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## THE QUESTION OF TRABZON'S EFRENCİYAN POPULATION : 1486 - 1583

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### ABSTRACT

The following article examines the 'fate' of the **Efrençiyân** or foreign residents of the city of Trabzon following the Ottoman conquest of the city in 1461. These foreigners were the remnants of the large Genoese and Venetian merchant communities which had played an important role in the city's commercial life in the three hundred years preceding the Ottoman conquest. It has generally been assumed that following the Ottoman conquest these elements returned to their places of origin. In the present study, via an examination of 15th and 16th century Ottoman **Tahrir Defter**s (Cadastral Surveys) it is shown that as late as 1583 this **Efrençiyân** community still remained as an identifiable ethnic and religious (Roman Catholic) minority in the city of Trabzon.

In the course of a full-length study on the growth and changes in the ethnic configuration of the city of Trabzon in the 15th and 16th centuries, one of the more intriguing questions which has arisen is just who were that portion of the city's population referred to in the Ottoman **Tahrir Defter**s as **Efrençiyân**? Were they as the name implies Europeans? A residue of the Genoese and Venetian merchants who had previously played a major role in the city's commercial life? If so, why were they listed in the Ottoman Tax Surveys? Even more intriguing, why at a time when Latin economic activities in the Black Sea are generally believed to be on the decline does the **Tahrir** compiled c. 1523 show this **Efrençiyân** community to encompass 159 households (**hane**), plus 24 widows (**bive**), and 13 unmarried males (**mücerred**), or approximately 15% of the city's total population? In the following communication, via a detailed examination of the four extant **Tahrir Defter**s containing information on the city of Trabzon, I will attempt to resolve these questions.

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**TRABZON TAHRİR DEFTERS :**

We are fortunate in that four **Tahrir Defters** from Trabzon have survived. Dated respectively c. 1486, c. 1523, 1553 and 1583<sup>1</sup> they provide us with a broad base for the study of the city's population in the late 15th and 16th centuries. The surveys of c. 1486, 1553, and 1583 are of the type known as **Mufassal** (detailed) which means that they supply us with the names of the city's taxpayers listed according to the **Mahalles** wherein they resided, while that of c. 1523 is an **İcmal** (Summary) **Defter** and supplies only a list of the city's **Mahalles** with the total number of tax-payers who lived in each of them.

To date the most detailed analysis of the population figures presented in any of these **Defters** is Professor M. Tayyib Gökbilgin's valuable study entitled: "XVI Yüzyıl Başlarında Trabzon Livası ve Doğu Karadeniz Bölgesi" which appeared in **Belleten** (Vol. XXVI, No. 102; pp. 293-337) in 1962. (Hereafter cited as: Gökbilgin, **Trabzon**). In this work Gökbilgin presents the population totals for Trabzon from the **İcmal Defter** of c. 1523 and then makes some general comments based on a comparison of these figures with those from the survey of 1553. As regards the city's **Efrençiyân** population he states that there were three **Frenk Mahalles** in 1523, listed under the heading **Mahalle-i Efrençiyân-ı şehir:**<sup>2</sup>

1) Mahalle-i Efreñç: 3	40 Hane; 9 Mücerred; 12 Bive.
2) Mahalle-i Zafunda nam-İ diğér Çölmekçi:	102 Hane; 4 Mücerred; 12 Bive.
3) Mahalle-i Beksid nam-İ diğér Değirmendereseli:	17 Hane;

for a total **Efrençiyân** pop. of: 159 Hane; 13 Mücerred; 24 Bive. He further remarks that by the middle of the century (i.e., in the survey of c. 1553) there was an influx of Christian peasants into **Çölmekçi** and that one of the **Frenk Mahalles** has shrunk by 49 **nefer**.<sup>4</sup>

Gökbilgin's figures have been used in two subsequent studies as well. The first of these is the **İslâm Ansiklopedisi** article on "Trabzon" which appeared in 1974.

