean.¹⁷⁰ Corsairs by attacking the regions where it was impossible for the navy to attack, gained information about that region. Captured slaves and maps were other channels for the circulation of information. Certainly, the center had many information channels; yet, first hand knowledge provided by the corsairs was the healthiest. In the first quarter of

¹⁶⁸ Vatin, p 337 - 345

¹⁶⁹ Palmira Brummet, *The Overrated Adversary Rhodes*, p 520

¹⁷⁰ Hess, *Ottoman seaborne*, p 1905

the 16th century For an empire intending to dominate the world, the significance of information was indisputable,.

On 1517, when the Egyptian expedition was completed, a corsair in the service of the navy, Piri Reis, had presented Selim I the world map he had prepared in 1513. Even though, we have today only the parts displaying Atlantic and American shores, this map is the oldest available world map. How the map was drawn by Piri Reis is a question of discussion among the historians. The entry by Piri Reis is enlightening:

I have used twenty (regional) maps and world maps. I have used eight ca'feriyes,¹⁷¹ an Arab map of the Indian Ocean, as well as maps made by four Portuguese who applied mathematical methods to represent India and China; I have also used a map of the Western regions drawn by Columbus.¹⁷²

With his uncle Kemal Reis, Piri Reis had plundered Spanish shores and ships for a long time. The Columbus map that he used in his own map was found by him in a ship they captured in Valencia.¹⁷³ In addition to this, in his book named *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, Piri Reis states that one of the Spanish slaves of Kemal Reis had participated in the third trip of Columbus to America. Piri Reis probably made use of the knowledge of this slave too, in making of his map.¹⁷⁴ Portuguese maps also passed hand to hand throughout the Mediterranean in this era. Apart from these factors, Piri Reis wrote that he had a chance to seek a globe created by a priest. That globe was probably a model globe made in 1492 by Martin Behaim from Nurnberg.¹⁷⁵

The *Kitab-ı Bahriye* that was presented by Piri Reis to Sultan Suleiman in 1526 includes 216 maps. This book includes not only technical naval information about islands, coasts throughout of Mediterranean but also socio-economic situation of

¹⁷¹ World maps made by the Arab geographers of the classical Islamic period which were partly inspired by Ptolemy

¹⁷² Svat Soucek, Piri Reis and Süleyman the Magnificent, in *Studies in Ottoman Naval History and Maritime Geography*, (Istanbul, ISIS Press, 2008)p 33

¹⁷³ Svat Soucek, Piri Reis, Ottoman Discovery of the Great Discoveries, in *Studies in Ottoman Naval History and Maritime Geography*, (Istanbul, ISIS Press, 2008) p 52

¹⁷⁴ Svat Soucek, Piri Reis and Suleyman the Magnificent, p 32

¹⁷⁵ Fikret Sarıcaoğlu, Osmanlı Deniz Harita ve Coğrafyaları, p 165

regions, their floras, rivers, borders and historical informations as well. Then he prepared his second world map in 1528.

Those maps and knowledge was registered by Piri Reis and thus, reached today. Even we do not have documentation, we may suppose that Piri Reis was not the only example. Many corsairs must have gathered information by the maps and the slaves they have captured. This supposition is justified by the fact that the maps ordered from Venice in later periods, those produced in the Ottoman *nakkaşhane*, book of maps of Ali Macar Reis dating 1560, and the map of Menemenli Mehmet Reis were all maps used by the corsairs. Even though they were not produced by the corsairs themselves, they have become a chain of the corsairs' circulation of knowledge.

Another document that has reached today from the period in which Piri Reis presented *Kitab-ı Bahriye* to Suleiman, is a report of a corsair about a different region. Giving information about the Red Sea, this report was presented by Selman Reis to Grand Vizier İbrahim Pasha on 1525. Selman Reis, against the wishes of Selim I, had entered in Memluk service, commanded their army, and defended Jiddah against Portuguese attack on 1517. He was imprisoned after the conquest of Egypt with the crime of disloyalty. He was set free after the death of Selim and returned to Yemen. He came to the attention of İbrahim Pasha with his experience as a corsair. He was sent to the region by İbrahim Pasha on 1524, in order to prepare a report on the present situation in the Indian Ocean and the Portuguese force.¹⁷⁶

The report present by Selman Reis to İbrahim Pasha in 1525 is crucial. Before all, it was prepared by a mariner knowing the region at first hand. Besides, this report was not limited to the developments in the Indian ocean. It included information about Ottoman ships and arms, as well as information about the geographies around the Red Sea. Advice for the future also took place in this report.¹⁷⁷ Another important report about the Indian Ocean, Red Sea, and the region belonged to Sefer Reis, who was preparing corsair attacks under the service of the navy. The report included information

¹⁷⁶ Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, p 74

¹⁷⁷ Salih Özbaran, "A Turkish Report on the Red Sea and the Portugese in the Indian Ocean" in *The Ottoman Response to European Expansion* (Istanbul, ISIS press, 1994) p 100 - 109

about the region between Ceylon and Hormuz. The political developments in the Indian Ocean were also given place.¹⁷⁸

In brief, in the Age of Discoveries, the Ottoman administration was collecting information about the regions it can not directly intervene, through the corsairs. Thus, the corsairs were serving the center as explorers and providing information.

II. 5) Barbary Corsairs the Barbarossas

The long life story of Hayrettin Pasha, one of most important figures of the Ottoman naval history, is an interesting subject not only for the evolution of relationship between state and corsairs but also as the biography of a pirate. His career at sea began as a little pirate. Then he became ruler of Algeria and his life ended as the Grand Admiral of the biggest navy of the Mediterranean.

According to *Gazavatname*, Barbaros Hayrettin's father was a fortress guard in Lesbos Island, named Yakup and his mother was a Greek. Hayrettin or Hızır, was one of the four sons of the family. In the beginning, these brothers have sailed in the Mediterranean for commercial purposes. Hızır Reis started to trade between Euboea and Thessaloniki, his older brother Aruj and younger brother Ilyas sailed to Damascus with the same purpose. During one of these journeys, the Knights of Rhodes attacked to the Aruj's boat, they captured him and murdered his brother, Ilyas. After this incident, Aruj ran away from the knights and became a corsair. After a while, Hızır gave up trade and joined his older brother as a corsair.¹⁷⁹ However, this information based on *Gazavatname* is unreliable. The story of trade, instead of illegitimate piratical activities or that of a heroic Aruj Reis escaping from the Rhodes Knights on his own might be reconstructed retrospectively. Though, the first pages of *Gazavatname* show us that the Barbarossas had a deep knowledge and experience about navigation and that they had a reputation among other seafarers before their corsair career.

¹⁷⁸ Giancarlo Casale, An Ottoman Intelligence report from the mid-sixteenth century Indian Ocean, *Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol:31 issue:1 p 181-186

¹⁷⁹ Seyyid Muradi, *Gazavatname*, p 56-70

We do not know exactly when the Barbarossas started raiding in the Western Mediterranean. This is a controversial subject. Some western sources indicate that the Barbarossas' corsair activities in North Africa began in 1504. However, Soucek notes that the last journey of Piri Reis to North Africa with his uncle Kemal Reis was in 1510. Piri Reis gives details about the political and military structure of the region in his masterpiece, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*. The fact that he does not mention Barbarossas is suspicious. According to Soucek, *Gazavatname* is confidential about Barbarossas migration season to North Africa. Consequently, they migrated to North Africa in 1513.¹⁸⁰

Following his accession to the throne, Selim I prohibited the entrance and the exit of the ships to the Ottoman ports, in order to prevent his brother *şehzade* Korkut's escape. Corsairs under the patronage of Korkut could not anymore shelter in the regions of Aegean and the Levant, thus they migrated to North Africa.¹⁸¹ The Barbarossas were among those corsairs. Even though no immediate threat was oriented to them, they must have not feel safe in the region.¹⁸²

Barbarossas reached Tunisia and got in contact with the Ruler of Tunisia to use his ports. According to the agreement, they would give one eighth of their booty as *pencik* and one fifty as the rent of port. In this way, they started to use the port of La Goletta (*Halk-ul Vad*), located around Tunisia, as a base for their corsair attacks. During the 16th century, there was a similar practice on the other side of the Mediterranean. The Maltese corsairs had to share one tenth of their booty with the master of the port.¹⁸³ Uskoks of Segna grew strong in the last quarter of century, paid one out tenth of their booty to two churches, a Franciscan and a Dominican. In the post-1580 era, this rate increased in the region after the direct participation of Kings of Naples and Sicily directly to corsair raids. The ship was equipped by these kings in exchange of half of

¹⁸⁰ Svat Soucek, Rise of Barbarossa, in *Studies in Ottoman Naval History and Maritime Geography*, (Istanbul, Isis Press, Istanbul, 2008) p 67-74

¹⁸¹ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, p 366

¹⁸² Seyyid Muradi, *Gazavatname*, p 82- 91

¹⁸³ Peter Earle, *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary*, p 11

the total booty. If the ship was owned by a corsair, kings took one quarter of the total amount.¹⁸⁴

The Barbarossas got established in La Goletta and they gained strength gradually. Number of their ships and the *levends* who fought for them rose. After an unsuccessful siege of Bougie in 1514, this fortress was besieged next year for a second time. Even if the Barbarossas defeated the outer defenses, they could not conquer the inner fortress. However, Aruj became a powerful actor in the region and hold on Djidjelli¹⁸⁵ The first contact between Barbarossas and Selim I took place at this moment. The following year, Aruj captured Cherchel and strengthened his position. Leader of a local tribe, Salim, was executed under the pretext of acting against *jihad* and the Barbarossas took the port under his control. Finally, Aruj's last target was Algiers. He attacked, captured it and became the king of the Algiers in 1516. The Barbarossas conquered Tlemsen, old capital city of central Maghrib in 1517. In this process, Aruj and Hızır made advantage of fragmented political structure of the region as well as the insufficiency of the Spanish naval force. In this political landscape, they could clear a field of mines.

The Spaniards besieged Tlemsen in 1518 with the purpose of expelling Barbarossas from the region. During the siege, Aruj Reis was killed and the Barbarossas lost Tlemsen. However, Hızır kept his sovereignty in Algeria. In this period, Hızır had limited warriors and equipment and his position was in danger.¹⁸⁶ In the east Mediterranean, Selim I conquered Egypt, became the new protector of Holy cities, Mecca and Medina. This made him the most prestigious Sultan in the Islamic world. In 1519, Hızır sent gifts to Selim I and he announced that he wants to enter under Ottoman sovereignty. Selim met this request with pleasure. In this way, following the conquest of Egypt, Selim's zone of influence extended to the Western Mediterranean. Selim gained a base far from the Levant and the Aegean Sea. This frontier was shortly transformed into a refuge for Ottoman corsairs. On the other hand, the contact between

¹⁸⁴ Aymard Maurice, "16 yy sonunda Akdeniz'de korsanlık ve Venedik" *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 23/1-2, p 226

¹⁸⁵ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr*, p 46

¹⁸⁶ Andrew Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier*, p 61-65, Seyyid Muradi, *Gazavatname*, p 140-150

the government and corsairs was officialized. Muslihiddin Kurdoğlu, an Ottoman corsair migrated to the North Africa after ascendant of Selim I, had already been put into the service of the Imperial navy during the expedition of Egypt. After this annexation, commissioning of corsairs like Kurdoğlu to the Imperial Navy became easier. On the other side of this relation, Hayrettin could legitimize his position in the region thanks to the patronage of the Sultan. While he was just a brave and bold corsair leader, he was promoted to the post of Ottoman governor. Besides, he took the Ottoman support against the rising Spanish menace. Selim sent 2000 janissaries with artillery and he gave Hayrettin the authority to enroll *levends* from the Anatolian coasts.¹⁸⁷

Nevertheless, political conditions turned against Hayrettin and under new circumstances he was obliged to retreat to Djidjelli in 1520. Between 1520 and 1525, he continued his corsair attacks from this port. In a couple of years, he reinforced his position thanks to the help of refugees and adventurers, both Christian and native. Five years later, he re-conquered Algeria.¹⁸⁸ In this process, other important corsairs gathered around him. He constructed a powerful fleet with these corsairs. There were Turgut Reis, Sinan Reis the Jew, Aydın Reis among them.¹⁸⁹ After the reconquest of Algeria, Hayrettin captured Penon of Algeria from the Spaniards in 1529. The conquest of important ports provided a more safe seaway between Istanbul and Algeria and corsairs obtained a key base in the central Maghrib. Spanish pressure on Algiers was reduced with this conquest. Even though the Spanish fleets organized attacks on Algeria under the command of Andrea Doria in 1530 and Alvaro de Bazan in 1531, they could not be successful. Following these events, Barbaros Hayrettin became one of the most important actors in the Mediterranean. He beat a path to the post of Grand Admiral of Ottoman Imperial navy with his own struggle. He fought twenty years as a corsair and finally gained a powerful position.

Changes in the balance of the Mediterranean at the end of 1520's, brought Barbaros to a more important position for the Ottoman Mediterranean strategy. In 1521,

¹⁸⁷ Khayr al-din, IE

¹⁸⁸ Godfrey Fisher, *Barbary legend; war, trade, and piracy in North Africa, 1415-1830* (Oxford; Clerandon Press 1957) p 54-55, As to Gazavatname, this period lasted just 3 years.

¹⁸⁹ John Julius Norwich, *The middle sea : a history of the Mediterranean*, (London: Chatto&Windus, 2006) p 286

the King of France, Francis I invaded Navarre and Low Countries belonging to the Holy Roman Empire. After a series of wars lasting four years, Francis I was captured by the Imperial forces following a serious defeat at the Battle of Pavesa in 1525. He signed the treaty of Madrid. According to this treaty, he gave up his claims over Italy, Flanders and Burgundy. However, following the year of his release, he founded the League of Cognac and included Pope Clement VII, and Republic of Venice. Subsequently, he attacked again. As a result of several wars, France accepted the conditions of Madrid treaty and quit the war in 1529. This was the final scene of a long conflict started in 1521.

In this period, another crucial incident was the appointment of Andrea Doria as the Grand Admiral of the Spanish Armada. Andrea Doria, member of an ancient Genoese noble family, was on the French side at the beginning of the wars; however, Charles V proposed a better contract to him in 1528 and he passed to the other side. According to the contract, independence of Genoa was guaranteed by the force of Imperial Arms and Andrea Doria joined the Spanish Navy with his own fleet. In the light of these developments, long conflict between Habsburg Empire and France was over and the Habsburgs had a powerful navy at the end of 1520's. Thereby, a danger rose at sea against the Ottomans in the beginnings of the 1530s. For the first time, Charles V had a powerful and professional navy to follow a stable and long term naval policy.¹⁹⁰

Charles V used this navy against Ottomans for the first time -except assaults on Algeria- in 1532. As a consequence of Suleiman's Austrian campaign, King of Austria, Ferdinand appealed to his brother Charles V for help, and Charles sent his navy to the Adriatic under the command of Andrea Doria. Andrea Doria captured Modon and Coron. Then his navy defeated Suleiman's navy which tried to resist, yet, was obliged to return Istanbul. Following this development, Barbaros was appointed as the Grand Admiral of the Imperial Navy as *Kapudan Pasha* upon the suggestion of Grand Vizier İbrahim Pasha in 1534. The reorganization of the Imperial Navy began.

¹⁹⁰ Miguel Angel de Buenes Ibarra, "Yavuz ve Kanuni devirlerinde Osmanlı-İspanya deniz savaşları, in *Türkler*, Cilt 9 p 601,

The rise of Barbaros Hayrettin was not an exceptional case in the early modern world. Legal act and illegal acts of a pirate and a Grand Admiral were not at the two opposite poles as in the modern world. There was nothing more than a thin line between these two figures and this line was often crossed. Kılıç Ali Pasha was promoted to the position of Grand Admiral like Barbaros Hayrettin, seafarers raised among Algerian corsairs were appointed as *beylerbeyi* of Algeria during the century. In the 16th and 17th centuries, there was not a maritime school in the modern meaning. Thus, Grand admirals and captains were often assigned from among seagoing experienced seafarers.¹⁹¹ For instance, Elizabethan privateering heroes, John Hawkins and Francis Drake were commissioned to the Royal Navy as Grand Admirals, like Barbaros. Interestingly, the stories of Drake and Barbaros show parallelism with each other. The similarity goes beyond their biographies. They are both symbolic figures who contributed to the institutionalization of privateering in the seas.

Francis Drake grew up in the household of the Hawkins family, who was occupied with sea trade and piracy in Plymouth. William Hawkins and his sons were successful merchants and part-time pirates.¹⁹² As mentioned in *Gazavatname*, Barbarossas became corsairs while trading with their ships. If this case is compared with Drake's case, it will be obvious that piratical activities and trade were not separate career paths in the context of the 16th century. Trade and piracy went hand in hand and due to this familiarity, the Barbarossas and the Drakes turned into corsairs at a certain point.

Francis Drake was enrolled in one of the ships of this family, which sailed to the Guinea coast of West Africa for trading. His next journey was to South America with Hawkins' ships. After a while, he was promoted to the position of captain in their ships and rose as an important corsair in a short time. In 1571, after about ten years of his first sea voyage, Francis Drake and his brothers were regarded by the Spaniards, as among the most dangerous English pirates.¹⁹³ In 1572, the younger brother of Francis Drake,

¹⁹¹ Jan Glede, *Warfare at Sea*, p 53

¹⁹² Harry Kelsey, *Sir Francis Drake The Queen's Pirate*, (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1998) p 11-12

¹⁹³ Op. cit p 33

John Drake was killed by the Spaniards in his unsuccessful predatory attack on a Spanish trade ship in Cartagena. Common enemy of Barbarossas and Drakes, the Spaniards managed to kill one member of these corsair families. However, they could not prevent the promotion of other brothers, Hızır and Francis Drake. They became Grand Admiral of English and Ottoman Navies.

