

Chapter Five: Venice and the Turcoman *Begliks* of Menteşe and Aydın

Following the Mongol invasion into Anatolia in 1243, the Rum-Seljukid Empire of Konya gradually disintegrated, breaking up into a number of autonomous Turcoman *begliks* or emirates. Some of these principalities extended their territory westwards at the expense of the Byzantine Empire and developed into maritime states. Among these was the emirate of Menteşe, which already in 1269 controlled the whole coastal area of Caria. Although the wartorn and unstable situation in Anatolia after the Mongol invasion will not have stimulated Venetian trade in the area, on the other hand commercial activities will almost certainly not have been discontinued completely. Venetian merchants seem to have visited the Carian coast (called 'Turchia' by the Venetians of Crete) in the second half of the thirteenth century. There is, however, no evidence of Venetian commercial activity on a large scale, nor do sources suggest that this trade was regulated by treaties or other instruments between the Venetians and the Turcoman *begliks*. Therefore, Venetian trade in this area must have been incidental and of a rather low volume.¹

¹ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 3-5; H. İnalçık, 'The Rise of the Turcoman Maritime Principalities in Anatolia, Byzantium, and Crusades', *Byzantinische Forschungen*, IX, 1985, 179-217, 182-185 (İnalçık, *Maritime Principalities*); Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, I, 534-535; Atan, *op. cit.*, 125-126; and Turan, *İlişkileri*, 141-188. On the Seljukid Empire, the emergence of the Turcoman *begliks* and trade in the second half of the thirteenth century see Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 269-370 and 320-323; Turan, *Türkiye tarihi*, 403-657; Vryonis, *Decline*, 133-139 and 244-258; H. Akin, *Aydın oğulları tarihi hakkında bir araştırma*, İstanbul 1946, 1-28; and Flemming, *art. cit.*, 16-66; on international trade in particular see *ibid.*, 26-27, 34-35, and 62-64. Concerning Venetian trade with Makri/Fethiye in the emirate of Menteşe before 1291, Flemming, *art. cit.*, 63, writes: 'Die Venezianer - wie auch andere Lateiner - liefen schon vor der Sperre [the naval blockade of Muslim territories and the prohibition of trade with these lands after the fall of Acre in 1291] häufig den lykischen Hafen Makri an...'. See also Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, I, 546-547. On the emirate of Menteşe in the second half of the thirteenth century see Wittek, *Das Fürstentum Mentesche*, İstanbul 1934, 15-57 (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, *Istanbul Mitteilungen II*)(Wittek, *Mentesche*); in Turkish: Wittek, P., *Menteşe Beyliği 13-15inci asırda garbi Küçük Asya tarihine ait tetkik*, Ankara 1986 (ed. princ. Ankara 1944). On the emirate of Aydın see P. Lemerle, *L'émirat d'Aydın, Byzance et l'Occident: Recherches sur "La Geste d'Umur Pacha"* (Bibliothèque Byzantine, Études, II), Paris 1957, 13-15. The city of Sivas in the eastern part of Anatolia, which was under direct Mongol rule, remained in the second half of the thirteenth century an important commercial center for European traders. Towards the end of the thirteenth century the Genoese even opened a permanent consulate in Sivas. See Bratianu, *op. cit.*, 166-168. For Venetian trade with the Ilhanids see Turan, *İlişkileri*, 128-139. On the Anatolian Turcoman emirates in general see İ. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri ve Akkoyunlu, Karakoyunlu Devletleri*, Ankara 1937 (Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Beylikleri*); and Sevim, *op. cit.*, I, 179-346. On the Anatolian Turcoman emirates at the beginning of the thirteenth century see C. Cahen, 'Les principautés turcomanes au début du XIV^e siècle d'après Pachymère et Grégoras', *Tarih Dergisi*, XXXII, 1979, 111-116. For two maps and a description of the Anatolian emirates see Pitcher, *op. cit.*, 28-34 and maps no. VII-VIII.

