

# Forced Population Transfers in Early Ottoman Imperial Strategy: a Comparative Approach

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## 1. Population Transfers in the Ottoman Empire, c.1356 – 1635

<b>Osman</b>	<b>(1299-1326)</b>
<b>Orhan</b>	<b>(1326-1362)</b>
Christian knights from fortresses in Rumeli to Karesi	(c.1356)
Nomadic “Kara Araplar” from Karesi to Rumeli	(c.1356)
<b>Murad I</b>	<b>(1362-1389)</b>
Mass settlement in the Balkans	
Christians from the Balkans to Anatolia and Edirne	
Nomadic “Araplar” from Saruhan (near Manisa) to Serez	(c.1385)
<b>Bayezit I</b>	<b>(1389-1402)</b>
Crimean Tatars under Aktav to Filibe	
Emptying of the İstanbul villages	
Christians from Trnova to Anatolia	(1393)
Greeks from Argos to Anatolia	(1397)
Türkmen and Tatars from Anatolia to Rumeli, near Üsküp and Tesalya	(1397)
Türkmen and Tatars under Paşayığit Bey from Saruhan to Filibe	(1400/1)
Settlement in Erzincan	(c.1401)
<b>Mehmet I</b>	<b>(1413-1421)</b>
Türkmen from Kastamonu-Amasya-Tokat-Canik area to Rumeli	
Turkish knights from Saruhan and elsewhere assigned Albania	(1415-30)
Tatars under Minnet Bey from İskilip to Konuş Hisarı, near Filibe	(1418)
<b>Murad II</b>	<b>(1421-1451)</b>
Turkish settlement of Salonica from surrounding villages	(c.1430)
Muslims from Yenice Vardar to Salonica	(c.1432)
Urban Muslims from Anatolia to Salonica	(1430-78)
<b>Mehmet II</b>	<b>(1451-1481)</b>
General transfer of Muslims, Christians, and Jews to İstanbul	(beginning 1453)
From Silivri and Galata to İstanbul	(1453)
Wealthy from Bursa to İstanbul	(c. 1453)
Jews from Salonica to İstanbul	(1453-78)
Christians from the Morea and Serbia to İstanbul villages	(1455-58)
Christians from Zante, Cephalonia, and Aya Maura to İstanbul villages	(1479)
Population of Amasra to İstanbul	(c.1458)
Learned and skilled from Edirne, Filibe, Gelibolu, and Bursa to İstanbul	(c.1459)
Greeks from the Foças, Imbros, Thasos, and Samothrace to İstanbul	(1460)
Residents, royals, notables, and skilled from Trabzon to İstanbul and Rumeli	(1461)
Muslims from north-central Anatolia to Trabzon	(beginning 1461)
Christian and Muslim knights from Albania to Trabzon	(1461-86)
Christians from Mitylene and other sites on Lesbos to İstanbul	(1462)
Population of Argos to İstanbul	(1463)
Settlement of a fort in Albania	(c.1466)
Wealthy and skilled Muslims and Armenians from Karaman region to İstanbul	(1468-74)
Yörük/Türkmen from the Taurus-Karaman region to Rumeli	(1468-74)
Greeks from Euboea to İstanbul	(1470)
Prisoners from Sivas to İstanbul	(1473)
Genoese and Armenian merchants from Kaffa to İstanbul	(1475)
Settlement of prisoners in villages near Bursa and Biga	
Men from Tire to Bayburd	
<b>Bayezit II</b>	<b>(1481-1512)</b>
Christians from Akkerman to Old Biga	(c.1484)
<i>Kızılbaş</i> from western Anatolia to the Morea	(c.1502)
Christians from Rumeli to the Yenişehir pass	
Agriculturalists from Anatolia to Silistre	
[Settlement of Bulgarian colonies near İzmir]	[late 15 <sup>th</sup> cen.]
[Christians from Sirem, Hungary to villages near Gelibolu]	[early 16 <sup>th</sup> cen.]
[Muslims from Anatolia to Serbian and Hungarian cities]	[early 16 <sup>th</sup> cen.]
[Christians to the castle of Foça in the <i>kaza</i> of Menemen]	[?]
[Christian and Muslim peasants from Trabzon to a <i>timar</i> in Rumeli]	[?]
<b>Selim I</b>	<b>(1512-1520)</b>
Merchants, artisans, scholars from Tabriz to İstanbul	(1514)
Merchants, artisans, clerics from Cairo to İstanbul	(1517)
Fishing communities from Trabzon to İstanbul	(1523-1540)
Skilled from Eastern Anatolia to Trabzon	(1523-1540)
<b>Süleyman I</b>	<b>(1520-1566)</b>
Settlement of Rhodes	(starting c.1522)
<i>Kızılbaş</i> from Anatolia to Budin, Hungary	(1565-7)
<b>Selim II</b>	<b>(1566-1574)</b>
Greek Cypriots to Antalya area	(c.1571)
Settlement of Cyprus	(starting c.1571)
<b>Murad III</b>	<b>(1574-1595)</b>
<i>Kızılbaş</i> to Cyprus	(1577-8)
<b>Mehmet III</b>	<b>(1595-1603)</b>
<b>Ahmed I</b>	<b>(1603-1617)</b>
<b>Mustafa I</b>	<b>(1617-1618)</b>
<b>Osman II</b>	<b>(1618-1622)</b>
<b>Murad IV</b>	<b>(1623-1640)</b>
Tribes from Azerbaijan to Erzincan and Pasin	(1635-6)

## Introduction

Starting with the earliest conquests in Thrace in the 1350s, the Ottoman state employed a policy of forced population transfers that over the next three centuries would transport thousands of subjects from Asia into Europe, Europe into Asia and from throughout the provinces into the great urban centers of the empire. The Ottomans were not alone in utilizing such means; within the same period massive transfers were undertaken by the Andean empire of the Inca in South America and the Ming Empire in China, shuffling men from the frontiers to the interior, from areas of wealth to areas of poverty, and concentrating human resources in the centers of imperial power. What were the goals of these transfers? How were they executed? How can we understand these moves within the larger framework of imperial strategy?

Forced population transfers, far from being the innovation of a single civilization, have been employed at many points throughout the history of human states. While these moves are something which may strike today's reader mainly as exercises of cruelty undertaken with complete disregard for the individual, they constituted a useful and deliberate tool of policy within the context of building and maintaining a state. The attempt of this essay is to understand the dynamics of forced population movement in the early Ottoman Empire within this larger process by examining the objectives, methods, and ultimate outcomes of employing such a tool.

The original conception of this project stems from a desire to understand the means by which states have historically operated in securing their place in the world.

Identifying population transfer as one of the tools in a state's arsenal, I have set out to explore its workings in a particular case, the Ottoman, with reference to a number of other examples drawn from the larger field of world history. The approach, as a result, is explicitly state-centric, a fact which places it among more traditional modes of interacting with the historical record. The exercise, I hope, may bring some insight to our understanding of a past in which states have played a prominent role in deciding the individual and collective fates of the members of our species.

The term applied to the phenomenon of population transfer in Turkish is *sürgün*, deriving from the verb *sürmek*, to drive or advance, as in to advance a piece on a game board or to drive a flock of sheep.<sup>1</sup> Such a term fits very naturally to the act of relocating a portion of humanity from one place to another. Machiavelli, for example, speaks of transferring inhabitants “from one province to another, as shepherds move their flocks from place to place.”<sup>2</sup> In the Ottoman empire, the *sürgün* became an institution of imperial policy, with the word applied as a piece of administrative terminology to individuals and communities that had been uprooted and resettled by the state.<sup>3</sup> In this essay, I have used the term *sürgün* interchangeably with forced population transfer.<sup>4</sup>

The operative definition of ‘population transfer’ employed in this essay is an instance in which a community or a piece of a community has been removed from one locale and resettled in another at the command of the central state authority. An

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<sup>1</sup> Redhouse (1922), p.1089. Aşıkpaşazade uses the term in various forms, such as in the case of the Karesi nomads: “Karasi iline göçer Arap evleri elmişti. Onları sürdüler. Rumeli'ye geçirdiler.” Aşıkpaşazade (1992), p.48. For the use of “*sürgün*” in its administrative sense, see Tapu Tahrir, no.370 in Barkan (1953-4), p.225.

<sup>2</sup> Machiavelli (1950). The Ottoman term for the subject class, *re'aya*, meaning flock in Arabic, also fits into this scheme of the state-subject relationship.

<sup>3</sup> In a general context, *sürgün* can also mean exile or banishment. A related term, *sürücü*, or one who drives, was applied to the official assigned to the rounding up of Christian youths to be put into the ranks of the state slave system (the *devşirme*).

<sup>4</sup> The Turkic subjects of the large-scale 20<sup>th</sup>-century Soviet transfers in fact employ the same term today.

additional number of themes bearing close ties to the concept of population transfer—voluntary migration and settlement, state encouraged movements, forced expulsions, military movements, enslavement, forced sedentarization, and the settlement of refugees, among others—also prove important to the treatment of the subject and some have been included at various points in the presentation and analysis of the policy.

This essay focuses on the central growth period of the Ottoman empire from the foundation of the dynasty at the dawn of the 14<sup>th</sup> century through the 16<sup>th</sup> century, what Halil İnalçık has labeled the ‘classical age’ of Ottoman history.<sup>5</sup> It is these three centuries that scholarship in Ottoman studies has identified as the heyday of the use of forced population transfer as a policy tool and for which the greatest amount of information on the subject is currently available. The body of transfers presented in the course of the first chapter and represented in the listing in the table should not be considered comprehensive in regard to all moves which occurred throughout this period - the appearance or absence of any particular move is dependent on both the proclivities of the primary source material and the approach of the body of secondary literature which treats it. No doubt there were a great many transfers undertaken in the period examined which have left little or no trace in the historical record.

The approach of this essay makes use of a number of comparative cases in the discussion of Ottoman use of population transfers. The pool from which comparisons have been drawn is mainly that of pre-modern and early modern empires or empire-like states. Some, such as the Inca and Ming, fall firmly within the traditional categorization of ‘empire’; others, such as the Afghan state of Abdur Rahman Khan (1880-1901) and the 14<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman Emirate itself, comprised somewhat smaller units which

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<sup>5</sup> İnalçık (1973), *The Ottoman Empire: The classical age, 1300-1600*, London.



nonetheless were faced with the same central questions of state formation that confronted traditionally defined empires.

The modern period, despite a wealth of events which conform to the defined phenomenon—the partitioning of India and Pakistan, the Greek-Turkish exchanges following the First World War, and the massive relocation projects undertaken throughout the Soviet Union, among others—has, for the most part, been set aside. This decision was made partly to place a limit on the already burgeoning scope of this essay and partly to limit complicating issues such as the impact of new capabilities in transport, communication, and government organization on the mass movement of peoples within and amongst states in the modern age.

Part one of this essay presents an abridged history of the use of population transfers in the Ottoman Empire, a chronology meant to introduce the reader to the subject and give it place within the larger flow of Ottoman history. Part two focuses on the elaboration and investigation of the objectives of the Ottoman transfers, making use of comparative material where appropriate. Part three treats the methods by which the transfers were enacted and some of the pitfalls encountered in the process. Part four then addresses the outcomes of the use of such transfers as a tool of imperial policy.

### sources

Our knowledge of Ottoman population transfers is revealed to us through a variety of source materials. One of the central foundations of our understanding of the phenomenon is the body of narrative histories produced by the Turkish and Greek chroniclers of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. The writing of Ottoman historical narratives in Turkish came at a strikingly late date in the development of the empire, a full century

and a half after the foundation of the ruling house; it was thus only in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century that Turkish chroniclers attempted to fill this gap, some relying on older sources now lost to us. While these accounts cannot be approached with an eye for precise chronology, they provide us with a large number of examples of population transfers which took place throughout the early phases of the state's existence. Among the most important of these writers is Aşıkpaşazade (c.1400-1490), who tenders a variety of anecdotal evidence for the relocation of population throughout the early European conquests. The history of Tursun Beğ recounts the steps taken during the repopulation of İstanbul complementing Byzantine accounts from the same period. Scholars such as Ömer Lütfi Barkan, İsmail Uzunçarşılı, and Heath Lowry have made use of additional Turkish narrative histories such as those of Naima (d. 1716), İbn Kemal (c.1468-1534), and Oruç Bey (late 15<sup>th</sup>/early 16<sup>th</sup> century), among others. Many of these chronicles (including Aşıkpaşazade) feature nearly identical or slightly divergent versions of the same events.

Byzantine chroniclers, too, provide us an excellent window onto the movement of populations throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Concerned for the fate of their cities and the lot of their fellow Greek speakers, the writers Kritovoulos of Imbros, Doukas of Phocaea, Laonicus Chalcocondyles, and George Sphranzes focus their attention on the uprooting and resettlement of manpower that accompanied the conquests and reconstruction projects undertaken in the reign of Mehmet II (1451-81).

Archival sources form the second broad category of sources from which we draw our knowledge of the Ottoman transfers. The earliest records which have been used in studies of the subject date to the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. Population registers (*tahrir defters*) of cities and provinces often indicate communities relocated from elsewhere in the

empire and, in cases in which we possess a succession of such documents over the course of several years, provide a record of the fate of these groups through time. *Mühimme defters* (outgoing correspondences of the sultan) provide us with invaluable insight into the actual implementation of moves in the form of transfer orders, exemptions, and follow-up correspondence.

### studies

There have been a number of scholarly works that, in addition to providing me with a few solid points of contact with the original source material, have addressed the subject with close analysis and insight. The definitive study of the use of *sürgün* in Ottoman history remains the series of articles published by Ömer Lütfi Barkan between the years 1949 and 1953 under the title “Population Transfers as a Method of Settlement and Colonization in the Ottoman Empire”.<sup>6</sup> Barkan presents *sürgün* as an important element in the large-scale demographic movement which underlay the establishment and growth of the empire.<sup>7</sup> In the course of the study, he draws on the Turkish narrative histories, population registers (*tahrir defters*), and the imperial decrees dealing with the execution of the moves (contained in *mühimme defters*). The scope of the study is wide, with discussion focusing on the colonization of Rhodes and Cyprus, Turkish settlement in Rumeli, the relocation of nomads, and the transfer of members of the ruling class, both Christian and Muslim.

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<sup>6</sup> Ömer Lütfi Barkan. “Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda bir iskan ve kolonizasyon methodu olarak sürgünler.” *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 11 (1949-50) pp.524-570, 13 (1951-52) pp.56-78, 15 (1953-4) pp.209-237. In addition to reproducing portions of the archival documents and narrative sources he cites in transcription, Barkan also includes a facsimile of the *sürgün hükmü* for Cyprus of 1572 and a fold-out map showing the distribution of population in the Ottoman Balkans at the start of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>7</sup> Barkan (1949-50), p.533.

Halil İnalçık, one of the most influential scholars of the early Ottoman period in the past century, has made numerous contributions to the subject of population transfer. His valuable article “Ottoman Methods of Conquest”, published in 1954, awards state deportation and emigration a significant place within the larger pattern of Ottoman expansion.<sup>8</sup> Other significant contributions of İnalçık include an article on the treatment of the Greek population and monuments of İstanbul following the conquest<sup>9</sup> and an entry on İstanbul in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*.<sup>10</sup>

Heath Lowry has made a series of important contributions to the understanding of the use of *sürgün* in the development of Ottoman urban centers throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, drawing especially on data from *tahrir defters* as well as the record of Greek and Turkish chronicles. These have included his doctoral dissertation on the post-conquest transformation of Trabzon<sup>11</sup>, an article on the population of 15<sup>th</sup>-century Salonica<sup>12</sup>, and a work which addresses the Ottoman reconstruction of the cities of Salonica, İstanbul, and Trabzon under Mehmet II.<sup>13</sup>

Suraiya Faroqhi, in her work on urban life in Anatolia, treats the settlement of Cyprus and the resettlement program of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century which attempted to repair

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<sup>8</sup> İnalçık (1954). “Ottoman Methods of Conquest.” *Studia Islamica II*. Paris. pp.104-29. See in particular pp.122-9.

<sup>9</sup> İnalçık (1969/70). “The Policy of Mehmed II Toward the Greek Population of Istanbul and the Byzantine Buildings of the City.” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23/24. Washington D.C.

<sup>10</sup> İnalçık (1978). “İstanbul.” *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. IV, pp.224-48.

<sup>11</sup> Heath Lowry (1977). *The Ottoman Tahrir Defters as a Source for Urban Demographic History: The Case Study of Trabzon (ca.1486-1583)*. Ph.D. thesis. University of California, Los Angeles.; published in 1981 in Turkish as *Trabzon Şehrinin İslamlaşma ve Türkleşmesi: 1461-1583*. Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, İstanbul.

<sup>12</sup> Lowry (1980-1). “Portrait of a City: The Population and Topography of Ottoman Selanik (Thessaloniki) in the Year 1478.”

<sup>13</sup> Lowry (1986). “From Lesser Wars to the Mightiest War’: The Ottoman Conquest and Transformation of the Early Byzantine Urban Centers in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century.” in Bryer and Lowry ed. (1986), pp.235-59.

the damage of the Celali uprisings.<sup>14</sup> Her discussion importantly calls into question the overall effectiveness of such state-directed measures.

The works of Ahmet Refik and Cengiz Orhonlu have addressed the manipulation of tribes within the empire based on a large body of archival data, including many instances of forced transfer and settlement.<sup>15</sup> Rudi Lindner, among others, has also treated the important issue of nomad-state relations in the empire without specific reference to the transfer policies.<sup>16</sup>

Further mention of *sürgün* often appears in general or introductory histories of the early Ottoman Empire. The work of İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, first published in 1947, devotes some pages and numerous references to population transfers.<sup>17</sup> Uzunçarşılı draws on much of the same body of Turkish narrative material as is explored by Barkan and provides a number of instances not included by other authors. The general histories of Stanford Shaw and, most recently, Colin Imber afford occasional mentions of population transfers as well.<sup>18</sup>

I have for the most part represented names and places from Ottoman history in their modern Turkish forms (Mehmet instead of Muhammad, Trabzon instead of Tirabuzon). The Turkish ‘ş’ is pronounced as ‘sh’, the ‘ç’ as ‘ch’, the ‘c’ as the ‘j’ as in ‘jog’,

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<sup>14</sup> Suraiya Faroqhi (1984). *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia*. Cambridge University Press. See pp.282-6.

<sup>15</sup> Ahmet Refik (1930). *Anadolu’da Türk Aşiretleri (966-1200)*. Devlet Matbaası, İstanbul; Cengiz Orhonlu (1987), *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Aşiretlerin İskânı*. Eren Yayıncılık ve Kitapçılık, İstanbul. Orhonlu focuses specifically on the settlement projects of 1691-1696. See also M. Tayyib Gökbilgin (1957). *Rumeli’de Yürükler, Tatarlar ve Evlad-ı Fatihan*. Osman Yalçın Matbaası, İstanbul.

<sup>16</sup> Rudi Lindner (1983). *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*. Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Bloomington.

<sup>17</sup> İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı (1947). *Osmanlı Tarihi*. volume 1, Türk Tarih Kurumu, İstanbul. See especially pp.170-81.

