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Storm Warnings in the Straits: Russian-Ottoman Trade Issues

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Russian envoys in the Ottoman capital routinely raised storm warnings over commerce and other contentious points in Russian-Ottoman relations. Trade formed part of the “precarious balance” between conflict and negotiation, as the two adjacent empires competed for lands, peoples and resources along porous frontiers and engaged in risky but profitable commercial exchange.¹ Archival documents from the Russian embassy in Constantinople provide telling detail and firsthand commentary on trade issues, contested borders and related concerns in Russian-Ottoman affairs of the early 19th century. These sources not only indicate the variety of interests that shaped Russian policy in the eastern Mediterranean but highlight some of the underlying tensions that generated friction in the Russian-Ottoman relationship. Moreover, these records attest to Russia’s maritime presence in the Ottoman Levant and to the important but largely neglected facet of trade in the European rivalries that fueled the Eastern Question.

Commerce became a crucial component of Russian involvement in the Eastern Question after the landmark Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji (1774), when Russia received the right of merchant shipping in the Black Sea and in other areas of the Ottoman Empire, along with the right to establish consulates anywhere in the Ottoman realm. Subsequent accords with the Sublime Porte, such as the Treaty of Commerce (1783), the Treaty of Jassy (1792) and the Treaty of Bucharest (1812), reaffirmed these trade and consular concessions. The opening of the Black Sea to merchant navigation stimulated the economic growth of the Russian South, the export of grains and other commodities via seaports like Odessa and the development of a Russian merchant marine in the Euxine, the Levant and the wider Mediterranean.² Economic profit thus joined strategic, military, diplomatic and religious considerations in defining Russian interests in the Near East and in shaping tsarist policy toward the Ottoman Empire.³

Primary sources, both published and unpublished, offer the best way to examine Russia's trade activity in Ottoman waters from the Black Sea to the Levant. Archival and manuscript holdings, in particular Moscow's Archive of

Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire (AVPRI), contain an extensive array of resources on Russia's contacts and connections with the Ottoman Empire, including trade.⁴ Russian scholars have made excellent use of AVPRI in their studies on tsarist policies and interests in the Balkans, Greece and the wider Ottoman world and one hopes that they, along with scholars from Greece, Turkey, Britain and North America, will continue to mine these sources for scholarly work on particular topics. For instance, a recent publication of AVPRI materials on Russia's activities in Ottoman Palestine in the late 19th and early 20th centuries demonstrates the value of identifying documents on a specific theme or issue and making them readily available for scholarly research.⁵

A broad selection of AVPRI records can be found in the *Foreign Policy of Russia (VPR)*, a treasure trove of sixteen massive tomes covering the first three decades of the 19th century.⁶ To be sure, Russian and Western historians of tsarist policy in the Near East and the Balkans have tapped some of the relevant sources in this rich compendium, but overall *VPR* remains a neglected resource and my research exemplifies the discovery or rediscovery of rare items in this published collection. The careful scholar interested in Russian commerce in the Black Sea and the Levant can glean countless details from *VPR*'s position papers, memoranda, diplomatic correspondence and consular reports, materials that warrant scrutiny for the study of Russian, Ottoman, Mediterranean and Balkan history. The *VPR* documents introduced here deserve a wider audience not just because they provide a Russian perspective on trade disputes in the Ottoman Levant but because they remind scholars and students alike of the wealth of information on merchant shipping, border issues and related topics in the multi-volume *VPR*.

Russia's Black Sea and Mediterranean merchant marine relied on captains and sailors of Greek and Italian descent who operated Russian-flagged vessels and who often worked for merchants and ship-owners, also of Greek and Italian origins, residing in Odessa, Kherson, Taganrog, Nikolaev and other Black Sea ports. Consuls of Greek, Italian, French and Balkan descent staffed most of Russia's consular offices in the Ottoman Empire. Their knowledge of Italian, French and Greek, the main languages of exchange in the Levant, and their familiarity with Ottoman society and institutions made these consular appointees potentially useful as intermediaries with Ottoman officials and as conduits of trade and other information for the tsarist embassy in Constantinople and the Foreign Ministry in St. Petersburg.⁷

Yet Russian commercial and consular affairs in the Levant faced perils, such as piracy in Ottoman waters, Russo-Turkish wars and Ottoman violations of treaty accords. Trade problems also stemmed from the notorious capitulations — privileges and concessions awarded to subjects of Russia and other European states which had treaty contracts with the Sublime Porte. Russian subjects who traveled, traded and resided in the Ottoman Empire enjoyed various capitulations: unrestricted trade and navigation, reduced customs duties, immunity from Ottoman laws, exemption from Ottoman taxes, consular protection and guarantees of personal security. While these concessions were not always observed by sultans, nor automatically binding on regional and port authorities, they were often manipulated by European states to advance strategic and commercial interests.⁸

