PROBLEMS

"Where Everything is Weighed in the Scales of Material Interest" Anglo-Turkish Trade, Piracy, and Diplomacy in the Mediterranean during the Jacobean Period

Lee W. Eysturlid
Purdue University Lafayette

In late 1605 the Venetian ambassador to England sat waiting for a decision from the Lords in Council concerning several Englishmen accused of piracy in the Mediterranean. The ambassador, Nicolo Molin, an experienced and insightful man, penned a report home. In it he described how the English had turned a blind-eye to the piracies committed in the Mediterranean due to the lucrative return it provided both business and government. He reflected Venetian doubts concerning English jurisprudence with regard to freedom of the seas in the Eastern Mediterranean by saying, "...everything is weighed in the scale of Material interest." [1]

Molin's correspondence embodied the essence, albeit simplified, of what was deemed to be the nature of Anglo-Turkish affairs in the Mediterranean during the Jacobean period (1603-25). In the later half of Elizabeth's reign relations between Protestant England and the Islamic Ottoman Empire expanded. [2] Scholarly research points to the Mediterranean grain crisis of the 1560's as providing England with her entry into modern trade relations with powers in that region. [3] Supplying the Italians and Ottomans with Northern European grain soon fueled further English economic interest. The only hindrance was the Spanish endeavour to maximize their military effort by exploiting geographic location. They found it advantageous to try and seal the Mediterranean's natural bottleneck at Gibraltar in an attempt to curtail English penetration. [4]

[1] Calender of State Papers, Venetian, 1603-07 (hereafter C.S.P.V.), p. 140.
[2] Sir Thomas Shirley, *Discours of the Turks (1606-07)*. The Camden Miscellany, vol. XVI., ed., E. Denison, pp. 9-12.
[3] W. E. Minchinton, ed., *The Growth of Overseas Trade in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. (London, 1969), p. 7.
[4] Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution*. (Cambridge, 1988), see chapter three.

The actual development of English and Ottoman relations, both commercially and diplomatically, are best observed during the reign of James I. In a pragmatic sense Anglo-Ottoman relations had floundered despite years of royal support from Elizabeth I. With the coronation of James I in 1603, a new but none-the-less vital ambiguity came into being. Despite a stream of anti-Turkish rhetoric from no less a figure then his Majesty, trade with the eastern Mediterranean was on the increase. To better understand this dichotomy in the overall development of the situation the influence of trade, the Levant Company, diplomacy, piracy, commercial investment, the attitude of James, and the reactions of the Turks must be determined. The importance of the arms trade with the Ottomans, especially as it affected commerce in general, is observed. This investigation can only begin to scratch the surface of the issues due to the limitations imposed by English language sources. To facilitate the study a brief overview of events in later Elizabethan times is in order.

The formal entry of England and the Ottoman Empire into a stable economic and political relationship came with William Harborne's mission to the Sublime Porte [5] in 1580 representing private business interests and the Crown. In June of that year he succeeded in getting a favorable grant from the Sultan made up of twenty-two articles of trade which defined "English liberties on the subject." The articles were a success because they allowed the English official access to the Eastern Mediterranean market. The Venetian and French ambassadors, who jealously guarded their tradional economic rights in Istanbul, used their leverage against England at the court of the Grand Vizir. [6] The best means of countering this negative influence was for the English to appoint an envoy to guard their interests. Since the Crown did not wish to pay for a formal ambassador the financing had to come from another source. The problem led to the creation of a merchant monopoly, the Levant Company, initially called the Turkey Company, whose representative in Istanbul would also act as a representative of James I. [7] Once again English entrepreneurs had evolved a de facto role in foreign policy which combined mercantile and diplomatic activity. [8]

Harborne, havin established the foundation for the venture, was the natural

[5] The term Sublime Porte derived from the French literal translation for High Gate, meaning the Ottoman court and government.

[6] S. A. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578-82*. (Oxford, 1972), 53. H. G. Rawinson, "The Embassy of William Harborne to Constantinople, 1583-8." *Transactions of the Roval Historical Society*. (November, 1921), vol. V., p. 6.

[7] Alfred C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*. (New York, 1964), p. 11.