<sup>18</sup> Stanford Shaw (1976). *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; and Colin Imber (2002). *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650: The Structure of Power*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

the 'ğ' as a silent consonant which serves to lengthen the preceding vowel, the 'ı' as the 'i' in 'bird', and the 'ü' and 'ö' roughly as in German. For other languages, I have relied on the spellings contained in the secondary source material from which I have drawn.

# Part I. A Short History of Population Transfers in the Early Ottoman Empire

## Early Conquests and Expansion – Orhan to Mehmet I

Our knowledge of the use of population transfers in Ottoman history begins in the reign of Orhan (1324-1359), the son and successor of the dynasty's founder, Osman. The first two decades of Orhan's reign saw the capture of Bursa in 1321, İznik (Nicaea) in 1331, İzmit (Nicomedia) in 1337, and the consolidation of control over the southern coast of the Sea of Marmara. Ottoman involvement in Europe occurred not long after in 1345, and conquests under Orhan's son Süleyman brought the Ottoman forces deep into Thrace by the end of the 1350s.<sup>19</sup> It was in the context of these conquests that later historians begin to write of the simultaneous immigration of nomads into and the forced movement of conquered peoples out of Rumeli—the principality's holdings in the southern Balkans and Greece—which would continue in some volume over the next century.

The 14<sup>th</sup> century saw the voluntary, encouraged, and forced movements of Türkmen and Tatar tribesmen out of Anatolia into the newly conquered lands of Europe. In addition to those drawn by the material benefits of the frontier, many were specifically utilized by the state in expanding territory, holding land or fortresses, or developing the pastoral economic potential of the newly acquired lands. Two chroniclers from the 15<sup>th</sup> century relate the transfer around 1356-7 of a group of "*kara göçer arap evleri*"—dark-skinned nomadic 'Arab' households<sup>20</sup>—to Rumeli by Sultan Orhan in response to a request by his son Süleyman for comrades to assist in holding a fortress

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<sup>19</sup> Imber (2002), pp.9-13.

<sup>20</sup> İnalcık (1983), pp.247-50.

captured in Thrace and continuing the conquests. The nomads were moved across the straits from the territory of Karesi, a former rival Turkish principality lying in the far northwestern corner of Anatolia that had been annexed in the previous decade.<sup>21</sup>

Migration and settlement continued under both of Orhan's successors, Murad I (1360-1389) and Bayezit I (1389-1402). It was under Murad that direct control was established over Edirne, the greater part of Thrace, Macedonia (including Serez and Salonica), and that Bulgaria, under Tsar Shishman, was reduced to vassalage. We know specifically of a move around 1385 of a group of nomads ("*göçer Araplar*") from the Anatolian district of Saruhan—still itself a semi-independent territory—to Serez, which had been captured in the previous decade and constituted an important locale for expansion against into Serbia and Bulgaria.<sup>22</sup>

The tsardom of Bulgaria was finally destroyed by Bayezit in 1393. In the period of consolidation of control over the central Balkans which followed, Filibe (Plovdiv,



1. Transfer of Muslims to Europe, 1356-1421

<sup>21</sup> Aşıkpaşazade (1992), p.48; Barkan (1951-2), p.59, cites the history of Neşri.

<sup>22</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.67.



Philippopolis), lying on the region's strategic southern approach, became the destination for two major tribal transfers. In the first, the Crimean Tatar chieftain Aktav, driven into the Balkans by Timur's campaigns north of the Black Sea, was assigned the area surrounding Filibe along with his fellow tribesmen, many of whom turned to settled agricultural life. Aktav himself, it seems, was later executed by the sultan, who feared his growing military power on the western frontier.<sup>23</sup> The second transfer involved a group of nomads who had come into conflict with a state salt monopoly in the territory of Saruhan—now formally under direct Ottoman control—and were transferred to Filibe as a result. Relocation did not always spell isolation from political importance - the leader of this latter group, Paşayığit Bey, came to be an significant figure in the expansion of the Ottoman frontier in the Balkans.<sup>24</sup>

Bayezit also initiated the settlement of Türkmén in the areas surrounding the new capital city of Edirne<sup>25</sup>, an action which anticipated the grand urban development projects which would undertaken in Salonica, İstanbul, and Trabzon under his grandson and great grandson Murad II and Mehmet II.

Accompanying Ottoman expansion and raiding in Europe was a simultaneous flow of conquered peoples across the straits into Anatolia. Many of those arriving in Asia did so as booty. Large numbers of Christians were sent to the slave markets, either ending up in the service of the state or dispersed as personal property. The *devşirme*

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<sup>23</sup> Barkan (1953-4), pp.211-2.

<sup>24</sup> Aşıkpaşazade (1992), pp.65-6; Barkan (1951-2), pp.69-76. There seems to be some confusion among various accounts concerning Paşayığit's arrival in the Balkans. Barkan places the transfer described by Aşıkpaşazade, which seems to include Paşayığit Bey himself ("*Paşa Yeğit Beg o kavmin ulusıydı. Ol zamanda onların ile bile gelmiş idi.*") in 803/1400-1. Uzunçarşılı (1947), pp.260-1, however, places him at the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 and Shaw (1976), p.29 makes mention of his campaigns in Albania from 1393 to 1395.

<sup>25</sup> Shaw (1976), p29.

system was instituted to provide a steady stream of Christian youths, at first drawn from the body of war captives and later collected as a sort of human taxation, in order to fill the ranks of the state slave hierarchy (the *kapı kulları*) and the sultan's personal infantry, the Janissaries.

Whole communities, too, were transported from their homes in Europe into other territories held by the Ottomans in Anatolia and Thrace. Our knowledge of such transfers, unfortunately, is less specific than for migration in the reverse direction: the chroniclers often leave us guessing as to the ultimate fate of these communities—whether group settlement or dispersion—and often provide us with no more than 'Anatolia' as their destination. We have the example from the early conquests of the 1350s of a group of Christian knights evacuated from two fortresses in Thrace who were transported to the territory of Karesi, an action which was followed by the transfer in the reverse direction of the Karesi nomads mentioned above.<sup>26</sup> Doukas, too, relates the



2. Transfer of Christians to Anatolia, 1356-1401

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<sup>26</sup> Aşıkpaşazade (1992), p.47; Barkan (1951-2), p.62; Barkan also cites the texts of Neşri and Hayrullah Efendi.

transport of communities to Anatolia in the course of Murad I's (1360-89) campaigns against the Serbs.<sup>27</sup> This treatment was repeated for the populations of Tirnova in Bulgaria and Argos in the Morea following their conquest in the reign of Bayezit I (1389-1401).<sup>28</sup> The same sultan, in an act of economic warfare, evacuated the populations of the villages lying outside Byzantine Constantinople, a move which would be reversed by Mehmet II in the course of its reconstruction as the imperial capital.<sup>29</sup>

While the majority of state-directed demographic movement occurred on the Ottoman front with Christendom, the statement by Doukas that Timur, upon capturing Erzincan in 1402, "slaughtered by the sword all those who had been settled there by Bayezid," hints at some degree of colonizing manpower employed in control the eastern front as well.<sup>30</sup> Though we are given no indication of the nature of the settlement or the degree to which it was emulated elsewhere, the idea of *sürgün* in Eastern Anatolia in the 14<sup>th</sup> century is intriguing. The only parallel we may cite is the settlement of some 3,000 men from western Anatolia in Bayburt half a century later under Mehmet II.<sup>31</sup>

It was in 1402 that Timur finally brought the force of his military to bear against the Ottoman principality at the battle of Ankara, resulting in the Ottoman army's defeat and Bayezit I's capture following the unanimous desertion of the Turkish and Tatar forces of Anatolia. The battle was followed by two decades of political fragmentation in

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<sup>27</sup> Doukas (1975), p.60.

<sup>28</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.63. Barkan cites H.A. Gibbon for the conquest of Tirnova in 1393 and Joseph von Hammer for the transfer from Argos in 1397, which supposedly involved 30,000 Greeks. Barkan, citing the history of Müneccim Başı, states that the population of Ayaslona, too, shared this fate, though I have had trouble pinning down where this is or when it occurred.

<sup>29</sup> Doukas (1975), p83; for later settlement, see İnalçık (1994), pp.167-8.

<sup>30</sup> Doukas (1975), p.89. Bayezit had captured Erzincan in the previous year, Imber (2002), p.16.

<sup>31</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.64.

which power devolved onto competing princes and local actors until the eventual reconstitution of a unitary state under Mehmet I (1413-21).

During Sultan Mehmet I's reconsolidation of Ottoman control in Anatolia, Filibe once again became a destination for tribal relocation. The sultan, returning from campaigns in northern Anatolia in 1418, ordered the relocation of a large group of Tatars from İskilip to Konuş Hisarı near Filibe on the pretext, as the chroniclers relate, of their not having supported Sultan Bayezit against Timur. Their chief, Minnet Bey, and his descendents subsequently became important notables in the area and participated in the warfare of the western frontier.<sup>32</sup> Also in the context of the restoration of control, a large number of nomadic Türkmen, some in outright rebellion, were deported to Rumeli under Mehmet I from the Kastamonu-Amasya-Tokat-Canik region, an area which slipped from control several times during that period.<sup>33</sup>

The establishment of manpower in conquered areas in this period was also implemented through the allocation of territorial units to soldiers and members of the Ottoman military (*askeri*) class. Türkmen fighting under the designation of *yaya* were granted farm plots (*çiftliks*) in the conquered territories, a policy which remained functional until the effective marginalization of the group by the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>34</sup> A similar insertion occurred at the elite level with the application of the Ottoman administrative system. The assignment and subsequent transfer of a large number of Turkish knights (*sipahi*) to holdings in Albania in the first decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century served both to

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<sup>32</sup> Aşıkpaşazade (1992), pp.77-8; Barkan (1953-4), pp.209-11; Barkan also cites Oruç bey, Neşri, and Evliya Çelebi.

<sup>33</sup> İnalçık (1986), p.46; İnalçık (1994), p.34. The rebellious Çepni Türkmen of the Canik region were specifically deported to Albania.

<sup>34</sup> İnalçık (1994), pp.92-3. İnalçık states that despite substantial benefits in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the replacement of the *yaya* forces with the Janissary corps resulted in heavy burdens on the *yayas* which in turn caused a break down in the system.

deepen Ottoman control over an area of increasing importance to the front with Venice as well as to shift members of the untrustworthy Turkish aristocracies away from their traditional power bases.<sup>35</sup> We may tie these moves again to the reconstitution and extension of Ottoman power in Anatolia. Saruhan, for example, the principal source of those transferred, had been re-seized by Mehmet I from local Turkish rule in 1417, after which a Bulgarian notable was installed as governor.<sup>36</sup>

### The 15<sup>th</sup> Century – Murad II and Mehmet II

The reigns of Murad II (1421-1451) and Mehmet II (1451-1481) constituted the period in Ottoman history in which population transfers were used to their greatest extent. As rapid territorial expansion continued, a series of urban reconstruction projects were initiated utilizing the human resources gained by conquests on two fronts.

The Byzantine city of Salonica had first been gained in 1387, but was lost during the interregnum following the defeat at Ankara.<sup>37</sup> Murad II captured the city again in 1430, after which he initiated a settlement program which brought Turkish families from the surrounding villages and encouraged the return of ransomed Greeks.<sup>38</sup> Around one thousand Muslims from the Macedonian city of Yenice Vardar were transplanted to the city<sup>39</sup> as were a large number of households from the towns of western and central Anatolia, possibly later under the reign of Mehmet II.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Barkan (1953-4), pp.215-6, based on a *tahrir defter* from Arnavid-ili, 1431/2. Close to one-third of the land holders in the *sancak* were of Turkish origin, with most designated as having been transferred.

<sup>36</sup> Imber (2002), pp.20, 185.

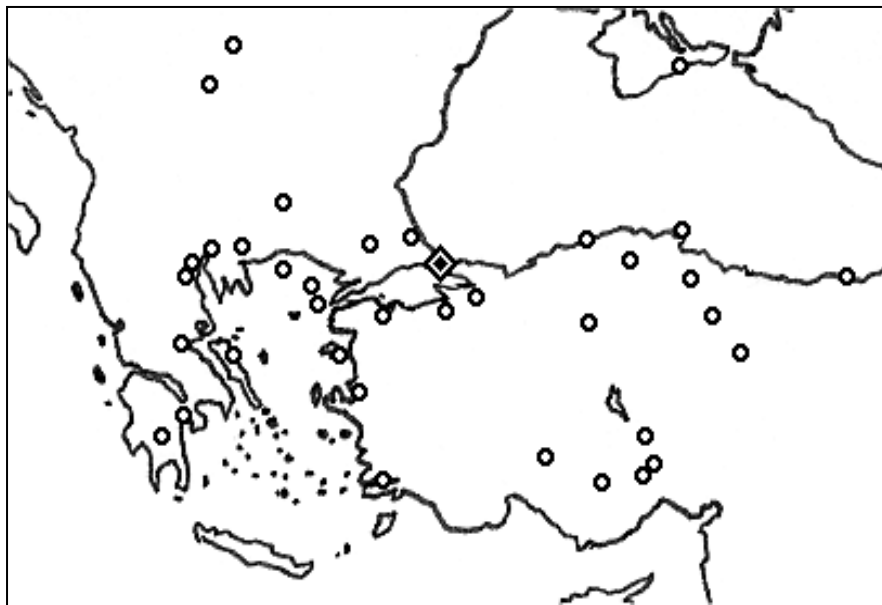
<sup>37</sup> Imber (2002), p.17.

<sup>38</sup> Doukas (1975), p.172.

<sup>39</sup> Lowry (1980-1), p.286; Aşıkpaşazade (1992), p.98; Lowry also cites the history of Agnostes.

<sup>40</sup> Lowry (1980-1), pp.286-7; Lowry (1986b), p.329. These new arrivals appear in a *mufassal tahrir defter* of 1478 registered with such names as Anadolulu, Bergamalı, Gebzeli, Kütahyalı, Karamani. The assumption is that some of these may have been transferred in the course of Mehmet II's campaigns against Karaman in central Anatolia.

Upon Mehmet II's capture of İstanbul in 1453, the sultan embarked on a vast reconstruction project to reconstitute the city as the capital and leading urban center of the empire. Among many other measures, population transfers implemented over the remainder of the sultan's reign would bring large communities of Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and Jews from many parts of Europe and Asia for permanent settlement in city.<sup>41</sup> The sultan's portion of the captives was resettled and Greeks who had fled or been captured and ransomed were encouraged to return.<sup>42</sup> A general call for voluntary immigration to the city was followed by the transfer of specific individuals and communities, particularly those who could offer specific contributions to the economic



3. Population sources for the reconstruction of İstanbul, 15<sup>th</sup> century  
source: Lowry (1986b)

<sup>41</sup> Lowry provides a useful list of the points of origin for the İstanbul transfers: ARMENIAN CHRISTIANS from Aksaray, Amasra, Bursa, Ereğli, Foca, Konya, Kaffa, Larenda, Merzifon, Niğde, Sivas, Tokat and Trabzon; GREEK CHRISTIANS from Aksaray, Amasra, Argos, Ereğli, Euboea, Imbros, Kaffa, Karaca, Konya, Larenda, the Morea, Mytilene, Samothrace, Trabzon, Thassos, and Yenice Foca; JEWS from Demetoka, Edirne, Euboea, Filibe, Ivoz, Kastamonu, Karafereye, Lamia, Niğbolu, Selanik, Sinob, Sofya, Siroz, Tırhala, and Tirnova; LATIN CHRISTIANS from Kaffa; MUSLIMS from Aksaray, Ankara, Bursa, Edirne, Ereğli, İznik, Karaman, Konya, and Larenda. Lowry (1986b), p.325.

<sup>42</sup> İnalçık (1973), p.225.

reconstruction.<sup>43</sup> In the flurry of movements which followed, three trends emerged: (1) settlers were drawn from all populations of the empire; (2) special emphasis was put on those possessing wealth, education, or trades skills; and (3) many, though not all, of the populations were drawn from areas in which there were active military campaigns.

Wealthy families were brought from Bursa<sup>44</sup> and the entire Jewish population of Salonica was transferred to İstanbul.<sup>45</sup> In the course of a series of military campaigns executed over the next three decades, the hinterland of the city was refurbished as the sultan sent large numbers of Christians from the Morea, Albania, and Serbia to settle in the 180 some villages surrounding İstanbul.<sup>46</sup> Doukas mentions the transfer of the nobility and court officials of the Morea as well;<sup>47</sup> Kritovoulos adds that the tradesmen brought from the Morea were specially selected to be settled within the city itself. He also states that the “larger and more able part” of the population of Amasra on the Black Sea, a large number of wealthy, skilled, and mercantile Armenians, and wealthy and educated Greeks residing in Edirne, Philippopolis (Filibe?), Gelibolu, and Bursa were transported to the city.<sup>48</sup> In 1460, around five years after their capture, the population of the predominantly Greek towns of New and Old Foça and the Aegean islands of Imbros, Lemnos, Thasos, and Samothrace were emptied into İstanbul as well.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), pp.93, 105; Lowry (1986b), p.330; Lowry also cites the history of Tursun Beğ.

<sup>44</sup> İnalçık (1969-70), p.237, citing a register from the *qadi* of Bursa.

<sup>45</sup> Lowry (1980-1), pp.262-4, based on *tahrir defters* from both İstanbul and Selanik. The community numbered around 50 families.

<sup>46</sup> İnalçık (1969-70), p.239; Barkan (1951-2), p.63. Campaigns in Serbia were launched in 1454, and the transfer is dated in the following year; people were deported from the Morea in 1455 and 1458, and the peninsula was fully conquered by 1460. Doukas describes the deportation to these villages of 4,000 inhabitants from a fortress near Smederevo in Serbia, Doukas (1975), p.243.

<sup>47</sup> Doukas (1975), pp.257-8.

<sup>48</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), pp.139-40, 148-9

<sup>49</sup> İnalçık (1969-70), p.238; Kritovoulos (1954), pp.148-9, 157, 159.

The conquest of Trabzon occurred in 1461. Like the Greek dynasts of the Morea, the Emperor of Trabzon, his retinue, and the notables of the city found themselves aboard a ship to İstanbul.<sup>50</sup> Like the cities of Salonica and İstanbul before it, however, the city became the object of a settlement and development project that included the relocation of Muslims from the towns of central and western Anatolia, a group which made up 78% of the city's Muslim population in the 1480s<sup>51</sup>. Land assignments were also granted to both Christian and Muslim knights (*sipahi*) who had been transferred from Albania. Barkan again sets this last transfer within the context of conciliation with troublesome elements of the ruling class which simultaneously dislocating them from a position from which they posed a challenge to the centralized authority.<sup>52</sup>



4. Transfers to Selanik and Trabzon, 15<sup>th</sup> century  
sources: Lowry (1977); Lowry (1980-1)

<sup>50</sup> Lowry (1977), p.9; Aşıkpaşazade (1992), p.136 p.136; Doukas (1975), p.259; Barkan (1953-4), p.218. The emperor appears to have eventually ended up in Rumeli.