Russia's envoys and consuls, like their European counterparts, distributed *berats* (patents of protection) to Ottoman subjects, who henceforth had capitulatory protection in return for performing useful services in trade, shipping and diplomacy. Protégés or *beratlis* (holders or owners of *berats*), drawn mainly from the *reaya*, the sultan's Christian subjects, enjoyed capitulatory benefits as interpreters, sailors and ship captains for tsarist Russia and proved crucial in the transactions of Russian traders in the Ottoman Empire.⁹ Moreover, at least some of these *reaya* mariners and navigators in Russian service benefited from the traffic in counterfeit ship titles. This fraudulent practice enabled Ottoman sailors and captains to hoist the Russian flag on vessels that, although registered as Russian property, were in fact owned and operated by Ottoman subjects, many of them Greeks from the seafaring islands of Chios, Hydra, Psara and Spetsae.¹⁰ They enjoyed protégé status, while their employers in Black Sea ports had access to additional ships for transporting goods to and from Smyrna, Constantinople, Odessa and other trade centers.

Ottoman officials sought to curtail abuses of the capitulatory system by limiting the Russian flag to strictly Russian ships, namely, those carriers owned and operated by bona fide Russian subjects, and by reducing the number of *reaya* in Russian service. Ottoman authorities threatened to seize cargoes from vessels suspected of flying the Russian flag under false pretense and to apprehend *reaya* sailors and captains posing as Russian subjects.¹¹ Ottoman inspections of crews and occasional seizures of cargoes, along with the imposition of extra customs dues, interfered with Russia's right of unimpeded merchant navigation. The Porte also breached treaty agreements by evading prompt restitution to shippers and

traders whose vessels suffered damages or fell prey to piracy in Ottoman waters. Furthermore, the Porte did not always honor treaty rights that allowed Russia to set up consulates anywhere in the Ottoman Empire deemed necessary for trade. Russia's envoys and staff posted to the diplomatic mission in Constantinople complained about these unresolved trade and consular issues in dispatches to the St. Petersburg Foreign Ministry and in memoranda to the Porte.¹²

After the Congress of Vienna (1814-15) tsarist policy in the Near East sought to maintain cordial ties with the Porte and to uphold existing treaties. Directives from the Foreign Ministry instructed Russia's new envoy in Constantinople, Grigorii A. Stroganov, to act prudently in urging the Porte's compliance with treaty provisos and in resolving trade and other disagreements.¹³ Stroganov, however, faced an arduous task due to ongoing abuses of the capitulatory system and the Porte's ensuing actions to restrict Russian shipping. While he performed his duties with restraint, endeavoring to abide by Foreign Ministry guidelines, he ardently defended Russia's treaty rights regarding commerce and consulates during his ambassadorship from 1816 to 1821.

In a lengthy memorandum to the Ottoman government in December 1816, Stroganov set forth a series of grievances that undermined the spirit of peace, cooperation and reciprocity between Russia and Turkey.¹⁴ He described numerous violations of Russian-Ottoman treaty articles by Ottoman officials, assigning ultimate responsibility for these transgressions to the Porte. In four appendices to this document, the envoy detailed the extent of damages to Russian merchant shipping, enumerating ship and cargo seizures by Ottoman officials, excessive customs charges and other losses in the Dardanelles, the Danube, the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁵ He cited the names of confiscated and detained vessels; the names of ship captains; the amounts of monetary damages; the dates of previous (and unfulfilled) requests for Ottoman restitution; and the specific places where piracy and other abuses took place — the Straits, Istanbul, Sinop, Smyrna, Aleppo, the Morea, Crete, Samos, Tenedos, Chios and Cyprus.

These details help us understand the perils as well as the personnel of Russian trade networks in the Levant. The Greek, Italian and Russian names of Russian-flagged vessels and of ship captains, sailors and traders in Russia's fluid merchant marine underscore the difficulty of identifying bona fide Russian subjects and protégés who enjoyed capitulatory protection. The trade of Russia and other European states in the Ottoman East relied on a variegated stock of *reaya*, an amorphous lot whose members may or may not have been protégés of

European powers. Greeks, Italians, Levantines, Turks and others sold their skills as agents, brokers, shippers, sailors and interpreters. They negotiated contested frontiers and diversified the social and ethnic composition of European commercial intermediaries in the Ottoman world.

An anonymous report of December 1816, written most likely by an official in the Russian embassy, perhaps by envoy Stroganov himself since it echoes some of the problems he discussed in the above-cited memorandum, makes the case for the establishment of a Russian consulate-general in the Ottoman capital, an office that would devote itself solely to commercial transactions.¹⁶ Without consular protection, the memorandum claimed, traders and sailors “depend utterly and entirely on the arbitrariness of local authorities and port officials and as a result incur huge losses Nowhere is the protection of a consul so necessary as in Turkey, for nowhere [else] do minor governmental officials utilize their full authority and wield it so despotically.” Many European states, both large and small, maintained consuls in the principal ports of the Ottoman Empire and “without [consuls], by general acknowledgement, it would be absolutely impossible for any country to conduct trade.”