Venetian sources, especially those pertaining to or originating from Venetian Crete, suggest an increase of trade and the gradual solidification of commercial relations between Venice, the Venetian territories in the Levant and the Turks after 1300. This trade was carried on by private entrepreneurs and by the administration of Crete, which had been in Venetian hands since 1204. In 1318 the Duca di Candia wrote a letter to the Doge of Venice in which he mentioned that the Cretan administration had succeeded in concluding a treaty with the Turks, probably those of the emirate of Menteşe. Political and commercial relations with the Turkish *begliks* were almost certainly delegated by Venice to the Venetian administration of Crete. Until 1318 relations between the Turks and the Venetians had been comparatively peaceful, since the main targets of Turkish military activity were the remnants of the Byzantine Empire in Asia Minor and the non-Venetian islands in the Aegean. After the Genoese had conquered Chios (between 1304 and 1309) and the Hospitallers Rhodes (between 1306 and 1310), these two new regional powers successfully fought the Turks. However, Byzantine attempts to push back the Turks by employing Catalan mercenaries turned out to be disastrous and in the end only resulted in the Turks winning more victories and new conquests.²

The friendly character of Venetian-Turkish relations changed completely in 1318 when the Catalan Duchy of Athens (conquered by the Catalans in 1311) made an alliance with the Turks of Menteşe and Aydın. The Turks, probably at the instigation of Alfonso Fadrique, the vicargeneral (1317-1330) of Catalan Athens started to raid Venetian and Angevin (Neapolitan) territories in the Aegean and on the mainland of Greece. The Catalans were at war with both the Venetians and the Angevins and hoped to profit from their Turkish allies' successful military actions. Crete itself was threatened and Venetian trade seriously disrupted by the raids. After a preliminary treaty in 1319, a new treaty (1321) between Alfonso Fadrique and Venice temporarily stopped the hostilities. In 1321 the Turks, however, had found the way to

² Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 6-12; idem, *Holy War*, 213-214; İnalçık, *Maritime Principalities*, 185-186; Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, I, 535-537; D. Jacoby, 'Catalans, Turcs et Vénitiens en Roumanie (1305-1332): un nouveau témoignage de Marino Sanudo Torsello', *Studi Medievali*, Serie Terza, Anno XV, 1, 1974, 217-261, 217-247 (Jacoby, *Catalans, Turcs et Vénitiens*); E. Zachariadou, 'The Catalans of Athens and the Beginning of the Turkish Expansion in the Aegean Area', *Studi Medievali*, 3a Serie, XXI, Spoleto 1980, 821-838, 821-823 (Zachariadou, *Catalans*); P. Schreiner, 'Zur Geschichte Philadelphias im 14. Jahrhundert (1293-1390)', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, XXXV, 1969, 375-431, 375-388; and Turan, *İlişkileri*, 141-188. On the emirate of Menteşe in this period see Wittek, *Mentesche*, 46-48 and 58-65; on Aydın see Lemerle, *Aydın*, 15-18. On the Genoese conquest of Chios and the Genoese policy to defend their sea route to Constantinople and the Black Sea see M. Balard, 'The Genoese in the Aegean (1402-1566)', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, IV, 1, 1989, 158-174.

Romania and from that time on posed a serious threat to both the Venetian and the other Latin territories in the Aegean and Romania. Around 1325 the Turks renewed their cooperation with the Catalans and consequently Venetian-Turkish relations rapidly deteriorated. Soon thereafter, for the first time, the Venetians considered the option of an anti-Turkish league. The Turks were no longer a mere nuisance; they had become a serious menace to Venetian interests. However, in 1329 the situation changed: relations between the Turks and the Catalans broke down and Byzantine policy which aimed at collaboration with the Turks divided the Christian powers in the area. The result was that Venetian policy which had sought to create an anti-Turkish alliance ended in failure.³

Although commercial traffic between Crete and Menteşe had not been entirely disrupted after the Catalan-Turkish alliance of 1318, Venetian trade had suffered considerably. In April 1331 the Duca di Candia, Marino Morosini, managed to conclude a treaty with the Beg of Menteşe, Orhan. The treaty reiterated the main clauses of an earlier treaty, most probably the one in force in 1318, but also added some clauses and omitted others. An important

³ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 12-17; idem, *Catalans*, 824-838; İnalçık, *Maritime Principalities*, 187-195; Jacoby, *Catalans, Turcs et Vénitiens*, 246-261; Setton, *op. cit.*, I, 177, 448-449; A. Laiou, 'Marino Sanudo Torsello, Byzantium and the Turks: The Background to the Anti-Turkish League of 1332-1334', *Speculum*, XLV, 1975, 374-392, 374-384; and Turan, *İlişkileri*, 141-188. On the emirate of Menteşe in this period see Wittek, *Mentesche*, 65-66; on Aydın see Lemerle, *Aydın*, 19-62 and Akin, *op. cit.*, 29-38. According to Marino Sanudo, in the beginning of the fourteenth century there were also quite intensive commercial relations between the emirate of Hamid (Antalya and Alanya) and the Mamluks. Flemming suggests that, apart from Muslims and Jews, Venetian and Genoese merchants also participated in this trade. During the reign of King Hugh IV (1324-1359), the kingdom of Cyprus gradually expanded its sphere of influence to the Turcoman *beyliks* along the southern shores of Anatolia and established commercial contacts with both the Turkish emirates and the Mamluks in Egypt. Cyprus became an important entrepot for Levant trade and was visited by many Venetian and Genoese merchants. Peter I (1359-1369), however, followed an extremely hostile policy towards the Turcoman emirates. After he had conquered Antalya in 1361 (in Cypriot hands till 1372), the Turks too adopted a hostile policy and started taking counter measures. The crisis particularly aggravated in 1365 when Peter I pillaged Alexandria. As a result of his 'crusading' policy, Levant trade in general suffered considerably and was seriously disrupted. In 1389-1390 the emirates of Hamid and Teke fell to the Ottomans. After 1402, when Timur restored the emirates of Teke and Karaman, the two important harbours Antalya and Alanya became the main focus of Venetian-Genoese rivalry. Antalya became Ottoman in the time of Mehmed I and Alanya was captured in 1471. Notwithstanding the fact that there were contacts between the emirates of Hamid and Teke and the Venetians, as far as is known, these relations were not formalized by way of treaties, as in the case of Menteşe and Aydın. See Flemming, *art. cit.*, 67-126, in particular 70-71, 82-89 and 114-115; Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, I, 546-550, and II, 3-23, 354-356; Atan, *op. cit.*, 130-134; and Setton, *op. cit.*, I, 238-284.

addition was a list which specified all the island-dependencies of Venetian Crete. However, it did not yet include all Venetian subjects.⁴

Notwithstanding the treaty of 1331, Turkish raids continued and Venice reconsidered its plans for a crusade. While negotiations between Venice, the pope and the French king dragged on, the situation in Romania deteriorated. Continuous Turkish raids forced local rulers, including the Byzantine emperor, to begin paying tribute to Menteşe and Aydın. The Byzantines also had to pay tribute to a third, newly emerging, *beglik*: that of the Ottomans. In August 1333 the Byzantine emperor was forced to sign a treaty, undertaking to pay 12,000 hyperpyra a year. Thus, from the 1330's onwards many Christian rulers were forced to pay tribute to the Turks of Menteşe and Aydın and to the Ottomans.⁵

Venice moved into action and in September 1332 she concluded a five-year alliance with the Byzantines and the Hospitallers of Rhodes: the very first European alliance against the Turks. Despite this treaty no crusading action followed. Indeed, Venice was once again confronted with difficulties, not only from her hostile Muslim neighbors, but in her own territories as well. A revolt broke out on Crete as a result of efforts to raise funds for the crusade against the Turks. Venice now searched for other allies and found them among the Turks of Menteşe and Germiyan. Relations between the Turks of Anatolia were troubled by conflicts between Aydın and Menteşe and Venice tried to take advantage of this situation by seeking alliances with the Turks of Menteşe and Germiyan. However, it is not clear whether these Venetian plans ever resulted in concrete action.⁶

Although no military action was taken in 1332 and 1333, Venice still fostered plans for joint Christian action against the Turks (*Sancta Unio*). In 1334 the *Sancta Unio* was revived and this time the crusading plans were carried out. In October 1334 the allied Christian naval and military forces heavily defeated the Turks of Karasi both at sea (Gulf of Adramyttion/Edremit) and on land. It seems that the Turks of Menteşe helped the Christians in their struggle against the other Turkish emirates. As a

⁴ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 18-20; and Turan, *İlişkileri*, 141-188.

⁵ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 21-24; idem, *Holy War*, 214; İnalçık, *Maritime Principalities*, 192-195; Laiou, *art. cit.*, 384-385; and Turan, *İlişkileri*, 141-188. On the emirate of Menteşe in this period see Wittek, *Mentesche*, 66-70; on Aydın see Lemerle, *Aydın*, 63-88.

⁶ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 24-29; İnalçık, *Maritime Principalities*, 192; Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, I, 538-539; Setton, *op. cit.*, I, 179-181; Laiou, *art. cit.*, 385-387; and Turan, *İlişkileri*, 141-188. On Aydın see Lemerle, *Aydın*, 89-101.

result of this victory, Turkish raids and expansion in the Aegean were stopped, at least temporarily, and the payment of tribute was abolished. Soon after the victory the league fell apart and Venetian efforts to reinforce the alliance turned out to be ineffective. The Venetians now operated on their own. The weakened Turkish emirates, however, shunned further hostilities and chose to conclude peace with Venice. In 1337 the Duca di Candia concluded a peace treaty both with the ruler of Menteşe and the ruler of Aydın.⁷

