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Ottoman Muslim Merchants in Eighteenth-Century Vienna

Abstract

Once ubiquitous, the fact that Muslim merchants were overshadowed by their non-Muslim counterparts in the later Ottoman Empire helped engender the misconception of an antagonism between Islam and enterprise. Based on a document in the Austrian State Archives, my paper presents evidence of a small ‘colony’ of Ottoman Muslim merchants in mid-eighteenth-century Vienna. It provides insights into the workings of a community, the motives of those involved, and the dynamics of entrepreneurship and trans-regional networking.

Keywords: Ottoman-Habsburg relations, 18th-century Vienna, Muslim expatriates

1. Introduction

Occasional appearances notwithstanding,¹ the Muslim merchant operating within the Ottoman orbit is generally overshadowed by his non-Muslim peer. A ‘reading back’ of the situation at the end of the empire, when commerce firmly rested in the hands of non-Muslims, helped consolidate the idea that this had always been the case. In Bernard Lewis’ influential book on *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* of 1961, for instance, we read that in the Ottoman ‘military empire’ the Muslims ‘knew only four professions – government, war, religion, and agriculture.’ Industry and trade, according to this author, ‘were left in large measure to the non-Muslim subjects.’² One of Lewis’ students, Fatma Müge Göçek, later sought to explain the predominance of non-Muslims in nineteenth-century commerce by the very tenets of Islam. This faith’s attitude toward ‘making large fortunes through usury,’ she argued, was principally negative. Unlike the skilled manual labour of artisans, ‘merchants’ profits from charging interest were regarded as unearned gain, profiteering.³

One might argue that if these were the social challenges faced by a successful Muslim merchant, his situation may not have been all that different from his Catholic and

1 See e.g. the contributions to Faroqhi/Weinstein 2008, the papers collected in Gilbar 2023, and other publications cited in the following footnotes and the bibliography. I am grateful to Wolfgang Göderle, Ünver Rüstem, Maria Stassinopoulou, and Anna Ransmayr for their feedback on earlier versions of this paper. It reproduces the text of a study researched in 2008 and presented first in 2011 at a conference on ‘Ottoman-European Exchanges in Commerce, Finance and Culture’ at the University of Cambridge. Due to different priorities thereafter, publication was not pursued.

2 Lewis 1968, 35.

3 Göçek 1996, 34.

Protestant counterparts in fourteenth-century Italy or seventeenth-century Netherlands, as argued by Simon Schama in his book about the latter, aptly titled *The Embarrassment of Riches*.⁴ By looking at court records rather than the Qur'an for insights, Nelly Hanna was able to paint a very different picture of the Muslim merchant class in Cairo around 1600. Its representatives were, she argued, 'quite comfortable exhibiting their success [and] making public their level of expenditure.' Hanna even went as far as to diagnose 'a cultural attitude diametrically opposed to a Protestant or Calvinist approach, which emphasized frugality even when wealth was available.' According to her, the Islamic culture of Cairene merchants indeed expected 'a certain degree of public and private spending from one who had material means – partly for the benefit of those around him and partly for his own image, which was expected to be in keeping with his social position.'⁵

In addition to Hanna's study, focused on the Red Sea trade, we have also learned of the existence of other Muslim merchant communities involved in maritime trade; such as the Muslim merchants of Thessaloniki that were engaged in commerce with Egypt in the eighteenth century,⁶ or the 'Muslim Turks' Panzac found controlling the Black Sea wheat trade with Istanbul at the end of the same century.⁷ Relatively little is known about the involvement of Muslims in inland trade throughout Southeast Europe, which grew to great importance during that century. In an influential article of 1960, Traian Stoianovich had highlighted the new prominence of Greeks, Vlachs, and Serbs in the trade of that period, referring to them collectively as 'the conquering Balkan Orthodox merchant'.⁸ While that scholar's claim for the predominance of the Orthodox Christian element in eighteenth-century trans-imperial trade remains uncontested, its general recognition may have hindered the study of other groups active at the same time, even if they were numerically less significant.

The presence and activity of a number of Muslim merchants in Vienna in the third quarter of the eighteenth century was in fact well-known to the many researchers of that city's 'conquering Balkan Orthodox merchants.' For, at one point, scholars would routinely make reference to one Austrian State Archives document that provides detailed insight into the commercial milieu of the Habsburg capital at that time.⁹ It was in 1766/67 that all resident Ottoman-subject merchants were first registered. When this register was partially published in the 1950s by Polychronis Enepekides, only the section dealing with the Orthodox Christian merchants – the largest community among the Ottoman subjects – was edited.¹⁰ Though the same historian also publicized his archival discovery

4 See e.g. Schama 1987 or Jenkins 1970.

5 Hanna 1998, 106.

6 Ginio 1999.

7 Panzac 1992.

8 Stoianovich 1960, revised in Stoianovich 1992, 1–77.

9 AT-OeStA/HHStA StAbt Türkei V 27-6 ('Conscription deren allhier in Wien sich befindenden Türken und türkischen Unterthanen').