In Europe's major maritime centers — St. Petersburg, London, Stockholm, Lisbon, Naples, Genoa and Venice — foreign states had established not just embassies for diplomatic relations with host countries but in most cases consular offices that dealt exclusively with commerce. In Constantinople, where diplomatic envoys guaranteed the personal security and the property of their countries' merchants and sailors, consulates proved essential for expediting the mundane details associated with trade, such as the payment of customs dues, the unrestricted buying and selling of goods, the departure of vessels without delays and rulings on trade disputes. While other European states traded directly with ports situated throughout the Levant, Russian commerce in the region required passage through the Straits; indeed, the Ottoman capital, strategically perched on this vital commercial highway, remained “the key to southern Russia's maritime trade not only with the ports of the Ottoman Empire but with the entire Mediterranean.” The founding of a Russian consulate-general in Istanbul would relieve the envoy of the onerous task of overseeing all the routine particulars associated with commerce, “the nature of which can sometimes lower” his dignity and rank.

More crucially, a consulate would advance Russia's trade interests, especially if the new post were entrusted to someone “well versed in commercial

affairs who knows Turkey well and who has command of Turkish, Greek, and even French and Italian, in addition to Russian.” While an envoy usually conducted diplomatic negotiations with the help of a *dragoman* or interpreter, commercial transactions required immediate action and could not afford delays necessitated by a consul who, “knowing only his native language has to rely entirely on interpreters. Moreover, it is generally known that in important trade affairs the Turks regard a consul with great respect,” considering him an official of almost equal rank as an ambassador, whereas they viewed a *dragoman* as a mere translator. Thus, a consul with requisite language skills would be able to expedite commercial affairs in a timely, efficient manner.

Stroganov's blunt note to the Porte in December 1818 condemned “the deplorable affair” of a Russian flag “torn to pieces in the [Ottoman] capital itself.”¹⁷ This insult, “having occurred in broad daylight, in the presence of hundreds of ships of various countries,” demanded an official and public apology from the Porte, all the more so since the actual culprits unjustly accused innocent Russian sailors. Based on the Russian embassy's own inquiry into the matter, Stroganov reported what happened in the port of Constantinople.

“Turkish boatmen, incited to attack by the shouts of one of their friends, climbed aboard the Russian ship ‘Leonidas,’ whose entire crew, hoisting the [Russian] flag as a symbol of sacred inviolability, sought shelter on nearby vessels.” The assailants “trampled upon the flag” and “tore it to pieces with their boat hooks.” In retaliation, crews from several nearby ships threw logs at the Turkish sailors, “inflicting injuries to three or four of them.” Only with the arrival of the local police guard did the crowd disperse, “taking with them the shreds of [our] flag. A man who seized the largest piece is well known; he is the same boatman who was the chief instigator of the outrage that was perpetrated.” The facts of the case, including eyewitness testimony from ship captains, prompted Stroganov's appeal to the Porte to acquit the sailors from the “Leonidas,” who were in no way responsible for an incident provoked by Ottoman subjects. The envoy protested the Porte's decision to try the Russian seamen in an Ottoman court, contending that “if they were actually guilty, they would have already been judged and punished in accordance with the treaties,” a reference to the swift and strict justice rendered by the Russian embassy to Russian subjects accused of actions that violated Russian-Ottoman agreements.

Although Stroganov argued that the feud involving the sailors should be resolved according to treaty provisions, the insult to Russia's flag required a

different Ottoman reply. “Quite otherwise is the matter of the outrage committed against the Russian flag in the very port of Constantinople in the presence of the government. What then must occur in distant provinces!” It was precisely this affront to Russia's national honor in the heart of Constantinople that compelled the envoy to request amends from the Porte. “The right of hospitality, due respect for the flag of a friendly neighboring government, the sanctity of treaties — all were violated by the unbridled audacity of the Turkish boatmen, and this invariably makes their outrage inexcusable and unprecedented.” On behalf of the tsarist government, Stroganov demanded punishment of the guilty party and expressed hope “that the consequences of such a serious incident will not damage the ties of sincere friendship between both [our] governments.”