In 1577, Francis Drake sailed for the purpose of plunder, as a captain of a mixed fleet composed of Queen's and some private investors' ships. This journey lasted three years and he returned to England as one of the richest men in the country and the most prestigious corsair who had sailed around the world. This corsair had a chair in Parliament in 1581 and he organized a Navy composed of privateer ships as an Admiral of the Queen for plundering the West Indies in 1584.¹⁹⁴ As mentioned by John Hooker (quoted in Kenneth Andrews) "Drake's voyage inflamed the whole country with a desire to adventure unto the seas, in hope of the like good success, so that a great number prepared ships, mariners and soldiers and traveled every place where any profit might be had"¹⁹⁵ Ports of Weymouth and Southampton became principal bases for English privateers after Drakes. These ports had the same mission of Algeria and Djidjeli. All of these ports were transformed into shelters for corsairs, after legendary corsairs like the Barbarossas and the Drakes.

The Drakes and the Barbarossas differentiated from other English and Ottoman corsairs thanks to their good chance and strategically correct gambits. Apart from successful stories of Barbaros and Drake in different geographies, there were lots of similar stories among corsairs hired by the naval service and rose to different ranks in the Imperial Navy. After all, corsairs had a risky occupation. Death in raids or being captured by enemy navies was a part of the story. In brief, Ottoman corsair settlement was not a unique case in the early modern era and the rise of Barbarossas was not an exceptional story among other corsairs' career.

¹⁹⁴ Op. cit. p 236-239

¹⁹⁵ Kenneth R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering, English Privateering During The Spanish War 1585-1603* (Glasgow : Cambridge University Press 1964)

CHAPTER III

THE INCORPORATION OF CORSAIRS AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION PROCESS:

THE KAPUDAN PASHA ERA

III.1) The Formation of the Kapudan Pasha's Navy

Barbaros Hayrettin arrives in Istanbul upon Suleiman's invitation in 1533. with 10 captains who had accompanied him. After coming together with Suleiman there, he goes to Aleppo in order to meet İbrahim Pasha, who is in Aleppo by then.¹⁹⁶ Thus, Barbaros Hayrettin is appointed as the head of the navy and the navy is re-organized. Whereas sanjak of Kapudan Pasha used to be Gallipoli, with a new arrangement, *Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid* (Islands of Mediterranean) province was founded in 1534 and it was given to Kapudan Pasha's affiliation. Barbaros is appointed *beylerbeyi* of this province. The sanjaks appertaining to the province were Gallipoli, Euboea, Lepanto, *Karlili* (situated in western coasts of Greece), Mytilene, and Rhodes. During Selim II period, Algeria (*Cezayir-i Mağrip*) and Chios were also attached to *Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid* province. All the revenues of these islands were left to Kapudan Pasha.¹⁹⁷ Confusion between *Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid* province and Algeria should be avoided. First one is province of Kapudan Pasha which embraces Mediterranean islands of which the center was Gallipoli, while the second one is North African Algeria, known as "Western Algeria", governed by a *beylerbeyi*. Barbaros started to re-organize his navy right after the nomination as Kapudan Pasha to his mission. Barbaros and the captains who participated in navy service with him also organized the shipbuilding. Northern African

¹⁹⁶ İdris Bostan, *Cezayir-i Bahri Sefid'in Kuruluşu*, in *Beylikten İmparatorluğa Osmanlı denizciliği* p 50-53

¹⁹⁷ Ayhan Afşin Ünal, XVI. ve XVII. Yüzyıllarda Cezayir-i Baht-i Sefid Eyaleti, in *Türkler*, cilt 9 p 614

coasts, which had previously been used by them as bases, helped them have knowledge about shipbuilding on the other coasts of Mediterranean Sea, and the naval tradition of Atlantic coast. Before Barbaros' arrival in the region, Algerian coasts had already met Iberian naval tradition. In 1505, Portuguese captives had constructed a boat at Mers-el-Kebir.¹⁹⁸ Also, Barbaros Hayrettin has run into a shipwright among the captives in a Majorcan boat he seized, and had him construct two ships; one with 26 thwarts, and the other with 12 thwarts.¹⁹⁹ Barbaros structured his navy with the experience he gained in Algeria and with his acquirements from the period where he used to be a corsair. The most important consequence of this fact was that the galleys are decided to be the striking force of the Ottoman navy and remained in that position for a long time²⁰⁰.

In May 1534, Barbaros set his first sail with 100 ships and took Coron back. Although he conquered Tunisia in 1535, he drew away into Algeria because of Spain's landing of soldiers, and went back to Istanbul while looting Majorcan Islands.²⁰¹ In consequence of extensive capitulations that Ottomans provided to France and following that, the re-starting of the war between Charles and Francis; the long-lasting Ottoman-French alliance against Spain was to start, thus the navies of Barbaros and Andrea Doria were coming against each other as a reflection of this struggle in the seas.

Barbaros' winning of the battle of Prevesa in 1538 had strengthened Ottoman superiority at sea.²⁰² The Ottoman-Venetian war was of value to the Ottoman navy on south coasts; with the Ottoman Empire's war declaration against Venice, Hadım Suleiman Pasha was confiscating Venetian merchant vessels and taking ship's crew in Ottoman employ. Thus, another Ottoman navy strengthened by hundreds of Venetian

¹⁹⁸ Dorothy M. Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk, A pattern of Alliances* (Liverpool: Liverpool university press; 1954) p 120

¹⁹⁹ Seyyid Muradi, p 274-275

²⁰⁰ İdris Bostan, *Osmanlılar ve Deniz, Deniz politikaları, teşkilat, gemiler*, (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları: 2008) p 116

²⁰¹ İdris Bostan, op . Cit, p 28

²⁰² Barbaros kept his navy inside Prevesa harbor and stood on the defensive. On the third week of besieging, navy of the Holy League of Spain, Venice and Papal states under the command of Andrea Doria attacked in order to enter the harbor early in the morning; however the order between sailor ships and ships with oars in Doria's navy was disarranged due to the lull in the wind. Profiting from this situation, Barbaros drew the navy from the harbor and trounced Doria's navy. Although the Holy League did not have an important loss, it had to withdraw. For further technical information about Prevesa sea war, Guilmartin , Gunpowder and galleys, p 42 - 56

gunners, pilots and skilled craftsmen was standing out to India under the command of Hadım Suleiman Pasha the same year.²⁰³

Prevesa Sea War was one of the three open sea wars – others Djerba and Lepanto- in the Mediterranean in the 16th century, and was the proof of Ottoman marine force becoming a dominant power in Central Mediterranean. It was almost 40 years after the first defeat of Venice by Ottoman navy during the period of Bayezid II, and in the meanwhile, during Selim II and Suleiman periods, the navy was developed and became the sole power in Eastern Mediterranean. Also, naval forces were being used as an important instrument in Ottoman foreign policy, alliance with France, as well as policies pursued against Venice.

Prevesa naval battle was an important example of 16th century Mediterranean naval battles. It was not very easy to overcome a combined defense system composed of war galleys and shore batteries in the Mediterranean. It was possible to defeat a stronger enemy navy if this defensive combination was used correctly. These battles were not open sea wars with the classical definition. Conflicts were usually taking place in the regions close to the land. Thus, “Mediterranean naval warfare was not purely naval, but amphibious in nature.” as Guilmartin explains. It was not possible for galleys to sustain a long-term siege from sea due to their logistic restrictions. It was not only difficult and dangerous to try to defeat an enemy fleet in the sea, but also inefficient. Consequently, seizure of the bases of enemy fleet was necessary.²⁰⁴

In consequence, some premises should be reviewed while evaluating 16th century Ottoman naval force. Generally admitted “Ottoman Empire was a land-based military empire and Ottoman regime was not interested at sea” premise seems to be defective when Mediterranean system is considered. This results from the evaluation of marine force usage in the 16th century independently from its historical context. At this point, it would be reasonable to consider alternative premises presented by Brummet.

²⁰³ Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, p 98-99

²⁰⁴ Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys*, p 56 -57

It is necessary to evaluate Ottoman naval force in accordance with the period and the region it functioned in, which is, the Mediterranean. Firstly, it is to be admitted that at any period, Ottoman Empire has never turned into a thalassocracy like Venice; however it was an assertive State in terms of naval force beginning from the 16th century, in accordance with its economical and political status. It had a naval culture which was developed accordingly with local conditions, adopted, and inherited. As an ineluctable consequence of Ottoman Empire's rising as a world power in the first quarter of the 16th century, its sea power was developed as an important and indispensable component of the Empire's power. Thus, it would be a more adequate statement to qualify Ottomans as an amphibian power instead of a sea power or a land-based empire. Ottoman conquests of Egypt and Syria, gaining ascendancy all over Black Sea coasts as well as Adriatic Sea obligated them to have a powerful naval force. It was not possible for an Empire branching out into a large area from Indian Ocean to Central Mediterranean not to be committed to naval force or implement naval politics. It was an obligation more than a luxury to provide the security of maritime routes between Alexandria and Istanbul and those that reach from Istanbul to the Adriatic and the Black Sea, to contend with Portugal in order to keep spice trade vibrant, to pacify the enemy fleets in the Mediterranean, as well as to secure Ottoman expeditions on land.²⁰⁵ The Ottoman Empire's coasts on the Mediterranean had important bases for the navy and corsairs. As of 1453, the range of naval force was increased as new ports and islands were conquered.

One of the arguments that take an important place in historiography and that is addressed by the discourse based on Ottoman administration's neglecting of seas and non-development of naval policies is that, persons nominated as Kapudan Pashas, except for Barbaros Hayrettin and Kılıc Ali Pasha, were not knowledgeable about seas and they only had a background from the palace. Without a deeper look and thinking on the reasons of this choice of Ottoman administration, this argument might be considered as acceptable. As a matter of fact, it is understandable that those who are not historians

²⁰⁵ Palmira Brummet, *The Ottomans as a World Power: What We Don't Know about Ottoman Seapower;* " *Oriente Moderno, XX (LXXXI)* n.s., no. 1 (2001) p 7-9. I am grateful to Palmira Brummet who kindly responded to my request and sent her article to me.

among serious researchers come to this conclusion²⁰⁶. However, some examples and functioning of the system demonstrate that this was a conscious choice.

It is an exceptional situation that Barbaros Hayrettin and Kılıç Ali Pashas achieved this post with their corsair background. Both of these two captains achieved this post within extraordinary conditions. Barbaros Hayrettin became an important political actor at the beginning of 1530s²⁰⁷ and it was not possible to nominate one of the important actors of the Mediterranean such as Barbaros Hayrettin to a simple post while recruiting him in the state service for the re-establishment of the navy. Regarding Kılıç Ali Pasha, he was inducted in extraordinary circumstances right after Ottoman Empire faced its biggest defeat in the 16th century including all war terrestrial wars. Apart from these, after Barbaros death, Sokullu Mehmet Pasha was nominated to the post of Kapudan Pasha, and following that, Sinan Pasha, brother of Kanuni's Grand Vizier Rüstem Pasha between 1550 and 1553, Piyale Pasha between 1553 and 1568, and Müezzinzade Ali Pasha in the period between 1568 and Lepanto naval battle were appointed to this post. After Kılıç Ali Pasha's death in 1587, for a very short period of time, Uluç Hasan Pasha who came from Algeria occupied this post and after him, Cağaloğlu Sinan Pasha who was raised in the palace became Kapudan Pasha. All other Kapudan Pashas except Barbaros Hayrettin and Kılıç Ali Pasha were persons raised in the palace, which are acquainted with governmental issues, knowledgeable about Empire's opportunities and systems, and educated in the *enderun*.

Approached from Ottoman administration side, Kapudan Pasha was to be knowledgeable about navy's arrangement, organization of ship construction, as well as ship crew's composition. This was considered as the reason for which persons with an educational background from *enderun* were nominated to this post instead of sea men who used to be corsairs. Those who had a keen knowledge about the imperial system used to profit from experiences of corsairs while preparing the navy to expeditions and during expeditions. In other words, while Kapudan Pashas were involved in administration, corsairs were playing an important role in decision making in the field.

²⁰⁶ Murat Belge, *Osmanlıda kurumlar*, (İstanbul : Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları : 2005) p 203

²⁰⁷ See pages 55-56

Its most well-known example is the talk between Sokullu Mehmet Pasha, Grand Vizier of the period, and Kılıç Ali Pasha, nominated as Kapudan Pasha, upon the reconstruction of the navy after Lepanto Sea War.

Kılıç Ali Pasha sees reconstruction tasks difficult and tells Sadrazam Sokullu Mehmet Pasha: “It is easy to build hulls, but to prepare five or six hundred anchors for two hundred ships and corresponding amounts of rigging sails and other equipment does not seem possible.” Sokullu responds Kılıç Ali with his famous words: “Pasha, you have not experienced about Empire's affairs yet. The power of this Exalted State is such, that if a fleet were to be ordered with anchors of silver, ropes of silk thread and sails of velvet, it could be easily built.”²⁰⁸ Here, it would be explanatory to skip Sokullu’s rhetoric and assess the talk between Sokullu Mehmet Paşa, raised in *enderun* and previously occupied Kapudan Pasha post and another Kapudan Pasha, not raised through government service but through experience gained in the seas. While Sokullu speaks with his knowledge on ample human resource and material source that the Empire has, Kılıç Ali Pasha spoke with the misgivings of a practical mariner.²⁰⁹ Problems that Kılıç Ali Paşa had never faced before such as construction of the navy, assurance of oarsmen, recruitment of paid soldiers to replace thousands of militias lost in Lepanto were overcome with Sokullu’s support. Also Sokullu clearly emphasizes the insufficiency of Kılıç Ali’s knowledge on the Empire. However Kılıç Ali Paşa was nominated to the Kapudan Pasha Post being the unique captain who succeeded to come back to Istanbul with his fleet after the defeat in Lepanto.

The fact that Turgut Reis, who was better known than Kılıç Ali Paşa, was not nominated as Kapudan Pasha has always been the subject of speculation. Katip Çelebi related this to the fact that Kapudan-ı Derya Sinan Paşa did not like Turgut Reis. With the help of his brother Grand Vizier Rüstem Paşa, Sinan Paşa was able to keep Turgut Reis, whom he considered as a competitor, away from the central administration. Certainly, it is possible that there might be personal rivalry; however, instead of taking

²⁰⁸ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr* p 118, Peçevi İbrahim, *Peçevi Tarihi* (Ankara :Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992) p352

²⁰⁹ Colin Imber, “The Reconstruction of the Ottoman Fleet after the Battle of Lepanto. 1571-1572.” in *Studies in Ottoman History and Law* (Istanbul. 1996) p 87

Katip Çelebi's ideas verbatim, it would be more useful to analyze the justification with which Rüstem Pasha convinced Sultan Suleiman for seeing the motives behind this choice. In order to justify Turgut Reis' non-promotion, Rüstem Paşa declares to Sultan Suleiman that he was raised in the country side and has never been promoted in civil service.²¹⁰ When Turgut Reis' situation is considered along with the talk between Sokullu and Kılıç Ali Pasha, it would be easy to realize the reason for which a person raised in *enderun* who knows the governmental mechanism is preferred for the Kapudan Pasha post. Moreover, Sinan Pasha died in 1553 and Piyale Pasha was preferred for his post instead of Turgut Reis. Thus, it does not seem enough to suggest a personal rivalry in order to explain this choice.