<sup>51</sup> Lowry (1976), p.25; Lowry (1986b), p.329. The community is listed in the tahrir defter of 1486 as “*Cemaat-i Müslümanlar ki bi-emr-i Hazret-i Sultan-i Azam sürgün amed der Trabzon*,” the community of Muslims forcibly settled in Trabzon by order of the sultan. Also named are: Niksar, Sonusa, Ladik, Amasya, Bafra, Osmaniçik, İskilip, Çorumlu, Gümüş, Merzifon, Tokat, Samsun, Tohal, Zile, Gölköy, Satılmış Canik, Kağala, and Kadı Gadı.



İstanbul's repopulation-through-conquest program continued through the 1460s and 70s. Portions of the population of Mitylene and other towns on the island of Lesbos and the entire population of Argos were evacuated in 1462 and 63.<sup>53</sup> From the Black Sea there were transfers to İstanbul of Greeks from Euboea in 1470 and Genoese and Armenian merchants from Kaffa upon its conquest in 1477.<sup>54</sup> Two years later, the islands of Zante, Cephalonia, and Aya Maura, lying between the Greek and Italian peninsulas, were secured under Ottoman control and their populations were settled in the villages outside İstanbul.<sup>55</sup>

On the eastern front, during campaigns against the emirate of Karaman in Central Anatolia through the late 1460s and early 1470s, hundreds of craftsmen and wealthy individuals, including Muslims, Armenians, and Greeks, were brought to İstanbul from Konya, Larenda, Aksaray, and Ereğli.<sup>56</sup> Tribal resistance which had formed around the Karaman leader Pir Ahmet was met with slaughter and wide-scale transfers of nomadic Türkmens to Rumeli.<sup>57</sup> Tursun Bey relates that in 1473 a large number of captives were brought to İstanbul from near Sivas in the course of Mehmet II's campaign against Pir Ahmet's ally, the Akkoyunlu leader Uzun Hasan.<sup>58</sup> It was also under Mehmet II that around 3,000 men were moved from Tire, near the Aegean coast,

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<sup>52</sup> Barkan (1953-4), pp.221-2.

<sup>53</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), pp.183-4; İnalçık (1969-70), p.238; the event is also described by an Italian account footnoted in the Magoulias translation of Doukas (1975), pp.322-3. Argos may or may not have recovered from the same event in 1397 following Evrenos Bey's temporary occupation of the town, mentioned above. The Morea has seen far more than its fair share of population transfers; see Charanis (1961) for the Byzantine period.

<sup>54</sup> Lowry (1986b), p.325; İnalçık (1969-70), p.238. These Genoese numbered 267 households in 1477.

<sup>55</sup> İnalçık (1969-70), p.239.

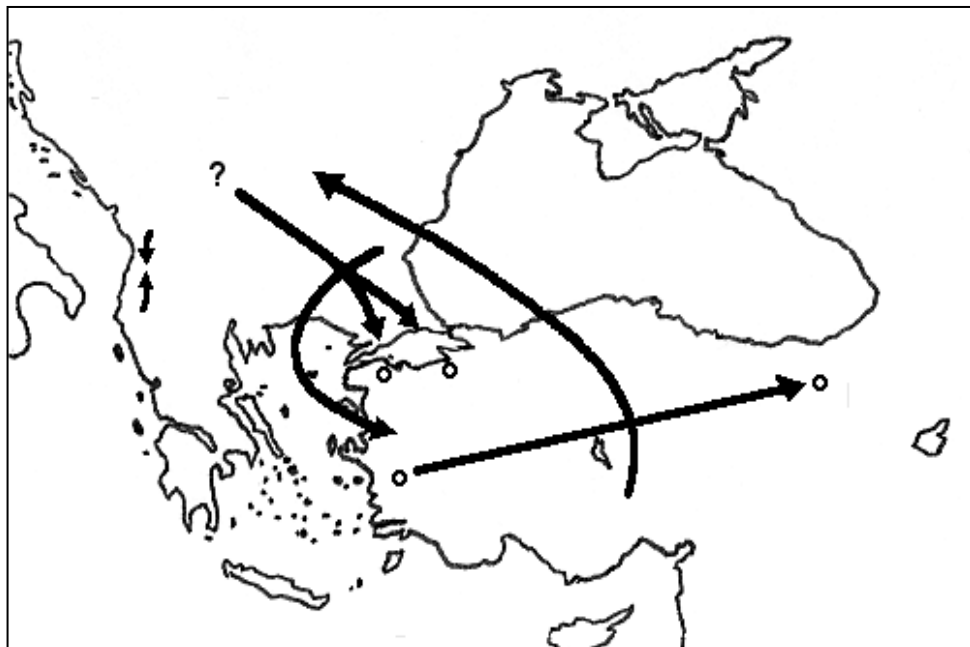
<sup>56</sup> İnalçık (1969-70), p.238.

<sup>57</sup> İnalçık (1986), p.46; Shaw (1976), p.64.

<sup>58</sup> Tursun Beğ (1978), p.61.

to Bayburt, an eastern Anatolian town captured from Uzun Hasan, another apparently rare instance of the use of resettlement to secure Ottoman holdings in the east.<sup>59</sup>

We are aware of a number of other transfers from the period of Mehmet II. According to Kritovoulos, a fortress built in Albania in the mid-1460s was populated drawing on “very many colonists from the countryside and from the surrounding towns and cities.”<sup>60</sup> In the same style as the many villages settled around İstanbul, prisoners of war were used to establish rural settlements near Bursa and Biga dedicated to the raising of livestock for the state.<sup>61</sup> In one of the few instances which reveals the destination of those Christians transferred out of the Balkans as communities, Uzunçarşılı writes that a number of Bulgarian settlements were established near İzmir under the designation of *sürgün* in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>62</sup>



5. Transfers outside Selanik, İstanbul, and Trabzon, 15<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>59</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.64, based on a comment by Evliya Çelebi.

<sup>60</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), p.215.

<sup>61</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.63.

<sup>62</sup> Uzunçarşılı (1947), v.1 p.181, with reference to the work of the Bulgar scholar Dorosiyef.

## The 16<sup>th</sup> Century – Bayezit II to Murad III

The movement of Muslims into the Balkans was continued under Bayezit II (1481-1512), whose favor of the Turkish aristocracy over the *devşirme* class resulted in an increased role for the Turkish frontier raiders on the western border.<sup>63</sup> A group of Muslim peasants, some 1025 households, were settled as a distinct administrative unit in the *sancak* of Silistre, situated on the Danube in northern Bulgaria.<sup>64</sup> The early 1500s also saw the transfer of Muslims from Anatolian and Balkan towns into territories in Serbia and Hungary.<sup>65</sup>

Following the capture of the northwest Black Sea port of Akkerman in the early years of Bayezit II's reign, a segment of the Christian inhabitants were removed and resettled in Old Biga, near the Sea of Marmara in Anatolia.<sup>66</sup> Also operating in this direction was the transfer from Rumeli to the area of Yenişehir of sixty Christian households assigned to guard a dangerous pass, an instance of population placed in order to bring security to internal territories<sup>67</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> Shaw (1967), p72.

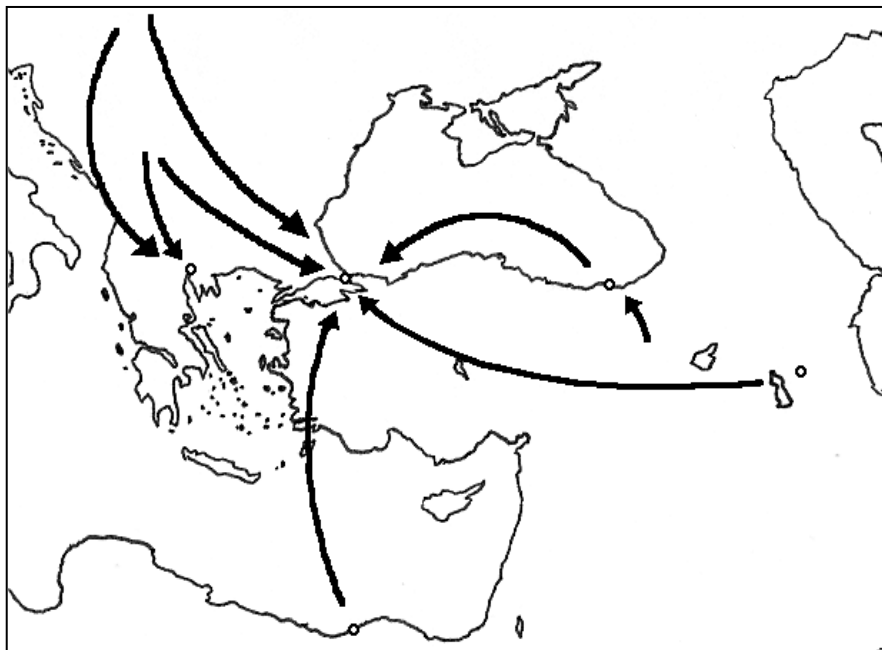
<sup>64</sup> İnalçık (1954), pp.123-4; Barkan (1953-4), p.225. The community was placed in the *kaza* of Pravada. The surviving *kanunname* for this group proves very interesting in regards to the demarcation and administration of a *sürgün* population: İstanbul, Başbakanlık Arşivi, Tahrir defteri no.270, vrk.242.

<sup>65</sup> Uzunçarşılı (1947), v.1 p.181, citing *Tabakat-ül-Memalik*, the history of Peçevi, and a *mühimme defter* from that period.

<sup>66</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.63, citing the history of Hoca Mehmet Sadettin.

<sup>67</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p64, based on a *mufassal tahrir defter*: Ankara, Tapu ve Kadastro Umum Müdürlüğü Arşivi, Hüdavendigâr mufassalı no.75, varak 25a.

The cities of Salonica and Istanbul continued to grow by means of forced and voluntary settlement. Christians from Serbia and Hungary were relocated to the cities under Beyazit II.<sup>68</sup> The encouragement of the settlement of Sephardic Jews fleeing Spain starting in the 1490s in Albania, Salonica, and İstanbul developed the empire's Adriatic coastline and resulted in the tripling of the Salonica's population.<sup>69</sup> The distant conquest of territories under Selim I (1512-1520) presented the opportunity to draw educated, skilled, and wealthy manpower into the empire once again. The temporary occupation of the Safavid capital of Tabriz in 1514 resulted in the transfer of thousands of merchants, artisans, and scholars to İstanbul.<sup>70</sup> The conquest of Egypt three years later in 1517 was similarly followed by the transport of a large number of merchants, artisans, and scholars along with the figurehead of the caliph back to the imperial



6. Urban population transfers, early 16<sup>th</sup> century

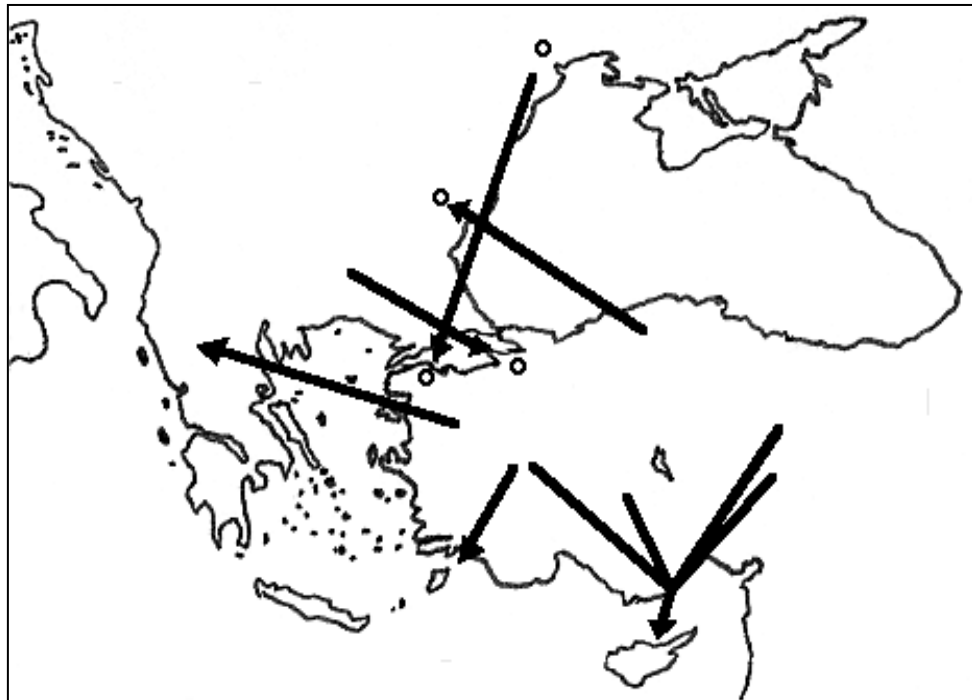
<sup>68</sup> Uzunçarşılı (1947), v.1 p.181.

<sup>69</sup> Shaw (1967), p69; İnalçık (1994), p.31; Lowry (1980-1), p264.

<sup>70</sup> Shaw (1976), p.81.

capital. The officers and artisans of the Mamluk Red Sea fleet were relocated to İstanbul in the following year for the enhancement of the imperial fleet to match the new Ottoman hegemony in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>71</sup>

The reshuffling of skilled labor amongst the empire's urban centers continued under Süleyman I (1520-1566). Between the years 1523 and 1540, around 280 Christian families from Trabzon, predominantly fishermen, were resettled in İstanbul, while in the same period several hundred Muslims possessing specific trade skills were moved into Trabzon from territories in eastern Anatolia.<sup>72</sup> With continued campaigning on the eastern front, these too may have been drawn from areas subjected to military occupation. Interestingly, a decree was released in Süleyman's reign declaring that artisans and scholars relocated from Tabriz, Egypt, and Azerbaijan were free to return



7. Transfers outside Selanik, İstanbul, and Trabzon, 16<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>71</sup> Shaw (1976), pp.85-7.

<sup>72</sup> Lowry (1976), pp.144-51; Lowry (1986b), p.331.

home as they wished, something which we may see as a concession to those unhappy with their new setting.<sup>73</sup>

Rhodes, counting among the first of Süleyman's long list of conquests, became the subject of a tightly directed colonization project following its capture from the Knights of St. John in 1522.<sup>74</sup> A general call for manpower was issued to territories throughout the empire, requesting a number of households from each community be provided for transfer to the island. A nearly identical policy was applied to the island of Cyprus under Selim II (1566-1574), which was fully removed from Venetian control by 1573.<sup>75</sup> A number of Greek Cypriots were also resettled near the Anatolian port of Antalya to serve as hostages against further resistance, of which there was little.<sup>76</sup>

The 16<sup>th</sup> century also was host to a number of transfers undertaken as the Ottomans attempted to put down a series of insurgencies by the empire's disaffected tribalist Türkmen population. Responding to the pro-pastoralist *shi'i* propaganda of the new Ottoman rival to the east, the Safavids, these tribesmen—called *kızılbaş*, or red-heads—were subject to harsh crack-downs starting in the reign of Bayezit II. In response to growing Safavid support within the empire, in 1502 the sultan ordered the deportation of *kızılbaş* from Teke, Hamid, and elsewhere in Anatolia to Coron and Modon in the Morea.<sup>77</sup> A decade later, such fears were confirmed with the outbreak of a major pro-Safavid rebellion in Teke in 1511. Such revolts, predominantly among the Türkmen, continued periodically through the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, notably again in 1519

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<sup>73</sup> Shaw (1976), p.87.

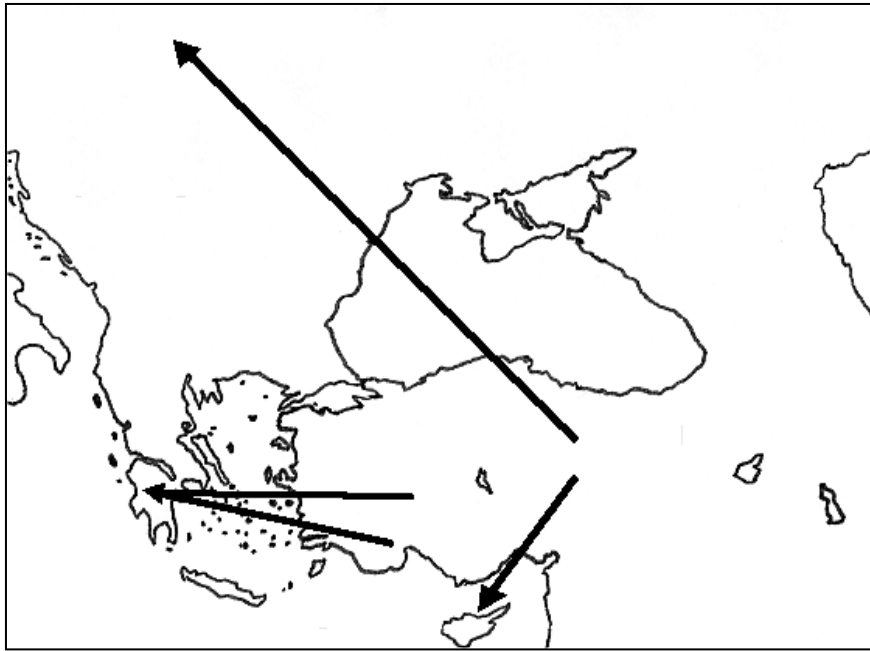
<sup>74</sup> Barkan (1949-50), pp.545-8. He includes an exemption order related to the project: İstanbul, Başbakanlık Arşivi, Tahrir defteri no.285.

<sup>75</sup> Barkan (1949-50), pp.547-58. He reprints a series of commands regarding the Cyprus *sürgün*: İstanbul, Başbakanlık Arşivi, Mühimme defteri, no.19, pp.69, 334, 337; Akham defteri, yp.310;

<sup>76</sup> Shaw (1976), p178.

<sup>77</sup> Lindner (1983), p109; Imber (2002), p42.

and 1526-8, as did measures taken to curb their disruptive power.<sup>78</sup> We possess an imperial decree from the mid-1560s ordering the transfer of the descendents and relatives of five *kızılbaş* leaders from central Anatolia to Budin, in Hungary.<sup>79</sup> A command was issued in 1577-8 under Murad II to the governor-general of the province of Rum in Central Anatolia declaring that, if necessary, rather than being executed, heretical *kızılbaş* should be punished by deportation to Cyprus.<sup>80</sup> Finally, another move taken against the empire's nomadic factions, state-pressured sedentarization, dates back at least to the reign of Süleyman I (1520-1566).<sup>81</sup>



8. Transfer of *kızılbaş*, 16<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>78</sup> Shaw (1976), pp. 86, 92.

<sup>79</sup> Barkan (1953-4), p.229. Barkan cites a *hüküm* dated Muharrem 973: İstanbul Başbakanlık Arşivi, Mühimme defteri, no. 6, p.575.

<sup>80</sup> Barkan (1953-4), p.229; İstanbul, Başbakanlık Arşivi, Mühimme defteri, no.33, p.206. “*Sunni mezheb olmayub mülhid ve rafızı olan kızılbaş evleri ve barkları ile alakaların kat edip hisar erlerine koşub Kıbrıs’a sürgün eyleyüb halife namına olanların haklarından geldüresin.*”

<sup>81</sup> Lindner (1983), p.55; İnalçık (1994), p.159.