1 The first three of these **Tahrir Defters** are stored in the **Başbakanlık Arşivi** in Istanbul under the following headings :

- Maliyeden Müdevver Defter** No. 828 from c. 892/1486 (Hereafter cited as : M. M. No. 828).
- Tapu - Tahrir Defteri** No. 387, undated, but c. 1523 (Hereafter cited as : T. T. No. 387).
- Tapu - Tahrir Defteri** No. 288, from the year 961/1553 (Hereafter cited as T. T. No. 288), while the fourth is housed in the Archives of the **Tapu ve Kadastro Umum Müdürlüğü** in Ankara, under the classification :
- Kuyudu Kadimi Fihristi** No. 29, from the year 991/1583. (Hereafter cited as : T. ve Kad. No. 29).

2 Gökbilgin, **Trabzon**. p. 297.

3 T. T. No. 387, pp. 716 - 717.

4 Gökbilgin, **Trabzon**. p. 298.

Written by Professor M.C. Şehabeddin Tekindağ,<sup>5</sup> this article gives Gökbilgin's figures from the survey of c. 1523 (through it fails to mention the **Mücerred** and **Bive** segments of the population) and repeats his general statements on changes in the middle of the century.<sup>6</sup>

The second study utilizing Gökbilgin's figures from the survey of c. 1523 is an article by Ronald Jennings entitled, "Urban Population in Anatolia in The Sixteenth Century: A Study Of Kayseri, Karaman, Amasya, Trabzon and Erzerum."<sup>7</sup> In this work Jennings attempts among other things to compare the c. 1523 **Efrençiyân** figures with those contained in the surveys of 1553 and 1583. The problems which he encounters in the course of this effort lead him to hypothesize that Trabzon's **Efrençiyân Mahalles** were either subject "to a strong Rum-izing influence" or that there was "a moving of Rum into these Mahalles," during the sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup> As will become clear in the course of this article his confusion stems from a basic misreading of the **Tahrir Defter**s which he is using.

Each of the above studies take as their starting points the **İcmal Defter** of c. 1523 which lists the suprisingly high figure of approximately 15% of the city's population as **Efrençiyân**. Not only does this figure seem suspiciously inflated but it also happens to appear in the only one of the four extant Trabzon **Tahrir Defter**s where it can not be checked for accuracy by an examination of the names which are listed in the **Mufassal Defter**s of c. 1486, 1553 and 1583 under each **mahalle**.

When questioning the **Efrençiyân** figures presented in the survey of c. 1523 the first question we must ask is are they consistent with the information provided in the survey of c. 1486 which preceded it and those of 1553 and 1583 which follow it? in short the answer is no. A closer look at the relevant portions of each of these **Defter**s will illustrate these inconsistencies and at the same time provide us with an explanation for their appearance in the first place :

#### SURVEY OF C. 1486 :

The survey of c. 1486 compiled only 25 years after the Ottoman conquest of Trabzon lists the **Efrençiyân** population as follows:

- 1) MAHALLE-İ EFRENCİYAN-İ GENEVİZ: 33 Hane, 9 Bive, 3 Mücerred.
- 2) MAHALLE-İ EFRENCİYAN-İ VENEDİK: 1 Hane, 1 Bive, 2 Mücerred.<sup>9</sup>

Here the question posed in the introduction of this paper as to the origins of the **Efrençiyân** population is answered. They are clearly identified as Genoese and Vene-

5 Şehabeddin Tekindağ: "Trabzon", *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 125. cüz (1974), pp. 455-477.

6 *op. cit.* p. 468.

7 This article appeared in: *Int. J. Middle East. Stud.* 7 (1976) pp. 21-57. (Hereafter cited as: Jennings, *Trabzon*).

8 Jennings, *Trabzon*. p. 45.

9 *M. M. No. 828*. pp. 14-15.

tians, in addition an examination of their names bears out their Latin origin. Among the Genoese we can identify the following: Andronikos, Francheska, Rodrigo, Niforos, Kasparhas and Marko; while among the Venetians we find: Koshko the son of Kosro, the window Kokoni, and the Priest Mariano.<sup>10</sup>

Equally interesting is the fact that among the city's Greek **Mahalles** we find the following:

- 1) **MAHALLE-İ PİKŞİD:** 10 Hane. 1 Bive.  
 2) **MAHALLE-İ DAFNUNDA:** 60 Hane, 22 Bive, 4 Mücerred.