The conclusion of these treaties of 1337 was followed by a short peaceful period. In 1339, however, Turkish raids started again; in 1340 the whole of Romania was devastated by the Turks. This alarmed the Venetians on Crete who took action and prepared for the defense of the island. The most powerful of all the Turkish emirates was Aydın, which under its ruler Umur, was able to subdue large parts of the Aegean and Romania and extract considerable tribute from these areas. Crusading plans revived and were directed towards the Turks of Aydın. The crusade, however, was doomed to fail. Although the crusaders conquered the important port of İzmir (Smyrna) in October 1344, they achieved little else and trade was broken off completely. The Venetians were facing a number of major problems around this time: disturbed relations with the Turks of Anatolia, war and economic crisis in Europe, as well as a general crisis in Levant trade caused by conflicts with the Mamluks and Tatars, and a conflict with the Genoese which eventually resulted in war in 1351. All these problems combined to place the Venetians in a difficult position and forced them to seek peace with the Turks of Menteşe. Commercial relations with Menteşe were resumed in 1346 but relations with Aydın remained tense.

Turkish raids started again in the spring of 1347, but came to a halt after the crusaders won a naval victory over Aydın and Saruhan. Then the Black Death, which had started its devastation in the Crimea, reached the area. The plague ravaged the Mediterranean, which had already suffered severely from continuous wars and from famine caused by the economic crisis. Thus, in 1348 both the Venetians and the Turks faced similar difficulties and were more or less forced to negotiate and make peace. Although in 1348 the members of the Sancta Unio and Aydın agreed to a truce, a final peace treaty was never formally concluded.

⁷ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 29-40; idem, *Holy War*, 214; İnalcık, *Maritime Principalities*, 192; Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, I, 538-539; Setton, *op. cit.*, I, 182; Laiou, *art. cit.*, 387-392; and Turan, *İlişkileri*, 141-188. On Aydın see Lemerle, *Aydın*, 89-115; and Akin, *Aydın*, 38-42.

Meanwhile relations with Menteşe deteriorated and by 1350 both the Turks of Aydın and Menteşe launched new raids. Negotiations to reinforce the Sancta Unio were undertaken, but the Sancta Unio was dissolved soon after the Venetian-Genoese conflict had reached the stage of open warfare (1351). Crete reopened negotiations with Aydın and Menteşe, and in 1352 a preliminary agreement with Aydın was reached. In 1353 this preliminary settlement was replaced by a new treaty. In the same year the Cretans also succeeded in reestablishing friendly relations with Menteşe by way of a new treaty. In 1355 the war with Genoa came to an end and the Venetians were now able to negotiate with the Turks from a much stronger position than before. The treaties of 1353 were apparently no longer in force and Turkish raids had started again. Diplomatic missions were dispatched but they did not achieve results. By 1357 contacts were cut off and Venice found herself in a war against the Turks. In 1358, while the Christian powers were still negotiating joint action against the Turks, the Venetian administration of Crete succeeded in concluding a new treaty with the emir of Aydın. Negotiating a new treaty with Menteşe turned out to be a bigger problem, since the emir did not really wish to establish peaceful relations. A new agreement was only reached in 1359 after long negotiations.⁸

For the next ten years Venice's relations with Aydın, as well as with Menteşe, are obscure. The Ottomans, the new emerging Turkish power in the region, started to attract the attention of the Christian powers, including Venice. It was during these years that the Venetians entered into more frequent and regular contacts with the Ottomans. In 1368 new problems arose between the Venetians and Aydın making this emirate once again the focus of Venetian attentions. The conflicts were resolved and a peace settlement agreed upon in September 1370. But soon after the conclusion of the treaty, relations were disrupted once again due to new conflicts.

The danger of war with Genoa, however, forced the Venetians to reestablish peaceful relations with both Aydın and Menteşe as soon as possible. Peace with Aydın was apparently restored, and in 1375 a new treaty

⁸ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 41-62; idem, *Holy War*, 214-215; İnalçık, *Maritime Principalities*, 195-201; Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, I, 539-546; F. Thiriet, 'Les relations entre la Crète et les émirats turcs d'Asie Mineure', *Actes du XII^e Congrès Internationale d'Études Byzantines*, 3 vols., Beograd 1964, II, 213-221 (Thiriet, *Relations*); Wittek, *Mentesche*, 70-71; Akin, *Aydın*, 38-55; and Turan, *İlişkileri*, 141-188. On the negotiations and preparations for the crusade of 1344, the conquest of Smyrna and the truce of 1348 see Setton, *op. cit.*, I, 182-223. On Aydın under Umur, its naval organization and (religiously inspired) expansion policy see İnalçık, *Maritime Principalities*, 204-217; Zachariadou, *Holy War*, 215-225; Lemerle, *Aydın*, 116-246; and Akin, *Aydın*, 38-50.