## The Drop-off of the Policy

From our current understanding of the phenomenon, it appears that by the late 17<sup>th</sup> century the population transfer had fallen from its previous position as a standardly implemented tool of Ottoman policy. This said, the continued movement of communities by the state at some level is certainly probable – incidental moves may well have continued through the end of empire. Barkan, for example, cites an instance from 1635-6 of the transfer of tribes in Azerbaijan to Erzincan and Pasin under Murad IV (1623-1640), in order to refurbish the area as evidence for the longevity of the phenomenon.<sup>82</sup> Also relevant to our subject are those resettlement projects undertaken in 1610 and 1635 attempting to move agriculturalists who had fled to the towns and cities in the course of the Celali uprisings back onto their former plots—not, it seems, to new lands.<sup>83</sup>

The conquest of Crete in 1669, the last of the Ottoman advances in the Mediterranean, was not followed by a state colonization project like those implemented in Rhodes and Cyprus.<sup>84</sup> Why this is the case is not readily apparent - one might cite a lack of need for such a project for control of the island, as well as the absence of a cohesive policy-making body as had existed in the preceding era.<sup>85</sup> In any case, conquest had its demographic effect even without forced civilian transfer; by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century Muslims may have constituted one-third to one-half of the total population.<sup>86</sup> With the exception of Crete, it was during this middle period that we see an end brought to the

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<sup>82</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.73; Naima (1968), v.3 p.1312.

<sup>83</sup> Faroqhi (1984), pp.283-4.

<sup>84</sup> Greene (2000), p.87.

<sup>85</sup> Greene addresses the issue of the ‘dilution’ of power in the court in this period, Green (2000), pp.20-1. On specific problems in the capital see Imber (2002), pp.83-4.

<sup>86</sup> Greene (2000), pp.52-3.



lunging territorial expansion and deliberate imperial construction which had characterized the first three decades of the empire's existence.

Also important to our narrative was the end of the European frontier as region of new opportunity. With the frontier no longer functioning as a 'safety-valve' for nomadic restlessness—to borrow Turner's concept from American history—the state turned increasingly to sedentarization as the central strategy of tribal policy, especially in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, with only marginal success, then again in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with greater effectiveness.<sup>87</sup>

Other activities with close semblance to the phenomenon of *sürgün* continued to take place past the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Türkmen and Kurdish tribes were pressured by the Ottoman government to move onto the fringes of the Syrian desert in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in a misdirected attempt to limit the lawlessness of Bedouin groups moving into the same area.<sup>88</sup> Exile, both political and criminal, was a common tool of government throughout the later Ottoman period; court officials and eunuchs were commonly exiled to Egypt in the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>89</sup>. Banishment of individuals and their families to other parts of the empire, such as the islands of the Aegean, was a commonly applied sentence in 19<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman court system.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Faroqhi (1994), p.446; see also Cengiz Orhanlı 1987, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Aşiretlerin İskanı*.

<sup>88</sup> McGowan (1994), p.647.

<sup>89</sup> Jane Hathaway, lecture at Princeton University. March, 2003.

<sup>90</sup> Ruth Miller, lecture at Princeton University. April 16, 2003.

## Part II. Objectives

The intention of this chapter is to lay out the objectives which underlay the Ottoman population transfers and discuss their role within the larger framework of imperial strategy. The organization of this discussion has utilized the distinction between security-oriented goals—those striving for a particular level of political or military control—and economic goals—those operating to effect changes in the realm of production, revenue, and trade. The ultimate precision of these terms is not unproblematic; conditions in the political/military sphere were crucial to the economic life of the empire while the economy constituted the primary basis of the state's ability to project political and military power. They are, however, useful enough for the purposes of this analysis.

The first section of part two addresses a number of central themes important to the concept of transfer within the context of the manipulation of manpower within the empire. The second and third sections then address the individual objectives which drove the transfers; the second will deal with those objectives related to the security of the realm while the third will deal with the economic objectives, taking into account both the *pushes* driving the removal of populations from one area and the *pulls* leading to their placement in another.

### ***A. Using Manpower Wisely***

The population transfer was an act of direct manipulation of the human resources of the empire. Humanity was a resource. People were power. They were capital to be invested and from which to benefit. But they were a peculiar kind of resource, one that

had will and followed interests, interests often in conflict with those of the state. It was in the state's interests to see that these human resources were in a position of greatest benefit and least detriment to the system.

The aims of the transfers were varied, and each transfer often fulfilled a multiplicity of goals. Some motives were based primarily on the desire to remove a population from a particular territory due to its position as a hindrance or threat to state interests—what we may label ‘pushes’; other motives were based on the desire to insert a population into a territory due to the advantages to imperial strategy its presence there would provide—what we may call ‘pulls’. Within a context of maximizing the efficacy of manpower within the empire, the trend of ‘doubling up’ the goals of a single transfer—the establishment of frontier colonies utilizing disruptive internal populations or the use of conquered populations in the process of restoring commercial centers, for example—was the standard rather than the exception. Not only could populations being ‘pushed’ out of one territory be utilized to fulfill the ‘pulls’ of another, but transfers often worked towards economic, military, and long-term demographic goals simultaneously.

### Theme 1. Profiting from disposable populations

When faced with the question of the mobilization of manpower, the state had varying degrees of mandate over the human resources of the empire. Said differently, populations existed at varying degrees of disposal to the ruling authority.

Perhaps the clearest mandate, for example, was held over those who lay under the state's direct professional control – the central military body, state slaves, and to a lesser degree, members of the greater military (*askeri*) class. Within bounds, the state held and commanded the movements and activities of these groups with complete

discretion. Outside of this grouping of 'state' manpower, lay the larger portion of the population, civilian and semi-civilian groups including peasants, city-dwellers, and pastoralists. The state, of course, claimed an absolute mandate over these as well. On the other hand, there were certain conditions that made the practical exercise of this mandate easier for the state, certain groups that for one reason or another were more easily or more efficiently manipulated. These constitute what we may term particularly 'disposable' populations - populations that, due to their particular character or status, existed at a high degree of disposal to the state.

Examples of such sources included those who existed at the edges of society and the economy – the landless, migrants, the unemployed – or those who by their actions were put at the mercy of the state – criminals, dissidents, or otherwise disruptive groups. The listing of those to be rounded up for the colonization of Cyprus, for example, explicitly emphasized this first group, whose removal, at least in theory, had little negative effect on state revenues, benefited the health of the source community, and provided the opportunity of gain for those who were moved.<sup>91</sup> Ming repopulation projects in the 14<sup>th</sup> century similarly targeted landless populations.<sup>92</sup> They constituted a set of resources whose displacement could be executed with greater impunity and whose disruption had little negative impact on the state or its holdings.

Conquered populations present another example of such a 'disposable' group. We have seen, for example, that huge numbers of captives from Mehmet II's conquests in Greece were transported to Istanbul in the course of the city's repopulation. Some were settled outside the walls as agricultural laborers and some, particularly artisans and

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<sup>91</sup> Barkan (1949-50), pp.550-551; Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334. Faroqhi, utilizing the same source material in her discussion of population transfers, uses the term 'marginal men'. Faroqhi (1994), p.282.

<sup>92</sup> Mote and Twitchett, pp.123-4.

craftsmen, were selected to settle inside the city. What drove such usage? Surely not all of these populations constituted major threats to Ottoman control of the Morea. The explanation comes with the fact that they represented an especially *accessible* source of manpower. The event of conquest, of suddenly being given the status of a ‘conquered people,’ placed their fate in the hands of the state. As a course of warfare, they were subject to death, enslavement, or relocation – the state had every right to do what it wanted. As a result, conquest was an excellent opportunity to grab manpower – agrarian, skilled, wealthy, or otherwise. This was especially true in the case of the Ottomans, who were conquering particularly skilled urbanite populations. Furthermore, in dealing with these populations at conquest, it wasn’t uprooting any of its established resource base. In the course of incorporating these resources into the empire, there was little disadvantage to relocating them to the areas provides maximum benefit to the state. Their utilization in such projects thus came very cheaply to the state.<sup>93</sup>

We may contrast this to the situation of a settled peasant population sitting firmly within the empire - constituting a much less ‘disposable’ population, they were a group over which the state had comparatively little mandate to treat with impunity and whose disruption proved much more costly to state economic interests. Should that population rebel, however, the tables are turned and the state can do what it wants – such an act renders it a much more disposable population.

The empire’s nomadic populations, too, held a particularly ‘disposable’ position within the total scheme of labor available to the state. Marked by their natural mobility, these groups could be moved with little disruption to the state’s economic base; their

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<sup>93</sup> One further factor that aided and encouraged the relocation of conquered peoples was the fact that the military forces applied to the conquest could then be used to execute such moves.

martial character and disruptive tendencies, moreover, gave the state a free hand in relocating them.

The state was of course not limited to such groups – there are a bevy of instances in which the state attempted to and succeeded in the relocation of groups lying at the center of the society establishment. Such transfers we find in cases of massive projects bearing the full weight of imperial authority—such as the construction of İstanbul under Mehmet II; instances of moves executed with such lack of mandate often required greater compensation by the state, and often gave rise to greater complaint than would the mobilization of a fringe community. The withdrawal of the Han dynasty from the practice of relocating members of the aristocracy to the areas surrounding the royal tombs in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. presents an example of a the state having to desist from the practice due to a lack of legitimacy.<sup>94</sup> The ‘repeal’ of the transfer of wealthy, skilled, and learned people from Azerbaijan, Tabriz, and Egypt under Süleyman I may have been responding to similar pressure.<sup>95</sup>

## Theme 2. Construction of a new order through displacement

The reconfiguration of power structures was a central process underlying a great many of the population transfers which we examine in this essay. This process was primarily a political one, crucial to the construction of an imperial state, but which often had important economic and social elements. We find a guide for this approach outlined by Machiavelli:

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<sup>94</sup> Twitchett and Loewe (1986), pp.209-210, 555.

<sup>95</sup> Shaw (1976), p.87.

Whoever becomes prince of a city or state... will find the best means for holding that principality to organize the government entirely anew... that is, he should appoint new governors with new titles, new power, and new men, and he should make the poor rich... Besides this, he should destroy the old cities and build new ones, and transfer the inhabitants from one place to another; in short, he should leave nothing unchanged in that province, so that there should be neither rank, nor grade, nor honor, nor wealth, that should not be recognized as coming from him. He should take Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander for his model, who by proceeding in that manner became, from a petty king, master of all Greece. And his historian tells us that he transferred the inhabitants from one province to another, as shepherds move their flocks from place to place.<sup>96</sup>

While Machiavelli's protocol proves somewhat more harsh than the characterization of Ottoman expansion and conquest given by those scholars who point to a tendency towards adaptation and conciliation over harsh military rule as a major factor in the success of the early principality<sup>97</sup>, it may nevertheless serve in understanding the place of many of the population transfers within greater imperial designs.

The Ottoman Empire from the 14<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup> century was a state engaged in nearly continuous territorial expansion and self-construction as an imperial power. Ottoman policy throughout this period was playing very active political games throughout its holdings in Europe and Anatolia, both among populations which might be categorized as 'subjects'—conquered Christians—and those which might be

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<sup>96</sup> Machiavelli (1950).

<sup>97</sup> see, for example, İnalçık (1954), pp.122-22; İnalçık (1969), p.5; Lowry (2003).

considered its ‘constituents’—the Muslim Turks of Anatolia. Halil İnalçık’s concept of the basic pattern of Ottoman expansion as the establishment of progressive “stages” of control<sup>98</sup> might well be extended to the process of consolidating state power, not in the conquered territories alone but throughout the empire as a whole. Thus, we may conceive the consolidation of control as a process that was occurring at varying stages simultaneously in both the heartlands and the frontiers of the state.

The realignment of power structures—that is, the way in which one derived authority and defined one’s position in the world—was an important element in this expansion and consolidation of power. It was within this effort that population transfers were utilized in the dismantlement of conquered and internal elites, in the establishment of dominion over new territories, eliminating threats to state control, and realigning the interests of otherwise belligerent tribal groups.

On a similar note, the use of transfers in the organization of the Inca Empire presents a clear application of such an approach, one which went beyond even the Ottoman in application. The *mitimae* system—by which large portions of conquered communities were swapped with groups of loyal settlers—was institutionalized, deeply hitting, and applied across the empire’s holdings. As Bernabe Cobo, writing in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, expresses, “By means of this resolution to make the majority of their people re-establish themselves by shifting some to the places of other, the king kept his states secure from rebellion.”<sup>99</sup> The Inca used the transfers as a tool in the dismantlement of pre-existing political, social, and even religious structures and in ensuring the implementation of their own. Nigel Davies writes: “As a form of social engineering, the

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<sup>98</sup> İnalçık (1954), p.103.

<sup>99</sup> Cobo (1979), p.189.



*mitimae* system was used on such a scale that it is hard to find a parallel elsewhere in the world. It played a vital role in the process of conquest as a means of pacifying newly acquired lands by removing the more unreliable elements and replacing them with loyal settlers.”<sup>100</sup>

The same strategy was undertaken in the construction of a unified Afghan state under Abdur Rahman in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, locating large numbers of ethnic Pashtuns into the majority Tajik northern areas and Tajiks into the Pashtun dominated south. In the words of H. Mortimer Durand, the British foreign secretary to the government of India, “Tribe after tribe which had maintained some sort of independence was reduced to order, and scattered in colonies all over the country.”<sup>101</sup> The historian Vartan Gregorian continues: “By 1901, when he died, Abdur Rahman had managed to unify Afghanistan politically and to establish the first thoroughly centralized regime in the country.”<sup>102</sup>

A metaphor that may aid our thinking of this process—the realignment of power structures in the constitution of an imperial body—is an endothermic chemical reaction, one in which the bonds holding together an existing set of molecules are broken apart to allow the formation of a new molecular arrangement bound by a new set of more stable, lasting bonds. Because the reaction is endothermic, the transformation is reliant on the application of energy. The population movements, the reshuffling of peasants, pastoralists, and aristocracies, serve as the catalytic application of energy that aids and encourages this transformation. One may then apply that energy with varying degrees of intensity depending on the extent of restructuring necessary to achieve a lasting level of

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<sup>100</sup> Davies (1995), pp.123-5.

<sup>101</sup> H. Mortimer Durand, quoted in Gregorian (1969), p.134.

<sup>102</sup> Gregorian (1969), p.133.

control over the area. The Ottoman *sürgün*, the movement of peoples throughout the empire “as shepherds move their flocks from place to place,” served as a force of change in the formation of a new political order.

This applied to a degree within the economic sphere as well. The Inca, who exhibited a very tightly controlled economy, strengthened the state-controlled sector of the economy through the relocation of labor.<sup>103</sup> The farming and ranching communities settled by transferees near İstanbul—perhaps numbering in the tens of thousands—and in northwestern Anatolia were similarly placed under the direct control of the sultan’s court.<sup>104</sup>

### Theme 3. Loyalty through displacement

Another important dynamic at work in many of these cases is that of the maximization of loyalty through displacement. The issue of a population’s loyalty to the state and its adherence to state interests was a key factor in the establishing added strength to the bonds between state and people.

Using transfer as a means by which populations that are dangerous in their original location are rendered dependable by settling them in a new location was both a central drive of many transfers as well as a factor which added extra profitability to the process of consolidating control and projecting influence – dangerous populations, instead of simply being eliminated, could be neutralized or even redirected towards state interests through displacement. Placed among hostile, unsympathetic, or simply linguistically or culturally alien populations, loyalty would fall back on the state which

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<sup>103</sup> Conrad and Demarest (1984), p.133.

<sup>104</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.63; İnalçık (1969-70), p.239. İnalçık cites an article by Barkan which I have been unable to access: “XV ve XVIıncı asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda toprak işçiliğinin organizasyon şekilleri.” *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 1 (1940)

had set them there and which backed their interests. Key examples of this in the Ottoman case include of the movement of Turkish and Tatar tribes from Anatolia into the Balkans, the reassignment of native aristocracies to positions elsewhere within the empire, and the transport of conquered peoples out of their native lands to be settled in the towns and countryside of Anatolia. As Colin Imber expresses concerning the deportation of Turkish knights to Albania in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century: “What Mehmet clearly did was to remove the fief holders from Saruhan, where they had local connections, and transferred them to Albania, where they had none. Their only source of patronage and protection was the Ottoman Sultan, whose interests they would therefore defend from local challenges.”<sup>105</sup> The disorienting/reorienting effects of such relocations, however, were not necessarily enduring; the strangeness leveraged here no doubt diminished as the foreigners and their new environment became accustomed to one another.

In some cases, what was produced was not necessarily loyalty in the sense of hearts and minds, but rather a convergence of interests. The transformation of Türkmen tribesmen from anti-state actors to loyal supporters of the new regime may seem implausible. In many cases, however, such a shift in loyalties was not engendered through any change in regard for authority but rather through moving them into a position where, in acting in their own interests, they were acting in the interests of the state as well.

Cieza de Leon presents the Incan *mitimae* strategy as a self-regulatory system of provincial security: “And these mitimaes were ordered by the Incas to be always obedient... so that if the natives should rebel, and they supported the governor, the

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<sup>105</sup> Imber (2002), p.185.

natives would be punished and reduced to the service of the Incas. Likewise, if the mitimaes stirred up disorder, they were put down by the natives... In this way, all was quiet, and the mitimaes feared the natives, and the natives feared the mitimaes, and all occupied themselves only in obeying and serving.”<sup>106</sup> A populace occupied only in obeying, serving, and producing revenue was indeed a worthwhile goal for the many state actors examined in this essay.

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<sup>106</sup> Cieza (1959), pp.57, 60.

## ***B. Security Objectives***

### PUSHES: political and military reasons behind moving people out

The removal of a population was often stimulated by the threat or obstacle which it comprised to the state's control over the territory that it inhabited. In some instances these populations were drawn from newly acquired areas within the context of consolidating control over conquered territory; in others they were drawn from internal territories in an attempt to destroy or channel the potential or manifest danger which they posed to state control.

#### **control of new territories, part 1: the conquered populations**

The removal of populations within the process of conquest accomplished a number of security objectives. This removal often took the form of enslavement, which neutralized the ability of groups to resist occupation while simultaneously providing the conquerors with a commodity to be sold, put into direct service, or used to reward troops.<sup>107</sup> Deportation at the community level was another such method by which to establish firm control over the territory.

Cieza de Leon provides us a description of the approach of the Inca to the question of controlling territory:

In as much as all this length of territory was inhabited by barbarous peoples, some of whom were very warlike, in order more easily to insure

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<sup>107</sup> Enslavement shares many of the features of population transfers. Enslavement, too, ensured the neutralization of the conquered community and in the case of those captured within the course of warfare, served to eliminate the greater part of the fighting men from the scene. Indeed the flow of slaves from the Balkans into Anatolia in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries can be considered a demographic movement of significant proportions which, though falling outside the scope of this study, is a phenomenon that shares many of the dynamics of group transfers.

and keep their power and tranquility, the following policy had been put into force from the time of Inca Pachacuti [d.1471]... As soon as one of these large provinces was conquered, ten or twelve thousand of the men and their wives, or six thousand, or the number decided upon, were ordered to leave and remove themselves from it. These were transferred to another town or province of the same climate and nature as that which they left...<sup>108</sup>

Such actions served to neutralize the obstacle posed by native populations to the consolidation of state control over the area. In the Ottoman Empire, this came primarily in the form of the removal and resettlement of large numbers of Greek and Slavic speakers from Europe into Anatolia.