Returning to the episode of the “Leonidas” in a lengthy diplomatic note submitted to the Porte in January 1819, the ambassador vented his dismay not just at “the insult inflicted on the Russian flag in broad daylight in the very port” of Constantinople but at the Ottoman regime's denial of the facts of the case as presented by the Russian embassy.¹⁸ If abuses of power “took place and went completely unpunished” in the capital itself, “what can one think about the excesses committed in other parts of Turkey!” By “other parts of Turkey,” Stroganov alluded to another contested issue in Russian-Turkish relations: Russian-Ottoman frontiers near the Kuban, Abkhazia and Kars fell prey to attacks by Circassians and other bandits who captured Russian subjects, livestock and property and who sold Russian captives into slavery. Indeed, the envoy continued,

nothing is sacred for Asiatic tribes which have the audacity to abduct our subjects directly from their peaceful dwellings and to reduce them to a mere commodity for trading, conducted under the open protection of *pashas*. Many Russians languish in slavery in Anatolia. Based on the latest dispatches of the commander-in-chief in Georgia, even a Cossack sentry was subjected to the threat of being driven into slavery. Our trade and our navigation not only fail to receive assistance, which runs counter to existing treaties, but too often are exposed to constraints, and our complaints regarding this [matter] have not been satisfied¹⁹

Did such a state of affairs, Stroganov concluded, really provide a valid basis for the peace and neighborliness that supposedly bound the Russian and Ottoman governments?

In a dispatch of January 1819 to Foreign Minister Nessel'rode, Stroganov conveyed concern over intensifying Ottoman complaints about Ottoman Christian subjects, or *reaya*, who illegally used the Russian flag on their merchant vessels.²⁰ “The Porte, becoming bolder every day, raised this question in a resolute manner and in such a defiant tone that it is impossible not to expect serious consequences.” The *reis efendi*, or Ottoman foreign secretary, wanted to punish a Russian captain accused of smuggling during his purchase of barley, insisting that the culprit fell to Ottoman jurisdiction as an Ottoman subject. Stroganov pledged to return the barley and to punish the guilty party, provided the inquiry he ordered established that a misdemeanor had been committed. The envoy stretched the facts to accommodate his claims, stating that “all ships which fly the flag of the Russian Empire belong without question to Russian merchants and if a captain in their service [belongs to the] *reaya* or is a foreigner, then this circumstance in no way alters ... the exclusive jurisdiction of the Russian [diplomatic] mission over everything that pertains to these ships.”

Two days after Stroganov discussed the smuggling incident with the Ottoman foreign secretary, the latter brought up the matter in a conference with the first *dragoman*, or interpreter, of the Russian embassy. According to *dragoman* Franchini, after first inquiring whether or not the accused captain had been punished, the *reis efendi* “then sharply criticized Russia's protection of the Greeks.”

In accordance with [Russian-Ottoman] treaties ... Turkish officials cannot subject to inspection the goods on board Russian ships; they must be satisfied with the declarations presented to them. It is another matter regarding the sailors; all of those who turn out to be *reaya* must be made to disembark on shore. All the inhabitants of the Archipelago have become Russians, [and] we have no more *reaya* left. Persons who are *reaya* travel to Russia, return with passports after several months, and from then on are considered subjects of the Imperial [Russian] court. We do not understand this [practice]. The envoy told me that there are ships belonging to Russia and commanded by *reaya* or persons of foreign nationality. If other

governments permit this [practice], then the Porte in no way can agree with it. Our *reaya* have learned to complete fictitious transactions, but we will not tolerate this. Convey to the envoy that all this must stop; otherwise [our] government will be forced to take appropriate measures.²¹

Stroganov rejected the Ottoman reproach that Russian officials participated in or facilitated fraudulent arrangements allowing *reaya* to sail under the protection of the Russian flag. The Russian mission “does not engage and will never engage in complicity. If Greeks, who try with all their means to make use of Russian protection, succeed in reaching agreements with individual traders, then they always apply to foreign offices to register these transactions, and we accept them only after the presentation of indisputable documents, drawn up according to all the regulations.” Ottoman complaints, the envoy argued, sought “to weaken the trust in us on the part of the Greeks” and to counter Russia's many claims by simply demonstrating that “we have violated one of the agreed upon treaty obligations” He voiced alarm that Ottoman objections might result in a decision “to subject [even] our smallest boats to inspection and to disembark all [captains and crew] who appear to be *reaya*, [actions] which would strike a very substantial blow to our honor as well as to our influence and our trade.” Stroganov predictably insisted that Russia's mission had conducted itself in strict accordance with treaty agreements and that Ottoman officials would never succeed in proving their charges about crooked transactions; “but they have the absolute right to inspect those vessels which they threaten, always convinced they will find *reaya* on board our ships.”

Protests about *reaya* who illegally flew the Russian flag invariably raised wider concerns about tsarist strategy in the Near East, including Russia's rivalry with Britain. The envoy correctly asserted that Russia's “magnanimous protection” of the Greeks “must undoubtedly be subordinate to the higher interests” of the Russian state. “Yet the Greeks have already become accustomed to this protection, regarding it as their only consolation and only hope. England looks upon these feelings with the utmost envy; her constant insinuations undoubtedly incite the discontent of the Turks all the more in this matter.”²² England's “perfidious policy will not fail to exploit the first favorable circumstance” in order to supplant Russian influence in the Archipelago.