We can say that the Kapudan Pasha occupies that post as an administrator. However, we also need to explain the verity of Kapudan Pashas going on expeditions leading the fleet as fleet commander. How were the Kapudans who were not experienced in the sea able to command the navy on expedition? Decisions during besieging and war were usually made by consulting corsairs. Also with provisions sent by the palace, Kapudan Pashas were told many times to consult corsairs during war. In a firman that Sultan Suleiman wrote to Kapudan Piyale Paşa in 1555, he declares;

Turgut Reis knows every condition and affair of the sea; do not abstain from consulting him. Be in good livelihood and complete solidarity with sensual and intentional engagement, and accomplish all that assiduity requires. Participation of volunteer *levant* ships in the navy is ordered. Turgut Reis knows about them; fulfill the need of volunteer *levents*. Render the State triumphant with Turgut Reis's ingeniousness and by consulting him.²¹¹

Expedition decisions made at Divan-ı Hümayun were enunciated to the Kapudan Pasha and the corsairs in his service. Feasibility of expedition decision's implementation and number of ships needed for the expedition was learned. According to this information, preparations were started. Political decisions, relating to naval strategy were taken at Divan. In the 16th century, only Barbaros Hayrettin had a place at Divan as a Kapudan Pasha. It is obvious that Barbaros has an important role in the

²¹⁰ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr*, p 90

²¹¹ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr*, p 92-my translation

formation of naval strategy and decision making in Ottoman Empire. However, after Barbaros period, Kapudan Pashas were not present at Divan-ı Hümayun. Expedition decisions were taken at Divan-ı Hümayun, and preparations needed to implement the decision were agreed upon between Kapudan Pasha and corsairs in navy yard. The most important guides were ex-corsairs and volunteer captains when the preparations were completed and expedition was started. Information that Selaniki provides about the decision-making process and preparation of Malta's besieging is enlightening. Upon the attack of Maltese corsairs on the *Bostancıbaşı*'s ship, "the ministers of the Grace and Might, together with the venerable viziers have discussed the siege of Malta fortress."²¹² In the official letter sent to Grand Vizier Ali Pasha upon the decision of expedition, he is asked to negotiate with Kapudan Piyale Pasha and captains at the Divan. Another firman is sent to Kapudan Piyale Pasha where he was ordered to completely fulfill all preparations needed for the expedition on time.²¹³ Ex-corsairs were consulted and requirements for besieging were determined. Expedition was conducted by consulting corsairs, foremost Turgut Reis, as usual. For Malta expedition, like previous maritime expeditions, Sultan ordered Kapudan Pasha to consult Turgut Reis. Katip Çelebi cites the late participation of Turgut Reis in the navy and, Kapudan Pasha's strategically wrong decision making about the conquest of the island during this one-week delay.²¹⁴

It was not a disjunctive fact about Turgut Reis that corsairs provide a sort of consultancy to Kapudan Pasha. In the periods after Turgut Pasha's death during Malta's besieging, this practice was continued. Sultan Selim II, as he clearly points out within his provision he sent to Kapudan Pasha, assured also for upcoming periods that "in his holy navy, eminent seamen and captains, as well as other knowledgeable corsair captains go on expeditions along with good alliance and unity."²¹⁵

Therefore, Barbaros Hayrettin had an exceptional situation as "super" kapudan. He was a main actor in decision-making process of naval expeditions, he managed the

²¹² "vükela-i devlet ü saltanat, vüzera-i izam hazretleriyle kal'ai Malta müzakere olur"

²¹³ Mustafa Selaniki, *Tarihi Selaniki* (İstanbul : İstanbul üniversitesi edebiyat fakültesi yayınları 1989) v:1, p 5-7

²¹⁴ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr* , p101-102

²¹⁵ *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (978-979/1570-1572)* (Ankara : T.C. Başbakanlık, Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı) hüküm no : 84

preparations for expeditions and led those expeditions in field. Because the post of Kapudan Pasha identified with Barbaros Hayrettin's identity, this "super" Kapudan Pasha example which is an exception in fact, is considered as a regular situation. However this was not a usual case in Ottoman naval history and Kapudan Pashas were generally not "super" kapudans like Barbaros as mentioned above. In general, decisions of naval expeditions were taken by the central authority, Kapudan pashas raised in *enderun* completed the preparations for expedition according to these decisions with consultancy of ex-corsairs in the service of navy. As well, ex-corsairs were consultants of Kapudan Pashas in battle field.

As the most important corsair of the Mediterranean, Barbaros's engagement in Ottoman service and his nomination as Kapudan Pasha started a new period in Ottoman navy as a consequence of the establishment of *Cezayir-i Bahr-i Sefid* province and its attachment to Kapudan Pasha. Following this date, the nature of relations between Imperial navy and Ottoman corsairs changed. How did corsairs affect Ottoman naval force starting with this period? How were the relations with corsairs engaged with naval service and ghazis who privateer out of the navy settled?

III.2) The Relationship between the Ottoman Corsairs and the Imperial Navy after the Kapudan Pasha

III.2.i) Corsairs Recruited for Naval Service

As mentioned in the previous section, starting from the employment of Kemal Reis by Bayezid II in the navy, corsairs commenced to be recruited by Ottoman Imperial navy. Also, we have mentioned the symbiotic relationship between corsairs and Ottoman administration. Beginning from Barbaros' nomination as Kapudan-i Derya, relations between central government and corsairs was strengthened. Barbaros and important captains around him took positions in Ottoman navy and also corsairs in Barbaros's service advanced their relations in a semi-official way with the navy. The most important reason for that is the integration of the corsairs personally attached to

Barbaros who gathered them in Algeria into Ottoman navy with Barbaros. It is considered as an inaccurate approach to describe relations between corsairs and Ottoman navy throughout institutional ties. Reification of the State, namely the central authority and the corsairs complicates the analysis of this relation. Thus, it seems more rational to identify this relation through persons instead of abstract institutions.

Before observing this relation in details, it would provide us with an agenda to assess the situation in the European navies. In early modern Europe, private entrepreneurs in warfare at sea had a market, as states could hardly find skilled seafarers while establishing their navies and private entrepreneurs were the first agents to address in this process. This was preferred because private ship owners were naturally in close relationship with seafaring communities. These persons had important positions for finding skilled and experienced masters, pilots, boatswains and quartermaster and composing crews. Through networks of ship owners, states were being able to involve seamen of good reputation in the seafaring community into ships and navies. Accordingly, states looking for captains and crews for war ships preferred private ship owners who had developed networks within maritime communities.²¹⁶

In Europe, seafarers were already present as a social group before the emergence of royal navies. When states were to establish navies, they used to recruit talented seamen among this social group and they used to be re-engaged with the civilian market when the navy was de-mobilized. Leaders of these crews, namely commanders of ships, were generally composed of noblemen. Belonging of these persons to the nobility group provided them with military training. Besides, being members of an elite group assured them a partial protection for those who fight for him. If this commander had not only patronage and skills but also courage and success, he gained more power. Even if their commitment to the State was not always strong, over long-term, they turned into navy officers from military leaders.²¹⁷

Regarding the Ottoman naval force again, the Ottomans had established their permanent imperial navy much earlier than their contemporaries. Also, there was not a

²¹⁶ Jan Glete, *Warfare at sea*, p 43

²¹⁷ Op. cit 44

private ship owner group equivalent of those in Europe. However, the problem of need for skilled, experienced seamen necessary for the navy was also present for the Ottoman administration. While Europeans addressed themselves to ship owners in order to overcome this problem, Ottomans addressed themselves to corsairs. Starting with captains to look over the situation in Ottoman navy, ship captains in Ottoman Empire did not belong to noble groups; because of this, corsairs had to obtain force on their own in order to become ship captains. In this process, the one who is strong survived, these sea warriors usually owned their ships in some time and settled authority over other warriors and seamen through this power. As an example of the domination of a ship fleet by a corsair, Turgut Reis' career can be analyzed. In his book's section entitled as "Emergence and some holy wars of Turgut Bey", Peçevi brings out the promotion of an Ottoman corsair. As he mentions;

Turgut Bey is from Menteşe. He joined sea *levents* and to put a bold front on, he became master in maritime sciences. While he was sailing with his levent boat, he obtained a galley, then he increased the number of his ships, made them five when he had one, and finally he was ascended in rank as a levent captain.²¹⁸

In this period, once the strength of a corsair who commands a ship increased, the number of ships he owns increased accordingly, and as a matter more important than the latter, he expanded his authority and area of influence along with captains and warriors attached to him. Similarly, after the rise of Barbaros and his group, other seven corsairs including Kurdoğlu Muslihiddin and Piri Reis, nephew of Kemal Reis, joined them.²¹⁹ Thus, it was possible to consider a hierarchy based upon the power, and a network structured upon this hierarchy. Also, keeping in mind that privateering started as a family enterprise²²⁰, we can tell that this network expanded by means of relations through consanguinity.

Beginning from the recruitment of Kemal Reis and his nephew Piri Reis, relation between present network and central navy was settled. After Kemal Reis's

²¹⁸ Peçevi İbrahim, *peçevi tarihi*, p 245

²¹⁹ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı tarihi*, p 366

²²⁰ See footnote 111

death in 1510, Piri Reis quitted naval service and started to privateering around Aruj Reis. It is not a coincidence that Barbaros and his group first sent Piri Reis in order to commence communication with Selim II. They got closer to Selim II with Piri Reis's mediation.²²¹ Also, Barbaros introduced Piri Reis as a "knowledgeable person about administrative bodies' procedures and rules."²²² We can consider that together with the state experience he gained in the naval service with Kemal Reis, social network he developed from people of palace was effective on this preference.

We cannot talk about a modern state structure in the 16th century. Even if bureaucracy becomes more intense during Suleiman's period, the system could not work efficiently like modern states. In the first *mühimme* records, we find one of the most important proofs of this bureaucracy loses its operability in a grey area like piracy, and personal connections stand out. Three captains; Şaban Reis, Yusuf Reis and Köse Musa dock in Lepanto harbor, and on account of being considered as pirates, they are arrested and put in prison by the sanjakbey of Lepanto. Barbaros Hayrettin, having been informed about this, wrote a letter to the Palace indicating that those captains are not pirates; on the contrary they are volunteer captains who fight infidel pirates and bandit *levents*, and asked for their release, implying that he is being a guarantor for them. Thereupon, the Palace sent an order to the sanjakbey of Lepanto affirming that those captains are seamen in service of the Sultan, and that they should not be aggrieved, they should be allowed stay in the port and, in case of need, to cut trees from the forest.²²³ It is understandable in an early modern state that other units within the state do not have acquaintance with the network developed and expanded by Barbaros.

In order to use ports, construct ships, obtain supplies, shortly benefit from the state's patronage, corsairs needed to have guarantors, in other words to have a good reputation within the seafarer community, similar to the system in Europe. This practice was even present in Bayezid II period. With a provision he sent, Bayezid II declared that he gave permission to privateer to a seaman named Deli Yusuf Reis, and

²²¹ Ann Williams, Mediterranean conflict, in Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age, The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World, edited by Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead(London and New York, Longman, 1995) p 45

²²² Seyyid Muradi, *Gazavatname*, p 126

²²³ Mühimme Defteri, H951-952 tarihli (1544-1545) E 12321 hüküm no:380

ordered that, if he appoints a guarantor upon redelivery, the supplies he needs for his ship should be provided to him.²²⁴ With another order sent from the Palace in 1568, it was ordered that as a precaution against the possible disturbance of people caused by the *levent* ships that dock in Santa Maura port to winter, they should appoint guarantors, and if not, they should not be allowed to dock in the port.²²⁵ In an order sent in 1565 to the sanjakebys of Rhodes and Menteşe, it was indicated that a naval expedition was decided for next spring and a great navy was started to prepare for this purpose. For this reason, it was announced that *levends* who can construct ships and appoint a reliable guarantor were permitted to construct ships with 18 to 25 thwarts, and they were asked to provide Palace with a name list of persons who started to construct ships.²²⁶ By this means, even if it seems different in terms of techniques, a system that has the same mission with European system was being installed in terms of function. Thereby if not corsairs were totally placed under control, a pool of seamen was being developed in order to recruit in the navy when needed.

Before, it was necessary to render service in the navy for a long time and to seize an enemy ship in order to become captain to *hassa* ships (ships subordinate to the navy) in Ottoman Imperial Navy. However, later on the post of *hassa* captain was given to prominent captains participated to naval expeditions.²²⁷ There was not a standard practice for being promoted and becoming *hassa* captain in the navy. It was possible to be promoted with the recommendation of Grand Admiral, the *kethüda* of the arsenal, or any beylerbeyi or sanjakebeyi serving in the fleet.²²⁸ This practice explains the increase in the number of corsairs serving in the navy beginning from the Kapudan Pashas period starting with Barbaros, as well as the system in which this increase took place. For example, Turgut Reis was recruited to Ottoman service in 1551 and he was appointed as *sanjakebey* of Karlılı. Among captains around him, Gazi Mustafa, Uluç Ali, Hasan Gülle, Mehmet Reis, Sancaktar Reis, Deli Cafer and Kara Kadı were

²²⁴ *Osmanlılarda divan-bürokrasi-ahkam: II. Beyazıt Dönemine ait 906/1501 tarihli ahkam defteri*, İlhan Şahin, Feridun Emecen (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı; 1994) Hüküm no:326, p 91

²²⁵ Mühimme Defteri 7, Hüküm no: 2310

²²⁶ Mühimme Defteri 5, Hüküm no 499

²²⁷ İdris Bostan, *Osmanlı bahriye teşkilatı : 17. yy'da tersane-i Amire* (Anlara :TTK yayınları ;1992) p 54

²²⁸ Colin Imber, "The Navy of Suleyman the Magnificent," *Archivum Ottomanicum VI/1980*, 211-282, in *Studies in ottoman history and law*, p 41

appointed as *hassa* captains with a salary of 70-80 akçe *ulufe*²²⁹. Within the order sent to *Cezayir-i Garb beylerbeyi* in 1556, it was indicated that Muhyiddin Reis, who had been efficacious, was nominated as the Kapudan to the ships in Algeria, and the same year, appointment of Uluç Ali and Haydar Reis to the posts of *hassa* captain with a salary of 40 akçe each was ordered. While Kara Halil Reis, one of the volunteer captains coming from Western Algeria, was setting out to sea with his galiot in 1572, the same year he was promoted from volunteer captain post to *hassa* captain post with a per diem of 15 akçe by the order of Kapudan Pasha.²³⁰

However, this limited picture is not explanatory enough neither for relations between corsairs and kapudans in naval service, nor for relations among kapudans. Were there households that corsairs promoted to Kapudan Pasha Post such as Barbaros Hayrettin and Kılıç Ali Pasha composed right after they came into Ottoman service? Were there any seamen raised in these households and then recruited in the navy? If there were seamen raised in this way and then recruited in the navy, how active were they within the navy? There is not any study about this issue and it is not possible to answer these questions in the light of foregoing studies. However, we know that there is a slave population owned by these corsair captains before they were recruited to the navy, as well as important Muslim seamen who set out to sea among these slaves. Barbaros Hayrettin, when he set out to Istanbul in 1534, he left his post to his adoptee, Hasan Ağa. Hasan Ağa, was 9 years old when he was captured during an incursion Barbaros set to Sardinian Island. Later on he was converted to Islam and raised in Barbaros's household. Between years 1534-1543, he served as governor in Western Algeria, and then called summoned to Istanbul.²³¹ Uluç Ali was born in Calabria, and enslaved by Ali Hasan Reis. He was converted to Islam and he rose among corsairs. After joining Ottoman navy, he was firstly nominated as İzmir *sandjak beyi*, and then as Algeria *beylerbeyi*. Following Lepanto sea war, he was appointed to Kapudan Pasha Post. Ramazan pasha was born in Sardinian Island, enslaved at an early age by corsairs

²²⁹ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr*, p 88 , Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, p 385 and *Merkez ve Bahriye Teşkilatı* p 433

²³⁰ İdris Bostan, *Adriyatikte korsanlık*, p 37 and p 65

²³¹ Jacques Heers, *Les barbaresques - la course et la guerre en méditerranée XVe et XVIe siècle*,(Edition Perrin, Paris, Août 2001) p 92 and 317

of Algeria, converted to Islam and raised as a seaman. He was assigned as Tunisia *beylerbeyi* in 1570 and as Algeria *beylerbeyi* in 1574. Hasan Pasha, from Venice, used to work as scribe in a commercial ship in Dubrovnik when he was captured by Turgut Reis in Tripoli. Later on, he became Kılıç Ali Pasha's treasurer. He became Algeria *beylerbeyi* twice in periods between 1577 and 1580, and 1582 and 1583.²³² Frenk Cafer Pasha²³³, Hadım Hasan Pasha²³⁴, Sencivan Hasan Pasha²³⁵ have followed similar paths, from slavery to galley captain. Even if it is not possible to make a certain statement departing from these particular examples, a structure similar to the household system in central organization was also being practiced by corsair captains and a household composing of captured Christian slaves was formed. These slaves used to be converts to Islam and deliberated, and later on, rise to high positions by seniority. It is necessary to make a differentiation between young slaves serving corsairs, who rise to high positions after being converted and seamen who arrived in North African coasts after 1580 in order to use this region as piracy bases. Most of British and Dutch corsairs who arrived in Algeria with their ships were also convert to Islam.²³⁶ However, what is emphasized here is, seamen raised from kapudans' household.

Besides the transition from corsair to *hasssa* captains and corsairs raised around ex-corsairs, another significant point is that those who are from Kapudans' families also serve in the navy and they can be promoted up to posts of navy kapudan or *beylerbeyi*. Between years 1568 and 1569, Sokullu Mehmet Pasha appointed the admiral of Alexandria, Kurdoğlu Hızır Reis to be head of the fleet he sent to Indian Ocean for the expedition in Sumatra. Kurdoğlu Hızır Reis²³⁷ is the son of an ex-corsair, Kurdoğlu muslihiddin Reis, who was assigned as *bey* to Rhodes when the island was conquered. The other son of Kurdoğlu Muslihiddin, Kurdoğlu Ahmet Bey joined in Djerba war in 1560 as Rhodes's *bey*.²³⁸ Barbaros Hayrettin's son, Hasan Pasha²³⁹ served as Algeria

²³² Op. cit 173

²³³ Sicil-i Osmani, Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayınları, v:2 p 631,

²³⁴ Op. cit, p 639

²³⁵ Op. cit, p 642

²³⁶ Salvatore Bono, "Corsairs, slaves and converts in the history of Mediterranean" in *Individual, Ideologies, and Society*, ed. Kirsi Virtanen (Tampere: Tampere Peace Research Center, 2000) p 47-55

²³⁷ Giancarlo, *the Ottoman age of exploration*, p 197-200

²³⁸ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr* p 95

²³⁹ Should not be confused with Hasan Agha. Hasan Agha, Western Algeria's *beylerbeyi* between 1533

beylerbeyi between years 1544 and 1551. Sefer Reis, who made predatory attacks against Portuguese in Indian Ocean beginning from the 1550s, and afterwards recruited in the navy by grand vizier Sokullu Mehmet Pasha, is probably the son of “Sinan the Jew”, who participated in corsair attacks in North Africa with Barbaros and his group.²⁴⁰ When Piri Reis sailed in order to lay siege to Hormuz in 1552, his son Mehmet Bey joined in this fleet together with five galleys under his command.²⁴¹ Son of Sencuvan Hasan Pasha became the *bey* of Alexandria. Apparently, these examples do not provide us with the whole picture, but a seafarer class that has a network among members and has connections with the Palace is present in the 16th century in Ottoman Empire.