Such relocations allowed the establishment of control over strategic sites—fortifications or inaccessible areas—which could either to be occupied or destroyed. The Inca instituted localized relocations to this effect by moving communities off of hilltops and out of fortified areas into lower valleys where they might more easily be controlled.<sup>109</sup> This state objective had prominence among the Ottoman transfers as well. The earliest transfer presented by the chronicler Aşıkpaşazade describes such a move undertaken in the first years of conquest in Thrace by Süleyman Paşa, who orders his men to “remove the unbelievers who are *sipahis* [knights] from these castles. Send them with their families to Karesi so that they won’t eventually bring some harm to us.” He then populated the fortress with nomads brought over from the same province in

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<sup>108</sup> Cieza (1959), pp.56-7

<sup>109</sup> Cobo (1979), p194. The Ottomans ordered similar localized movements outside the context of conquest later in the 17<sup>th</sup> century following the movement of peasants into fortified enclaves during a period of uprisings. The concentration of rural populations in fortified areas was undesirable in terms of both security and the economy – such a situation kept peasantry away from their fields and provided the lawless with fortresses from which to defy state authority. See Faroqhi (1984), pp.273-5.

Anatolia.<sup>110</sup> The narrative of the Byzantine chronicler Doukas reveals the continued application of such removals through the following century.<sup>111</sup>

The Byzantines, facing the identical geographical landscape centuries earlier, transferred large bodies of Slavs captured in the Balkans into Anatolia in an attempt to break the threat they posed to the empire's European presence. Syrians, Armenians, and others presenting problems farther east were then moved into defensive positions along the western frontier.<sup>112</sup> This presents a nearly perfect parallel with the Ottoman solutions to control over both its conquered territories and difficult tribal populations.

It should be noted that as the conquered were potentially a very valuable source of new manpower to the state, it was very often more than the obstacle they posed to state control that underlay their removal. As we shall explore later, in a large portion of such instances the objective was largely economic – the conquered groups would be transplanted into cities or resettled as agricultural workers. In other instances, however, they could also be utilized to meet security objectives. The relocation to Rumeli, for example, of the Türkmen tribes supporting the emir of Karaman subdued through the 1460s and 70s would have worked towards Ottoman security objectives in Europe in

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<sup>110</sup> "Süleyman Paşa: 'Bu hisarlardan sipahi olan kafirleri çıkarın. Evleriyle Karası iline ilertin ki bunlardan sonunda bize bir kötülük gelmeye' dedi. Öyle yaptılar." Aşıkpaşazade (1992), ch.39 p.47.

<sup>111</sup> During Murad I's campaigns against the Serbs, "he destroyed many of their fortresses and towns and took their inhabitants captive; he then transported them to the Asiatic shore over the straits of the Chersonese." Doukas (1975), p.60. Mehmet II, after capturing a fortress near Smederovo, "took all the inhabitants captive... After claiming half of the captives for himself, he sent them to populate the villages outside Constantinople." Doukas (1975), p.243.

<sup>112</sup> Fine (1983), p.6. A much more thorough treatment of the routes by which the Byzantines and Ottomans dealt with their geographical and demographical situations is an exciting prospect, one which would prove extremely interesting looking at the issue of population transfers alone. See, for example, Charanis (1961).

addition to eliminating a serious source of resistance to Ottoman expansion in Anatolia.<sup>113</sup>

### **control of new territories, part 2: the political elites**

Another key question facing the expanding state was what to do with those that stood at the top of the pre-existing power structures in newly acquired territories – members of the ruling class or native aristocracies. The central power faced the dilemma of attempting to minimize the ability of such elites to challenge its own authority, but yet at the same time utilize groups whose education, skills in government, and wealth held advantages for a growing empire.<sup>114</sup>

There were several options to follow in dealing with this issue, depending on the necessities of the situation and the approach of the imperial power. They might be entirely destroyed, such as in the case of the defeat of the Bey of Aydın in the 1420s, who was executed along with all his family.<sup>115</sup> In other instances, the state could ensure their complete isolation from the political realm, often by means of transfer. While the central aim lay in the relocation of specific individuals, this sometimes could involve significant numbers, not just the removal of the royal family. Alternatively, they might be given a place within the new system. In some cases they would be left in the same positions as

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<sup>113</sup> İnalçık (1986), p.46. The idea of the converse - using newly conquered Christian populations in securing territory in Anatolia - though intriguing, lacks evidence: most instances of Christian communities moved eastward offer no destination other than 'Anatolia'. It does not seem likely that the 60 Christian families placed as guards at the pass near Yenişehir under Bayezit II were newly conquered subjects, Barkan (1951-2), p.64. Cieza's description of the Inca *mitimae* system includes a role for the conquered in contributing to the security of the area to which they were transplanted, Cieza (1959), p.57, though Cobo includes that they were generally transferred to "the quiet and peaceful provinces." Cobo (1979), p.189. The Ming utilized the large number of Mongols surrendering themselves along the northern frontier in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century to shore up their defenses in Kwangtung and Fukien, Serruys (1968), pp.234-50; the case, however, is not quite analogous as there was a degree of willingness among the Mongols which would be unexpected among most we would label as 'conquered' peoples in the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>114</sup> Lowry (2003), pp.115-30.

<sup>115</sup> Imber (2002), p.23.



before; with tighter control, they would be assigned positions elsewhere within the empire, still existing within a new political order but isolated from their previous bases of power.

This last approach proved a particularly effective means for the encroaching imperial power to induce those who would otherwise oppose its authority to act instead toward its own goals. The phenomenon through the 14<sup>th</sup> and early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries which Lowry has labeled the “the subsumption of members of the Byzanto-Balkan aristocracy into the Ottoman ruling elite”<sup>116</sup>, whereby members of the Christian ruling classes and their descendents were granted posts within the central and provincial state hierarchy, would fall within this category. The execution of Tsar Shishman in 1395, for example, was followed by the ‘exile’ of the remaining members of the Bulgarian dynasty to governorships in Asia.<sup>117</sup> The practice of granting governorships and *timars* to those Turkish warlords who surrendered their claims over territories in Anatolia is a parallel on the eastern front.<sup>118</sup>

Several cases from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century demonstrate the simultaneous isolation of conquered elites from their native lands and retention of the body of wealthy and educated manpower which they constituted. Doukas reports that following the capture of territories in Greece, for example, Mehmet II “took with him Demetrios and his entire household, the palace officials and wealthy nobles from Achaia and Lakedaimonia and the remaining provinces...”<sup>119</sup>. This action was repeated in the following decade with the removal of the ruling class of Trabzon—“the emperor, his lords, and other useful men”

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<sup>116</sup> Lowry (2003), pp.115-30; see also İnalcık (1954), pp.112-22.

<sup>117</sup> Imber (2002), pp.14-15.

<sup>118</sup> Imber (2002), p.185.

<sup>119</sup> Doukas (1975), pp.257-8.

according to Aşıkpaşazade<sup>120</sup>; the emperor, “his entire family, uncles and nephews, palace officials and nobles” according to Doukas<sup>121</sup>—to İstanbul and Rumeli following its conquest in 1461; thus in the process of destroying the remnants Byzantine power in Trabzon, the sultan was increasing the pool of cultured and wealthy individuals active in the construction of the imperial capital.

In some cases, removal of a portion of the conquered could provide hostage communities which might then afford additional leverage in dealing with those who remained; it seems likely that such measures would have been directly mainly at control of the ruling classes. Shaw attributes this goal to the early relocation of Christians under Murad I (1360-89). A number of Greek Cypriots were also apparently relocated to the environs of Antalya for the same purpose following the island’s conquest in 1571.<sup>122</sup>

### **the issue of internal elites**

Many of the concerns over conquered aristocracies were applicable to political elites which existed within the empire as well. Those who sat within the confines of the empire but remained ‘outsiders’ to the centralized imperial order often held positions from which they could challenge that order. States often made an attempt to either sideline or redirect these notables.

Such transfer in its simplest form was exile. During the course of Russian eastward expansion through the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, for example, Siberia served as a common destination for political and religious figures holding an undesirable level of

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<sup>120</sup> Aşıkpaşazade (1992), p.136.

<sup>121</sup> Doukas (1975), p.159.

<sup>122</sup> Shaw (1976), pp.19, 178. The holding of individual hostages—often the family members of those in power—in order to guarantee vassal loyalty was a common medieval practice, one certainly employed by the Ottomans.

influence at the empire's center.<sup>123</sup> In many cases, however, the manipulation of elites was rolled into other actions, such as the reassignment of lands and positions within the empire. The Han dynasty in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> centuries B.C. used the assignment of notables to the upkeep of imperial funerary structures as a means by which to displace landed aristocracies from their established bases of power.<sup>124</sup> We can see this drive at work in many of the Ottoman transfers. In the transfer of Christian and Muslim knights from Albania to Trabzon, for example, assignment of land in the newly opened territory was utilized to appease those threatening the system as well as relocate them far away from their bases of power.<sup>125</sup>

Such worrisome elites were sometimes direct carry-overs from the pre-conquest ruling class—a situation particularly common in a relatively new, expansion-oriented state such as the Ottomans' in the early period. This was the case for a large body of the landed Turkish aristocracy of Anatolia. When the district of Saruhan in northwest Anatolia—brought under Ottoman control in the 1390s but lost to local powers in the shake-up following the battle of Ankara—was formally annexed by Mehmet I in 1417, a large body of Turkish knights (*sipahi*) from that area were reassigned lands in Albania while a son of a Bulgarian noble was granted its governorship.<sup>126</sup> We can assume that

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<sup>123</sup> Huttenbach (1988), p.99.

<sup>124</sup> Twitchett and Loewe (1986), pp.209-210, 555. Later emperors were pressured to drop this practice; as was briefly mentioned in an earlier section, this presents us with a good example of attempting to manipulate a fairly non-'disposable' population – the state lacked the high level of mandate over these groups needed to continue to push through such arbitrary moves. In contrast to say, a group of captives, the fact that aristocracies generally possess some level of influence with which the state must negotiate lessens its ability to act with impunity, from which stems the need to (a) legitimize their transfer on other grounds and (b) to provide them some degree of compensation making it 'worth their while'.

<sup>125</sup> Barkan (1953-4), pp.221-22; İnalcık (1954), p.124.

<sup>126</sup> Barkan (1953-4), pp.215-6; Imber (2002), p.184-5. The *tahrir defter* cited by Barkan also lists *sipahis* drawn from Yenişehir, Koca-İli, Vize, Engüri, Canik, İncügiz, Tarakborlu (Bolu), Kastamonu, Mihaliç, and Eflani.

similar principles may have been active throughout much of the process of the assignment of new lands to members of the Ottoman ruling class.

Though the primary and explicit aims of transfers executed in the course of urban reconstruction were undoubtedly economic, Mehmet II's "calling of notable persons by name from all over the empire,"<sup>127</sup> might also have presented the sultan with the opportunity of dislodging potentially troublesome members of the provincial elite, a very real possibility in consideration of the strong centralizing drive characteristic of his reign.<sup>128</sup> Similar moves had been instituted in Ming China in the preceding century. In the large-scale movements of population undertaken by the emperor T'ai-tsu—most of which were economically driven—large numbers of landed gentry and wealthy households were relocated from the coastal provinces to Nanjing with the aims of reducing their influence and bringing them under tighter central control.<sup>129</sup> Edward Farmer discusses the peopling of Beijing several years later in a similar regard, noting that the calling of wealthy families served both to settle "people of substance" in the city, but "may also have provided an opportunity to root out some of the leadership of the southern provinces."<sup>130</sup> Such examples attest to the use of transfer as a powerful tool in the state's dealings with its internal political elites.

#### **the issue of the tribes and their elites**

The obstacle that the nomadic tribes of Anatolia posed to Ottoman power was a major incentive for a large number of the transfers undertaken in the early centuries of the dynasty. Sometimes such transfers were executed in the course of expansion in

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<sup>127</sup> Tursun Beğ, quoted in Lowry (1986b), p.324,

<sup>128</sup> Such centralizing tendencies were typified by the replacement of local governing elites with members of the *devşirme* class. See Imber (2002).

<sup>129</sup> Ho (1959), pp.136-9.

<sup>130</sup> Farmer (1976), p.149.

Anatolia, serving to eliminate threats to Ottoman dominance over a particular territory; at other times, transfers were aimed at removing sources of disturbance lying deeper within the principality's borders.

Both the tribes and their chieftains constituted specific sources of worry to the central state body. Despite the origins of the Ottoman dynasty in the nomadic warfare of the frontier, the development of the Ottoman state as a centralized governing body dependent on a sedentary agricultural tax base had given rise to a fundamental divergence of interests between the state and nomad. Such a situation induced a change of tribesmen of Anatolia, in the words of Rudi Lindner, "from willing comrades to untrustworthy subjects."<sup>131</sup> Their predatory tendencies disrupted trade and eroded agricultural revenues and with growing estrangement from the central government, the Yörük and Türkmen of Anatolia were prone to frequent revolt and collaboration against the state order;<sup>132</sup> they rallied behind Timur at the dawn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and would rally behind the Safavid Shah Ismail a century later.

The political elites of these groups represented further problems for the establishment of Ottoman control in Anatolia. While many of the Turkish aristocracy of Anatolia constituted members of a landed ruling class, many remained basically tribal leaders in command of nomadic pastoralist populations. As a result, efforts at eliminating the threat they posed as holders of power outside the central state body came to be applied to the communities attached to them as well.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Lindner (1983).

<sup>132</sup> See İnalcık (1994), p.41.

<sup>133</sup> Three factors inclined efforts at eliminating the challenge posed by tribal elites through displacement to involve significant numbers of people. First, unlike sedentary aristocracies, whose attachment is to territorial holdings, the attachment of nomadic elites is to a particular community, regardless of where it lies, and a community, moreover, which by definition constitutes a mobile unit. Second, as these tribal leaders were often individuals sitting firmly within the empire, the state did not possess, except in cases of

A large number of transfers were aimed at redirecting the political and material ambitions of tribal leaders and their constituencies towards frontier warfare, especially through the earlier years of expansion. The Ottomans utilized the tribes as agents within the imperial strategy of territorial expansion and absorption. Nomadic groups were assigned to the frontier as a paramilitary force in residence—fighting both in formal campaigns and conducting raids into foreign territory—and as the guardians of strategic sites, such as forts, roads, or passes.<sup>134</sup> The state was thus able to profit by utilizing an otherwise troublesome source of manpower in the execution of political and military goals elsewhere in the empire.<sup>135</sup> This was analogous to the plan undertaken by the Afghan Abdur Rahman Khan, who “ordered some 10,000 Ghilzai families transferred from the Ghazni area to the region between the Oxus and the Hindu Kush, hoping thereby not only to strengthen the Afghan element in this region, but at the same time to weaken the powerful Ghilzai tribe.”<sup>136</sup>

The Ottoman strategy of directing its troublesome tribesmen into southeastern Europe was not without its pitfalls – the western frontier came to be a difficult region to control as well. The Ottomans faced several uprisings among the tribal groups established in Europe; later, as expansion slowed and the frontier ceased to provide the

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open rebellion, the level of legitimacy in isolating them from political life that it would, for example, in dealing with conquered elites – its approach, therefore, was by necessity more conciliatory. Finally, in keeping such tribal leaders attached to their constituencies, the state gave itself the benefit of being able to interact with a single figure in dealing with a potentially troublesome demographic group, a figure capable of responding to inducements, thereby simplifying the effort of reorienting that group towards a more acceptable position.

<sup>134</sup> İnalcık (1994), p.41.

<sup>135</sup> A similar strategy was undertaken in the Mongol Empire in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Thomas Allsen writes of the Khan Möngke: “By combining internal reform with external expansion, Möngke kept the conservative nomadic faction, who traditionally opposed political centralization and reform, busily fighting on the frontiers, thereby leaving the partisans of administrative regularization and a strong central government a relatively free hand to pursue their objectives.” Allsen (1987), p.220.

<sup>136</sup> Gregorian (1969), p.133

safety valve it once did, the tribal tendency toward predation once again troubled the region's economic base and aggravated relations with neighboring powers.<sup>137</sup>

We find a similar strategy of diffusing a potential menace to security undertaken by the Ming in handling the large number of disruptive Mongol tribesman occupying its northern territories in the early and mid-15<sup>th</sup> century. A Ming official in 1450 submitted the proposal that “the best of them be selected for military service... in Kwangtung and Fukien where lately a series of uprisings had occurred, and to send their families to join them as soon as peace was restored. If they settled down permanently in those southern provinces, scattered over a large area and serving in local garrisons, their power would be effectively fragmented while at the same time they would render a great service to the country.”<sup>138</sup> The Ottoman transfer of Türkmén and Tatar tribesmen into Rumeli sought to accomplish the same.<sup>139</sup>

At times, the threat posed by the nomadic elements of the empire became expressed more overtly in the form of revolts and collusion with outside powers, most notably the Safavids, but also the Karamanids and Akkoyunlu. As antagonism between nomad and state made itself increasingly clear over the course of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, in addition to instances of direct crackdown and massacre we see a number of preemptive and punitive acts of relocation, such as the removal of Safavid sympathizers to the Morea in 1502 and the transfer of *kızılbaş* to Cyprus in the 1570s.<sup>140</sup> The Ming in

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<sup>137</sup> Seasonal migration and cross-border raiding, for example, was a source of tension in Ottoman-Polish relations in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. İnalçık (1994), pp.293-4.

<sup>138</sup> Surruys (1987), pp.234-5.

<sup>139</sup> A very interesting instance of military institutions being established for the purpose of ‘dealing’ with an internal problem is the development of the Chinese ‘field-farm’ system. The central government, overburdened by a large military body reliant on state revenues but fearing the consequences of releasing large body of unemployed soldiery onto the land, saw the establishment of joint military-agricultural colonies as a means of bringing about both employment and self-sufficiency. A different situation from the Ottoman case, certainly, but one which fits a similar pattern in regard to policy-making.

<sup>140</sup> Lindner (1983), p.109; Barkan (1953-4), p.229.

the 15<sup>th</sup> century faced a comparable situation with the semi-nomadic Jurchens residing along the northeastern border, who, like the *kızılbaş*, were feared of collaborating with fellow-tribalist forces invading from the north, the Oirat Mongols. The government in Beijing turned to relocation once again, utilizing the empire's internal territories as a depository for potentially traitorous paramilitary groups along a volatile frontier.<sup>141</sup>

The state thus sought to leverage the advantages of displacement to lessen or channel the disruptive ability of the nomads, thereby weakening the resistance of tribal elites and consolidating state control.<sup>142</sup>

### PULLS: political and military reasons behind moving people in

Having discussed the forces driving the removal of populations in the pursuit of political and military objectives, let us turn to the forces underlying the insertion of populations for the same purposes. Populations were placed in territories with the goal of establishing a greater degree of control both in the course of expansion and in maintaining security within the empire.

#### **holding new territories**

In order to understand the objectives of forcibly transferring populations into an area within the process of territorial expansion, we must necessarily look at the greater phenomenon of colonization as a means by which imperial control may be extended over conquered lands, stepping back for a moment to understand the basic role of

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<sup>141</sup> Rossabi, (1982), p.41.