[8] The reason for Company involvement in most of the decisions made in the Mediterranean during this period was financial. They paid for the ambassador, furnished ships to fight pirates, and paid the government imposed impositions. In the opinion Arthur Leon Horniker, as shown in his article, "William Harbome and the Beginning of Anglo-Turkish Diplomatic and Commercial Relations." *The Journal of Modern History*. No. 3, (September, 1942) vol. XIV., the company played a crucial role in the development of English commerce.

selection to represent the company. As ambassador Harborne had two jobs, the first to protect English commercial investments and merchants, the second diplomatic. The English, unaware of actual Ottoman interest, hoped to lure the Turks into the fight with the common foe, Spain. This was a recurring idea throuhout the Jacobean period, hoping to pit the Catholics against the Muslims. [9] This use of unorthodox political maneuvering on the part of the English embassy caused numerous problems at the courts of Europe, whose rulers saw any attempt at an alliance with the Turk as traitorous to Christianity. English hopes for a military-diplomatic relationship were overly optimistic because the Ottomans were over-extended in wars with the Persians and Hunarians. [10] Since military assistance was not available, as demonstrated by the Ottoman failure to enter the fight in 1588, the English turned their attention to trade. [11]

Once the dominating need for grain subsided in the Mediterranean the English looked to tie Turkey into their growing export market. At the time England was the newest of Europe's economically developing countries and always looking for good markets. Ottoman domains represented an excellent potential market for textiles which constituted 70-90% of a English exports. [12] In order to control this trade the merchants involved formed the previously mentioned Levant Company as a joint stock venture, with all buying and trading done as a unit. When the initial charter ended in 1592 the Company reorganized as an individual investment company, although it remained monopolistic in nature. This meant that members could finance their own voyages, but that rent on the monopoly had to be paid as a whole. The renewed charter lasted twelve years, ending around the time of Elizabeth's death in 1603. [13]

The death of Elizabeth in 1603 and the subsequent rise of James to the throne shortly thereafter represented the end of any direct royal interest in the development of diplomatic relations with the Turks. [14] The new king looked upon himself as one of the defenders of Christian Europe, and did not feel the necessity to interact with the infidels on any level except commercial. In dealing with a delegation from the Levant Company just after his coronation James stated that he saw no reason to maintain relations with the Turks and the presence of an ambassador in Istanbul was unimportant. [15] Further proof of

[9] MICHAEL COOK, ed., *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*. (Cambridge, 1976), 124.
[10] BRANDON H. BECK, *From the Rising of the Sun*. (New York, 1987), p. 31. James C. Davis, ed., *Pursuit of Power: Venetian Ambassadors' Response on Spain. Turkey and France in the Age of Philip II, 1560-1600*. (New York, 1970), p. 133.
[11] S. A. SKILLITER, p. 178.
[12] J. P. COOPER, ed., *The New Cambridee Modern History, Vol. IV., The Decline of Spain and the Thirty Years War 1609-48/59*. (Cambridge, 1970), p. 94. Derek, Hirst, *Authority and Conflict England 1603-58*. (Cambridge, 1989), p. 6.
[13] ALFRED C. WOOD, p. 22.
[14] S. A. SKILLITER, p. 178.

James's anti-Turkish feelings came with his statement that if the rest of the Christian monarches of Europe would raise forces to fight the Ottomans, he would provide 6,000 troops upon request, although he declined the honor of acting first. [16]

What was the economic nature of the new market and how were the Ottomans perceived by the English? During the late 16th and early 17th centuries the Ottoman Empire appeared to the English as a military behemoth which also held promise as a vast commercial emporium. [17] To merchants the Empire presented a fantastical world, with its collection of unseen Eastern goods and peoples. The stark absolutism of the Sultan also tended to shock Englishmen as well. Yet this did not prohibit them from exploiting a situation in which strategic affairs and tyranny had extinguished the so called spirit of enterprise, thereby presenting a unique commercial opportunity. [18]

While the Turks were not as commercially naive as some authors have implied, they were handicapped by a narrow economic perspective. From 1566 to 1617 the Ottoman Empire was involved in almost constant warfare, suffering from poor leadership, corruption, numerous enemies, and overextension. [19] These factors, added to an anti-mercantilistic policy that combined favoring foreign merchants with high export taxes only helped to weaken their existing infrastructure. [20] Worse still, the Turks viewed the English as inferior, making economic competition with them undesirable. This is not to say that certain Pashas were not clever enough to make use of tariffs and local laws to fleece numerous English merchants in the years to come. [21]