Was not there any kapudans raised in naval docks in Ottoman navy except those who were raised through piracy? Definitely, number and qualifications of captains raised in naval docks was important for the navy. The most well-known seaman who was promoted to high positions through traditional procedures is Seydi Ali Reis.²⁴² Nonetheless, in *Mir'at-ül Memalik*, in order to prove that he is a good seaman and to make the reader respect him, Seydi Ali Reis repeats several times that he was around Barbaros Hayrettin. He appoints Hayrettin and other captains as references.²⁴³ We have already mentioned that the word “corsair” is used for persons who are knowledgeable about seamanship due to their acquirements and experience. Seydi Ali Reis identifies himself as a corsair in that sense.²⁴⁴ Another interesting point is that, seamen call themselves as “*Hayrettinli*” (from/with Hayrettin or Hayrettinist); “*We walk on the sea / we look for and find the enemy / we take or revenge / they call us Hayrettinli*”²⁴⁵

and 1543 is Barbaros Hayrettin's adopted son. Regarding Hasan Pasha who became *beylerbeyi* in 1544, he is Barbaros's son.

²⁴⁰ Giancarlo Casale, Ottoman guerre de course and the Indian Ocean Spice Trade; The career of Sefer Reis *Itinerario* vol:xxxii (2008) no:1

²⁴¹ Salih Özbaran, “The Ottoman Turks and the Portugese” in *The Ottoman response to European expansion : studies on Ottoman-Portuguese relations in the Indian Ocean and Ottoman administration in the Arab lands during the sixteenth century*(Istanbul ,ISIS 1994) p 131

²⁴² Brummet, *Ottoman Seapower*; p 104

²⁴³ “I had fought under Hayrettin Pasha, Sinan Pasha, and other captains, and had cruised about on the Mediterranean, so that I knew every nook and the corner of it ” *Mir'at-ül Memalik* p 74, for translation; *The Travels and Adventures of the Turkish Admiral Sidi Ali Reis*, translated by A. Vambery (Kessinger publishing 2000) p 5

“God is our withness,I was with Hayrettin Pasha and fought against to Andrea Doria and Cend Dal.” *Mir'at-ül Memalik*, p 82

²⁴⁴ See footnote 36-37

²⁴⁵ Seydi Ali Reis, *Mirat-ül Memalik*, p 96 “*Deniz üstünde yürürüz / düşmanı arar buluruz/ öcümüz*

This rhyme that Seydi Ali Reis used in *Miratül Memalik* was probably a well-known and anonymous one among seamen. A similar practice to seamen calling themselves *Hayrettinli* is observed within *akinci*'s organization. *Akinci*'s beys and *akincis* fighting with them, who used to be semi-independent frontiersmen before Mehmet II period, were totally integrated into the central army with the influence of centralization and bureaucratization commenced by Mehmet II, and they lost their autonomies. During the Mehmet II period, names, occupations, and habitations of *akincis* called for army at war time were enlisted. *Akinci* troops were divided in two regions; right and left wings. Left wing was under the command of *sanjakkbey* of Lepanto, and right wing was under the command of *sanjakkbey* of Çirmen. During war time, they participated in the war according to their determined positions and missions in the army. Regarding the matter that interests us, previously, these territorial divisions used to have the names of old *beys* of the *ghazis* of the region. Left wing was called Turhanlı after the name of Turahan Bey, whereas Mihallu was the name of the right wing, named after a member of the Mihaloğulları family²⁴⁶ Even if overestimated statements can not be excerpted through this similarity, it is an interesting common point that *akincis* evolved into bureaucratic structure that used to be called after the names of *ghazi beys*, and corsairs and seamen who render service in the navy with the influence of centralization call themselves as *Hayrettinli*. Besides, when it is considered that Seydi Ali Reis had fought around Hayrettin, it becomes meaningful that a seaman raised in naval docks like him calls himself *Hayrettinli*.

In summary, if we try to draw up a framework in light of this information, a society composed of corsairs based in North Africa before Barbaros Hayrettin's nomination as Kapudan-ı Derya was already present. Starting with Kemal Reis, relations between corsairs and central navy gained a new dimension with Barbaros Hayrettin's nomination as Kapudan-ı Derya. Nomination of *hasa* captains to the navy upon suggestions of persons at positions such as Kapudan Pasha, Beylerbeyi or sancakbeyi, enabled assignment of corsairs to the navy throughout these relations. On

komaz alrız /bize Hayrettinli derler”

²⁴⁶ Mariya Kiprovska, *The military organization of the akincis in Ottoman Rumelia*, unpublished M.A. Thesis p 79-80

one hand, slaves recruited by kapudans when they were corsairs became Muslims and rose to captain positions and higher, and on the other hand, other seamen raised through these kapudans' families held positions in the navy and these facts provided the sustainability of seamen elite. Also, until 1587, instead of nominating as *beylerbeyi* somebody from the center, Ottomans nominated corsairs raised in Algeria who were known in the region. Thereby, continuous communication between corsairs in the region and the center was established. Regarding seamen who rose through traditional means within Ottoman navy, they were able to integrate themselves into this elite society of seamen if they could join this circle.

In order to render more meaningful the relations between navy and corsairs mentioned above, a deeper research upon this frame is necessary. Obviously, it is difficult to construct a structure based on individuals. However, instead of conceptualizing the relations between corsairs and the State throughout institutions, bringing out a network throughout persons on an indefinite issue like corsair would lead us to a more robust conclusion.

III.2.ii) The Employment of Volunteer Captains by the Imperial Navy

Like corsairs who get on privateering recruited in the navy and assigned as *hassa* captains, seamen who contribute to Ottoman naval force as being volunteer captains also occupy an important place within this structure. Usage of volunteer captains by the center, their connections with the center and their contribution to Ottoman naval force constitute another dimension of piratical activities.

These volunteer corsairs used to support the navy in the expeditions. Navy ships under Barbaros Hayrettin's command were accompanied by 70 pieces of corsair ships for Prevesa. 7 galleys and 20 galliots from Algeria participated in the siege of Malta.²⁴⁷ During Cyprus expedition, this number was around 100.²⁴⁸ During expeditions, these

²⁴⁷ Guilmartin, Gunpowder and galleys, p 185

²⁴⁸ İdris Bostan, Kıbrıs seferi günlüğü ve osmanlı donanmasının sefer güzergahı, in *Beylikten İmparatorluğa Osmanlı denizciliği*, p 91

volunteer corsairs joined raids. Before Prevesa, Barbaros ordered these volunteer ships to raid Astypalea (Istanbolya) Island.²⁴⁹ After the war, volunteers who joined the navy were also allowed to sack Kefalonia Island.²⁵⁰

These volunteer captains were sometimes asked to be vanguards to collect information for expeditions.²⁵¹ If there was not any expedition, volunteer captains were sent to enemy coasts for collection of information. For example in 1567, Memi and Abdulgaffar Captains who were volunteer captains wintering in Modon were sent to enemy coasts in order to gather intelligence.²⁵² Orders like this sent from the Center are frequently observed in *mühimme* records. These orders also provide important information to us about relations between central authority and volunteer captains. These orders were written by the Center, sent to the related port, and announced the corsairs to be used for that mission by name. This situation indicates that corsairs were known by the Center and the Center had information about the port they winter at. Among those who winter at ports, selection of certain corsairs for missions is an indicator to the presence of seamen trusted by the Center among these corsairs. This practice continued in the following periods and volunteer corsairs were utilizes advantage of for intelligence activities (“*dil almak*”).

Ships, galliots, and fustas designed suitably for predatory attacks were more useful compared to galleys due to their speed, and ability to maneuver. However, even if these galiots were convenient for raiding and vanguard, they were not successful at head-on engagement with galleys.²⁵³ Nonetheless, they were used in sea wars for their ability to maneuver and speed. Prior to Lepanto, Uluç Ali Pasha planned to use these galliots for breaking the order of enemy ships instead of putting them into direct clash against galleys.²⁵⁴

Out of expedition time, these corsair ships used to attack both commercial and war ships, and at times raid coasts, and pillage. Apart from naval expeditions, attacks of

²⁴⁹ Katip, *Tuhfet'ül Kibar*, p 71

²⁵⁰ Katip , *Tuhfet'ül Kibar*, p 75

²⁵¹ Katip, *Tuhfet'ül Kibar*, p 72

²⁵² MD 7, hüküm no : 1431

²⁵³ Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys*, p 47

²⁵⁴ Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys* p 246

Ottoman corsairs were also a serious threat. Confronted with this growing menace after 1538, construction of city walls and watchtowers was started on the coasts of Naples and Sicily. These works were expanded towards west because of the growing menace along the coast.²⁵⁵ Following Djerba War in 1560, Algeria-based privateering was intensified in Mediterranean.²⁵⁶ Apart from Algerian based attacks, usage of middle Mediterranean's ports by Ottoman corsairs contributed to Ottoman sovereignty in Middle and East Mediterranean. Privateering was fortified especially in Modon, Santa Maura/ Levkas, Lepanto, Vlöre, Navarino/Zonchio, Durazzo and Prevesa ports. These corsairs were influent on shifting hands of commerce. Western Christian powers' loss of important bases and these maritime powers' lacking of security in the seas through Ottoman corsair attacks changed balances in long-term. Commerce was passed into the hands of Ottomans; Jews first, then Greeks and Turks, and finally Armenians.²⁵⁷

Corsairs provided sources for the navy out of wartime, as well. First of all, big numbers of oarsmen were needed for Ottoman navy's galleys with oars. There were alternative ways for assurance of oarsmen for the navy. Among oarsmen, there were galley slaves, oarsmen taken from families in exchange of *avarız* (extraordinary taxes), and oarsmen hired with wage.²⁵⁸ In case where oarsmen are insufficient, slaves purchased from slave markets were made work.²⁵⁹ Therefore, also out of wartime, corsairs bringing slaves to the slave markets were important at this point. According to *Gazavatname*, when he wintered in Mtylienne while privateering, Barbaros also sold captives he seized to the captains of ships with oars.²⁶⁰

One of the other advantages brought by volunteer captains during peace times was supply of appropriate ships in a short time when needed by the navy. Corsairs used to sell the ships they seized to the navy from time to time. With an order Sultan Suleiman sent to Barbaros, he wanted three ships to be sent to Kavala, and one of these

²⁵⁵ Braudel, *Mediterranean*, p 850

²⁵⁶ Brauldel, *Mediterranean*, p 880

²⁵⁷ Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*, p 187 - 192

²⁵⁸ İdris Bostan, Osmanlı Donanmasında Kürekçi Temini meselesi ve 958 (1551) tarihli kürekçi defterleri, in *Beylikten İmparatorlupa Osmanlı Denizciliği*, p 68-69

²⁵⁹ İdris Bostan, *Osmanlı Bahriye Teşkilatı*, p.12

²⁶⁰ Seyyid Muradi, *Gazavatname*, p.116

ships was purchased from *levents*.²⁶¹ In a similar order, it was ordered to supply the needs for ships to protect Kavala with those purchased from *levents*. Because one of the two ships in Kavala was not compatible for sailing, and also other ships were needed, purchase of one ship from *levents*, and its transmission was ordered. Transmission of two more ships if there are any among those purchased from *levents*, and if not, attachment of two ships among other ships that would be equivalent of the first one in order to keep ready four ships in Kavala was demanded.²⁶²

To summarize, we have already explained in the previous section that volunteer captains (privateers) outside the navy were recognized by the Center, and disclosed the channels through which these seamen communicate with the Center. Even if some of these corsairs were recruited in the navy, most of them were privateering in the sea and establishing external relations with the navy. Although these corsairs were not profited much during wars in terms of the usage of their ships, they were being helpful for disarranging enemy ships' order, and they were driven forward for intelligence and marauding. Besides, captives needed for assurance of oarsmen and ships needed for short periods were purchased from these corsairs. Thereby volunteer corsairs, as supplementary forces, supplied needs of the navy.

III.3) The Central Authority over Privateers and Piracy

Process of Ottoman centralization did not run in the same paths with that of contemporary European states. Different experiences that shaped these two processes became an obstacle before an examination of this first within the conceptual framework prepared for the later. However, Karen Barkey presented an alternative framework to centralization of Ottoman Empire. As a fact, unlike Europe rural rebellions as a reaction to centralization were not seen in the Ottoman Empire. Instead, banditry became a crucial notion against centralization in this process. On the other hand, Ottoman central authority, as a strategy, tried to integrate these bandits to the system.

²⁶¹ Mühimme defteri 951, hüküm no:116

²⁶² Mühimme defteri 951, hüküm no: 140

Traditional classes, like peasants, did not stand against central authority and they did not fight for their land. They preferred to quit their lands and adapted themselves to the new system. As a result, they transformed into bandit/mercenaries. Ottoman central authority tried to convict these rising powers to engage in the system. This was an alternative but also a comparable centralization process, in relation to European system.²⁶³ Barkey has analyzed this process in the context of *celali* uprisings. However, we should argue that the source of mercenaries/banditry and privateering/piracy was the same fountain; *çift-bozan reaya*.

People who left their land were called *çift-bozan*, some became mercenaries and these mercenaries started to attack and raid properties of Ottoman *reaya* as bandits when they could not find jobs. Some people among these groups grew stronger and became powerful bandit leaders. Central authority sometimes crushed these *celalis*, and in other cases, it gave them place in the ranks of the Ottoman army to struggle against other *celalis*. The aim of this study is not to examine the *celali* uprisings. Yet, we can argue that there were some significant similarities between mercenaries/bandits and privateers/pirates, that would allow us to use Barkey's framework for the 16th century corsairs.

As Akdağ argues, the way of the robbery by *çiftbozans* who lived in coastal areas was piracy. Rising number of *çiftbozans* in the Aegean region contributed to the rise of piracy. *Çiftbozans* gathering around galley captains formed the crew of pirate ships. After 1550's, increase of *çiftbozans* affected the rising of piratical activities in East Mediterranean.²⁶⁴ For instance, 20,000 *çiftbozan reaya* sent to Algeria from the western Anatolian coasts had joined to corsair ship's crew.²⁶⁵ In this sense, the fact that the Palace, at the end of the 16th century, called the pirates as "celalis at sea", is quite interesting.²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats, The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1994) p 8-11

²⁶⁴ Mustafa Akdağ, *Türk halkının dirlik ve düzenlik kavgası, celali isyanları*, (İstanbul, Barış Yayınevi, 1999) p 146-147

²⁶⁵ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, p 294

²⁶⁶ Bostan, *Adriyatik'te korsanlık*, p 19

Apart from the similar origins of the warriors groups, the strategy of the central authority vis-à-vis the pirates in the second half of 16th century can be compared to its strategy against the *celali's* gangs. Even though, Barkey constructed this framework for *Celali's* uprisings which occurred at the end of the 16th century, the strategy of taking the anti-center forces under Ottoman service was already put in practice by the central authority against the pirates throughout the 16th century. It seems that this was a traditional method of centralization applied by the Ottoman government. It should be emphasized that the thin line between legal and illegal could be passed quite easily. A pirate could become an officer of the Imperial Navy and after a short time he could return to his piratical life. The general tendency of the government was to accept the pirates to the state service. The central authority could provide its authority at sea partially through this practice.

For instance, as mentioned above, Kara Durmuş was one of the corsairs who joined Ottoman Imperial navy as a captain of *Hassa* galley, during the 1499-1502 Ottoman-Venice war. After the Zonchio sea war (1501), he returned to the sea as a powerful pirate and started to attack Ottoman coasts and ships. That's to say, an “old” corsair engaged in Imperial Navy as an officer transformed into a pirate. Then he was punished by another “old” corsair Kemal Reis with the order of the Ottoman government. However, pirates were not suppressed in every case. Some pirates were forgiven by the central authority and they could be promoted to high ranks in the Ottoman service. From the beginning of the 16th century, several important figures of Ottoman naval history have risen in this way.

In October 1516, the Venetian *bailo* complained about the raids of Kurdoğlu Muslihiddin to the Ottoman court. Grand Vizier Piri Pasha announced that this pirate was harmful for Ottomans too. Thus, he replied to the Venetian *Balio* that Venetians could catch this pirate if they could.²⁶⁷ After the death of Prince Korkut, he migrated to North Africa like Barbarossas and continued with his predatory attacks not only on “infidels” but on the Ottomans as well. Besides, Kurdoğlu sacked the Ottoman islands, Mytilene and Naksos. Another seaman who was seen as the peak point of the science

²⁶⁷ Vatin, *Rodos Şövalyeleri* , p 123 and 296

of Ottoman navigation, Piri Reis was a pirate too. After the death of his uncle Kemal Reis, he left the Ottoman service and returned to the seas as a pirate. Venetian ambassador Mocenigo left Istanbul with the escort of two Ottoman fustas (small oared galley) in order to go Sporades. Piri Reis and other pirates were standing on the route for raid. One of Ottoman fustas was under attack and Mocenigo found shelter in Chalci.²⁶⁸ As seen in this chapter in detail, individual relations were determinant in this process. When corsairs lost their main relation or felt themselves in danger, they followed alternative options like privateering or piracy, instead of being an officer in the Imperial Navy. However, this was not a one way path, this process was reversible. These pirates could become again the most influential captains of Imperial Navy in a following period. Kurdoğlu Muslihiddin became the sanjakbey of Rhodes after its conquest, and his sons were also promoted to important ranks. Piri Reis returned to Ottoman service in 1517. When he was executed, he was in charge as the Grand Admiral of the Alexandria fleet.