<sup>142</sup> Sedentarization—a shift from migratory nomadic to settled agrarian life—was an additional policy answer to many of the problems posed by the tribes of the empire, one which shares many of the central features of *sürgün*. In addition tax policies encouraging permanent settlement, state-induced sedentarization occurred as early as the reign of Suleyman I, Linder (1983), pp.55-9, with systematic attempts undertaken in Anatolia and Syria by the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. See Orhonlu (1987).



colonization in empire building. We may discern this role within a common pattern of territorial control among pre-modern imperial projects.

Faced with the task of controlling a territory, the degree and mobilization of manpower by the state varied. Some territories existed as vassal/tributary states which, though falling under the imperial dominion, involved little to no insertion of state manpower. Examples of such territories included those within what İnalcık describes as the ‘first stage’ of Ottoman conquest such as the kingdom of Serbia or the emirate of Karaman at the end 14<sup>th</sup> century<sup>143</sup>, or the Kurdish territories of the eastern frontier beginning in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>144</sup>

Other cases demanded the insertion of manpower into a territory. As was introduced earlier in this essay, the first manpower reserve generally available to the state for such a purpose was that which lay under its direct professional control, ‘state’ manpower – the central military apparatus, the greater military aristocracy, and other men of state. The empire would mobilize such manpower to positions of ‘active’ control, such as the stationing of military forces in forts and garrisons or the application of the imperial administrative system. Early 16<sup>th</sup> century Romania, for example, retained an administration under local aristocracy which gave tribute to the central government while Janissaries manned forts and garrisons within its borders.<sup>145</sup> Other territories—including instances in which some portion of the local aristocracy was left in place—experienced more penetrating imperial control with the assignment of territorial units

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<sup>143</sup> İnalcık (1954), pp.103-4.

<sup>144</sup> Shaw (1976), p.82.

<sup>145</sup> Lapidus (2002), p.254.

(*timars*) to members of the military (*askeri*) class from elsewhere in the empire; the wide-scale implementation of this practice accelerated in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>146</sup>

At times the state would also make use of manpower outside the state realm – peasants, nomads, and urban communities. These populations filled both ‘active’ roles, such as participating in expansion or manning defenses, or the ‘passive’ role of providing a population base loyal to the state that would help to cement long-term control over the territory while at the same time contributing to its economic development.<sup>147</sup> This included the establishment of villages, the migration of pastoralists onto open land, the planting of sufi *tekkes*, and settlement in towns and cities, all undertaken with a sense of permanence and an intention of irreversibility.

Colonization proved an effective, and most importantly, efficient tool in achieving long-term control over land. Military occupation alone proved a route which was practical in many situations, especially in the short-term, but which held disadvantages in regard to developing permanent authority over an area; furthermore, the stationing of elements of the central military body tied up valuable human resources and drew directly on the material resources of the state. The settlement of communities in permanent residence, however, proved a self-sustaining means of control that, where

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<sup>146</sup> Imber (2002), p.186. The mobilization of manpower in this form could often be a fairly significant demographic event. The Norman colonization of England through the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century took a similar form, Chibnal (2000), pp.39-72.

<sup>147</sup> Stephan Horak provides a good description of the role of civilian actors: “The mass migration of Russians into Ukraine, first by landowners, merchants, administrators and then by peasants and workers, created population centers loyal to the Russian state in newly incorporated areas. The settlers became not only agents of Russia’s interest, but watchdogs over the unreliable Ukrainian natives.” Horak (1988), p.105.

successful, allowed a much smaller overall footprint by the central state apparatus, yet often more enduring.<sup>148</sup>

We see an example of such a use of colonists in Inca case as described by the 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish writer Bernabe Cobo:

The Inca felt that he could not maintain peace and obedience in any other way, and ... the Inca ordered that the majority of the *mitimaes* who are made to go to recently subjected towns settle in the provincial capitals so that they could serve as a garrison and presidio – not for a salary or for a limited time; rather the *mitimaes* and their descendants would remain perpetually.<sup>149</sup>

It was in such a way that the Incas “could maintain forts without the presence of a contingent of full-time soldiers because of the special features of the *mitimae* system... Such loyal *mitimaes* would have offered not only sustenance but also security, able both to cultivate their new lands and to guard them in times of emergency.”<sup>150</sup>

Colonization served to decrease the ease by which conquered territories could undergo a political ‘rollback’ resulting in the return of rule to native authorities. The contrast between the protracted French retreat from Algeria and the comparatively clean British withdrawal from Egypt demonstrates the degree of entrenchment which

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<sup>148</sup> This same issue is addressed by Machiavelli: “The other and better course is to send colonies to one or two places, which may be as keys to that state, for it necessary either to do this or else to keep there a great number of cavalry and infantry....But in maintaining armed men there in place of colonies one spends much more, having to consume on the garrison all income from the state, so that the acquisition turns into a loss, and many more are exasperated, because the whole state is injured; through the shifting of the garrison up and down all become acquainted with hardship, and all become hostile, and they are enemies who, whilst beaten on their own ground, are yet able to do hurt. For every reason, therefore, such guards are as useless as a colony is useful.” Machiavelli (1950).

<sup>149</sup> Davies (1995), pp.209-210, quoting Cobo.

<sup>150</sup> Davies (1995), pp.148-9.

becomes possible in cases where projections of imperial power are accompanied by significant demographic insertion.

Settlement of territory from the outside furthermore often worked toward long-term demographic change, inducing a transformation in the character and ultimate identity of those who made up the inhabitants of a territory. This was a result achievable both through the influx of new demographic elements as well as through the inducement of change in the native population, usually in the form of religious conversion or linguistic and cultural assimilation. This indeed proved a crucial force in the history of Turkish dominance in Anatolia and, to lesser extent, parts of the Balkans.<sup>151</sup> This was the process behind the inevitable domination of the American West by European settlers and current Chinese policy towards the provinces of Xinjiang and Tibet.

Understanding 'non-state' colonization in this regard, we may see a specific place for such a policy when considering the needs of the early Ottoman state. Heath Lowry has argued that in the course of the first two centuries of their existence, the Ottomans faced a dearth of manpower in the task of holding and administering the vast territories that were coming under their control. Fortresses were often destroyed rather than filled with loyal troops.<sup>152</sup> They lacked the basic human resources to rule with an iron fist and thus turned to a policy of *istimalet*, or accommodation, which manifested itself in the inclusion of members of the conquered aristocracies and administrative accommodation

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<sup>151</sup> Barkan, for example, opens his series of articles on population transfers by posing the question of how we can understand the processes of long-term demographic change in the territories conquered by the Ottomans, presenting *sürgün* as one of the answers. Barkan (1949-50) pp.524-29.

<sup>152</sup> Lowry (2003), pp.134-5.

towards the conquered populations themselves, Lowry's central point.<sup>153</sup> I would argue that the Ottoman utilization of civilian and semi-civilian manpower bases may be understood within this same context. Despite the apparent disjuncture between *istimalet* (what we would think of as 'soft rule') and colonization (more oppressive rule), both constituted practical policy answers for an empire faced with limited human resources.

**the military, the civilian, and the paramilitary in colonization**

The distinction between military and civilian manpower, of course, was not static. Military establishments, too, could serve in the capacity of instituting long-term control and territorial transformation. The mobilization of state manpower in the establishment of garrisons or in the application of rule over a territory by a military class could constitute 'colonization from above', as was the form taken by the Norman colonization of England through the later half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>154</sup> Military colonies could at times emerge as fully-rounded communities themselves, as soldiers and administrators—members of the state manpower reserve—came accompanied by families, laborers, merchants, and artisans.<sup>155</sup> Examples such as Chinese agricultural garrisons—the 'field-fort system'—constitute 'mixed' colonization program.<sup>156</sup> Neither, as we have already mentioned, was the role of 'active' control of the territory limited to the professional

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<sup>153</sup> Lowry (2003), p139.

<sup>154</sup> Chibnall (2000), pp.39-72.

<sup>155</sup> Roman military colonies for example. Forts or garrisons often provided a bridgehead for more enduring settlement, in the case of French colonization of western Canada. In the Muscovite colonization of Siberia in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the military-administrative staff, established sovereignty over the natives and implemented taxation and were later joined by families, servants, merchants; finally, peasants were encouraged and forced on the land. Huttenbach 1988, p.91. Some scholars have even suggested the consideration of military movements within the framework of migration. Such an approach has validity when considering, for example, that 25-30% of all military units (perhaps 250,000 men) were moved into Peking when it was made the capital, many accompanied by families. Mote and Twitchet, p.247.

<sup>156</sup> Farmer (1976), p.65.

military classes; peasant populations have often been utilized in military capacities. Perhaps demonstrating the desire to draw on other sources of manpower in fulfillment of security goals, the government made young men from the civilian/peasant (*reaya*) class eligible for military posts in course of the settlement of Cyprus, an offer that presumably would also have been further encouragement for migration to the island.<sup>157</sup>

Another 'active' manpower base, lying between the military and civilian, was the paramilitary – armed populations existing outside the centrally controlled military class. These groups could, like the state military, hold control over the land, defend against outside threat, and participate in expansion of the realms while at the same time not placing a drain on state resources. In regard to levels of state mandate, the military potential of such groups often placed them at a higher level of disposal to the state, able to be ordered around and what not. A distinguishing factor was that these were whole communities, not simply a professional body.

In the Ottoman case, as with its Turkish and Mongol predecessor states, the paramilitary population *par excellence* was the semi-nomadic pastoralists, the Türkmen and Tatar tribes which have already been a central focus of discussion. Unlike sedentary populations, which often required a certain degree of training and armament to constitute an effective fighting force, there was, in a sense, 'no assembly required' in the case of pastoralists, a fact which could also be of some concern for governing authorities. While many of the previously nomadic immigrants to the Balkans through the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries established sedentary communities upon their arrival in Europe,<sup>158</sup> others retained their semi-nomadic paramilitary character as *akıncıs*, or frontier raiders, a

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<sup>157</sup> Faroqhi (1984), p.283, drawing from a *mühimme defteri* in the Başbakanlık Arşivi.

<sup>158</sup> İnalçık (1994), p.14

force which also included volunteers and adventurers. In addition to their capability as fighters, such tribal segments were also distinguished by their mobility in comparison to sedentary agricultural populations. Altogether there were a number of factors working to insure the role of tribesmen in whatever application of non-state manpower that was undertaken in the control of the European frontier: as a paramilitary group, they were suited to roles of actively controlling territory; as nomads they constituted a naturally mobile force whose movement caused little disruption; they were a segment of the population which could directly benefit from the opportunities of the frontier; and finally, and importantly, there were strong drives to remove these groups from their positions in Anatolia, as discussed earlier.

We have already seen instances in which the Mongols of the Ming Empire were put to use in a very similar way. Likewise, We may assign the Cossacks a similar role in the history of Muscovite expansion. They comprised ‘naturally’ military populations.

#### **levels of control**

Perhaps not surprisingly, the character of the occupation or colonization was often closely tied to the desired degree of control in that territory. We find that the implementation of a colonization effort, the number and type of people injected into the territory, was often tied to the degree of control needed for a particular area. Sometimes the degree of control depended on the strategic importance of an area. Bulgaria, for example, was crucial to the empire’s western front and for the defense of the heart of the state – there were very large numbers of people transferred there. Tight control over Albania, a territory vital to the empire’s cold and hot wars with Venice, may also be seen in this light.

Location and distances may also have determined levels of control. Rhodes was fairly far from the imperial center, and Cyprus was even farther; active colonization policies were implemented after the conquest of both these islands. Limnos, on the other hand, was firmly within reach of the capital; it has a small, unworriesome population and economic resources that could be exploited without major restructuring. A single garrison of Greek-speaking janissaries was sufficient to implement the state's interests there.<sup>159</sup>

The Inca case too is an illustration of this. Cobo discusses the transfer of civilians to newly conquered areas in terms of placing a population in permanent residence which would ensure security in the territories farthest from the imperial center.

The city of Cuzco, capital of the kingdom where the Inca had his court and residence, *was far away from the most remote provinces* in which there were many nations of barbaric and warlike people; therefore, the Inca felt that he could not maintain peace and obedience in any other way, and since this was the main reason why this measure was taken, the Inca ordered that the majority of the *mitimaes* who were made to go to recently subjugated towns settle in the provincial capitals so that they could serve as garrison and presidio—not for a salary or for a limited time; rather, the *mitimaes* and their descendants would remain perpetually.<sup>160</sup> (my emphasis)

Cobo expresses that it's the distance of the territories from the center that necessitate colonization.

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<sup>159</sup> Lowry (1986a).

<sup>160</sup> Cobo (1979), p.190.



### **holding internal territories**

Transfers also occurred which aimed, like colonization in conquered territories or along the frontier, at the establishment of greater security, but which targeted internal territories. Outside the process of expansion, there was a need to have populations holding certain positions increasing security. Two such examples are the assignment of a Christian community in Rumeli to the guardianship of a pass near Yenişehir and the transplantation of Christians to the fortress of Foça in Saruhan, both in western Anatolia.<sup>161</sup> A much greater number of moves involved the empire's nomadic populations, whose relocation for the fulfillment of services to the state, guard duty primarily among them, occurred with such regularity that they often fall below the radar of those searching out more dramatic moves.<sup>162</sup>

The placement of manpower for the security of internal territories remains a more obscure use of transfer: the communities moved were often fairly small, and, because they lacked association with significant political events, were of little concern to either Greek or Turkish chroniclers. Without the use of archival documents, the occurrence of such moves could easily go unnoticed. In consideration of the many arenas in which the state drew on its civilian and paramilitary manpower bases for security-oriented objectives, it should come as no surprise that the empire undertook the relocation of non-state manpower for the purpose of security at home.

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<sup>161</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.64. Tax breaks were also used to encourage voluntary migration into important sites, as in the case of Ayasoluğ in the later 16<sup>th</sup> century, Faroqhi (1984), p.268.

<sup>162</sup> See İnalçık (1986) for a comprehensive survey of the responsibilities placed on certain nomadic groups in return for special tax status. Ahmet Rafik's work provides numerous specific instances of such relocations, Refik (1930).

### ***C. Economic Objectives***

The economic drives which lay behind state-driven relocation of populations are an incredibly important subject for the assessment of population transfers in both Ottoman and world history. The issue of the distribution and reconfiguration of the empire's economic human resource base, indeed, constituted one of the primary stimuli for a great number of transfers undertaken throughout the period examined.

#### **PUSHES: economic reasons for moving people out**

##### **alleviating population pressure**

The primary economic reason for the desire for population removal from a particular territory was the alleviation of population pressure – a condition of too many people living on too little land. The removed populations in almost all of these cases became a useable population elsewhere (as discussed in the subsequent section). World history presents us with a number of such examples. Massive projects along these lines were undertaken in the Ming Empire through the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. According to Cobo, the Incas also had a practice of transferring communities away from densely populated areas to more sparsely populated ones.<sup>163</sup>

In the Ottoman Empire, we see this drive manifest in the selection of men for transfer to areas designated for development. In the case of Cyprus, for example, by targeting for transfers the landless, the unemployed, and migrants arriving in towns and cities from the countryside, the state took the opportunity to effectively siphon off those

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<sup>163</sup> Cobo (1979), p.192.

who put a strain on the economic well-being of the provinces.<sup>164</sup> Efforts were put in place to return immigrants from rural areas who were placing pressure on the urban centers of the empire to their previous lands, both in general and especially following the Celali uprisings of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The attempts at the resettlement of agriculturalists in 1610 and 1635 similarly attempted a more favorable distribution of population. The relocation of those who had fled in search of work to the safety of fortified towns to their former lands was intended to alleviate the strain placed on urban food supplies both by removing non-contributing consumers and returning men to production.<sup>165</sup> Similar movements attempting to remove populations from areas of natural economic draw were undertaken in the Ming Empire with the large-scale forced migration of people away from the attractive coastal centers to the interiors.<sup>166</sup>

It should be remembered that the security-oriented ‘pushes’ (as discussed in section B) very often had economic dimensions – a central reason for the removal of disruptive Türkmén from Anatolia was to minimize their deleterious effect on agricultural production. Indeed, the buildup of nomadic populations in Anatolia can be seen as population pressure of a certain type that found release in expansion into the Balkans.

For the most part, however, it seems that the ‘push’ for the alleviation of population pressure was rarely a *primary* drive behind any of the Ottoman transfers;

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<sup>164</sup> „Memalik-i mahrusamda sa’b ve sengistan yerlerde mütemekkin olub yer hususunda muzayakaları olan re’ayayı ve reaya arasında şirret-ü şaka ile ma’ruf olanları ve vilayet tahririnde yazılmayub kalan re’aya ve re’aya oğlanlarını ve sonradan ahar yerden gelüb mutavattın olanları ve kendülerin yerleri olmayub ücret ile yer tutan re’ayayı ve müddet-i medidedenberü yaylak ve bağ ve bağçe ve yer da’vasın idiüb araları fasl omayub niza’ üzere olanları ve ehl-i karyeden olub yerlerin ve yurdların birağub kasabat ve şehirlerde mütemekkin olanları velhasıl eğer kasabat ve eğer kura ve şehirlerde bikar olub işi ve gücü olmayub...” Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), pp.550-1.

<sup>165</sup> Faroqhi (1984), pp.283-6.

<sup>166</sup> Twitchett and Mote, p.433.

rather it was generally the pulls that drove the redistribution of labor as an economic resource.

### **depriving the enemy of economic resources**

A secondary objective was that of economic deprivation. The desire to deprive another group of a valuable economic resource by the removal of populations was also a factor in several of the transfers presented so far. This was especially true for temporarily held or contested land. The deportation of merchants and scholars from the Safavid capital of Tabriz during its temporary occupation by Sultan Selim II was no doubt injurious to the city's economic life. Through the course of the warfare of the 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottomans and Safavids had stripped the urban centers of Azerbaijan to the benefit of their more securely held cities – İstanbul and Trabzon in the Ottoman case and Isfahan in the Safavid.<sup>167</sup> Another example of economic deprivation was the evacuation of the villages supporting Byzantine Constantinople under Bayezit I more than a century previously.<sup>168</sup>

### **PULLS: economic reasons for moving people in**

Economic pulls—reasons to insert populations to strengthen the economy of the destination locale—were directly responsible for the lion's share of population transfers in the Ottoman period and particularly those of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Projects instigated for

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<sup>167</sup> Lowry (1976), pp.144-51; Lowry (1986b), p.331; Shaw (1976), p.81; Morgan (1988), p.138. The Safavid army, campaigning against the Ottomans in the first decade of the 1600s deported eastward “whole villages and towns”; Christian men and boys were slotted into the state slave system; the Armenians of Julfa were forcibly relocated to Isfahan. Griswold (1983), p.101.

<sup>168</sup> Shaw (1976), p.81; Doukas (1975), p.83.

the development of economic life targeted both the rural areas and urban centers of the empire.