The Greek (**Rum**) origin of the residents of these two **mahalles** is also attested to by an examination of their proper names. Among them we find: Yani, Grigor, Lefter, Vasili, Konstantin, Yorgi etc.<sup>11</sup>

Yet a further argument for the non-Latin nature of these two **Mahalles** is the fact that both of their names are Greek in origin. **Pikşid** (Gökbilgin's **Bekşid**) appears to derive from the Greek name **Pyxites** meaning Box-tree,<sup>12</sup> while **Dafnunda** (Gökbilgin's **Zaftunda**) is the accusative form of the Greek **Daphnous**.

We can therefore state with some degree of certainty that in c. 1486 the city of Trabzon had two **Efrençiyân Mahalles** (a Venetian and a Genoese), while among its Greek Mahalles there were a **Pikşid** and a **Dafnunda**.

#### **SURVEY OF 1553:**

A study of the survey of 1553 shows that it lists one:

**MAHALLE-İ EFRENCİYAN:** 32 Hane, 17 Bive.<sup>13</sup>

While among the names of its residents there are a good many which still point to a Latin origin (Carlo, Andro, Andon, Malaros, Nikol) there are others such as Yorgi, Grigor and Yani which are also found in clearly Greek **Mahalles**. On the other hand it can be argued that each of these names also appear in similar forms in Italian.

Among the other **Mahalles** of the city there still appear a **Pikşid** and a **Dafnunda**:

**MAHALLE-İ PİKŞİD NAM-İ DEĞER**  
**DEĞİRMENDERESİ:** 4 Hane, 1 Bive.<sup>14</sup>  
**MAHALLE-İ DAFNUNDA NAM-İ DİĞER**  
**ÇÖLMEKÇİ:** 39 Hane, 39 Bive.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> M. M. No. 828, pp. 14 - 15.

<sup>11</sup> M. M. No. 828, pp. 11 - 12.

<sup>12</sup> Minas Bişşkyan, *Karadeniz Kıyıları Tarih ve Coğrafyası*. (trans. by Hrand Andreasyan) İstanbul, 1969. p. 57.

<sup>13</sup> T. T. No. 288, p. 26.

<sup>14</sup> T. T. No. 288, p. 26.

<sup>15</sup> T. T. No. 288, p. 17.

and in addition there is a second entry for **Dafnunda** with the added explanation **HARİC AMED EST** (new arrivals from outside the city):

**MAHALLE-İ DAFNUNDA NAM-İ DİĞER  
ÇÖLMEKÇİ (HARİC AMED EST):** 36 Hane, 24 Bive.<sup>16</sup>

One interesting change is that **Pikşid** which in c. 1486 was clearly a Greek Christian **Mahalle** has by 1553 become a Muslim **Mahalle**. Its residents are listed as: Mustafa the son of Hasan İskender; his unmarried brother Burhaneddin; İbrahim the son of İskender; his brother Kurd; and, 'Ali son of Abdullah.

**Dafnunda** (indeed both entries) on the other hand is still clearly Greek and Christian with the usual assortment of: Lefter, Manol, Lisavrios, Yorgi, Kostantin, Dimitri, Yani, Todoros etc.

#### SURVEY OF 1583:

Our last survey, that of 1583 clearly carries on the pattern established in those of c. 1486 and 1553. Here we have:

**MAHALLE-İ EFRENCIYAN:** 47 Hane.<sup>17</sup>

While there is no entry for **Pikşid** in this **Defter** there are again two **Dafnundas** :

**MAHALLE-İ DAFNUNDA NAM-İ DİĞER  
ÇÖLMEKÇİ:** 78 Hane.<sup>18</sup>  
**MAHALLE-İ DAFNUNDA DİĞER ...:** 68 Hane.<sup>19</sup>

Here again as in the surveys of c. 1486 and 1553 the proper names of those listed in the **Efrençiyân Mahalle** show a predominately Latin origin, while those listed under **Dafnunda** are clearly Greek.