British-induced Ottoman restrictions against Russian shipping posed a direct threat to Russia's interests in the Mediterranean. "If severe regulations were to deprive *reaya* of all means and pretexts to use our privileges," not only would trade suffer but Russia's merchant fleet would be hurt as well. Black Sea ports such as Odessa may have been "flourishing" according to Stroganov, but he fully acknowledged the shortage of Russian sailors and captains in the country's expanding Black Sea merchant marine; indeed, only a few of these vessels were actually "equipped and staffed with our subjects." Stroganov thus admitted that most of the ship captains and sailors who served on Russian-flagged vessels comprised either seafaring *reaya* or other foreign nationals with maritime experience. "Our shortage of sailors is so great that in 1812-13 we had to rescind for a short time the regulation that two thirds of the crew on each ship under our flag must consist of Russians."²³ Even when Russia strictly observed this regulation, Ottoman inspections of ships passing through the Straits caused delays and problems. If Ottoman investigations found only ten or fewer *reaya* on board ship, these small numbers sufficed for Ottoman authorities "to display their unfriendliness, to kick up a storm, and to demand debarkations." Such were the controls the Porte now endeavored to impose on Russian trade.

In a note of January 1819, Stroganov reminded the Porte of its own repeated declarations that treaties represented inviolable contracts.²⁴ The envoy cited the capitulations as necessary for the protection of Russian and other foreign nationals in the Ottoman realm, a land he described as vastly different from European Christian countries in matters of religion, law and custom. "Treaties with Turkey contain special privileges and rights which must be observed, even if they are onerous for one of the sides" A treaty symbolized a bond "as sacred as a monarch's word," and European envoys in Constantinople had the duty to safeguard capitulations, "treaty privileges that protected" the subjects of European states who resided or traded in the Ottoman Empire. Underscoring the need to maintain cordial ties between Russia and Turkey, Stroganov requested an end to abuses which infringed upon both the personal security of Russian subjects and the duties of the Russian mission on behalf of those subjects.

Consular postings proved to be another contentious issue in Russian-Ottoman relations. Stroganov's note of October 1819 objected to the Porte's repeated delays in granting the necessary documents (*berats* and *firmons*) for certifying Russian consular appointments in Moldavia, Wallachia and Athens.²⁵ Both the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji and the Treaty of Commerce had provisions

giving Russia the indisputable right “to appoint, according to its own discretion, consuls anywhere in the Ottoman Empire ...; to determine their authority and appropriate range of duties; [and] to prescribe the extent of [their] responsibility.” This right, the envoy stated, “stems from the very treaties which ... the reigning sultan of today has promised to observe.”²⁶ Stroganov called on the Porte to issue the requisite certificates as soon as possible.

The Eastern crisis of the 1820s exacerbated Russian-Ottoman discord over commerce and consulates. The outbreak of the Greek revolt, naval clashes between Ottoman and Greek forces and Russia's claim to protect Orthodox Christians disrupted trade traffic and threatened the economic well-being of Odessa and other Black Sea ports. The Ottoman government suspected that Russian-flagged vessels transported arms and provisions to Greek rebels or were owned and operated by insurgent shippers from Hydra, Psara and Spetsae.²⁷ Ottoman confiscations of grain exports from Russian ships, combined with dwindling numbers of Ottoman vessels entering Black Sea markets, eroded the profits of more than a few Odessa merchants and ship-owners. Indeed, one of these businessmen filed a formal complaint with Foreign Minister Nessel'role in 1823, declaring that two of his ships failed to secure the requisite Ottoman permission to sail the Straits.²⁸ Other documents substantiate the dangers and risks of trade during the Eastern crisis and the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29.²⁹

Russian archival records, published and unpublished, remain invaluable for researching Russian trade in the Straits and across other contested frontiers in the Ottoman Empire. A more complete understanding of this topic depends on the collaborative efforts of multiple scholars examining multiple sources in French, British, Greek, Italian and Turkish archives and libraries. Ottoman documents in particular offer indispensable leads for the study of commerce in the Levant, and it is hoped that more of these records will become accessible to a wider public and that Turkish and non-Turkish Ottomanists will continue to mine these sources in their research. Additional findings from other collections will no doubt balance the Russian perspective presented in this article.

Russian commerce in the Ottoman Levant forms an integral part of the Eastern Question rivalry that entangled European powers in a quest for profit and leverage in the Ottoman Empire. Russian trade also belongs to Mediterranean maritime history, a field of inquiry encompassing not just naval affairs and piracy but the economic, commercial, social and cultural experience of those communities affected, directly or indirectly, by the Mediterranean.³⁰ The Straits

not only intersect the Black Sea and the Aegean Archipelago but connect the histories of the lands and peoples influenced by these bodies of water; the Straits also feature prominently in the exchanges and disputes that characterized Russian-Ottoman relations. Ships and cargoes, mariners and merchandise, consular offices and commercial treaties, ports and harbors, customs and quarantine facilities: these topics in Russian-Ottoman maritime interactions continue to attract attention from scholars worldwide who draw upon published and unpublished records. The scrutiny and publication of these widely dispersed documents requires the concerted cooperation of Russian, Ottoman and other specialists willing to share their findings in a timely manner.