There is no evidence justifying piratical activities of Barbarossas. We can not argue that Barbarossas attacked Ottomans coasts or ships of Muslims and vessels. However, we know that Muslihiddin Kurdoğlu and Piri Reis were close to the Barbarossas in this period. We can assume that Barbarossas has been informed about these piratical attacks. Another interesting anecdote takes place in *Gazavatname*. 3 years later than the migration of Barbarossas to North Africa, they returned their homeland, Mytilene to spend that winter. They hired a broker (*tellal*) and announced that:

One whose property is taken by force by Levends in the market shall come to me. I shall compensate for their loss. We came here for your good wishes. We shall not allow harm to anyone's property or chastity. One who does so is not one of us.²⁶⁹

Did this practice really happen? If it happened, why did Hızır Reis need to announce his “side”? This practice might have been reconstructed retrospectively.

²⁶⁸ Vatin, Ibid, p 119

²⁶⁹ Seyyid Muradi, *Gazavatname*, p 114 -my translation

Probably, Barbaros wanted to clear his name in the last part of his life as a Grand Admiral of the Ottomans. However, Mustafa Âli notes the opposite of Barbaros' claims. According to him, Barbaros followed the same path with other corsairs. He started his career as a pirate like others.²⁷⁰ Barbaros' own memory includes some question marks as well. Mytilene was his mainland and he was brought up in that island. We could assume that the people of the island had known Hızır Reis, and his brothers as well. On the other hand, he became one of the most famous seamen in the Mediterranean at that time and it seems unreasonable to imagine that the people have not heard of Barbarossas' fame and "their side". Thus, this incident seems unreliable. Otherwise, if this really happened, this practice can be interpreted in two different ways; 1) this announcement was the turning point of Hızır Reis' career; he has chosen his "side" and decided to be a "*ghazi*", it means an Ottoman privateer acting in accordance to Islamic law and collaborating with the central authority or 2) some captains and levends around him attacked Ottoman coasts and ships even if Hızır Reis did not attend (or even may be not approve) those raids and he needed to stress his "side". In all aspects, we can say that piracy and privateering were two brothers of sealife.

The story of Turgut Reis, one of the most famous corsairs, was such an interesting case in this context. This was a characteristic example for the relationship between pirates and corsairs and state. Turgut Reis acted like a pirate, privateer and officer as well within a short time. About the transfer of Turgut Reis from privateering to the navy service, Katip Çelebi notes;

When Sinan Pasha sailed from Istanbul, Turgut Reis would come from North Africa and join Grand Admiral Sinan Pasha's fleet as volunteer Reis. Sinan Pasha had an unrest due to Turgut's powerful fleet equipped with canons and armfires. He invited Turgut Reis to engage in Imperial Navy in fear of turning him against to Ottoman State. Turgut Reis and his close companions, famous corsairs, have been put into service of Imperial Navy. Besides, Turgut Reis became sanjakkbey of Karlılı province.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Mustafa Âli, *Mevaid'un Nefais*, p 288

²⁷¹ Katip Çelebi, *Ibid*, p 88 -my translation

As Katip Çelebi mentions, while he was sanjakbey of Karlılı province, he attacked a Venetian ship, killed all the crew of the ship then burned the Venetian vessel. Following this incident, Venetian *bailo* complained about Turgut Reis to the Ottoman court. Then, Turgut Reis was called to Istanbul. He did not obey this order, sailed to North Africa and in the Katip Çelebi's words;

He has not obeyed the orders and become an outlaw for two years. Then, he was forgiven by the Sultan reluctantly because of the campaign of Tripoli and Sultan sent to an invitation, a Koran and a golden sword and he promised to promote of Turgut Reis as the *beylerbey* of Tripoli after conquest until his death.²⁷²

However, the first *beylerbeyi* of Tripoli was not Turgut Reis after the conquest. As a reply against this decision of Ottoman government, Turgut Reis sailed to North Africa again. In this time, some other galley captains of Navy joined him as well. Then they returned to the navy with the permission of Turgut Reis and continued to sail as Navy officers. After two years, Turgut came to Vlöre, an Ottoman port in the Adriatic, with precious gifts and slaves for the Sultan. He declared his request for rank of *beylerbey* of Tripoli and this time his request was accepted and he remained as *beylerbey* of Tripoli until his death.²⁷³

As seen in this case obviously, a powerful corsair was engaged in the Navy because of fear. Then this corsair left service and acted like pirate. However, Ottomans did not prefer to struggle against this powerful pirate. On the contrary, this pirate was invited one more time for navy service. Nevertheless, request of this pirate was not accepted by the central authority. In the long term, pirate could succeed to become a *beylerbey*. Furthermore, he has been one of the most important seamen in Ottoman naval history. To sum up, relationship between corsairs and states was not based on absolute obeisance. This was a symbiotic relation. When one of parties was not content of his position, the unofficial treaty was broken until display of tolerance by the central authority, or the death of the seaman -like in the case of Kara Durmuş-.

²⁷² Katip Çelebi, *ibid*, p 89 -my translation

²⁷³ Katip Çelebi, *ibid*, p 91

CHAPTER IV

THE END OF THE GREAT KAPUDANS' ERA

IV.1) The Imperial Navy As “A Corsair Fleet” and against the “Pirates’ Fleets”

Navy was a crucial element of the empire. However, as we have mentioned previously, its principal mission was not to destroy the enemy navy by high sea battles. During the 16th century, only two high sea battles, Prevesa and Lepanto have been fought. Except these wars, the naval sieges were combined with the land army. Besides, supporting the land campaigns, and maintaining the security of the trade routes by fighting against the pirates were among the functions of the imperial navy. In some seasons, the navy was used to sail for purposes other than siege. Considering these campaigns and the plunders on the way back from sieges/conquests, there was hardly a difference between these plunders and those by the corsairs. The attack of the Ottoman navy was like that of a great corsair fleet. On 1537, during the war against Venice, Hayrettin Pasha has sailed with the navy, conquered some of the Venetian islands, and has levied a tribute on some others. During this campaign, the navy staff plundered some of the islands with the approval of Barbarossa. The next year, during the campaign over Crete, the navy took more than 15,000 prisoners by plundering the villages for a week, instead of besieging the castles. Voluntary *reis* were ordered for the plunder of some islands. On 1557, Piyale Pasha has plundered Majorca, and turned to Istanbul with booty.²⁷⁴ The plunders on the way back were an integral part of the campaigns. The firsthand registers of Zekeriyazade Ferah, the scribe of the dockyard who was on the campaign with Piyale Pasha, tell about the plunders in detail. On the

²⁷⁴ Katip Çelebi, *Tuhfet'ül Kibar*, p 94

way to Djerba War, the imperial navy pillaged Malta. Zekeriyazade notes, “Their sheeps and lambs, their animals in the barns, their ox, their grain mills, farms, cheese, and their herders were plundered. The infidels were left in a position of bareness. And their horses were put into the vessels.”²⁷⁵ When the corsair *reis* Divane Ali has passed with the Algerian ships, to the ‘side of the infidels’ for plunder following Djerba war, the corsair fleet was assumed to be the Ottoman imperial navy by local population. Besides, Messina Island and the port of Kalavri was again pillaged by the Imperial Navy on the way back.²⁷⁶

As Zekeriyazade mentions, the real purpose of these plunders was to put “*the infidels in a position of bareness*”. Since no clash did not rise during these plunders, there was no loss of vessel or soldier, and a substantial amount of booty was gained. Besides, the harm done to the other side was quite high. Sale of the prisoners was another method applied by the Ottoman navy in case of necessity. The corsairs were taking prisoners in their ship, sailed to open sea and run up a white flag and selling them to their family. By this way, they could sell them to higher prices than the market price and they did not have to feed them in their ships.

This practice was also used by Barbarossa in the Toulon expedition. France had demanded for assistance from Suleiman, against Spain. Barbarossa sailed for the coasts of south France in the spring of 1543. He was conquering castles with French and leaving them to France. The navy passed the winter of 1543 in the port of Toulon. France had previously guaranteed to cover the logistic needs during this expedition. However, France did not provide the order and salaries it had promised. Thus, in 1544 Barbarossa attacked the Italian coasts, took prisoners and sold them.²⁷⁷

For a peasant living on Sicily, Messina or Majorca, it did not matter whether the danger from the sea came from the Ottoman navy or the corsairs. Besides, even though they were in the service of the imperial navy, the corsairs in the North Africa made

²⁷⁵ Zekeriyazade Ferah, *Cerbe Savaşı*, yayına hazırlayan Orhan Şaik Gökyay, (İstanbul Tercüman yayınları, 1980), p 47

²⁷⁶ Zekeriyazade, *Cerbe Savaşı*, p 101-104

²⁷⁷ Halil İnalçık, *Haçlılar ve Osmanlılar*, Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa Fransada in *Türk Denizcilik Tarihi* Türk Denizcilik Tarihi ed. Bülent Arı (Ankara : T.C. Başbakanlık Denizcilik Müsteşarlığı, 2002)

independent attacks with their own ships in the West Mediterranean.²⁷⁸ Thus, in the perception of the other side, this threat was associated with the Turks. The shores that have been previously plundered by the corsairs were plundered by the same seamen with the navy and the private ships after they entered navy's service. For Spain, the threat from the sea was identified with the person of Hayrettin Pasha, and with that of Turgut Reis, during the last years of Charles V's reign. From this point of view, the war on the sea was not against Suleiman, but against the North African corsairs.²⁷⁹

In some situations, the corsair attacks were utilized as a maritime strategy. The Ottoman borders have been extended to Suez with the conquests of Egypt and Syria. With this base, the Ottomans conquered the first port opening into the Indian Ocean. During Suleiman's reign, the rivalry with the Portuguese started in the region. On 1538, Hadım Suleiman Pasha, establishing an alliance in the region sailed to the Indian Ocean with a powerful navy, besieged Diu but failed. Yet, he had managed to conquer Aden and Zebid. With these conquests, the Red Sea had passed totally to the Ottoman control, and Aden, an important naval base opening to the Indian Ocean had become Ottoman territory.²⁸⁰

The Ottomans had the intention to take the Indian trade under their control, by maintaining the security in the Indian Ocean through establishing naval bases, a strategy similar to that they applied in the Mediterranean. With this purpose, on 1552, Piri Reis besieged Hormuz but could not conquer, and retreated to Basra.²⁸¹ On 1554, Seydi Ali Reis was sent to the region, to take the navy out of the Basra Bay. However, during the battle with the Portuguese the Ottoman navy was seriously endangered. The navy of Seydi Ali Reis was destroyed off Muscat. Ottomans were failing during the sieges and high sea battles in the Indian Ocean. For Brummett, the main reasons of this failure are related to the logistics of supply, protection and the conquest'.²⁸² Besides, high firepower of the vessels and the incompetence of the galleys constructed for Mediterranean in the Indian Ocean were also determinant.

²⁷⁸ Giancarlo Casale, *Ottoman Course de Guerre* p 60

²⁷⁹ Ibarra, *Kanuni döneminde deniz savaşları*, in *Türkler*, V:9 p 603

²⁸⁰ Salih Özbaran, *The Ottoman Turks and the Portuguese*, p 130-131

²⁸¹ Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman age of exploration*, p 147-150

²⁸² Palmira Brummett, *The Ottomans as a world power*, p 13

Sefer Reis, who became the most important captain in the region after Seydi Reis, has been promoted to the position of commander of the Empire's Indian Fleet. From this date on, he left the Mediterranean strategy and developed a new one, realizing the new types of obstacles before the Ottoman navy. We have mentioned before that the Ottomans conquered important naval bases in the Mediterranean, in order to maintain the security of the trade routes. Sefer Reis, replaced this strategy with that of corsair attacks with small fleets to block the Portuguese trade.²⁸³

Portuguese merchant ships generally had a few artillery pieces aboard, but they were usually only lightly manned and consequently lightly armed. Galleys could capture such ships by first immobilizing them -either by attacking them in a place and time in which there was no wind to begin with, or by using their own cannons to destroy the sails of the vessel- and then swarming them and boarding them through hand combat.²⁸⁴ The Portuguese fleets sent against Sefer Reis were inefficient. In the 1550s, Ottomans regained control over the Indian trade that had passed under the control of Portugal in the first quarter of the century. This shift was due to the Ottomans' geographical advantage on the trade routes and the use of the corsair attacks as an official strategy.²⁸⁵

The navy was an important tool served to the policies determined by Ottoman governance. After the amphibious attacks conquered the important islands and ports, these bases were used to accomplish the farther attacks. Especially the plunders of the navy in middle and west Mediterranean sea, were parallel to the image corsairs created in the opposite party by the predatory corsair attacks in Indian Ocean. However, the navy was an Imperial navy and its main objective was to maintain the safety in the sea routes of the empire rather than the attacks. After the important naval bases were conquered by Ottomans, the activity of Christian corsairs were reduced but the attacks remained. In this period, more damage was given by the bandits *levends* rather than the Christian corsairs. The corsair threat grew by the increase of corsair activities at the end

²⁸³ Giancarlo Casale, *Ottoman course de guerre*, p 74

²⁸⁴ Casale, based e-mailed correspondences in 06.06.2009. I am grateful to Giancarlo Casale for his responses to my technical questions.

²⁸⁵ Casale, *An Ottoman explanation*, p 331

of the century. Therefore, Ottoman navy was equipped to keep the trade routes open during the 16th century against the corsair threat.

The defensive network of small flotillas saved Ottoman shore against pirates and enemy attacks. There were two squadrons in the Aegean Sea. The center of the first squadron was Kavala, located on the Macedonian coast. The safety of the region to the Mytillene was under the responsibility of this flotilla. The center of the second squadron was Mytillene. The two fleets maintain the safety of Aegean Sea. The other two fleets centered in Alexandria and Rhodes were responsible of the safety of East Mediterranean Sea.²⁸⁶ This defense system was changed in the 1590s. The center of the Northern or Aegean Wing was Chios. This squadron was responsible of the region from Modon and Coron to the Samos. The center of the Southern or Mediterranean Wing was Rhodes and this arm was responsible of the East Mediterranean region including Rhodes, Alexandria, Syria and Cyprus.²⁸⁷

If the rise of the piratical activity in the east Mediterranean was a phenomena of the last quarter of the century, Ottoman coasts were attacked by the corsairs (*harami levends*) all through the century. Even though Gelibolulu Âli mentions that there were not any pirates around the islands of Lesbos and Limnos during the reign of Suleiman²⁸⁸, he too admits the existence of pirates plundering the Aegean shores and ships.²⁸⁹ In 1545, as mentioned in a letter written in Balat (Miletos) and addressed to the Palace, bandits *levends*, with another name pirates, were wounding people and plundering the villages. Besides, the Palace was informed that the plunders took place in the winter and that they may increase in the summer.

A bandit reis named Saru Ali, returned back to sea in one hour upon plundering the houses in Balat with more than 200 *levends*. It was informed in the letter that these pirates made new ships in the uninhabited islands in the Aegean Sea. It was guessed that they used Aydın province, Menteşe Region and Samos island with the small ships they

²⁸⁶ Colin Imber, *The navy of Suleyman*, p 42-43

²⁸⁷ Pal Fodor, *The organisation of the defence in the eastern Mediterranean(end of the 16th century)*, in *The Kapudan Pasha, His Office and His Domain*, p 90-91

²⁸⁸ Gelibolu'lu Ali, *Mefaid'ün Nefais*, p 36

²⁸⁹ See footnotes 114 and 120

used-most probably the galiots. It was ordered to sanjakbey of Menteşe by the Palace to capture the pirates and to Hüseyin *subaşı* who was defending the coastline, to investigate those coastlines and islands.²⁹⁰ It was also ordered to Barbaros Hayrettin to investigate the islands and the coastlines and to burn the ships that can not be used in the Navy.²⁹¹ However, by the orders given later, we see that the corsair could not have been captured and the cautions grew harder. Because the pirate named Karahisarlı Saru Ali went into the shore and the *kadis* didn't let this pirate to be captured without permission by Hüseyin Subaşı, who was responsible of the sea security, ordered all *kadis* to capture the so-called pirate.²⁹² Moreover, in order to prevent the pirates from returning back to sea by getting a boat, Sultan Suleiman ordered Cafer bey (lala of Prince Selim), not to let anyone in the coastline construct boats.²⁹³

Saru Ali, being the most powerful pirate the later period of Barbarossa, was not the only example. According to a letter written by Barbarossa to the Palace, two pirate ships had captured two ships. A ship from the navy encountered these pirates, and freed the ships. Yet, the pirates succeed to land and run way. The Palace ordered the sanjakbeys to arrest these pirates and to informe their names to the center.²⁹⁴ Similarly, upon the complaint of Mehmed under the protectorate of Kavala, *Beylerbeyi* of Algeria was informed for the arrest of the pirates named Köle Memi and Marmarişkor.²⁹⁵ If the pirate *levends* were never absent in the Aegean Sea all through the century, in the last quarter of the century these attacks increased significantly. Replacing the navies in the Mediterranean, the corsairs rose to the dominant position.

²⁹⁰ 951(1544/1545) tarihli mühimme defteri, hüküm no: 201

²⁹¹ Op.cit. Hüküm no:202

²⁹² Op.cit.Hüküm no: 402

²⁹³ Op.cit.Hüküm no:407

²⁹⁴ Op.cit.Hüküm no: 386

²⁹⁵ Op.cit Hüküm no: 23 Similar records about piractiacal activites in pre-Lepanto warr; 5 numaralı mühimme defteri, hüküm no: 244, hüküm no: 1318, 7 numaralı mühimme defteri: h.no:1515, 1588, 2009

IV. 2: What happened in the 1570s?

IV. 2. i: The Financial Limitations of the Imperial Navy

Keeping a permanent navy, recovering the losses, recruiting mariners, and launching expeditions were costly activities. This was a pressure on the treasury. Ottomans have launched great sea expeditions by large navies, during an important part of the 16th century. The burden of the navy over the treasury increased constantly through the century.