When considering instances of state-mandated shifts in labor resources, it should be remembered that labor operated as a mobile force in ‘ordinary’ circumstances. It was customary for laborers and skilled workers to follow the work available, and shifts in labor resources occurred on a regular basis as materials and manpower were mobilized for the execution of specific projects, both public and private. It was customary, for example, for craftsmen and tradesmen (butchers, cooks, saddlers, cobblers, and so on) to be allocated for travel with the Ottoman armies on campaign.<sup>169</sup> Edward Farmer, writing about the movement of human resources in the construction of Beijing under the Ming makes a distinction between short-term laborers and settlers. While short-term laborers were assigned to grain transport, building canals, and construction projects, it was permanent settlers that allowed the establishment of a long-term tax base, a permanent labor pool, and both agrarian and urban population bases.<sup>170</sup> It is the movement of this second group that is our primary interest in this essay.

### **revival of conquered lands**

Many of the economically driven moves were aimed specifically at the development of the productive potential of newly acquired lands. Considering the desire for resources that drives communities to conquest, it comes as little surprise that the conquering power would seek maximum exploitation of its new holdings in as short a time as possible; for those states that are willing to do so, it is only natural that transfers

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<sup>169</sup> Imber (2002), p.234.

<sup>170</sup> Farmer (1976), pp.148-52.

would be executed towards this goal. Cieza de Leon describes such a policy in the case of the Inca:

... If, perchance, they had conquered territory in the highlands or plains or on a slope suitable for plowing and sowing, which was fertile and had a good climate, and was empty of people, they quickly ordered that from near-by provinces that had the same climate as these, for the good of the health, enough people come in to settle it, and to these lands were given, and flocks, and all the provisions they needed until they could harvest what they planted.<sup>171</sup>

Many of the demographic movements occurring in the wake of the Ottoman conquests can be seen within this light. In the case of Cyprus, for example, a correspondence sent by the governor-general of the island to the imperial court in Istanbul, declared the territory's economic refurbishment to be primary and explicit goal of the entire transfer project:

With many places lying ruined following the invasion of the island of Cyprus by the victorious troops, let it be known that ruined lands should be made healthy, with gardens and orchards and sugar cane put into cultivation; lands producing one bushel of harvested grain should be made strong, with yields of 50-60 bushels; the towns, villages, and other lands and plots should become prosperous and flourishing.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Cieza (1959), p.62

<sup>172</sup> "Anadolu ve Karaman ve Rum ve Zülkadiriyyede vaki' olan kadılara hüküm ki, Hala Kıbrıs beylerbeğisi Sinan dame ikbaluhu südde-i se'adetime mektub gönderüp Kıbrıs ceziresi 'asakir-i nusrat eser istilasile hayli yerleri harab olub ve harab olan yerler ziraate bağ ve bağçe ve şeker kamışına salih yerler olub hatta toprağında ziraat olunan hububun bir kilesinden elli altmış kile hasıl viriür kuvvetlu yerler olub eğer kasabat ve eğer kurası ve sair erazi ve buka'i ma'mur ve abadan olmak lazım idiüğün bildirmişsin." Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), p.550.

The language used in expressing the aims of the transfer of men and families onto the island is in fact very close to that used in the order concerning the rehabilitation of the livelihood of Cyprus' native Christian population.<sup>173</sup>

As we have seen, the three major Ottoman urban development projects of the 15<sup>th</sup> century—Salonica, İstanbul, and Trabzon—were undertaken in Byzantine cities directly following their conquests. These efforts will be examined in greater detail below.

### **developing the rural economy**

Population transfers were used to develop the production potential of the empire's rural economy—agricultural and pastoralist—in both newly conquered and internal territories.

Many of these transfers constituted manipulations of the empire's agricultural labor base. On a broad scale, the establishment of Christian peasant communities in Anatolia throughout the first two centuries of the dynasty no doubt helped develop the agricultural base of the economy. On a smaller scale, instances such as the movement of Christian and Muslim peasants from Saruhan onto a *timar* in Rumeli and the planting of peasant communities in Silistre around the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century represent the establishment of the labor bases of specific territories.<sup>174</sup> As we have seen in the transfer to Cyprus, agricultural production was one of the central stated goals of the island's settlement.<sup>175</sup> Much of the movement aimed at building up İstanbul took the

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<sup>173</sup> See Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.69, in Barkan (1949-50), p.560.

<sup>174</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.64; Barkan (1953-4), p.225.

<sup>175</sup> Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), p.550.

form of the settlement in the surrounding region that could then help feed the city, a task undertaken in the development of Beijing as well.<sup>176</sup>

At times, such transfers were aimed at the establishment of a labor base directly attached to the central government. The settlement of villages near İstanbul, Bursa, and Biga with slave/sharecropper labor was intended to provide the Sultan a regular supply of grain and livestock. The Inca similarly used transfer to strengthen the state-controlled sector of the economy in their relocation of maize farmers.<sup>177</sup> Groups that would have otherwise operated with greater autonomy or within the provincial administrative system were instead made to report directly to the capital.

It should be noted that the Ottoman manipulation of its peasant labor base, though certainly apparent, does not seem to have reached the scale or impact of similar efforts elsewhere in the world. It is claimed, for example, that in the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century of the Ming dynasty, there were some three million people resettled in the decimated territories of the north, mainly from Shansi, an area that had enjoyed relative stability.<sup>178</sup>

The moving of nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists, so far discussed only in terms of the security threats and advantages they posed, also had economic dimensions. As İnalçık points out, despite their potential for disruption, the nomads served an important role in the rural economy. Although sedentary agriculture was a superior

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<sup>176</sup> İnalçık (1969-70), p.239. The construction of Beijing also featured a large number of moves aimed at developing the agricultural production of the province as a whole, Farmer (1976), p.149.

<sup>177</sup> Conrad and Demarest (1984), p.133.

<sup>178</sup> Twitchett and Mote, p.433.



revenue producer, pastoralism filled an important niche in the utilization of less easily cultivated or marginal lands for stock raising (producing wool, meat, and hides).<sup>179</sup>

The movement of various nomadic groups into the Balkans developed the pastoral economy and allowed the utilization of marginal lands. The emergence of Filibe—home to large numbers of transferred nomads through the 14<sup>th</sup> and early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries—as an important center for the production of woolen goods in the middle years of the empire is perhaps a demonstration of the contribution which pastoralists could make to the economy of the areas in which they settled.<sup>180</sup> Sultan Murad IV's commanding the relocation of the Zeyneli and other tribes into Erzincan and Pasin in the 1630s seems to have been primarily aimed at the economic restoration of those areas.<sup>181</sup>

The forced sedentarization of nomads was both economically and security driven and constituted a policy which sought to enlarge the body of labor engaged in agricultural production. Such efforts were meant to change the nature of rural production to fit the desires of the state. Sometimes forced relocation served as a catalyst for the shift to settled life. Many of those pastoralists arriving in Rumeli in the first century of conquest chose to take up full-time agriculture, as was the case for a number of the Tatar groups relocated there in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>182</sup> In such a way, the transfer of peasants and pastoralists allowed greater utilization of the empire's land resources.

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<sup>179</sup> İnalçık (1994), pp.37-41, 160-161.

<sup>180</sup> Faroqhi (1984), p.276.

<sup>181</sup> "Suyun öte tarafında bir gün oturulup Zeyneli ve diğer aşiretleri bin kadar oba ile yerlerinden kaldırulup Erzincan ve Pasin sancaklarında boş ve harap yerlere yerleşmek emirler yazılup beylerine sancak ve zeamet verildi." Naima (1968), p.1312.

<sup>182</sup> Barkan (1953-4), pp.211-212. A further economic role played by the nomadic segments of the population was in transportation. İnalçık (1994), p.39. The resettlement of a group of "kara araplar" in colonies along trade routes in northwestern Anatolia in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century proves an example of a move instituted to this effect, İnalçık (1983).

## **reconstruction and urban development**

The economic development of the empire's cities was the single most important objective driving the transfer of population in the early Ottoman Empire. Transfers were used to build up the capital of Edirne in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and proved a central pillar in the reconstruction of Salonica, İstanbul, and Trabzon in the 15<sup>th</sup>.

The employment of transfers in city-building is a common feature of a large number of imperial states. Some, as in the Ottoman cases, occurred within the context of rebuilding areas ravaged in the course of conquest. Others occurred following bouts of plague. Still others were initiated with the declaration of a capital city. Cieza de Leon's description of the Inca capital of Cuzco, for example, places primary emphasis on the diversity of communities imported from throughout the empire.<sup>183</sup> Similarly, large numbers of deportees were used in the construction of the Ming capitals of Nanjing in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and Beijing in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>184</sup>

In the both the Ottoman and Ming examples, the governments drew on both the land-poor classes (those who had nothing to lose and could be most easily shifted) as well as skilled and wealthy groups (those who had the greatest to contribute); the first established the city's labor base, which the second flesh out specific segments of the urban economy.<sup>185</sup> In the case of the Beijing, "wealthy families from all the southern provinces, but especially the richest areas of the Southern Capital and Chekiang, were among the first to be moved. This decision insured that the new capital would be

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<sup>183</sup> Cieza (1959), p.148.

<sup>184</sup> Ho (1959), pp136-9; Farmer (1976), pp.148-52.

<sup>185</sup> This formula was articulated by Lowry (1986b), pp.323-5. In the Ottoman case, the establishment unskilled labor was undertaken primarily in the earliest stages of the project; culling of skilled human capital continued for many decades afterwards.

populated with people of substance, solid citizens who would bring wealth and culture with them.”<sup>186</sup> Much of this process in the case of İstanbul has been related. In addition to a large number of calls extended to specific individuals and communities, Kritovoulos informs us of the selective settlement applied to the large bodies of manpower brought to the city from campaign: “As many of the Peloponnesians whom he had brought back as seemed to be better than the rest in their knowledge of trades. The rest of them he placed in the surrounding villages...”<sup>187</sup> Such tinkering with the distribution of skilled manpower in the empire continued into the reign of the Conqueror’s grandson, Sultan Süleyman I (1520-66). As seen in the transfer of the fishing communities from Trabzon to İstanbul, such moves continued to be executed some sixty to eighty years after the conquest. Such transfers could have a large impact on the actual composition of the city; Lowry states in the case of Salonica, for example, that “there was a direct correlation between the prominence of these trades and industries in Salonica, and the nature of the populace *sürgü*ned there by Mehmed II.”<sup>188</sup>

In addition to increasing the general prestige of the city, such actions presented the state with specific economic advantages. In creating superpowered economic centers, the Ottomans were leveraging the same advantages that bring tradesmen together in an open economy, the process of agglomeration. The concentration of trades simplified and reduced the cost of bringing in materials and marketing finished goods; it facilitated taxation and put the labor force within direct reach of the state for employment in public projects. This control-through-consolidation method was leveraged in the Inca case as well, with craftsmen being relocated to special

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<sup>186</sup> Farmer (1976), p.149.

<sup>187</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), pp.139-40.

<sup>188</sup> Lowry (1986b), p.337.

communities to allow fulfillment of their state labor responsibilities and ease the task of storing and distributing goods.<sup>189</sup>

As has been mentioned, there was also a major effort to develop the hinterlands of cities, as peasants were brought to settle around Edirne and, on a much larger scale, İstanbul; such moves paralleled Ming settlement of the northern provinces surrounding the new capital, a particularly underdeveloped region at the start of the project.<sup>190</sup>

### **looting labor**

Drawing off the labor resources, both skilled and unskilled, of newly conquered realms was a central feature of a large number of transfers instituted in the development of various sites in the empire. As discussed earlier, conquered populations were a group over which the state could exercise power with a great deal of impunity. Considered purely economically, if the revival of conquered lands was aimed at bringing the territory into the imperial economic system, the removal of populace aimed at bringing in its manpower. İbn Kemal's statement concerning the campaigns against Karaman in central Anatolia in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century that "orders were issued that from each city some hundreds of households of craftsmen and wealthy citizens should be selected for transfer"<sup>191</sup> appears to have been applicable throughout the conquests of the period. As we have seen, three consecutive sultans drew off conquests in Serbia, mainland Greece, the Morea, the islands of the Aegean, central and eastern Anatolia, Azerbaijan and Egypt in the peopling of the imperial capital. While shipment of manpower coming in from the earliest conquests contained both standard and skilled labor, later transfers came to focus solely on this second sector.

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<sup>189</sup> Julien (1983), pp.78-9.

<sup>190</sup> Farmer (1976), p.149.

<sup>191</sup> İbn Kemal, quoted in İnalçık (1969-70), p.238.

Once again, the Ottomans were in good company with their neighbors and predecessors. The deportation of skilled labor for conquered cities was a major theme throughout the conquests of Genghis and Ögedey Khan in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and Timur in the 14<sup>th</sup> century; Doukas, for example, relates that before confronting the Ottomans at Ankara, Timur razed Damascus and Aleppo and “transported many craftsmen to Persia”.<sup>192</sup> The Safavids used the campaigns of 1604-5 to bring some 3,000 Armenian craftsmen from Julfa, on the Ottoman-Safavid border, to Isfahan, where they were settled in the neighborhood of “New Julfa.”<sup>193</sup>

The Ming utilized captured labor as well, settling 7,000 captured Annamese artisans in Beijing in 1407.<sup>194</sup> The same opportunities were not missed by the Incas; Following the conquest of Chimu, for example, “Topa Inca, with his usual clemency, [ordered] the survivors to devote themselves to tilling their fields... As the [Chimus] were so skillful at working metals, many of them were taken to Cuzco and the capitals of the provinces, where they wrought jewelry, vessels, and goblets of gold and silver, and whatever else they were ordered.”<sup>195</sup> As shown, large portions of manpower were relocated from conquered cities in an attempt to strengthen the prestige and economic power of the imperial center.

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<sup>192</sup> Doukas (1975), p.90.

<sup>193</sup> Morgan (1988), p.138.

<sup>194</sup> Mote and Twitchett, pp238-9.

<sup>195</sup> Cieza (1959), p.328.

## Part III. Methods and Pitfalls

The methods by which the Ottoman *sürgüns*, or population transfers, were executed varied according to the objectives and context. The institution no doubt changed over time. While the transfers of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, mainly the movement of tribesmen and conquered peasantry, appear in the chronicles as fairly opportunistic disposals of population, by the 15<sup>th</sup> century the policy had taken on an institutional character, a trend which paralleled the development of the Ottoman state as a centralized bureaucratic order.

Some transfers were leveled against communities on a case-by-case basis, such as in instances of alleviating specific threats (deporting rebellious tribes), opportunistic grabs for manpower (removing captives from newly conquered areas), or fulfilling small-scale needs (populating a fortress). Others, generally deliberately undertaken projects requiring large-scale insertion of human capital, were instituted through general calls for manpower which could then be followed up by calls for individuals or groups answering specific needs.

Mehmet II's use of forced transfers in the repopulation of İstanbul took on this latter form.<sup>196</sup> As Kritovoulos relates immediately following the capture of the city, “he sent an order in the form of an imperial command to every part of his realm, that as many inhabitants as possible be transferred to the City, not only Christians but also his own people and many of the Hebrews,” and later, “he gathered them there from all parts

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<sup>196</sup> For close examinations of this process, see Lowry (1986b) and İnalçık (1973).

of Asia and Europe, and he transferred them with all possible care and speed...”<sup>197</sup> This broad culling of manpower was then augmented over a long period of time with summons issued to specific individuals and communities—the wealthy citizens of Bursa and the fishermen from Trabzon, for example<sup>198</sup>—as well as the human spoils of conquest.

Some general calls took on the form of a human tax, paralleling the collection of Christian youths within the *devşirme* system or the taxation of sheep.<sup>199</sup> In the colonization of Cyprus in the 1570s, the *sürgün* project for which—thanks to Barkan’s studies—we have the most complete documentation, one out of every ten households of districts throughout Anatolia were to be set aside for immigration to the island.<sup>200</sup> The Mongol Khan Hülegü, according to one chronicler, undertook the reconstruction of his Armenian holdings in a similar fashion: “from each inhabited village he selected householders, one from a small and two or three from large villages ... and sent them to all destroyed places to undertake rebuilding.”<sup>201</sup> In the case of Cyprus, the criteria for selection targeted both those individuals lying on the periphery of society and the economy—those lacking land or occupying marginal land, share-croppers, recent immigrants, unemployed bachelors, as well as those convicted of petty offenses such as usury—as well as those possessing specific trades skills—cobblers, cloth-makers, cooks, candle-makers, grocers, tanners, blacksmith, carpenters, stonemasons, and so on.<sup>202</sup> A

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<sup>197</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), pp93, 105.

<sup>198</sup> İnalçık (1969-70), p.237; Lowry (1976), pp.144-8.

<sup>199</sup> İnalçık (1994). The sheep tax in the 16<sup>th</sup> century called for one out of every hundred sheep to be turned over to the provincial administrator. Tapu Tahrir, no.370, in Barkan (1953-4), p.225.

<sup>200</sup> Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), pp.550-51.

<sup>201</sup> Grigor of Akanc’, quoted in Allsen (1987), p.90.

<sup>202</sup> “şehir ve kasabatda sakin olan erbab-ı hiref ve ehl-i sanayi’den pabuccu ve başmakçı ve derzi ve takyeci ve kemhacı ve mutaf ve hallac ve kazzaz ve aşçı ve başçı ve mumcu ve semerci ve nalband ve bakkal ve debbağ ve demürcü ve dülgör ve benna ve taşçı ve kuyumcu ve kazancı...” Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), pp.550-51.

similar, if not identical process was employed several decades earlier in the colonization of Rhodes and may or may not have been employed in the many transfers of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>203</sup> Such a dual approach – aiming both for the marginal and the valuable elements in society – was common to such projects. In the repopulation of Beijing and its hinterland in the first decade of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Ming not only made use of landless peasants and convicts but additionally to targeted wealthy families who would be able to contribute directly to the reconstruction.<sup>204</sup>

The issue of exemptions was important in the case of general as well as specific calls. Just as certain areas and populations were exempted from imperial taxes, some territories, such as the port town of Sinop in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, were granted a status of permanent protection guaranteeing freedom from being utilized in a state transfer project.<sup>205</sup> Other territories and communities were specifically excused in the course of implementation, such as in the case an exemption decree (*müaf hükümü*) issued for the city of Ayasoluğ (Ephesus) absolving it from the duty of sending men to the island of Rhodes.<sup>206</sup>

Transfers occurring in the course of conquest generally took a somewhat different form. Many took place right at the time of the occupation of the territory, in which case the state had the benefit of being able to use the conquering forces in the execution of the move. Those transferred could constitute either the entire or a portion of the population, with others being drafted into state service, distributed as booty, sold

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<sup>203</sup> Mention is made of “a few people from every town of the people of the whole of the province” being ordered to settle on the island: “*amme-i vilayetin ehalisinden her kasabadan bir kaç nefer kimesne cezire-i mezkurda temekkün etdirilmek emr olundukda...*” Tapu Tahrir. no.285, in Barkan (1949-50), pp.546-8.

<sup>204</sup> Farmer (1976), pp.148-52.

<sup>205</sup> Faroqhi (1984), p.107.