Notes

1. Alan Fisher, *A Precarious Balance: Conflict, Trade, and Diplomacy on the Russian-Ottoman Frontier* (Istanbul: Isis, 1999).

2. On the economic consequences of Russia's participation in Black Sea commerce after 1774, see Elena I. Druzhinina, *Iuzhnaia Ukraina v 1800-1825 gg.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1970); *idem*, *Severnoe prichernomor'e v 1775-1800 gg.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1959); Patricia Herlihy, *Odessa: A History, 1794-1914* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986); *idem*, "Russian Wheat and the Port of Livorno, 1794-1865," *Journal of European Economic History* 5, no. 1 (1976): 45-68.

3. Russia's interests in the Eastern Question are discussed in Matthew S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1966); Vladimir A. Georgiev *et al.*, *Vostochnyi vopros vo vneshnei politike Rossii: konets XVIII-nachalo XX v.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1978); A.L. Macfie, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923* (New York: Longman, rev. ed., 1996)

4. For an introduction to AVPRI's resources on all aspects of tsarist foreign policy, see I.V. Budnik, ed., *Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Imperii: Putevoditel'* (Minneapolis: East View Publications, Inc., 1995). On AVPRI holdings on Russian trade and consular diplomacy in the Ottoman Empire, see Theophilus C. Prousis, "Archival Gleanings on Russian Trade and Consulates in the Near East," *Balkanistica* 17 (2004): 67-78; *idem* "A Guide to AVPRI Materials on Russian Consuls and Commerce in the Near East," *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook* 16/17 (2000/2001): 513-36.

5. Nikolai N. Lisovoi, ed., *Rossia v Sviatoi Zemle. Dokumenty i materialy*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 2000). Russian scholars who have written on Russian-Ottoman

topics with the help of AVPRI sources include Grigorii L. Arsh, Irina S. Dostian, Anatolii V. Fadeev, Vitalii I. Sheremet, Avgusta M. Stanislavskaia and Vladlen N. Vinogradov.

6. Ministerstvo inostrannykh del SSSR, *Vneshniaia politika Rossii XIX i nachala XX v.: Dokumenty Rossiiskogo ministerstva inostrannykh del*, 16 vols. (Moscow: Nauka, 1960-1995), hereafter cited as *VPR*. English translations of three *VPR* documents appear in Theophilus C. Prousis, "Disputes in the Dardanelles: A Report on Russo-Ottoman Relations," *East European Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (2002): 155-70; *idem*, "Russia's Position Toward Ottoman Orthodox Christians: An 1816 Instruction from the Foreign Ministry," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (2002): 331-46; *idem*, "Russian Trade Prospects in Smyrna: An 1812 Consular Report," *Balkanistica* 16 (2003): 127-38.

7. Based on AVPRI and other archives, Arsh unearthed the names of many consuls, shippers, sailors and traders in the Ottoman East who descended from Greek, French and Italian families and who entered Russian service. See Grigorii L. Arsh, *Eteristskoe dvizhenie v Rossii. Osvoboditel'naia bor'ba grecheskogo naroda v nachale XIX v. i russko-grecheskie sviazi* (Moscow: Nauka, 1970). On the major role of Greek and Italian traders, shippers, captains and sailors in Russia's commerce in the Black Sea and the Levant, also see Elena Frangakis-Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the Eighteenth Century (1700-1820)* (Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1992), 68-74, 108-14, 174-77; Vitalii I. Sheremet, "Russko-turetskaia torgovlia i balkanskie zemli (konets XVIII-pervaia polovina XIX v.)," *Balkanskie issledovaniia* 9 (1984): 74-86; Gelina Harlaftis, "The Role of the Greeks in the Black Sea Trade," in Lewis Fischer and Helge Nordvik, eds., *Shipping and Trade, 1750-1950: Essays in International Maritime Economic History* (Pontefract, West Yorkshire: Lofthouse, 1990), 63-95; Vassilis Kardasis, *Diaspora Merchants in the Black Sea: The Greeks in Southern Russia, 1775-1861* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Press, 2001), which focuses on Greek merchant houses and commercial networks and includes a good bibliography of Greek archival and published sources; Carmel Vassallo, "The Maltese Merchant Fleet and the Black Sea Grain Trade in the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of Maritime History* 13, no. 2 (2001): 19-36; Nikolai Ovcharov, *Ships and Shipping in the Black Sea: XIV-XIX Centuries*, translated by Elena Vatashka (Sofia: St. Kliment Ohridskii University, 1993).