At this time the Levant Company also faced a crisis over the renewal of its charter. The main problem was that James frowned on any interaction, political or commercial, with the Turks. Secondary was that the merchants were adamant complainers about high impositions paid to the Crown and the cost of maintaining the ambassador in Istanbul. [22] Parliament was compelled to listen as the company aired its grievances against the home government. They adamantly fought the imposition of what they deemed to be exorbitant tariffs

15 C.S.P.V., 1603-07, p. 184.

16 C.S.P.V., 1603-07, pp. 265, 362. James repeatedly made this statement for the benefit of anyone listening, in these cases the Veneti an ambassador.

17 Sir Thomas Shirley, p. 15.

18 Fynes Moryson, *An Itineary, containin his ten vears travell throuh the twelve dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, Switzerland, Netherland, Denmarke, Poland, Italy, Turkey, France, England, Scotland, Ireland*. (London, 1617) (reprint Glasgow, 1907). Moryson felt that The Ottoman's enthusiasm for near continual warfare had allowed the economy to become based on plunder and had ruined the economic spirit of the upper-classes.

19 Sir Thomas Shirley, pp. 5-8.

20 J. P. Cooper, ed., p. 61. All commerce within the Empire was handled by Greeks or Jews with the Turkish upper-classes remaining aloof from any such interactions.

21 Alfred C. Wood, p. 17.

22 Calender of State Papers, Domestic, (hereafter Cal. S.P.D.), 1603-10, vol. 8, p. 218.

on commodities such as dried currants, which were prized by the English for their use in food and beverages. The debate ran for almost the entire year of 1604 and into 1605, with the powerful members of the Company trying to force the restitution of their rights on favorable grounds. At one point Parliament as a whole became incensed with the petitions, stating they, "showed the unreasonableness of the Turkey Company in petitioning the House of Commons."[23]

Many important economic factors were in the merchant's favor and in hindsight restitution of the charter just seems to have been a matter of time. During the reign of James the survival of the Company and its trade had become crucial to the development of English exports and power. The Company's political strength was based upon the many influential members who were either close to the court or seated in Parliament. The Governor of the Company, Sir Thomas Smythe, was a close friend of James and a staunch business ally.[24] The Crown realized that the existence of strong merchant companies maintaining numerous ships at private cost increased the kingdom's naval resources. There was also economic incentive for His Majesty. As long as the Company continued to increase imports the revenues derived from impositions would improve the finances of the king.[25] These considerations meant that the Company charter created in 1605 remained similar to the original with only minor exceptions.[26]

A single voyage to the Ottoman ports of Istanbul, Alessandretta, Alexandria, Tunis, or Algiers, held the prospect of a profit of up to 300%. The potential of such outstanding returns, inspite of insurance costs, attracted numerous wealthy investors in England. The cost of building, outfitting, and victualing a vessel, combined with purchasing a cargo, could easily be regained from a first voyage. Although the uncertainty of any voyage, due to piracy and weather, increased the risk, venture capital was always to be had and the period of James' reign saw a boom in the Levant trade. Ships captured by pirates were reported with cargos of tremendous value, meaning even small commercial investors could make a sizable profit.[27] Sir Paul Pindar, a member of the Levant Company, eventually amassed a large enough fortune to become the primary lender to the king and the city of London.[28]

A typical voyage started with the construction or chartering of a two hundred ton berton(the standard English merchantmen of the day). The vessel would then take on a cargo in England generally consisting of broadcloth, kerseys, tin, lead, and other assorted goods. Once these initial wears had been

[23] Cal.S.P.D., 1603-10, vol. 8, p. 311.
[24] Robert Ashton, *The City and the Court 1603-1643*. (Cambridge, 1979), p. 16.
[25] Derek Hirst, p. 4
[26] Robert Ashton, p. 90.
[27] C.S.P.V., 1603-07, 100, 163, and C.S.P.V. 1610-13, p. 312.
[28] Alfred C. Wood, p. 4. Sir thomas Shirley, p. 10.