The navy of Barbarossa which had gained a victory in Prevesa against the Holy League had important losses in the aftermath of the battle, because of the storm. The navy had lost about 70 galleys and galliots near Albanian coast. Taking advantage of the situation, Andrea Doria conquered Castelnuovo. Next year, Barbarossa re-conquered the castle with a new navy. However, the cost of the reconstruction of the navy was high. Imber shows that the navy formed for the expedition of Hercegnovi in 1539, cost 12 million *akçes*.²⁹⁶ This cost included only the salaries paid to the sailors and the craftsmen working in the construction of the navy. The cost of the material for the construction and the repair of the ships, as well as the costs of the munition boarded on the ships were not included in this amount. We should consider that the total amount was much higher than 12 million *akçe*. This amount was paid by the central treasury.²⁹⁷

Out of the expedition seasons, the costs of the squadrons held for the security of the sea routes was more than half million gold ducats per year.²⁹⁸ Under extraordinary conditions, mobilizations of the navy, at the strategically important moments of the 16th century necessitated treasury's support. However, this meant in the short term, the disappearance of the excess saved by the treasury. For instance, in 1543 the cost of the equipment of the fleet sent to France was 1,2 million gold ducats, which was equal to 72

²⁹⁶ Colin Imber, "The Costs of Naval Warfare: The Accounts of Hayrettin Barbarossa's Herceg Novi Campaign in 1539," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 4 (1972) in "studies in ottoman history and law" (Istanbul, Isis 1996)p 79

²⁹⁷ Op.cit. 72

²⁹⁸ İnalçık, *An economic and social*, p 94

million *akçe*. For the period, the expenditure was 112 million *akçe*, the regular income was 198,9 million *akçe*, thus leaving an excess of 86,9 million.²⁹⁹ Thus, a great amount of this excess of 87 million were spent for this expedition.

The cost of the navy was not only due to the construction work. The yearly cost of a galley was almost equal to its construction cost. Between 1534 and 1573 the cost of the navy was multiplied by three.³⁰⁰ The galleys in Prevesa were smaller than the half of the galleys in Lepanto. This also meant a rise of the number of the oars, fighters and mariners. As a matter of fact, the costs of staff and commodities also increased.³⁰¹

Beside the rise of the naval costs, the price revolution that influenced the whole Mediterranean in the last quarter of the 16th century became another important factor. In this period, the prices of commodities and services tripled and even quadrupled in Europe. Inflation started in the Western Europe, affected first Italy, than middle Europe. Later, this crisis reached the Ottoman Empire. Particularly, after 1585 the empire was affected by the crisis. In 1606 the crisis reached its zenith.³⁰²

IV.2. ii: “Geography is Destiny”³⁰³

One of the existing arguments on Ottoman navigation is that the Ottomans have lost their short term dominance in the Mediterranean as the result of their incapability to adapt themselves to the developing sea technology. For Glete, guns and gun-armed warships rested as characteristic of Europe and they were used on a very limited scale by the Asian seamen. This situation resulted from the fact that society lacked the dynamism needed to absorb the technological developments and the elasticity needed to make changes in the institutional framework.³⁰⁴ According to him, other Mediterranean empires like the Ottoman Empire lost their position in the sea for the same reasons.³⁰⁵

²⁹⁹ Murphey, Rhoads, *Ottoman Warfare 1500-1700*, (UCL Press, University of Birmingham, 1999) p 17-18

³⁰⁰ Braudel, p 841

³⁰¹ Guilmartin, p 267

³⁰² Barkan, *Price Revolution*, p 8-9 and 15-16

³⁰³ Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Turkish novelist and poet

³⁰⁴ Glete, p 34

³⁰⁵ Op. cit p 110-111

Cipolla too characterizes the Mediterranean empires with conservatism and sees it as the underlying reason of the technological difference. This was also the reason of the decline of Venice and the inadequacy of Spain.³⁰⁶ According to Cipolla, Ottomans under the influence of ‘oriental’ culture could not adopt the technological changes.

Considering that the environmental conditions were among the most significant factors determining the technological design, and that this is particularly true for the field of navigation, this approach seems problematic. Sea powers dominating the Mediterranean were not unaware of the sea technology. Every navy had formed its own sea power in accordance with its strategic purposes. Spanish galleys were designed as a tactical assault craft. The galliots and the galleys of the North African corsairs were in the form of a strategic raiding craft. Venetian galleys were shaped as an artillery platform. The purpose of the Ottoman ships was principally to transport siege forces to their destination and cover their operations so they were constructed in accordance to this purpose³⁰⁷ Thus, geographical conditions and strategic priorities shaped the sea technology.

Technical differences existed even among the sea powers in Mediterranean. Therefore, it was inevitable that the ships sailing into the ocean and those in Mediterranean would follow different technological paths. When a significant change occurred, it was transferred from one shore of the Mediterranean to another in a short time.³⁰⁸ There were not insurmountable obstacles before the circulation of technical knowledge, in the context of fluidity of cultural borders. For instance, from among the 25 Portuguese slaves bestowed to Hadım Suleiman Pasha, the most knowledgeable and cooperative two slaves were sent to Istanbul in 1537. Gian Francesco Giustiniani, a Venetian renegade in the Sultan’s service, took one of these slaves under Ottoman service by convincing him.

This Portuguese, Diego Martins who was a Jew previously converted to Christianity, converted to Islam and assisted Hadım Suleiman Pasha with Giustiniani in

³⁰⁶ Cipolla, p 45

³⁰⁷ Guilmartin, p 217-218

³⁰⁸ Braudel, p 840

the campaign to the Indian Ocean.³⁰⁹ The firepower of the galleasses developed by the Venetians were effective in Lepanto, the most important Ottoman defeat in the sea. Six galleasses modified from the galleys with high boards provided a great advantage to the Holy League on the battle field.³¹⁰ Besides, the Spanish soldiers disposing firearms against infantries (*timarlı sipahis*)³¹¹ constituting the heart of the Ottoman forces became another source of superiority.

Even though the Ottoman defeat in Lepanto was a crucial war, it is not possible to define it as the end of Ottoman domination in the sea. The ships were reconstructed and in the next spring the navy sailed again. Behind this, how was the deficiencies related to techniques and stuff were recovered? The Grand Vizier's Council has ordered the chief shipwright of the Arsenal for the construction of similar galleasses. During the winter, in the Ottoman dockyard an imitation of the Venetian galleasses was constructed. Five galleasses took their place in the navy that sailed in the spring.³¹² For the navy formed in 1572, new warriors were needed to replace the thousands of sipahis died in Lepanto. The government demanded that these new soldiers use musket and bow and that the volunteers attending the navy should know to use firearms. Besides, it ordered to the sandjakbeys to buy the firearms of the civil people in order to give them to the troops.³¹³

Guilmartin mentions that the seamen disappeared in Lepanto were much more important than the material losses, since the navy was renewed in a short time, while manpower deficiency could not be recovered. This problem was overcome through the recruitment of the corsairs by the navy. Among the losses in Lepanto, there were not vessels from North Africa. Under the commandment of Grand Admiral Kılıç Ali Pasha, who was also the former *beylerbeyi* of Algeria, Magribian sailors and ships constituted

³⁰⁹ Casale, p 94-95

³¹⁰ Guilmartin, p 240-241. For further technical information about Lepanto seawar, see p Guilmartin, p 221-252

³¹¹ Apart from the janissaries, azabs and levends, major part of the warriors participated to Lepanto naval war was *timarlı sipahis*. These soldiers did not use firearms and 30 000 sipahis were dead in this battle.

³¹² Imber, The reconstruction, p 88

³¹³ Op.cit 99

the core of the new navy.³¹⁴ Hence, contrary to the arguments we have mentioned above, the Ottoman government had a flexible structure. It had the capacity to respond to the technological shifts occurring in the Mediterranean, and to imitate the novelties in a short time. The fact that the galleons were not appropriate for the climatic and geographical conditions of the Mediterranean, underlay the use of the galleys by the Mediterranean sea powers. Ottoman galleys managed to maintain the trade routes open –which was the priority of the Ottomans-, even though they were inefficient *vis-à-vis* the Portuguese warship galleons³¹⁵ Portuguese vessels could not follow these galleys. In the Red sea which was similar to Mediterranean and the galleons were inefficient.

Under these conditions, with the other Mediterranean sea powers, Ottomans who have chosen the most efficient technology for Mediterranean from among two different traditions, would be on the side of the losers in the long run. From 1580 onwards, with the entrance of the vessels into Mediterranean a new era has been started. Between 1580 and 1620, Dutch and English corsairs became influential in whole Mediterranean. The activities of the northern corsairs establishing in North Africa had destructive effects particularly for Venice.

Venice tried to construct different types of ships to cope with the pirates. In order to increase the maneuverability of the galleasses used in Lepanto worked for a long time. However, these galleasses could only burn two *burtons* (ships of northern corsairs) in the 22 months between 1602-1603. The first galleon as a warship constructed in 1608 was displaced from the navy 17 months later, because its speed was very low.³¹⁶ On the other hand, the Spaniards tried to develop sailing ships that could be used in the Mediterranean. Particularly, Pedro Tellez Giron, the Duke of Osasuna, returning from his visit to Britain, attempted to construct galleons. These galleons launched after 1611 were efficient against the Turkish fleets.³¹⁷ As to the Ottomans, they began their first attempts to build similar vessels on a later date, just before the campaign over Crete in 1644. Following the closure of the Dardanelles strait by the

³¹⁴ Hess, The Battle of Lepanto, p 62

³¹⁵ See footnote 284

³¹⁶ Aymard, p 235-236

³¹⁷ John Julius Norwich, The Middle Sea, p 334-335-336

Venetian galleons rented from the Dutches during the siege of Crete, an imperial order has been given for the construction of 30 *burtons* in 1650.³¹⁸ In 1657, in the Ottoman navy there were 16 galleons fully constructed and 26 *burtons* brought from Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripoli. Even though between 1661 and 1681 the galleys regained priority, after 1682 the galleons became the principal battle force. Hence, in the first half of the 17th century galleys constituted the major element of the battle fleets in the Mediterranean. This was true for Genoa, Venice and Malta, as well as the Ottomans.³¹⁹ For the Ottomans there was the possibility to benefit from the experience of the North African corsairs who have begun to use the vessels in a very early date. In 1581, from the 35 corsairs owning galleons, 22 were converts, 3 were son of converts and 10 were Turkish.³²⁰ In this period, Ottoman navy had the opportunity to shift to galleons with this support. However, the question of the inclusion of the galleons to the navy was never raised.

In the 17th century, the area of use of the galleys was very wide in the Mediterranean. The *burtons* were used more by the corsairs. The galleys were more appropriate for the amphibian operations in the shallow seas such as the Aegean, the Adriatic and the Tyrrhenian, and in the rocky and island-strewn regions. Through Danube, they could provide logistic support for the Ottoman land battles. Due to the use of the slaves as oarsman, the galleys were more affordable compared to the galleons.

Their construction was easy and less timber was needed. They were also appropriate for the maintaining of security on the shores.³²¹ Besides, in this period the principal danger in the sea did not come from the enemy navies, but from the Cossacks in the Black Sea. These later were using small and fast galleys, called *shayka*. The transformation in the Ottoman navy was due to these factors. Yet, these choices made by the empire resulted with the decline of its power in the sea. In brief, the sea strategy

³¹⁸ İdris Bostan, *kadırgan kalyona*, p 186-189

³¹⁹ Cipolla, p 41

³²⁰ Agoston, *guns for sultan*, p 55

³²¹ Bamford, p 14-17

shaped primarily by the geographical conditions caused the decline of the Mediterranean sea powers.

IV.2. iii: The Battle of Lepanto and the post-Lepanto Era

Consequences of the Lepanto war are an important debate for the Mediterranean history. Andrew Hess handles the Lepanto war with Spanish conquest of Tunisia, Ottoman re-conquest, Alcatraz war of 1578, and Ottoman-Spanish peace of 1580. At the end of this period, the differentiation in the Mediterranean between the Hapsburgs and the Ottomans was completed. According to him, a decisive line between two radically different civilizations, European and Turco-Muslim has been formed.³²² For Brumette, Lepanto was not a breaking point for the Mediterranean history. It is only a part of the overlapping, and not parallel history, of Ottoman Empire and Europe.³²³ After 1570-1573, Cyprus stayed in the hand of the Ottomans, even though Spain conquered Tunisia in 1574, it was re-conquered by the Ottomans. This was not envisaged to be the last campaign for the navy returning from Tunisia in October 1574. At the end of 1574, the bankruptcy of the Spanish treasury meant that the navy formed for the Lepanto war and Tunisian conquest would never be seen in the Mediterranean. With the conquest of Cyprus, the East Mediterranean totally passed under Ottoman control. With the re-conquest of Tunisia, Ottomans were establishing in the North Africa. However, the costs of both Lepanto war and Tunisian campaign appear as the principal reason of disappearance of the navies. Except this reason, there were not any changes in the material conditions. Sokullu Mehmed Pasha and Grand Admiral Kılıç Ali Pasha, who were shaping the Ottoman policies were still alive. The navy had returned with success from Tunisia. The effects of the economic crisis in the Mediterranean had not yet reached the Empire. However, the experience of Malta siege (1565) had showed that dominance over the Middle Mediterranean would not be easy.

³²² Hess., Lepanto, p 73

³²³ Palmira Brummet, The Lepanto Paradigm Revisited: Knowing the Ottomans in the Sixteenth Century,” in Chong, A. and Contadini, A., (Eds.), *Cultural Encounters: Europe, the Ottomans, and the Mediterranean World*, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and Periscope Press, Boston, forthcoming. P 4. I am grateful to Palmira Brummet for allowing me to read her unpublished article

As the Vienna being a natural frontier for the land army, and thus, its conquest being difficult, Malta was the frontier at the sea. Even though with the retreat of Spain from the Mediterranean, no navy was left to threaten the Ottomans, it did not seem possible that the Ottoman Empire could constitute a danger for the west Mediterranean by conquering Malta. Thereby, dominance fields were formed for the Empire in a defacto way.

Including the Alcatzar war of 1578, and the entrance of the English into the Mediterranean to the consequences of the Lepanto war is an anachronistic point of view. In 1574, neither the Alcatzar war, nor the rise of the Mediterranean privateering after 1580, was envisaged. Thus, this was not a period of the two Empires in decline, but that of two empires who have determined their dominance fields. It is not possible to situate exactly when the Ottomans lost control in the sea after 1580. On the other hand, the idea of a total retreat of the Ottoman navy from the Mediterranean after 1580 or that of a navy left to decay in the dockyard are misperceptions. Even though, the navy did not sailed for campaign, it did it for maintaining the trade routes open, and to maintain the security of the shores. From the early 17th century until the war of Crete in 1654, between 60 and 70 ships were in the service of the navy and around 12 thousand to 13 thousand crew were working on these ships.³²⁴ Construction work was limited. Four to six ships were built a year. Yet, the ships in hand were renewed and repaired continuously.³²⁵

Alberto Tenenti, shows that the Venetians retreated from the sea as a result of the rising corsair attacks.³²⁶ However, there is not a detailed research on the influence of these attacks on the Ottoman trade. Ottomans had geographical advantages. They could keep the trade combined the maritime and land itineraries. As a matter of fact, as well as English and Dutch merchants, Ottoman merchants too have benefited from the reshaping of the trade resulting from the retreat of the Venetians from east Mediterranean. Ottoman-Muslim export trade increased constantly during the period of

³²⁴ Murat Çizakca, *Ottomans and Mediterranean*, 1981, p 786

³²⁵ *Op.cit* 774

³²⁶ Tenenti, *Piracy and the decline of venice*

peace, which lasted from 1573 to the War of Crete in 1645.³²⁷ The rising transport costs of the Venetian trade due to the corsair threat, and the inflation in the Ottoman empire were influential on the rise of the Ottoman exports. The commodities transported from land to the Adriatic shores, were transported from here to Venice. As a result, the number of Ottoman merchants in Venice rose in the last decades of the 16th century.³²⁸ After the loss of Cyprus, an important naval base, Venetian existence in the east Mediterranean came to an end. Shipmasters and ship-owners with 7-10 galleys who were engaged in overseas trade constituted the wealthiest group in Istanbul.³²⁹ If the rising corsair activities from 1570s onwards were influential in the whole Mediterranean, we do not know for sure whether it had destructive effects in the Ottoman trade, similar to the those on the Venetian trade. To be able to answer this question, we need further research.