with Menteşe was concluded. From that time onwards relations between Venice and the emirates of Aydın and Menteşe remained friendly, despite occasional conflicts. In the winter of 1389-1390 the new Ottoman ruler Bayezid I, who wanted to unite Anatolia under his own rule, annexed Aydın and Menteşe. Thereupon, the Venetians, eager to protect their commercial interests in the former emirates, turned to the Ottomans for confirmation of the commercial privileges, which had been conceded by the independent rulers of Aydın and Menteşe. Venice sent an ambassador, Francesco Quirini, and in 1390 Bayezid I renewed the treaties. The Venetians were given permission to trade in all territories belonging to the Ottoman emirate. From this time on Venetian trade with the coastal area of western Anatolia depended largely on maintaining good relations with the Ottomans. Only for a relatively short period after the Ottoman defeat at Ankara (1402) did the Venetians have to negotiate for the renewal of commercial relations with the emirates of Aydın and Menteşe whose *begs* Timur had restored to power.

In 1403 the Venetians reached an agreement with the Beg of Menteşe. The situation in Aydın, however, was very confusing at that time. The Aydın oglis were expelled from their emirate by Cüneyd, the son of an Ottoman *subaşı* of İzmir. The Aydın oglis assisted by the Turks of Menteşe (both were supported by Bayezid's son Mehmed Çelebi) succeeded in reconquering most of the emirate, while Cüneyd (supported by another son of Bayezid, Süleyman Çelebi) was able to retain control of İzmir. However, in the winter of 1405-1406 Cüneyd retook Aydın and declared himself independent. Süleyman Çelebi now attacked Cüneyd and, having defeated him, appointed a new Ottoman governor in Aydın. During this turmoil the Venetians tried to secure their interests in Menteşe. In June 1407 they concluded a new treaty, which was a renewal of that of 1403. On the other hand, they abstained from concluding treaties with either the Aydın oglis or Cüneyd because they did not want to jeopardize their good relations with the Ottoman prince Süleyman Çelebi. But the turmoil was still not over: once again Cüneyd managed to establish himself as an independent ruler in Aydın, and the Venetians, to protect their interests in Menteşe, tried to obtain another reconfirmation of the treaty. An agreement was reached in the winter of 1409-1410. However, soon after this the emirs of Aydın and Menteşe once again began raiding Venetian territories.

In 1414, however, the emirs of Aydın and Menteşe recognized Ottoman suzerainty and consequently the Venetians sent an ambassador to the Ottoman *beg* to negotiate the renewal of their commercial privileges in Aydın and Menteşe. The negotiations resulted in a renewal of their commercial

privileges in these former independent begliks. From then on Venetian commercial privileges in the area were exclusively negotiated with the Ottoman sultans.⁹

⁹ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 63-89; idem, *Holy War*, 215; Heyd, *Histoire du commerce*, II, 351-354; Wittek, *Mentesche*, 71-102; S. Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, 10 vols. Venezia 1853-1861, IV, 70; Turan, *İlişkileri*, 141-188; and M. Manoussacas, 'Un poeta cretese ambasciatore di Venezia a Tunisi e presso i Turchi: Leonardo Dallaporta e i suoi componimenti poetici', A. Pertusi (ed.), *Venezia e l'Oriente fra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, Firenze 1966, 283-307, 296-299. For a detailed account of Quirini's mission see M. Silberschmidt, *Das orientalische Problem zur Zeit der Entstehung des türkischen Reiches nach venezianischen Quellen. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Beziehungen zu Sultan Bajezid I., zu Byzanz, Ungarn und Genua und zum Reiche von Kiptschak (1382-1400)*, Hildesheim 1972 (ed. princ. Leipzig-Berlin 1923), 55-64 and 83 (Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance. Herausgegeben von Walter Goetz. Band 27); Akin, *Aydın*, 55-82; and A. Fabris, 'From Adrianople to Constantinople: Venetian-Ottoman Diplomatic Missions, 1360-1453', *Mediterranean Historical Review*, VII, 1992, no. 2, 154-200, 162-163 (Fabris, *Adrianople*). On the province of Menteşe under Ottoman rule see Wittek, *Mentesche*, 103-110. On the province of Aydın under Ottoman rule see Akin, *Aydın*, 83-90.