sold at a port in the Levant, the ship might engage in some regional commerce. Along with local business interactions, the English were also contracted to carry government officials, which simply increased their profit margin. Finally, before returning, the vessel would be loaded with the luxury items so valued back in England.[29] These voyages give some idea of the lucrative nature of maritime commerce in the Mediterranean during the first decade of the seventeenth century. Carrying agents like ambassadors, or correspondence, soon became a secondary business for many of the Company merchantmen.[30]

With the boom in trade beginning in 1605, the Levant Company experienced a rapid growth. The introduction of English broadcloth and kerseys, especially lighter fabric known as Spanish cloth, were extremely popular in the Ottoman Empire.[31] This material, less expensive than the Venetian and French product, allowed England to assume the dominant share of the textile market.[32] The commercial importance of a presence in the Mediterranean for the English was crucial at this time as they were involved in a trade war with the Dutch. To the Crown the increase in exports was essential in the maintenance of royal finances since impositions on the Company's imports were a steady source of revenue.[33] These two points, the progressive promotion of the English textile industry and the ability of the royal revenue collectors to tax imports, secured the trade's future.

The study of Anglo-Turkish piracy in the Mediterranean reveals a fusion of commercial and foreign policy interests embodied in the development of this special relationship. A long time tradition in the region, the Turks having been successful at it for centuries, piracy reached new heights in the early 1600s. The phenomenon of English piracy, and their mastery of it as a profession, stemmed from the naval war with Spain in the late 1580s. Unable to afford a fleet to openly engage the Spanish, Elizabeth had turned to officially commissioning privateers. Quite numerous by the end of the century, they operated extensively from the Caribbean to India, leading England to be called a "nation of pirates."[34] Piracy, especially for the English in this period, became inextricably tied to trade in the Mediterranean. As in all commercial ventures, the English showed great originality in their piratical efforts. The commissioned privateer was like an entrepreneur, with private citizens investing their capital in the ship, crew, and voyage, keeping a sense of mercantilistic patriotism about them.

[29] C.S.P.V-. 1603-07. p. 92.

[30] Logan P. Smith, *The Life and Times of Sir Henry Wotton, Vol. I.*, (Oxford, 1966), p. 353.

[31] Alberto Tenenti, 60. Anhur Leon Horniker, p. 291.

[32] Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe*. (New York, 1982), p. 194. Lewis says that the superior quality and price of English cloth received numerous mention by Muslim writers on the subject.

[33] Cal.S.P.D., 1603-10, vol. 8, p. 51, and 168.

[34] C.S.P.V., 1603-07, p. 312.

The arrival of James saw a change from the Elizabethan acceptance of investment in privateering. Wishing to earn the title "Rex pacificus," James sought peace with England's enemies and to end the state promotion of privateering. Despite James's actions piracy continued in a similar fashion, but no longer sanctioned by the government. From the beginning of James's reign, therefore, all investments in pirate ventures had to be done covertly.[35] An example of a typical sponsor was English nobleman Sir Robert Cecil, who took several separate options in English privateers starting in 1601.[36] Contrary to what had been accepted practice by many at the time, Cecil and many of his fellow investors were not members of the Levant Company. Piracy represented an outlet for the numerous individual investors who wished to trade in the area but were excluded due to the Company's monopoly. By maintaining covert pirate operations individuals were able to invest in profitable voyages of their own. Privateers offered the only opportunity for nonCompany investors and it readily became a preferred investment alternative. The Company soon became the leading voice in appealing for official government efforts to suppress piracy, continually petitioning the king for assistance. Levant Company investors realized that piracy was disruptive to trade, even if it was sponsored by fellow Englishmen.[37]

As the English privateers began operating in the Mediterranean they quickly entered into a working relationship with Turkish pirates. The English had always been particularly capable seamen and those that entered the Mediterranean were exemplary. The vessel of choice for the English was the berton, of medium tonnage, with three masts and had a deep keel that gave it excellent handling in all types of weather. With a necessary crew of sixty men, it could hold twenty to thirty cannon and had a large cargo capacity.[38] The combination of good seamanship and had a technically superior vessel allowed the English merchants and pirates to sail even during bad winter weather.[39]

The result of the pirate menace in the Mediterranean was that merchant vessels had to arm if they were to survive. The captains of these ships soon found that a well-armed vessel, once its trading had been accomplished, could easily engage in piracy before returning to England, thereby increasing the profit of the voyage. As merchant ships of all nations came under greater threat they were forced to increase their armament. This increase in power strengthened the will to risk privateering. By the end of the first decade of the

[35] C.S.P.V., 1607-10, p. 43.