IV. 3: A New Era in the Relations of Ottoman Corsairs and the Imperial Navy

In 1580, in the aftermath of the Ottoman-Spanish peace, a new era has been started between the North African corsairs and the central bureaucracy. At this date, the Sultan ordered financial reorganization in the region. North Africa was divided into three regions. Three treasures had been formed and three *defterdars* were appointed for Algeria, Tunisia and Tripoli. This was an attempt to increase bureaucratic control in the region. However, people of the North African frontier were influenced by the economic crisis. This stimulated the conflict between the center and the periphery. The corsairs captured an English commercial ship, given concession by the Sultan. They did not return it despite the order from the center. Subsequently, another English ship was captured and the booty was sold in a Spanish port. By this way, the borders of the privateering have been passed for the first time. On the other hand, Algerian regional treasury has bankrupted. The salaried paid to the janissaries did not cover the expenses

³²⁷ Cemal Kafadar, "A Death in Venice (1575), Anatolian Muslim merchants trading in the Serenissima", *Journal of Turkish Studies*, 10, p201

³²⁸ Op. cit 202

³²⁹ Halil İnalcık, *Capital Formation*, p 120

of the janissaries. In 1593, Şaban Pasha, the *beylerbey* of Algeria informed the palace with a letter that the janissaries were wishing to attend the privateering venture with the corsairs. Murad III accepted the demand unwillingly. The central government lost its political means to control the region.³³⁰

The rising janissary population in the region during the 75 years was another important factor in North Africa in this period. At the end of the century, through rebellions janissaries gained power, and became a part of local government. Beginning from this date, the central power in the region was in decline. In Tunisia, at end of a similar period of disturbance the janissaries came to power İn 1587. Starting from 1591, the rule passed to the head of janissaries (*yeniçeri ağası*) in the local divan , with the title of “dayı”.³³¹

Even though the Ottoman governor in the region was only of symbolic importance, the region has not broken its relations with the empire. From this date on, the Algerian Ottoman elite emphasized its Turkish identity, and turned it to a strategy of government.³³² “The term "Turkishness" signifies a variety of cultural features connected with the lifestyle, language, religion, and area of origin of the elite's members. These created remarkable differences between the Algerian Ottoman elite and the indigenous population”.³³³ In my humble opinion, we should use “*Rumi*” identity instead of Turkishness. This term is more appropriate for early modern era Ottomans.³³⁴ For the Algerian *ocaks* new soldiers were recruited from Anatolian shores.³³⁵ Janissaries marrying local woman were alienated from some of their rights. This practice was established for the purpose of preventing these marriages.³³⁶ Another problem was the children born from these marriages, who were called *kuloğlu*. When a child born from a marriage between a janissary and an European slave was considered as Turkish, the ruling elite perceived the *kuloğlus* as a threat, considering the local support they may

³³⁰ Hess, The forgotten frontier, p 104-110

³³¹ Op. cit 111

³³² Tal Shuval, The Ottoma Algerian Elite and its Ideology, 2000, p 326

³³³ Op.cit. p327

³³⁴ Cemal Kafafar, “A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the lands of Rum”, *Muqarnas* vol 24 (2007)

³³⁵ Shuval, p 329

³³⁶ Op.cit. p 330

provide. Besides, the children of *kuloğlus* were conceived as local Algerians, and no more as *kuloğlus*. According to Shuval's accounts: "The kuloglus are excluded from the highest posts of the central government. They cannot be dey, or khaznaji (in charge of the treasury), or wakil al-kharj (in charge of the marine), or agha al-arab (commander of a local auxiliary army, in charge of local affairs), nor khoja-a1 khail (in charge of collecting tax)...,and of course not agha of the Janissaries (head of the odjak [commander in chief of the army])."³³⁷

Ottoman Algerian elite holding power in Algeria, consolidated its relations with the Ottoman center, in order to keep its power and discard the local dangers, in the general framework of this policy. In Tunisia and Tripoli local dynasties seized the power and controlled the region. On the other hand, the corsairs proceeded to use the Ottoman ports. Thus, the organic relationship between the corsairs and the center lasted. Strategy to take the corsairs in the service of the central navy in case of necessity continued. During the reign of Ahmed I, Murad Reis was called from Algeria and the sanjak of the Morea was given under his control.³³⁸ Kapudan Pashas continued to benefit from the experience of the corsairs. Grown in the Palace and hold the position of Kapudan Pasha for 10 years, Cağaloğlu Sinan Pasha used to consult Koca Hacı Reis, about the affairs of the navy.³³⁹ In 1574, long after the Tunisian campaign, the fleet of Maghreb came to assistance of the navy during the Crete expedition.³⁴⁰ Even though, corsairs sometimes attacked the foreign ships disobeying the concessions given by the Ottoman state to the third states, they have never broken their relation with the center. Hence, what was changing in this period was not the relationship between the imperial navy and the corsairs. Ottoman state changed its strategy because of the financial constraints in the aftermath of the Lepanto war, and because of the absence of a threatening foreign navy in the Mediterranean. Maintaining the security in the seas under its control gained priority *vis-à-vis* conquering new islands and ports. As a matter of fact, the period of 'legendary' kapudans of the 16th century, such as Barbaros, Turgut Reis, Kılıç Ali Reis came to an end. On the other hand, Ottomans continued to

³³⁷ Op.cit. P 332-334

³³⁸ Katip Çelebi, p 125

³³⁹ Katip Çelebi, p 123

³⁴⁰ İdris Bostan, Kadırgadan Kalyona, p 192

use the galleys, while the corsairs shifted from galleys to galleons. This caused problems during operation in the fleets combined of corsair and navy ships. Not wishing to lose their ships, the corsairs with galleons were less voluntary to enter in conflict in the operations.³⁴¹ However, at the end of the 17th century when the navy had decided to shift from galleys to galleons, the corsairs were again on the scene. Mezamorto Hüseyin Pasha, an Algerian corsair, who prepared the Bahriye Kanunnamesi of 1701 extended the use of galleons. He held the position of Kapudan Pasha, between 1695 and 1701. Even if my research is limited with the 16th century, relationship between corsairs and Imperial navy lasted until the 19th century.

CONCLUSION

There are several studies about Mediterranean corsairs. In these works mentioned in the introduction, corsairs are usually handled as a group totally independent from navies. On the other hand, in the nationalistic rhetoric, corsairs are seen as heroic figures of Ottoman naval history, thanks to whom “Mediterranean turned into a Turkish lake”. Therefore, there is an obvious confusion about this topic. On the one hand, corsairs are handled as independent actors even if they are based on the port of a state. On the other hand, corsairs are illustrated as seamen serving the Ottoman Navy. Besides, it is not clear whether these corsairs served the Ottoman Empire as its naval officers or as semi-dependant corsairs.

All these approaches reflect a degree of truth. Corsairs could be independent as pirates, semi-dependent as privateers or dependent as naval officers. However the crucial point is the following: All these different figures of seamen could be aggregated in a single personage. In this blurred area, constructing a framework about relationship between corsairs and the Ottoman Imperial Navy is obviously a formidable and dangerous task. As I mentioned in the introduction, my main problematic is, “What was

³⁴¹ Op.cit p 194

the nature of the relationship between Ottoman corsairs and Ottoman Imperial Navy in the 16th century?”

To analyze of this problematic, several parts of subject had to be explained;

- 1) two side of this relationship; corsairs and Imperial navy,
- 2) three different types of relationship ; pirates-Navy, corsairs-Navy and officers-Navy,
- 3) transitions between these types of relationships
- 4) a historical explanation covering the whole 16th century

I tried to handle these four points simultaneously, so I did not follow a chronological or thematic path rigidly. For this purpose, conceptual framework of piracy/privateering was presented in the first chapter. First of all, there is a terminological problem of this subject and a terminological confusion in this grey area which might be the cause of a series of misconceptions. I tried to overcome this problem. The differences of legal bases among these concepts were presented in the first part of this chapter. To sum up, privateer ships were distinguished from the navy ships in that they were privately owned and were under the command of non-officer private individuals; but also from the pirates in that they took part in acts of pillaging with an official permit. Even if this was a superficial definition and there is not an absolute divergence among them, it was a clear definition. Then Turkish means of these terms were explained. Later parts of the first chapter, a general framework was presented for corsairs. Overall, piracy/privateering was not a practice identified with a unique geography or a specific period of time. From the Antiquity to the modern era, piracy/privateering was a part of sea life and there are some preconditions to burgeon of it. The evolution of this “profession” provided a broader view for my research.

In the light of this framework, I focused on Ottoman seapower. I made a subjective periodization of 16th century Ottoman Empire history in accordance with the

subject of my study. Pre-Kapudan Pasha era – formation of Kapudan Pasha post – Post-Lepanto Era. This was just a symbolic periodization. Except some parts, I did not follow naval incidents within these chapters.

Ottoman Empire had not had a powerful navy until the reign of Mehmet II. In his reign, Ottomans conquered strategically important bases and the navy developed not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. Thanks to these developments, Ottoman navy transformed into a prominent power in the Mediterranean during Mehmet's reign, even though Ottomans could not gain a sea battle against their main rival, Venice, during this period. Reign of Beyazıd II was the turning point in terms of the relationship between Ottoman corsairs and the Imperial Navy. Kemal Reis, a corsair, engaged with the Navy and became a Kapudan of Sultan's Navy in 1495. Following this, Ottomans won a victory over the Venetians at the beginning of the new century. In the first decades of the 16th century, Ottomans seapower and Ottoman corsairs rose simultaneously. Even if several crucial corsairs under the patronage of Korkut migrated to North Africa following the ascendance of Selim I, relation was never cut between corsairs and central authority. Furthermore, Ottoman corsairs based on the ports of North Africa grew stronger and conquered some fortresses on the Algerian coastline. First contact with these corsairs occurred in the reign of Selim I, but the milestone of the Ottoman naval history was the promotion of Barbaros Hayrettin to the post of Kapudan Pasha in 1534. After this time, relationship between Ottoman Imperial Navy and corsairs became intense. At this point, my main argument is the following: This relationship should be analyzed in terms of personal attachments rather than within an institutional relationship. In early modern states, bureaucratic structure was not as efficient as modern states. Especially considering naval activities, the maritime *savoir-faire* could only be transferred via social reproduction, transfer of skills and lore through apprenticeship in the lack of naval schools in the modern meaning. Therefore, these skills could only be gained through piratical activities or sea trading. In the Ottoman case, major part of this seafarer community composed of pirates and privateers. There was a network among these seamen and relationship with the Imperial Navy was assured thanks to this network. Ex-corsairs serving the Imperial Navy had contacts

among corsairs. These corsairs had crews. Some among these crews gained power and became captains of their own galleys. These new galley captains were integrated to the available network. In this way, network extended gradually. The most powerful and skilled seamen among these corsairs hired to the Navy with the recommendation of Grand Admiral, the *kethüda* of the arsenal, or any *beylerbeyi* or *sanjakkbeyi* serving in the fleet. Besides, *beylerbeyi* or *sanjakkbeyis* serving in fleet like the *beylerbeyis* of *Cezayir-i Garb*(Algeria) or *Trablusgarb* (Tripoli) , *sanjakkbeys* of Rhodes, Lepanto or Karlılı were usually ex-corsairs. These ports were used by corsairs as bases, and they spent the winter in these ports. Therefore, these *sanjakkbeys* and *beylerbeyis* in the Ottoman service could keep close relations with corsairs. Needless to say, these networks were limited and they did not cover the whole community. For instance, one *sanjakkbey* arrested some captains with blame of being pirate, but Kapudan Pasha, Barbaros Hayrettin claimed that those were sea-ghazis and saved them as a guarantor.³⁴² It must also be emphasized that corsairs were granted the privilege to profit from Ottoman ports and possibilities, only upon the reference of a guarantor.

Some prominent corsairs could be integrated to the Navy, while some others were used in naval expeditions in different missions. More or less this relationship was based on mutual profit. Yet, this relationship was not clear in every case. In some cases, corsairs could transform into pirates if they were not content of this unofficial partnership. That was a reversible process and this criminal could become a “good” corsair or a captain in Sultan's Navy again at a later point.

Next step of piracy/privateering started in 1580 for the Mediterranean. This date is also presented as the beginning of the decline of Ottoman seapower. However, it seems impossible to give a certain date such as 1571(date of Lepanto sea war) or 1580 for this “decline” or for the rise of Mediterranean piracy. There is not a clear breaking point in the relationship between corsairs and central authority, even though some radical changes occurred in the Mediterranean power balances throughout the time.

³⁴² See footnote 223

To sum up, naval power of the Ottoman Empire could not be comprehended without understanding the corsairs. On the other hand, studies on the Ottoman corsairs should consider their relations with the Imperial Navy. I tried to explain the establishment of this relationship. I attempted to construct this relation via personal attachment. However, this study is limited to the 16th century. There are many missing points in Ottoman Naval history. A further question might be posed, how and when was this relationship abolished? When did the central authority leave its strategy to recruit corsairs in the navy and to use them as a support force during the expeditions?

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APPENDIX

1. Naval Technology of 16th century

During the second half 15th century, Ottoman naval power strengthened gradually. In this process, Ottomans advanced their naval technology obviously. At the beginning of the 16th century, Ottomans could challenge their main rival, Venetians and they struggled against Habsburgs' navies throughout the century. Naval technology of 16th century was shaped by the climatic and geographical conditions of Mediterranean. These conditions were quite different in relation to Atlantic so naval technology followed two different paths in Atlantic and Mediterranean. Related to thesis subject, conditions of Mediterranean will be focused in this part.

One of determinant factors affected naval system of Mediterranean was streams. Source of the most powerful stream of Mediterranean was the Straits of Gibraltar. Mediterranean water flows out into the Atlantic in a deep, subsurface current while lighter, less saline, Atlantic water flows into the Mediterranean in a surface current which averages about 6 knot (sea mile – 1852 m).³⁴³ The power of this surface current influences the entire sea in different speeds. This route was influential over the formation of trunk routes.

Another factor was climate, especially unstable winds. External intercontinental pressure systems interacting with geographical features of Mediterranean basin shape weather systems of Mediterranean. Winter and summer patterns were quite different, there were several local regimes related to that region as well.

North coasts of Mediterranean are relatively safe in relation to south coasts in terms of geographical conditions. The sea bottom generally drops away quickly, providing deep waters to seamen however general character of Mediterranean is not like that. Offshore reefs, shoals, sandbanks, islands, rocky cliffs can be seen in every corner, especially south coasts, of Mediterranean.³⁴⁴

³⁴³ Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War*, p 13

³⁴⁴ Pryor, *ibid*, p 20-21

These climatic and geographic features of Mediterranean obliged to seafarers to construct oared ships. Oared ships did not depend relatively on weather conditions. They could gather way in calm weathers. Besides, oared vessels were lower in the water so more suitable for shallows of Mediterranean. After all, sailing ships could be used for transportation limitedly as merchant ships in certain seaways. However, these sailing ships were inefficient as warships.

“Before gunpowder, the only decisive maneuver which could successfully terminate a naval engagement was boarding: the occupation of the enemy decks with your your own troops.”³⁴⁵ Sailing ships did not have maneuverability for boarding. Oared ships were faster in short distance and maneuverable in relation to sailing ships. Other alternative means of attack were fire and ramming below the waterline to sink. However, these alternative ways purposed to destroy enemy vessels. Fire was always a possibility but it was used as a last resort. During the combats, vessels were so close to each other so fire means destruction in both own ship and enemy ships. If ship was almost seized by enemy, captains fired ships as a last alternative way – this practice was seen in Zonchio naval battle in 1501, two Venetian vessels boarded to one of the biggest ship of Ottoman navy, *göke* of Burak Reis, and all these ships were fired by Ottomans.

As another way of attack, ramming aimed to destroy enemy vessel. However, booty was the main purpose of naval combats in 16th century so ramming was not an attractive way of assault. All these factors obliged the seafarers to construct oared warships. Usage of oared vessels presented solutions to these problems, on the other hand it brought new capacity issues. The best sustained speed of a galley was only about three knots or a little more for a long distance. In addition, the large crews of specialized rowing vessels consumed provisions at a high rate. On the contrary, provision capacity was low unlike sailing ships. The requirement of supply, water and food, carried by the typical war galley no more than two weeks.³⁴⁶ This logistical limitation, in addition to their speed, limited the galleys’ cruising range to a maximum

³⁴⁵ Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and galley*, p 59

³⁴⁶ Guilmartin, *ibid*, p 62-63

of 960 sea miles.³⁴⁷ (see Fig. 1) As a result, availability of provisioning and watering facilities en route was a crucial requirement for oared ships unlike sailing ships. Beginning from the 16th century, cannons were established on the bows, strongest part, of galleys.(see Fig. 2) These cannons were used at the beginning of combats however these cannons were not decisive tools of naval combats. Cannons have not had quick fire ability yet and they were used just once before the beginning of combat. Even there space was so restricted that there was no platform to establish heavy guns. During the century, number of cannons and their efficiency advanced relatively however main characteristic of naval battle was hand-to hand combat to the end of the century. As a result, engagement between several galleys were quick and decisive but this engagements were not decisive for navies consist of numerous ships. Defensive strength of navies reinforced by artillery of coastline was more effective. It was not very easy to overcome a combined defense system composed of war galleys and shore batteries in the Mediterranean. Galleys could not sustain a long-term siege from sea due to their logistic restrictions and assault to a harbor or fortress was so dangerous because of heavy artillery positioned in land. It was possible to defeat a stronger enemy navy if this defensive combination was used correctly. Because of these operational characteristic of Mediterranean system of naval warfare, seizure of conventional bases, ports or islands, was more important to defeat enemy navy.

2.Certain types of Ships

As we mentioned above, Ottomans used oared warships like other Mediterranean naval powers in the 16th century. Different type and different size of oared ships -*çektiri*- were seen in Ottoman navy during this century.

The *kadırga* is, what we translate as galley, was the main striking force of Ottoman Imperial navy. Especially, after the promotion of Barbaros Hayrettin as Grand Admiral of Navy, *kadırgas* formed the basis of navy. Their size and category was usually expressed in terms of thwarts or oar benches as oppose to tonnage, by volume or weight in the case of sailing ships and the *kadırga* had 25 or 26 such thwarts. This type

³⁴⁷ Pryor, *ibid*, p 86

of Ottoman ships were equivalent of *galee sattle*. (see Fig. 3) *Galee sottilis* were used by Genoese, Venetians, Spaniards, the Papacy and the Hospitallers as a striking naval force as well. All these types of light galleys were usually rowed by three oarsmen per bench -*galee alla sensile*-

The *bastarda* was the name of larger types of galleys. It had up to 36 thwarts. These types of ships were used as leading ships of galley squadrons. *Bastardas* were commanded by ranking captains and *Kaptanpaşa's* ship was also called as *bastarda*. (See Fig.4)

The *kalita*, a Turkicization of the Italian *galiotta*, was used for a galley of a size smaller than the norm. These smaller, faster (in short distance) and more maneuverable galleys were preferred by Mediterranean corsairs in the late middle ages and throughout the 16th century for predatory attacks. (See Fig. 5)³⁴⁸

The *mavnas* were equivalent of *galeazza* of Venetians (in English as galleass), the largest fighting oar-ship in a sense of military version and development of *galera grossa da mercato*. These type of ships had usually 26 thwarts but each oar was pulled by seven men. These warships were gross and slower but they could carry more heavy guns in relation to other smaller type of galleys. (See Fig. 6)

There were several ships used as boats of logistics in Ottoman navy. *Ince donanma* consisted of ships of smaller, lower in the water, carried militias and supplies of army over the rivers. As well some type of ships carried cannons, horses or similar supplies for sieges unlike warship galleys.