8. On capitulations and protégés in the Ottoman Empire, and their significant impact on trade, see these recent studies which utilize both Ottoman and Western sources: Maurits H. van den Boogert, *The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System: Qadis, Consuls, and Beratlis in the 18th Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Maurits H. van den Boogert and Kate Fleet, eds., *The Ottoman Capitulations: Text and Context* (Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente, 2003), a collection of essays which originally appeared in *Oriente Moderno* 12/83, no. 3 (2003): 575-714; Alastair Hamilton, Alexander H. de Groot, and Maurits H. van den Boogert, eds., *Friends and Rivals in*

the East: Studies in Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Levant from the Seventeenth to the Early Nineteenth Century (Leiden: Brill, 2000); Feroz Ahmad, "Ottoman Perceptions of the Capitulations, 1800-1914," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 11, no. 2 (2000): 1-20; Daniel Goffman, "The Capitulations and the Question of Authority in Levantine Trade, 1600-1650," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 10 (1986): 155-61; *idem*, *Izmir and the Levantine World, 1550-1650* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990). Also see Halil Inalcik, "Imtiyāzāt" *The Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition* 3 (1971): 1179-89; Nasim Susa (Sousa), *The Capitulatory Regime of Turkey: Its History, Origin, and Nature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1933), 1-173; Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 188-95, 480-83, 517-26, 724-42, 837-42; Francis Rey, *La protection diplomatique et consulaire dans les échelles du Levant et de Barbarie* (Paris: L. Larose, 1899), 199-244.

9. Greek skippers and sailors, owing to their navigational skills and commercial know-how, comprised a sizable portion of the Ottoman as well as the Russian merchant marine. Not just Greeks but Italians, Armenians, Jews and Arab Christians played a large role in Ottoman maritime commerce. See the sections on trade in Inalcik and Quataert, eds., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, and in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, 2 vols. (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982). Also useful are Frangakis-Syrett, Elena, *The Commerce of Smyrna*, 75-118, 155-87; Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of Turkey, 1800-1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 54-73; Traian Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant," *Journal of Economic History* 20, no. 2 (1960): 234-313; Daniel Panzac, "International and Domestic Maritime Trade in the Ottoman Empire during the 18th Century," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 24 (1992): 189-206; *idem*, *Commerce et navigation dans l'Empire Ottoman au XVIIIe siècle* (Istanbul: Isis, 1996); *idem*, *Le caravane maritime: Marins européens et marchands ottomans en Méditerranée, 1680-1830* (Paris: NRS, 2004); Gelina Harlaftis and Carmel Vassallo, eds., *New Directions in Mediterranean Maritime History* (St. John's, Newfoundland: International Maritime Economic History Association, 2004), in particular the essays on Greek and Ottoman maritime history by Gelina Harlaftis, Gerassimos D. Pagratis, and Eyüp Özveren and Onur Yildirim (pp. 111-70). On the development of a Greek merchant fleet, also see George B. Leon, "The Greek Merchant Marine (1453-1850)," in Stelios A. Papadopoulos, ed., *The Greek Merchant Marine* (Athens: National Bank of Greece, 1972), 13-52; Vasilis Kremmydas, *Elliniki nautilia, 1776-1835*, 2 vols. (Athens: Istoriko Archeio, Emporiki Trapeza tis Ellados, 1985); *idem*, *Synkyria kai emporio stin propanastatiki Peloponniso, 1793-1821* (Athens: Themelio, 1980); *idem*, *To emporio tis Peloponnisou sto 18o aiona (1715-1792) (me vasi ta gallika archeia)* (Athens: Ph. *Balkanistica* 21 (2008)

Konstantinidi, 1972); Gelina Harlaftis, *A History of Greek-Owned Shipping: The Making of an International Tramp Fleet, 1830 to the Present Day* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Gelina Harlaftis and Tzelina Charlaute, *Istoria tis ellinoktitis nautilias: 19os-20os ai.* (Athens: Nepheli, 2001).

10. Rey, *La protection diplomatique et consulaire*, 266-81; Arsh, *Eteristskoe dvizhenie v Rossii*, 27-166; *idem*, “O russkoi sisteme ‘pokrovitel'stva’ i o nekotorykh ee sotsial'no-ekonomicheskikh i politicheskikh posledstviakh dlia naseleniia Balkan (konets XVIII-nachalo XIX vv.),” *Études balkaniques*, no. 2 (1975): 108-13, including information on fraudulent transfers of ship titles; Theophilus C. Prousis, *Russian-Ottoman Relations in the Levant: The Dashkov Archive* (Minneapolis: Modern Greek Studies Program, University of Minnesota, 2002), 1-8.

11. *VPR* 3 (1963): 205-08, 239-42, 273-78, 686; Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789-1807* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 177-80, 341-50; Avgusta M. Stanislavskaia, *Russko-angliiskie otnosheniia i problemy Sredizemnomor'ia (1798-1807)* (Moscow: Nauka, 1962), 433-34.