This evidence clearly points to what I would call a "scribal error" in the survey of c. 1523. When copying the totals from the **Mufassal Defter** (now missing) which served as the basis for the **İcmal Defter** of c. 1523 the scribe mistakenly included the two Greek Mahalles of **Pikşid** and **Dafnunda** under the general heading **MAHALLE-İ EFRENCIYANI- NEFS-İ ŞEHİR**, which in actual fact should only have been applied to the **Mahalle-İ Efrenc**. Once this error has been corrected (that is, **Pikşid** and **Dafnunda** returned to the list of Greek **Mahalles**) the profile which emerges for the city's **Efrençiyân** population in the late 15th and 16th centuries is quite consistent:

<sup>16</sup> T. T. No. 288, pp. 17 - 18.

<sup>17</sup> T. Kad. No. 29, p. 16v.

<sup>18</sup> T. Kad. No. 29, p. 15r.

<sup>19</sup> T. Kad. No. 29, pp. 16v - 16r.

<u>Defter of :</u>	<u>Mahalle</u>	<u>Hane</u>	<u>Bive</u>	<u>Mücerred</u>
c.1486	Combined Genoese and Venetian	34	10	5
c.1523	Efrenç	40	12	9
1553	Efrençiyān	32	0	17
1583	Efrençiyān	47	0	0

In addition to the above we may cite internal evidence in the survey of c.1523 itself as a further support for this interpretation. Namely, the fact that after listing the singular heading: MAHALLE-İ EFRENÇİYAN-I NEFS-İ ŞEHİR the scribe precedes to list not one **mahalle** but three.<sup>20</sup>

The question of how the scribe who copied the c.1523 **İcmal Defter** made this mistake is answered by an examination into the locations of the city's **mahalles**. In 1523 the majority of Trabzon's Greek population were living along the sea coast to the East of the walled city. Slightly further East was the **Efrençiyān Mahalle** and to its East were the Greek **Mahalles** of **Dafnunda** and **Pikşid**. It appears that the scribe copying the **İcmal Defter** of c.1523 (which lists the city's **Mahalles** in a West to East pattern) simply assumed that **Pikşid** and **Dafnunda** which came after the **Efrençiyān Mahalle** were also **Efrençiyān**.

### CONCLUSIONS :

While we have uncovered the scribal error which causes the survey of c.1523 to list such a large **Efrençiyān** population in Trabzon and in so doing amended the figures which are presented in the works of Gökbilgin, Tekindağ and Jennings,<sup>21</sup> we still have not clearly answered all of the questions posed in the introduction of this paper. Namely, what were this groups origins and why are they listed in the Ottoman Tax Surveys at all? Here I would propose the following explanation:

- 1) From the survey of c.1486 which breaks the group down into Venetian and Genoese sub-groups we can state that they were almost certainly a residue of the Latin Catholic Genoese and Venetian merchants who are known to have played an important role commercially under the Grand Komnenoi prior to the Ottoman conquest of Trabzon in 1461.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> T. T. No. 387, p. 717.

<sup>21</sup> Jennings, **Trabzon**, pp. 43-46. Jennings population figures and percentages should be used with the utmost caution. Since he excepts **Pikşid** and **Dafnunda** as **Efrençiyān** on the basis of the c. 1523 survey he continues to treat them as such in the surveys of 1553 and 1583. This means that not only are his **Efrençiyān** figures continuously inflated, but also that his Greek and Muslim figures are inaccurate as well.

<sup>22</sup> For a recent article discussing the role of the Latins in the Black Sea, see: Anthony Bryer: "The Latins in The Euxine." **XVe Congrès International D'Etudes Byzantines: I. Histoire**. Athènes, 1976. pp. 3-20.

- 2) Furthermore the fact that they are listed in the Ottoman Tax Surveys and indeed in the survey of c.1486 the amount of the **ispence** Tax paid by the community is shown (Genoese: 951 **Akçe**; Venetians: 81 **Akçe**),<sup>23</sup> clearly indicates that they were not a protected foreign group within the Empire but were indeed Ottoman subjects. In other words they were a Latin Catholic community which following the Ottoman conquest elected to remain in Trabzon as naturalized Ottoman citizens.
- 3) Finally I would suggest that the meaning of the term **Efrençiyân** in these **Tahrir Defter**s is synonymous with Catholic, i.e., this term is used to distinguish between Trabzon's Greek Ortodox and Latin Catholic communities.