³⁴⁸ Svat Soucek, *Certain Types of Ships in Ottoman Turkish Terminology, in Studies in Ottoman Naval History and Maritime Geography* (Istanbul, ISIS Press, 2008) p 181-184

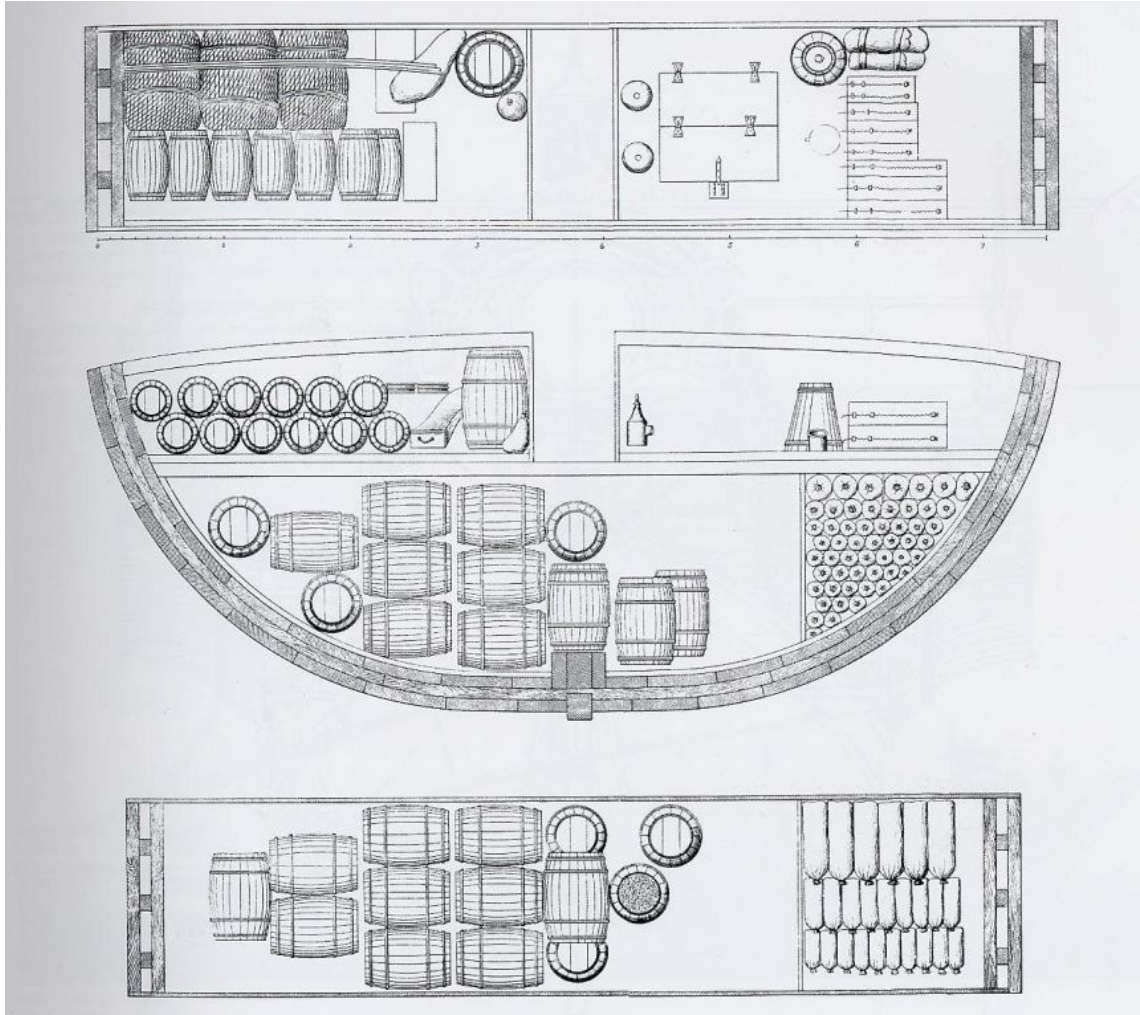


Fig. 1. Storage arrangements on board a galley, including provisions, gunpowder, oil, tar, ropes and other supplies. From : Ahmet Gülerüz, *Kadırgadan Kalyona Osmanlıda Yelken* (Denizler Kitabevi, 2004)

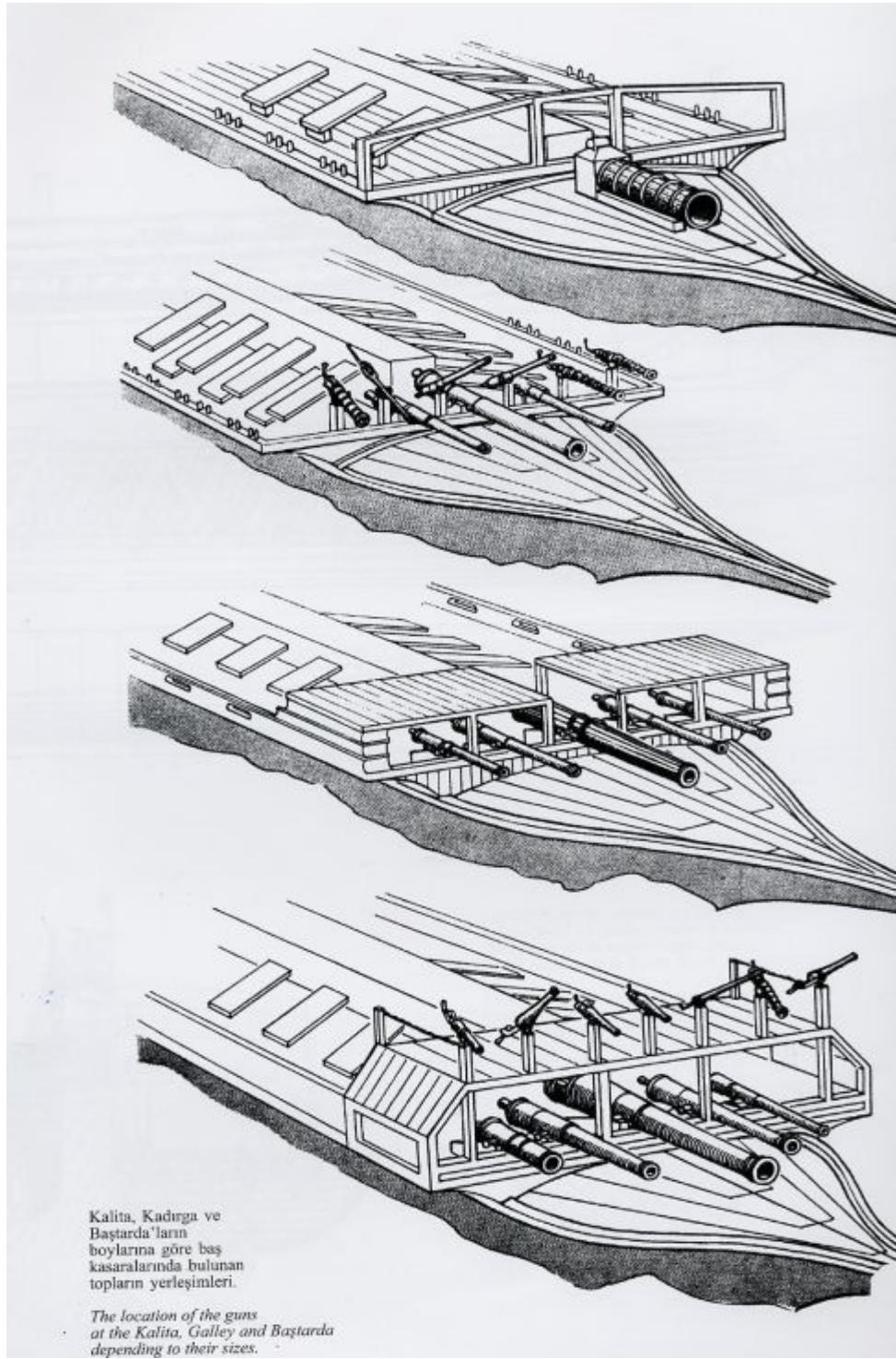


Fig. 2. The location of the guns at the galiot (*kalita*), galley and *baştarda* depending to theirs sizes. (Ahmet Gülyüz, *Kadirgadan Kalyona Osmanlıda Yelken*, Denizler Kitabevi 2004)

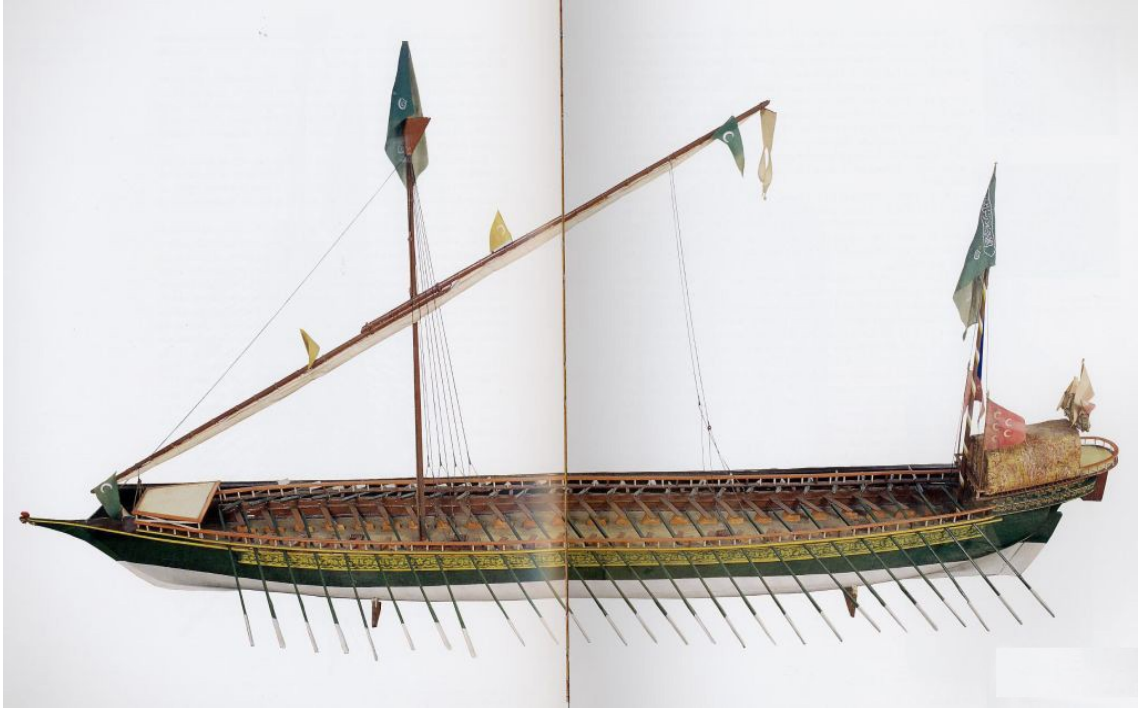


Fig. 3. Model of a single-masted Ottoman Galley of the time of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha. From :İdris Bostan, *Kürekli ve Yelkenli Osmanlı Gemileri*(Bilge Yayınevi,2005)



Fig. 4. Model of a bigger and heavier, two-masted Ottoman galley (*Bastarda*) of the time of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha. From : İdris Bostan, *Kürekli ve Yelkenli Osmanlı Gemileri* (Bilge Yayınları, 2005)

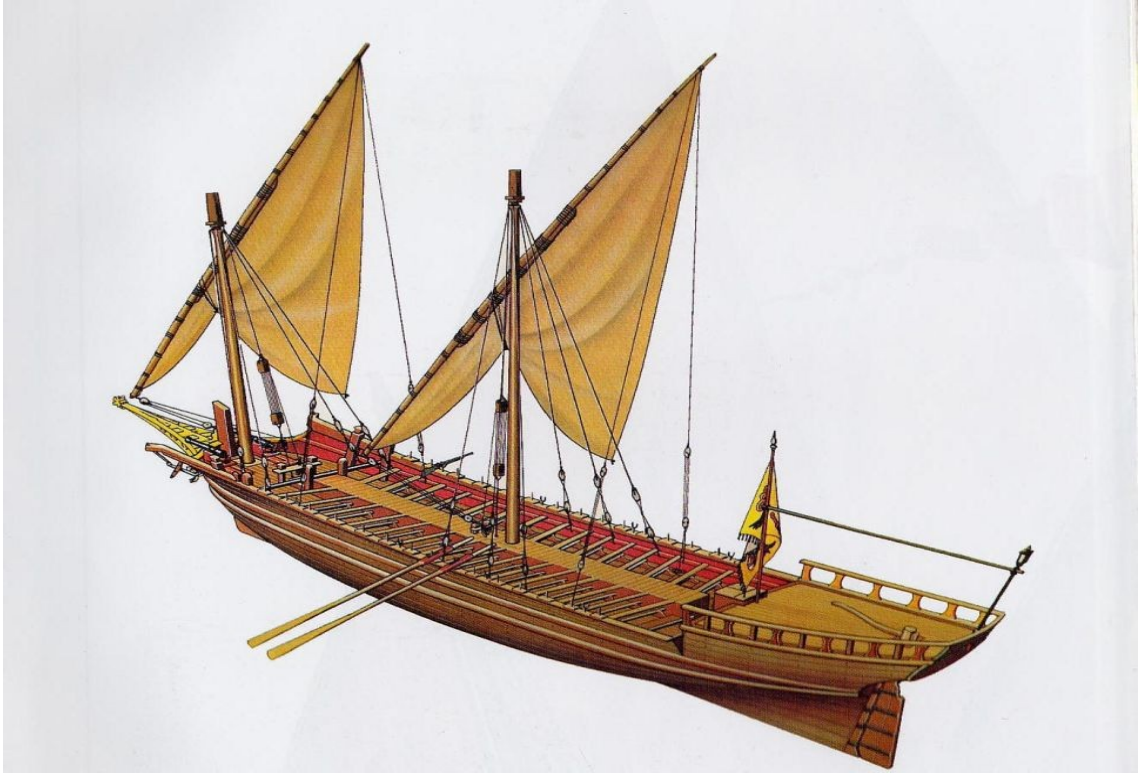


Fig 5. Model of a *kalite* (*galiot*). From: Ahmet Gülerüz, *Kadırgadan kalyona Osmanlı'da Yelken* (Denizler Kitabevi, 2004)

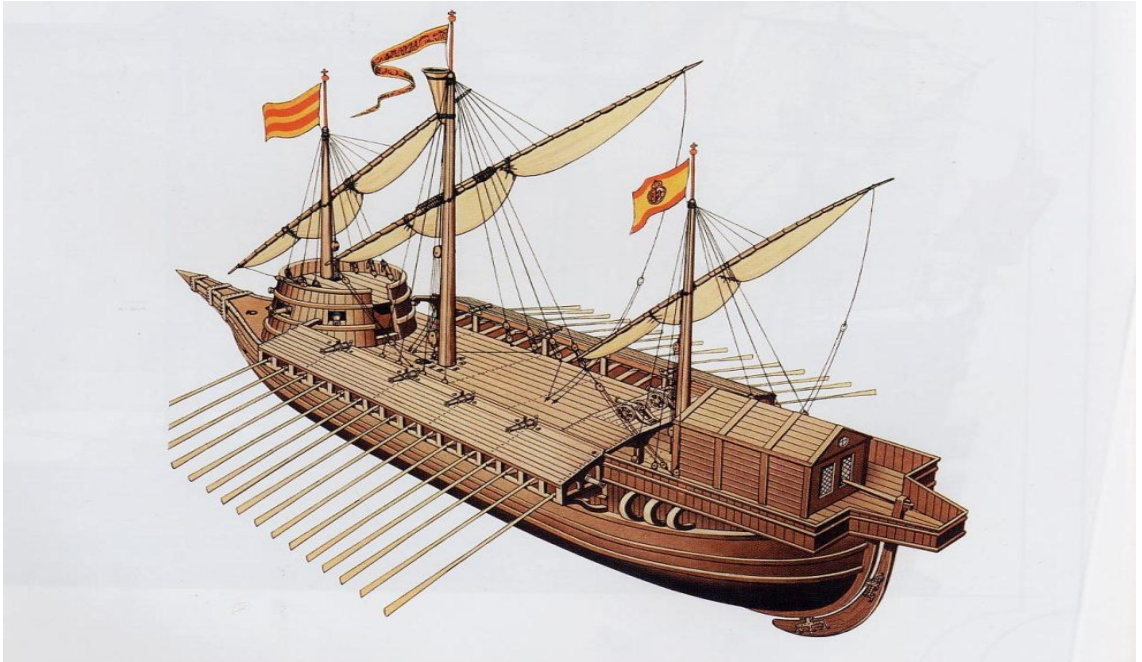


Fig 6. Model of a galleasse that could have fought at Lepanto. From: Ahmet Gülerüz, *Kadırgadan Kalyona Osmanlı'da Yelken* (Denizler Kitabevi, 2004)