[36] Kenneth R. Andrews, "Sir Robert Cecil and Mediterranean Plunder." *English Historical Review*. No. 343(1979), vol. 87, p. 513.

[37] C.S.P.V., 1603-1607, 42, 89, C.S.P.V., 1607-10, 415, and Cal.S.P.D., 1603-1610, vol. 8, 487, vol. 10, p. 308.

[38] Alberto Tenenti, p. 64.

[39] Cal.S.P.D., 1603-1610, vol. 8, p. 109. C.S.P.V., 1603-07, p. 109. J. P. Cooper, ed., p. 232.

seventeenth century English bertons, particularly those of the Levant Company, were the only ones strong enough to operate freely in the Mediterranean. This advantage was the result of intense arming and superior seamanship, not to mention funding. Even the Venetians were reduced to carrying their cargo on English ships, or paying pirate warships to escort their merchantmen. [40]

The first English pirates in the Mediterranean were merchantmen who capitalized on their strength to increase profits, but always maintained a commercial mission. To them piracy remained a secondary course of action. What followed very quickly, however, was the evolution of pirates who operated heavily armed and manned vessels with the intention to raid shipping. A great number of reports exist of ships traveling alone or in groups of up to twenty waiting along commercial routes to prey on passing merchant vessels. [41] Many of these ships had mixed crews of Englishmen and Turks, but were always captained by an Englishman. This mixture occurred mostly because it was the only way that English pirates operating out of ports like Algiers could recruit enough sailors. These pirate crews had long since abandoned their religious hostility towards each other for possible profit. [42] Once an Englishman had taken to working with non-Christians, he was said to have "gone Turk." Worse still, even as James attempted to outlaw piracy, the general lack of control in the Ottoman Empire allowed local Pashas, especially in Algiers and Tunis, to cooperate with and support their efforts. [43] Since many of the now outlawed English pirates sought to use Algiers as a base of operations, they also brought with them their technical and navigational skills. An example of one such individual was Captain Ward, who deserted the Royal Navy by seizing a ship from Portsmouth in 1613 and making his way to Algiers. An extremely successful pirate, he gained great notoriety for both his ruthlessness and wealth. [44]

The involvement of Englishmen in piracy necessarily produced two effects. First was the diplomatic problem of explaining to Venetian, French, Spanish and Ottoman representatives that the government of "Rex pacificus" was not involved directly, and therefore not responsible. An example occurred on November 8, 1613 when the English ambassador was called before the Grand

[40] KENNETH R. ANDREWS, *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement*. (Cambridge, 1984), p. 97. Frederic Chapin Lane, "Venetian Shipping During the Commercial Revolution." *The American Historical Review*. No. 2, (January, 1933), vol. XXXVIII, 236. A. D. Wright, *The Counter-Reformation: Catholic! Europe and the Non-christian World*. (New York, 1982), p. 72. Pressure form piracy and rival shipping in the Adriatic eventually became so intense that Venice was forced to declare itself an open port.

[41] Cal.S.P.D., 1611-18, vol. 9, p. 55.

[42] C.S.P.v., 1603-07, pp. 94-163, C.S.P.V., 1607-1610, p. 470, C.S.P.v. 1610-13, p. 100, C.S.P.v. 1619-21, p. 486.

[43] SIR THOMAS SHIRLEY, 8. According to Shirley: "Argier(Algiers) & Tunis obey him noe further then they please..."(This refers to the Sultan's inability to exert control over the Pashas).

[44] C.S.P.v., 1603-1607, p. 94. Logan P. Smilh, p. 415.