12. *VPR* 5 (1967): 464-70; *VPR* 7 (1970): 16-19, 83-86, 188-90, 198-200, 704, 726-28; *VPR* 9 (1974): 23-28, 389-93, 419-36; *VPR* 10 (1976): 626-30, 802-03.

13. *VPR* 9 (1974): 168-77, 207-12, 696-707. On tsarist policy in the Near East after the Congress of Vienna, also see Barbara Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements, 1806-1914* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 24-41; Irina S. Dostian, *Rossii i balkanskii vopros* (Moscow: Nauka, 1972), 129-95.

14. “Pamiatnaia zapiska poslannika v Konstantinopole G.A. Stroganova turetskomu pravitel'stvu” (“A memorandum from the envoy in Constantinople, G.A. Stroganov, to the Turkish government”), 2/14 December 1816. *VPR* 9 (1974): 323-36.

15. *VPR* 9 (1974): 722-29. The four appendices have been translated into English in Theophilus C. Prousis, “Risky Business: Russian Trade in the Ottoman Empire in the Early Nineteenth Century,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 20, no. 2 (2005): 201-26.

16. “Pamiatnaia zapiska o neobkhodimosti uchredit' v Konstantinopole general'nogo konsula dlia pokrovitel'stva russkoi morskoi trgovle na Iuge” (“A memorandum on the need to establish a consulate-general in Constantinople for the protection of Russian maritime trade in the South”), no later than 24 December 1816/5 January 1817. *VPR* 9 (1974): 389-93. The ensuing quotations come from this document.

17. “Nota poslannika v Konstantinopole G.A. Stroganova turetskomu pravitel'stvu” (“A note from the envoy in Constantinople, G.A. Stroganov, to the Turkish government”), 1/13 December 1818. *VPR* 10 (1976): 594-96. I quote extensively from this source in the next few paragraphs.

18. “Nota poslannika v Konstantinopole G.A. Stroganova turetskomu pravitel'stvu” (“A note from the envoy in Constantinople, G.A. Stroganov, to the Turkish government”), 8/20 January 1819. *VPR* 10 (1976): 630-37. The following quotations come from this document.

19. *Ibid.*

20. “Poslannik v Konstantinopole G.A. Stroganov upravliaiushchemu ministerstvu inostrannykh del K.V. Nessel'rode” (“The envoy in Constantinople, G.A. Stroganov, to Minister of Foreign Affairs K.V. Nessel'rode”), 2/14 January 1819. *VPR* 10 (1976): 626-29. I use this source for the ensuing passages.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. “Nota poslannika v Konstantinopole G.A. Stroganova turetskomu pravitel'stvu” (“A note from the envoy in Constantinople, G.A. Stroganov, to the Turkish government”), 26 January/7 February 1819. *VPR* 10 (1976): 652-56. Subsequent quotations come from this document.

25. “Nota poslannika v Konstantinopole G.A. Stroganova turetskomu pravitel'stvu” (“A note from the envoy in Constantinople, G.A. Stroganov, to the Turkish government”), 3/15 October 1819. *VPR* 11 (1979): 132-34.

26. *Ibid.*

27. For the Eastern crisis of the 1820s, and its impact on Russia's Black Sea trade, see Anatolii V. Fadeev, *Rossiiia i vostochnyi krizis 20-kh godov XIX veka* (Moscow: Nauka, 1958), 52-57; Theophilus C. Prousis, *Russian Society and the Greek Revolution* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1994), 26-54; Vitalii I. Sheremet, *Turtsiia i Adrianopol'skii mir 1829 goda: Iz istorii vostochnogo voprosa* (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), 7-28; Herlihy, *Odessa*, 99-101.

28. AVPRI, f. 161, II-3, op. 34, 1823, d. 1, “Ob otkaze Turetskogo pravitel'stva v firmane dvum sudam, prinadlezhashchim Odesskomu zhiteliu Iosifu Verani,” ll. 1-2.

29. AVPRI, f. 161, II-3, op. 34: 1825, d. 4, “Ob upadke torgovli v chernomorskikh portakh,” ll. 1-7, with documents from 1825 to 1827; 1828, d. 1, “O zapreshchenii vypuska za granitsu khleba po sluchaiu voiny s Turtsieiu,” ll. 1-4; 1829, d. 1, “Po prosheniiu Odesskikh i inostrannykh negotsiantov o dozvolenii im vyvoza za granitsu pshenitsy,” ll. 1-5; 1829, d. 5, “O razreshenii vyvoza iz chernomorskikh portov vsekh tovarov, kotorykh byli vospreshcheny k otpusku za granitsu po sluchaiu voiny s Turtsieiu,” l. 1.

30. For an introduction to the state of scholarship on Mediterranean maritime history, see the essays in Harlaftis and Vassallo, eds., *New Directions in Mediterranean Maritime History*.