<sup>206</sup> Tapu Tahrir. no.285, in Barkan (1949-50), pp.546-8.



in auction, or left in residence. Several years after the conquest of İstanbul, for example, Doukas relates that when the Sultan captured a fortress near Smederovo he “took all the inhabitants captive,” then “after claiming half of the captives for himself, ... sent them to populate the villages outside Constantinople.”<sup>207</sup> Following the conquest of Mitylene, on the island of Lesbos, an Italian chronicler writes that “a census was taken of the citizens, who were divided between the worthless who stayed behind, those who were sold at public auction, and the remainder, some 10,000, who were transported to Constantinople.”<sup>208</sup> Other utilization of conquered populations appears to have come several years after the initial conquest, such as in the transfer in 1460 of the populations of Old and New Foça (captured in 1455) and the islands of Imbros, Lemnos, Thasos, and Samothrace (1456) to Istanbul.<sup>209</sup> It is probably not insignificant that the transfer occurred after having taken stock of the newly available resources – the practice of assessing manpower through the recording of population registers (*tahrir defters*) provided both a portrait of the empire’s taxable resources as well as an account of the total human resources available to the state.<sup>210</sup>

A number of archival documents and narrative anecdotes provide us with an understanding of the process by which these transfers were executed. The *sürgün* orders

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<sup>207</sup> Doukas (1975), p.243; a similar scene is described by Kritovoulos following the destruction of several fortresses in the Morea, Kritovoulos (1954), p.157.

<sup>208</sup> Doukas (1975), note pp.322-3. Chalcocondyles, quoted in Lowry (1976), p.9, describes the events following the conquest of Trabzon in similar terms: “Dividing the population into portions, he kept one for himself, making of it later in his court *Silahdars* and *Sipahi Oğlans*... Another section he settled in Byzantium, and the third he made Janissaries and laborers.”

<sup>209</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), pp.148-9, 159; İnalcık (1969-70), p.238.

<sup>210</sup> Such practices were common to bureaucratic tax-driven states. The Incas, too, made a point of conducting a census shortly after bringing new acquisitions into the empire, but as this was completed following the main body of population reshufflings it does not seem to have played an important role in the process. We might assume that such data proved useful later as the state set about the mobilization of manpower towards projects such as the construction of Cuzco, Cobo (1979), p.194.

were nearly always directly linked to the court of the sultan, though a few instances exist in which instigation appears to have occurred at lower levels, such as an instance of a group of peasants relocated from Saruhan to Rumeli by a notable from Trabzon who was attempting to establish a fief (*timar*) there.<sup>211</sup> The documents from the Cyprus transfer provide us with the role played by officials in the provincial government. The majority of orders relating to the collection and embarkation of transferees are addressed to the provincial *kadis* (judges); some are extended to them as a group, while others address individuals with specific instructions.<sup>212</sup> It is evident from a number of the orders that there was communication between provincial officials and the capital; for example, one correspondence is addressed to the governor-general of Cyprus inquiring whether or not the 1,000 households under a certain officer had arrived on the island.<sup>213</sup> The orders also mention the role of officials (*mübaşir*)—who are warned against turning to corruption—and “useful men,” sometimes soldiers assigned to execute the move.<sup>214</sup>

The provincial administrators were then charged with the transport of the transferees, along with their flocks and oxen, to the port for shipment to the island, where they would come under the command of the local governor-general (*beylerbeyi*).<sup>215</sup> The use of portions of the imperial fleet in transporting transferees appears in a number of sources. For the transport of the populations of Old and New Foça to İstanbul, for example, Kritovoulos relates that Mehmet II “sent Zaganos,

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<sup>211</sup> Barkan (1951-2), p.64, based on a *tahrir defter* from the *liva* of Saruhan.

<sup>212</sup> See Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), pp.550-51, for example, versus Ahkam Defteri, yp.310 in Barkan (1949-50), pp.555.

<sup>213</sup> Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.69, in Barkan (1949-50), p.560.

<sup>214</sup> Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.69, in Barkan (1949-50), pp.550-552. The phrasing used is “*dahi yarar ademlere koşub*,” In the transfer of *kızılbaş* to Cyprus several decades later specifies to appoint soldiers to the task. “*hisar erlerine koşub*.” Mühimme Defteri, no.33 p.206, in Barkan (1953-4), pp.229-30.

<sup>215</sup> Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), p.552. In the case of the relatives of the executed *kızılbaş* transported to Budin in Hungary we also see the *beylerbeyi* indicated as the recipient of the transferees. Mühimme Defteri, no.6 p.575, in Barkan (1953-4), p.229.

Governor of Gallipoli and admiral of the entire fleet, to the islands with forty ships. When this man arrived there, he removed some peoples of Thasos and of Samothrace and settled them likewise.”<sup>216</sup> Deportations following conquest often made use of the ships which had been used in the course of the conquest, such as in the removal of groups from Trabzon and Lesbos.<sup>217</sup> The Italian chronicler presents us with a less than ideal portrait of this phase of the operation in the movement of captives from Mitylene to Istanbul in 1462, noting as well the attention paid to proper accounting: “Many died from overcrowded conditions on the transports; the right ear of each corpse was cut off as evidence of death and the name was removed from the lists to obviate disputes as to ownership.”<sup>218</sup>

The emphasis on keeping track of the people and goods involved through close record keeping is apparent throughout the orders for Cyprus. Registers compiled at the source location were to be copied to both the capital and the governor-general of the destination and lists completed at various stages were then used to verify arrivals and track desertion.<sup>219</sup> The prescribed punishment of those who went missing after having been registered for the transfer was harsh: “those who oppose my [the sultan’s] command and arrive in other areas are to be executed wherever they are found.”<sup>220</sup>

These transfers, of course, could not take place by the threat of force alone, and it was of maximum benefit to the state for the transferees to accept their fate and become

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<sup>216</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), p.159. Trabzon in 1461 presents a similar case: Doukas (1975), p.259; Kritovoulos (1954), pp.173-6; Chalcocondyles, quoted in Lowry (1976), p.9.

<sup>217</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), pp.173-6; Doukas (1975), note pp.322-3.

<sup>218</sup> Doukas (1975), note pp.322-3.

<sup>219</sup> Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), pp.551-2.

<sup>220</sup> “*Ve bilcümle emr-i şerifim üzere Kıbrısa yazılıb ve kefilü ahnuh ihrac defterine kayd olunub davarile Kıbrısa gönderilenlerden biri gaybet idiüb emrime muhalif ahar diyara vara her ne mahalde bulunursa onda siyaset olunur.*” Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), p.552.

productive in as short a time as possible. Cieza de Leon remarks on the same issue faced by the Incas in dealing with the *mitimae* settlers:

As the Incas were aware of how reluctant peoples are to leave their native land and the surroundings they know, in order that they should cheerfully accept this exile, they treated these people with special consideration; to many they gave arm bands of gold and of silver, and clothing of wool, and feathers, and women, and they enjoyed other privileges... To these lands were given, and flocks, and all the provisions they needed until they could harvest what they planted... For a number of years no tribute was exacted of these new settlers, but on the contrary, they were given women, coca, and food so that they would carry out the work of settlement with better will.<sup>221</sup>

The Ottomans similarly had a number of measures by which to assuage and assist the displaced populations. Kritovoulos tells us of the settlement of Greeks from the Morea whom “he placed in the surrounding region [of Istanbul] in villages, distributing to them grain and yokes of oxen and every other necessary supply they needed for the time being, so that they were able to give themselves to agriculture.”<sup>222</sup> Nearly all transfers were accompanied by the distribution of lands; İnalçık cites the granting of *timars* in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries to the nomads under the frontier lords such as Paşayiğit Bey, as evidence “that in the frontier districts the deportees as warriors were treated in an exceptionally generous way.”<sup>223</sup> Those individuals and communities whose removal had little justification—those not among the highly ‘disposable’ populations—were given

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<sup>221</sup> Cieza (1959), pp.60-2.

<sup>222</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), pp.139-40.

<sup>223</sup> İnalçık (1954), p.125.

greater compensations. Mehmet II brought to Istanbul the wealthy Greeks of Edirne, Filibe, Gelibolu, and Bursa, “giving to some of them houses, to other building lots in whatever part of the city they preferred, and to still others every sort of facility in needed benefit, most generously for the time being.”<sup>224</sup> When the objective was the removal of notables or tribesmen from positions dangerous to the state, promises of profitable lands or the opportunity to participate in frontier warfare were techniques employed to make the move worth their while.

Taxation too, the fundament of the relationship between state and subject in many empires, played a key part in the attempt to ease the shock of transfer. The extension of tax breaks—most often exemption from extraordinary taxes, the *avarız-ı divaniye* and the *tekalif-i örfiye*—were a common means of compensation for special services such as guard duty or providing iron or firewood. Tax benefits were also used to encourage voluntary migration to certain regions of the empire.<sup>225</sup> Populations holding the status of *sürgün*, that is, those transferred by state decree, were awarded similar dispensations. The peasants transferred to Cyprus, for example, were exempted from the agricultural tithe for a period of two years.<sup>226</sup> The *sürgün* community of Silistre, having evidently been established in the area for a number of years, paid a tax on sheep and oxen and the agricultural tithe, but were exempted from the extraordinary *avarız* tax<sup>227</sup> The Christian families assigned to the dangerous pass near Yenişehir, being both

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<sup>224</sup> Kritovoulos (1954), pp.148-9.

<sup>225</sup> See Faroqhi (1984), pp.60-1, 268, 275. İnalçık (1954), also relying on the documents published by Barkan, addresses the issue in similar terms, p.123. I have referenced Faroqhi (1984) and İnalçık (1994) for the administrative terminology in this section.

<sup>226</sup> Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334, in Barkan (1949-50), p.550: “*ol cezireye varanların iki yıla değin öşür ve hukuku alınmayub af olunmak üzere...*” p552: “*ikişer yıllık hasılı alınmaya degü emrim oluduğün reyayaya tenbih ve ilan eyleyüb cezire-i mezbureye tergib eyleyesiz.*”

<sup>227</sup> Tapu Tahrir, no.370, in Barkan (1953-4), p.225.

transferred and assigned guard duty, were excused from the agricultural tithe and the *avarız* and *tekalif* taxes.<sup>228</sup>

Regarding the long-term administration of transferred communities, we again see some variation according to the context of the move. As noted in the works of İnalçık and Lowry, a distinction was made in urban settings between areas made up of groups transferred from elsewhere, often labeled as *cemaats* (communities), and long-standing or naturally settled districts, or *mahalles*.<sup>229</sup> Population registers often indicated the origins of these imported groups and had a greater tendency to record professional affiliations than patronyms, a practice which Lowry has suggested was meant to help keep track of the new immigrants;<sup>230</sup> they may also be significant in consideration of the importance placed on bringing individuals and groups with specific trade skills to flesh out various sectors of the urban economy. With time, as the foreign elements put down roots in the city, the distinction of *cemaat* would then fade away.<sup>231</sup> We see a similar situation in the case presented by Barkan of the agriculturalists established in Silistre, who, despite being distributed throughout several villages, remained as a distinct taxation unit (labeled as a *zeamet-i sürgünan*) under an independent official (*subaşı*) for a number of decades.<sup>232</sup> The Bulgarian villages placed in western Anatolia in the 15<sup>th</sup> century appear to have been given a similar administrative distinction.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Tapu ve Kadastro Umum Müdürlüğü Arşivi, no.75, in Barkan (1951-2), p.64: “*öşürlerin ve rüsümlerin almıya ve avarızı divaniyeden ve tekalif-i örfiyeden muaf ve müsellemler olalar...*”

<sup>229</sup> İnalçık (1973), p.239; Lowry (1986b), p.326.

<sup>230</sup> Lowry (1986b), pp.326-7. See also Lowry (1976), pp.144-8.

<sup>231</sup> Lowry (1976), p.41.

<sup>232</sup> Barkan (1953-4), p.225, citing Tapu Tahrir, no.370.

<sup>233</sup> Uzunçarşılı (1947), p.181. He cites an entry in *tahrir defter* for the *kaza* of Mihaliç: “*karye-i Bulgarlar, Rumeli’den sürgünlerdir. Hassa-i padişahi Akhisar’da has olan yoz korusunda olurlar ve harac dahi verirler.*” Tapu Tahrir, no.111 p.179.

Though transfer could at times present the opportunity for advancement in the world, it was in nearly all situations a disruptive force, often met with unwillingness on the part of those involved. Resistance in the Ottoman case took on several forms. Some, especially those with influence, attempted to flaunt the orders or negotiate their way out of them. The wealthy citizens of Bursa attempted to avoid deportation to İstanbul, producing some amount of paperwork as a result.<sup>234</sup> The notables of central Anatolia, whose deportation was ordered during campaigns against the emirate of Karaman, were evidently able to gain the favor of the official put in charge of the project; his subsequent efforts to transfer poorer subjects in their place were discovered and corrected by the court.<sup>235</sup> Officials at the capital could intervene on behalf of those targeted for transfer, as occurred in the course of the Cyprus *sürgün*.<sup>236</sup>

Other transfer groups deserted *en route*. The nomads, while in other respects one of the greatest candidates for movement throughout the empire, proved a particularly difficult group to gather and drive to a destination. Several groups marked for transfer to Cyprus killed those directing the move and took up banditry in Anatolia. Serious commands were placed upon the provincial judges of Anatolia ordering the arrest of those who attempted to flee the project.<sup>237</sup>

The population registers examined by Lowry show a decrease in the number of Muslims in both Selanik and Trabzon by the early 16<sup>th</sup> century which he suggests may show transferred populations returning to their areas of origin.<sup>238</sup> As map four shows, the often short distances involved would have made such repatriation an easy task.

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<sup>234</sup> İnalçık (1969-70), p.237.

<sup>235</sup> İnalçık (1969-70), p.238, citing İbn Kemal and Eremya Çelebi Kömürcüyan.

<sup>236</sup> Faroqhi (1984), p.283.

<sup>237</sup> Barkan (1949-50), p.522. See Mühimme Defteri, no.19 p.334.

<sup>238</sup> Lowry (1977), pp.238-9; Lowry (1986b), p.333.

Faroqhi, examining a number of *mühimme defters* not included in Barkan's study, pronounced the result of the Cyprus transfer project "mediocre": "A rescript dated several years after the initiation of the project remarks that of 12,000 families or households deported to Cyprus, only a few hundred remained."<sup>239</sup>

In summary, if labor was a manipulatable resource available to the state, it at times proved a difficult one. The relocation of entire communities required a determined application of central authority and careful coordination on the part of the officials involved.

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<sup>239</sup> Faroqhi (1984), p.283.



## Part IV. Outcomes and Conclusion

As the objectives and conditions involved in the many Ottoman population transfers varied greatly, so too must a consideration of the outcomes of the moves address a number of angles. First, to what degree were the Ottomans successful in utilizing the transfer of population in and out of newly conquered territories to meet their objectives of holding dominion over them? In the short-term, the deportation of conquered peoples as slaves and communities certainly served the objectives of bringing control over the area, particularly in holding strategic sites and in isolating those who would have been capable of mounting resistance to the new regime. The wholesale clearing of territories in Serbia, the Morea, and the islands of the Aegean would have left little able-bodied manpower to impede Ottoman rule there. The deportation of tribes directly resisting expansion into Anatolia was undertaken on a scale which would have served considerably in clearing the path of the armies advancing against the Turkish Beys holding out against growing Ottoman dominance in the region. Colonization by civilian and paramilitary communities in Europe allowed the expansion of the Ottoman presence beyond cities and garrisons into the countryside.

Crucial to the Ottoman success in Europe, however, was the ability to accommodate members of the ruling elites into the new system of governance, thus turning a potential source of resistance into a valuable contribution to the growing Ottoman ruling class. By the selective application of hard force and conciliatory measures, the Ottomans were able to push their borders out to the Adriatic and into

Central Europe within the first two centuries of their regime. While the degree to which transfers were important to this process does not seem to match what commentators attribute to similar practices under the Inca, deportation and colonization no doubt oil the process of consolidating control.

The place of population transfer within the larger issue of long term demographic change in the Balkans, Aegean, and Eastern Mediterranean is also important to our consideration of the policy. To what degree did such change take place and what role did transfers play in bringing it about? The Islamification of the empire's holdings in Europe indeed constitutes a central question in Ottoman history. On the whole, the Balkans were certainly neither Islamicized nor Turkified to the extent that Anatolia had been. Many Muslim communities resulted from conversion rather than settlement. In Bosnia and Hercegovina, for example, Todorov writes that "Islamization took place without massive Turkish colonization."<sup>240</sup> Nevertheless, Turkish settlement occurred on a scale large enough to have what İnalçık has called "a revolutionary effect on the demography of the eastern Balkans and Thrace."<sup>241</sup> Some districts were fully dominated by Türkmen immigrants by the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in particular those that served as the destination of a number of transfers, such as Serez and Filibe.<sup>242</sup> The relative importance of voluntary and forced migration in these cases is difficult to evaluate. Regarding 'colonization' efforts further south, we find the role of the transfers as a vehicle of demographic change equally obscure: the ratio of Muslim and Christian inhabitants on Cyprus, which had

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<sup>240</sup> Todorov (1983), p.51

<sup>241</sup> İnalçık (1994), pp.34-5.

<sup>242</sup> İnalçık (1994), p.35.

undergone a conscious colonization project, and Crete, which had not, appear to have reached very similar levels in the two centuries after their conquests.<sup>243</sup>

The channeling of the empire's nomadic population remains an important issue. The reconsolidation of state control over Anatolia under Mehmet I in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century may have owed a great deal to the sultan's ability to shift both tribesmen and aristocracies onto foreign lands. The difficulty of revolt on the western frontier and the headaches that border-hopping pastoralists continued to cause the centralized state, however, reveal that transfer to Europe was not an end-all solution. The deterioration of nomad-state relations corresponds in part with the state's increasing inability to find a place for the tribalist in the new ruling order. The earlier days, in which it was possible to direct such factions to the European frontier, had proved much easier in this regard. Though other factors were also at play, it was not until the flow of nomadic peoples into southeastern Europe had stalled by the later 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries that the Türkmen uprisings in Anatolia took on such endemic proportions.

The impact of the policies launched under the sultans Murad II and Mehmet II for the reconstruction of the conquered Byzantine cities of Salonica, Istanbul, and Trabzon was far reaching. In each case, the cities were not only restored to economic health, but transformed into distinctly Ottoman cities which reflected the character of peoples throughout the empire, much like Cieza de Leon's description of Cuzco, "full of strange and foreign peoples".<sup>244</sup> In the case of Salonica, however, the greatest growth occurred with the influx of Jewish immigrants in the later 15<sup>th</sup> century, not with the

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<sup>243</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> century Cyprus appears to have been 20-30% Muslim, Hill (1952), pp.31-2, while Crete in the same period may have been 30-50%, Greene (2000), pp.52-3.

<sup>244</sup> Cieza (1959) p.148. Lowry also emphasizes the deliberate "metropolitan" character established through the use of population transfers, Lowry (1986b), pp.336-8.

multiple transfers which preceded.<sup>245</sup> Though it seems probable that the reconstruction of İstanbul might have been possible through by the forces of voluntary migration alone, the use of transfers in stocking it with the most productive resource base that the empire could yield no doubt had a large impact on the speed at which the capital once again became the preeminent city of the Eastern Mediterranean.

There is no doubt that the subject of *sürgün* has left a considerable imprint on Ottoman history. Forced population transfer indeed served as a powerful tool in the formation and maintenance of the early Ottoman state. The goal of this study has been to address several of the mechanisms by which this action has functioned as a tool of policy, and in a broader sense to understand the dynamics by which states and populations have interacted throughout the course of their history together.

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<sup>245</sup> Lowry (1980-1), p.264.

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