Vizir with demands that England make reparations for damage done to Turkish shipping. The Vizir said that the Sultan was, "greatly exasperated against(sic) his nation for a long time on this account." [45] The second effect was the passing of technological improvements to the pirates, especially armaments and seamanship, thereby increasing their abilities. The result was a need for a naval campaign against the pirates. An English failure to move militarily would appear to Europe as self-incrimination. At the same time the lucrative trade to the eastern Mediterranean was too important to be interrupted. King James ineffectual disclaimers smacked of duplicity to both European and Ottoman observers who found his distinction between involvement and responsibility insultingly artificial. [46]

The proliferation of piracy aggravated the inconsistency of English policy toward the Turks. The government was constantly under pressure to do something about the dangers of commercial travel in the Mediterranean. As early as 1608 the Levant Company petitioned the king to act against this threat, however, due to deficiencies in royal finances at that time, James was unwilling to take action. [47] By 1615 the Levant Company was demanding action or the trade to the Ottoman Empire would be ruined. They proposed a fleet of six royal vessels with the Company covering operational costs. The so-called, "war against the pirates" was hotly debated but by 1617 had not progressed beyond the discussion stage. [48]

The only formal effort to suppress the pirates during James's reign was mounted in 1619 under the title the "Algiers Fleet," and listed twenty-five vessels. [49] Sailing in 1620 the task force was readied for a six month voyage at the cost of £20,700. The fleet returned in 1621 having accomplished nothing but aggravating the pirates, who simply fled the areas patrolled. [50] The fleet only managed to seize a few vessels. One reported in November of 1620 was a large, well-armed berton with a crew of two hundred Turks and three English captains. In keeping with standard practice for Europeans sailing with Muslims at the time the three Englishmen were immediately hung. [51]

So why were the Turks so keen on trade with the English, and what kept them interested after piracy had become epidemic? And why did the Ottoman government tolerate an ambassador whose monarch was openly hostile to the Sultan and supported state enemies? To understand the basis for Ottoman actions we must delve further into historically contemporary affairs.

The Ottoman Empire during the Jacobean period was beginning to suffer

[45] C.S.P.V.. 1613-15. p. 63.
[46] Cal.S.P.D., 1603-10, vol. 8, pp. 41, 168, 470.
[47] *Ibid.*, p. 469.
[48] C.S.P.V., 1615-17, pp. 496, 503, and Cal.S.P.D.. vol. 9, pp. 177, 515.
[49] Cal.S.P.D., 1619-23. vol. 10, Il.
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 185. C.S.P.V., 1619-21, p. 486, C.S.P.V., 1621-23, p. 69.
[51] C.S.P.V., 1619-21, 486.

from the spiral of decline begun in the previous century. Some of the English observers present in Istanbul realized they were witnessing imperial decline and took time to record their impressions. In 1622 Ambassador Sir Thomas Roe wrote in shocked terms that the murder of Sultan Osman II had "poisoned the state."[52] At the same time the Empire was also being forced to modernize its army, the key pillar of state, in order to compete with its Persian and European enemies. Throughout the early 1 600s the Turks pushed to acquire more munitions and weapons to arm the increasing number of troops they were forced to maintain.[53] Therefore, in order to preserve the military might of the empire the Turks were forced to turn to suppliers like the English.

The English answered this need as early as 1579 with the delivery of tin, which was necessary in the casting of bronze cannon. It was Harborne's promise in the trade negotiations to assure regular delivery of much needed casting metals that initially convinced the Ottomans to open up to the English.[54] Merchants followed by developing a thriving export in related items like iron, lead, copper, arquebuses, muskets, swordblades, brimstone, saltpetre, and gunpowder. In 1605 it was reported that the only good gunpowder in Turkey was imported from England, and that munition merchants had established three arms shops in Istanbul.[55] Numerous examples of this trade exist. In 1607 the Sultan sent a cavass(embassy) to London to try and secure a deal guaranteeing a steady supply of powder and arms. After meeting with willing members of the Levant Company he was scheduled to meet the king.[56] In 1609 the arrival of three munitions laden vessels at Istanbul was reported. The first was a ship carrying 6,000 sequins of tallow, a necessary component in making cartridges, which was unloaded directly at the city's arsenal. The next two ships carried tin, steel, and a number of arquebuses.[57] In 1611 the vessel carrying the new English ambassador also had a cargo of unmounted swordblades, English steel being highly prized by the Turks.[58]

This arms trade with the Ottomans, declared enemy of all Europe, caused particular problems. England was declared the arms supplier of Islam and some countries took direct action.[59] In 1607 the Grand Duke of Tuscany ordered the