### TRABZON'UN EFRENCIYAN AHALİSİ : 1486-1583

#### ÖZET

15. ve 16. asırlarda Trabzonda yaşayan Efrençiyân ahalisi bahsedilmeye değer bir konudur. Tahminlerimize göre, şehrin Efrençiyân ahalisi, yani şehrin ötedenberi ticaret hayatını ellerinde tutan Ceneviz ve Venediklerin, 1461 de şehrin fethini takip eden zamanlarda Trabzonu terketmiş olmaları gerekirdi. Fakat, bu zamana ait Osmanlı Tahrir Defterlerinde bunun doğru olmadığını gösterir. Birincisi takriben 1486 da yani, Fetih'ten 25 sene sonraya ait olmak üzere, diğerleri takriben 1523, 1553 ve 1583 senelerine ait olan 4 Tahrir Defteri günümüze kadar muhafaza edilmiş ve halen edilmektedir.

1486, 1553 ve 1583 senelerine ait olanlar Mufassal Defterleridir, 1523 e ait olan bir İcmal Defteridir ki bunlardan bu güne kadar sadece bu İcmal Defteri Trabzon şehrinin nüfusu açısından detaylı olarak kullanılmıştır. Bu Defterlerden alınan şehrin nüfusuna ait rakkamlar, ilk olarak 1962 de M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, sonraları 1974 de Şehabettin Tekindağ ve nihayet 1976 da Ronald Jennings tarafından çalışmalarında gösterilmişti. Bu üç ilim adamı, Efrençiyân ahalisinin nüfusunun 1523 de üç mahalle de bulunan: 159 Hane, 24 Bive ve 13 Mücerred veya ortalama olarak şehrin tüm nüfusunun yüzde 15 ini teşkil ettiği fikrinde birleşmiştir.

Bu tebliğatımda, bu dört Defteri birbirleriyle mukayese ederek, yukarıda gösterilen rakkamların hakikatte, o devrin kâtibinin yekünleri, 1523 İcmal Defterine, daha evvel yapılmış Mufassal Defterlerden geçirirken yapmış olduğu bir hatâdan meydana gelmiş olduğunu göstermeye çalışacağım. Yanlışlıkla bu 1523 İcmal Defterinde, şehrin iki Rum Mahallesini de tek Efrençiyân Mahallesi ile birleştirerek, Efrençiyân ahalisinin nüfusunun aslından çok fazla olarak gösterilmesine sebep olmuştur. Bu hatayı, bu üç Mufassal Defterde belirtilen mahallelere göre ayrılan halkın adlarını birbirleriyle mukayese ettikten sonra, görüyoruz ki, aslında 1486, 1553 ve 1583 Defterlerde Rum Mahalleleri olarak gösterilen Dafnun-

23 M. M. No. 828. pp. 14 - 15.

da Mahallesi ve 1486'da Rum, 1553 de Müslüman Mahallesi olarak gösterilen Pıkkıd, yanlışlıkla 1523 İcmal Defterinde Efrenciyan Mahallesi ile beraber gösterilmişti. Bu hatayı düzelttikten sonra, şehrin Efrenciyan ahalisi nüfusu bu seneler zarfında yani, 1486-1583e kadar aşağıda gösterilen şekilde kalmıştır :

<u>Sene:</u>	<u>Hane:</u>	<u>Bive:</u>	<u>Mücerred:</u>
1486	34	10	5
1523	40	12	9
1553	32	0	17
1583	47	0	0

Netice olarak, Efrenciyan ahalisinin kimler oldukları sorusu, kanaatimce, 1486 Defterinde onların ödedikleri İspence miktarı ve diğer Tahrir Defterlerinde adları geçtiği için aslen Ceneviz ve Venedikli olan bir Latin Katolik guruptur. Şehrin 1461 de fethinden sonra, Osmanlı idaresine geçmişlerdir. Yani bir başka deyimle, Defterlerde adı geçen Efrenciyan terimi Latin Katolik manasına gelmektedir.