[52] ROE, SIR THOMAS, *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe in his Embassy to the Ottoman Poste from the Year 1621 to 1628 Inclusive*. (London, 1748), ed., S. Richardson, p. 126.
[53] V. J. PARRY, ed., *War, Technology, and Society in the Middle East*. (Oxford, 1975), 200. The acquisition of arquebuses and muskets were particularly important for use against the Hungarians, whose forces were modernized.
[54] STANFORD J. SHAW, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, vol. I*. (Cambridge, 1977), p. 182.
[55] SIR THOMAS SHIRLEY, p. 9.
[56] C.S.P.V., 1 607- 1 0, p. 22.
[57] *Ibid.*, pp. 239. 466.
[58] C.S.P.V., 1610-13, p. 289.
[59] SIR THOMAS SHIRLEY, p. 9. Shirley refers to the arms trade which in his opinion, "bringeth mutche sclaunder to our nation & religion, whyche is powder other munition

seizing of three English vessels at the Italian port of Leghorn. The reason, which the Duke later gave ambassador Sir Henry Wotton, was that they had been carrying ammunition bound for Turkey and he was merely interdicting the flow.[60] The dependence of the Turks upon English munitions even led England's ambassador at Istanbul in 1609 to suggest to the Grand Vizir that they might bring a fleet into the Mediterranean to assist the Turks. The offer appears to have been generated more by mercenary interest than the spirit of friendship. England would benefit from increased Turkish military aggression, expanding the munitions trade, while English vessels would collect captured booty. The offer, not taken seriously, was declined.[61]

Neither partner looked upon the other as a friend but rather as a necessary evil. England needed the wealth generated by the Levant trade while Turkey relied, at least in part, on English munitions. One of the more important items of English foreign policy that involved the Turks during the period was the Polish question. Long time enemies, the Poles and Turks were at war during most of James's reign. Poland was continually searching for assistance in the fight, and in James they found a receptive ear. In 1609 James entertained a visit from Poland's representative, the Grand Marshal, although he had already accused the English ambassador at Istanbul of urging the Turks to attack his country.[62]

In 1619 James was "willing to allow" the appeal of the Polish ambassador to recruit 10,000 levies from Scotland and Ireland. The conditions were that it would be done at Polish expense and the men could only be used to fight the Turks.[63] The main problem in granting the right to recruit within Britain was that it could endanger English subjects in Istanbul, since such actions would obviously infuriate the Sultan. In 1621 the Lords in Council debated the subject and feared that retribution might be taken against English merchants, with the confiscation of goods an inevitability.[64] James did eventually grant Poland the right to recruit levies, although he apparently felt they would not get more than 3,000 men. It was at that point, however, that Sir Thomas Roe, the ambassador at Istanbul, begged James not to allow the recruitment of troops. Roe realized that the Sultan would take great offense and in all probability look upon this as

for warre & shyppinge, broughtc by the Englishe in greate abundans thither, & by noe other nation els."

[60] LOGAN P. SMITH, p. 408. BERNARD LEWIS, p. 193. Papal bulls had been issued against the sale of any and all munitions with the Turks in 1527 and again in the 1620s. The lists included anything that might be considered of military value.

[61] C.S.P.V., 1610-13, p. 236. Described by the Venetian ambassador to Turkey, this could simply be the exaggeration of an angry representative at Istanbul trying to stir dissent against the English.

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 330.

[63] C.S.P.V., 1619-21. p. 53.

[64] C.S.P.V., 1621-23, p. 22. Cal. S.P.D., 1619-23, vol. 10, p. 237.

an act of war. So while James sanctioned this publicly, privately he refused the Poles any financing, crippling their recruitment effort. In doing so James was able to ensure that Polish actions would not endanger the Mediterranean trade. [65] In the end James never assisted the Poles beyond offering the services of his ambassador at Istanbul.

Relations with the Turks were al so effected by more clandestine English policies. James was keen to restore Prince Stephen, then under English protection, to the throne of Moldavia, for with Stephen James would gain an ally in Eastern Europe to pit against the Habsburgs. The responsibility for Stephen's cause was given to the ambassador at Istanbul, and it did much to bother the Turks. In 1608 the government gave the Company £3,000 for bribes, "to further the restitution of the Prince of Moldavia." [66] The actions of ambassador Sir Thomas Glover in this activity, especially the involvement of Poland, angered the Turks enough to force his diplomatic recall in 1611 to save face for England. [67]

Another of James's policy problems was the plight of his son-in-law, Frederick, the Elector of the Rhineland Palatinate and leader of the German Protestant Union. The arrival of the Thirty Years War placed Frederick in dire straits and forced James to assist his in-law and coreligionist. [68] The king again assumed a dualistic policy to deal with the situation. James publicly donned the cloak of religious decency in 1620 by swearing to support his son-in-law in the battle against the, "common enemy of all Christendom." [69] However, in 1623 he used the covert efforts of Ambassador Roe to block a Habsburg-Ottoman peace in hopes of diverting the Habsburg military forces then facing Frederick. James claimed that his intention was not a war between the two, but merely to cause diplomatic agitation. [70] In a further Machiavellian move James urged that Levant trade funds should be diverted towards the £1,000,000 needed for the proposed Palatinate campaign. [71]

Perhaps one of the more successful pieces of English policy at the time was the treaty created wi th the B arbary pirates in 1623 . Initiated by the Levant Company through ambassador Roe, it reflected the English fleet's inability to suppress the pirate menace. [72] Playing the dual role of merchant and

[65] C.S.P.V., 1621-23. p. 92.

[66] Cal. S.P.D., 1603-10, vol. 8, p. 458.

[67] Alfred C. Wood, p. 82. Glover was actually operating under specific orders from James to further Prince Stephen's cause. James simply used Glover as a scapegoat for his own actions.

[68] Derek Hirst, p. 11 5.

[69] C.S.P.V., 1619-21. p. 239.

[70] Roe Sir thomas, p. 34.

[71] C.S.P.V., 1623-25, p. 572. Cal. S.P.D., vol. Il, p. 453.

[72] C.S.P.V., 1621-23, 421, C.S.P.V., 1623-25, pp. 62, 170. Unable to suppress the pirates, the Company realized that the only way to solve the problem was to buy them off.

ambassador in 1623 Roe personally negotiated an agreement with representatives from Algiers and Tunis, guaranteeing the release of several hundred English captives. In return for safe passage the English would pay tribute to the pirates.[73] Although James claimed to accept this only to secure the freedom of the English captives, it was obvious that future commercial relations with the pirates would be very profitable. The Barbary pirates had by then come to represent an important commercial outlet that was better placated then resisted, and their neutralization helped restore regular English commerce throughout the Mediterranean.[74]

By the time of his death in 1625 James's policy toward the Ottoman Empire was more sophisticated than it might appear on the surface. The great amount of rhetoric that he had directed against the "enemy of all Christendom" had not hindered English commercial interaction. The southward shift in European trade, accentuated by the beginning of the Thirty Years War in 1618, placed greater emphasis on exports to the Mediterranean. Between 1609 and 1619 the export of cloth to the Levant increased from 46% to 79% of total English textile trade.[75]

The nature of trade in the Mediterranean also went a long way in furthering economic growth in England. Commercial activity between the English and the Turks satisfied the economic theory of the time, that goods should be traded for goods of greater value or gold, but not to exchange gold for goods. This belief found strong advocacy in England, which protected its bullion reserves.[76] James also relied on the trade to collect revenue for his personal maintenance. To assist him in this the exchequer determined that the regulation of duties was the king's prerogative, and that impositions could be placed on any import. In 1608 alone James collected £70,000 in duties from Levant Company imports.[77]

The policy of James I provides a distinct dichotomy between official policy and actual trade relations. By the end of his reign James, the great Christian monarch, had allowed his country to become increasingly involved in trade with the Eastern Mediterranean. Despite his strong anti-Ottoman rhetoric James's finances were tied into the revenues English trade from the Levant generated. He probably also realized that at the national level the growth of trade represented increased economic power for England. Monopolies, such as the Turkey Company, assured an outlet for English goods while it provided royal finances with an increasing opportunity for impositions. Although the trade into the Mediterranean meant problems with pirates and foreign policy, the economic significance outweighed the difficulties.

[73] Cal.S.P.D., vol. II, pp. 13, 20, 158.
[74] C.S.P.V., 1623-25, p. 107.
[75] W. E. Minchinton, ed., p. 67.
[76] Alfred C. Wood, 43. Cal.S.P.D., vol. 11, p. 432. In 1624 a paper was circulated titled:"A Discourse of Trade and Shipping in the Levant," that called for greater protection of trade and to make England a staple for foreign produce.
[77] Derek Hirst, p. 109.