10 Enepekides 1959. The contents of the document were first summarized, with errors, in Popović 1940. For a bibliography that includes other partial editions, see Ransmayr 2018, 247–50.

at a congress in Istanbul in 1951, and also in the proceedings of that event published two years later,¹¹ the interest in this source among Ottomanist historians has been modest.¹² This is surprising given not only the apparent consequence of a document proving the very existence of a Muslim community of merchants in the Habsburg capital at that time; the level of detail in the information it contains also helps to paint a tentative portrait of the Ottoman Muslim merchant active in 1760s Vienna.

All resident Ottoman subjects were asked a series of questions about their status, livelihood, and future plans. The census official was interested neither in biographical details, nor even in the quantities of goods the merchants traded and the profits they made. This, too, may have deterred some economic historians from further investigating this source. Indeed, to gain insight beyond descriptive analysis, the document requires a reading between the lines and necessitates speculation. Consequently, this paper focuses more on the historical phenomenon of the Muslim merchant 'colony' in Vienna than on economic aspects. It is interested in the causes for its emergence and demise, and in the protagonists of this story, their lives, their motives, and their interaction with their surroundings. Finally, I would like to consider what these findings could mean within the framework of the historiographical paradigm discussed in the first part of my paper.

2. Why Vienna?

Before turning to an analysis of the data recorded in the source, I will attempt to outline the conditions that must have made possible the emergence of a Muslim merchant colony in Vienna in the first place. However limited their number, this city seems an odd-enough site for Muslim merchants – supposedly a rare breed anyway – to establish themselves. Following the failed Ottoman siege of 1683, Vienna came to epitomise the failure of Islamic expansion into Western Europe. Therefore, it should not surprise that the appearance of an Ottoman-Muslim colony in the Habsburg capital coincided with an unusually long period of peace between the two empires, which roughly corresponded to the reign of the Austrian archduchess Maria Theresia (1740–1780). In a similar vein, a long period of peace with Venice (1573–1645) previously seemed to have boosted the Muslim element in trans-Adriatic trade.¹³ In light of this dynamic, it may well have been the (largely inconclusive) Habsburg-Ottoman war of 1787–1791 that marked the end of this colony; at least temporarily, as resident Muslims reappear in early-nineteenth-century sources – and art (Figure 1 and 2).¹⁴

While the presence of an Ottoman merchant community in Vienna was clearly linked to the city's general thriving after 1683, the main incentive for trade on a larger

11 See Enepekides 1959, vii.

12 Studies that have referenced this source with regard to its insight on Muslim merchants include: Do Paço 2010; Do Paço 2011; Do Paço 2013; Do Paço 2015; Numan 2004.

13 See Kafadar 1986, esp. 201.

14 See also Ransmayr and Ruscher 2024.

Figure 1. Johann Adam Klein, *Three Turks or Greeks in Augustini's coffeehouse on Rotenturm-bastei, 1817*, pencil drawing with watercolour, modified by author. Wien Museum collection, inv. no. 96626



scale must have been the trade agreement between the two empires concluded at Passarowitz (Požarevac) in 1718.¹⁵ In the following year, a new Habsburg port was instituted at Trieste, but Austria also sought to develop closer economic ties with its southern possessions and the formerly Ottoman territories in the east. In the following decades, rivers were made navigable, roads were built, and depopulated areas were repopulated. Toward the end of the century, it had become both feasible and profitable to transport grain from Hungary to Italy via Trieste.¹⁶

Vienna became a hub for trade between western Central Europe and the Ottoman Empire. It became a destination for goods from Anatolia and the Balkans and a marketplace where Ottoman merchants purchased products from Styria, Bavaria, and Bohemia to be re-sold in Istanbul and elsewhere in the empire. Overall, Vienna became an interesting location for Ottoman merchants due to changes in the political and economic landscape. The Adriatic was challenged by the Morava-Vardar corridor in the Balkan interior as the major trade route in the region. The participation of Muslims in this trend appears to have been due to a favourable climate between the two empires, which affected Muslims abroad to a greater degree than it did non-Muslims.

15 On the economic impact of which, see also Rauscher 2021.

16 See Stoianovich 1992, 44–6; also Erceg 1985, esp. 208–9.

Figure 2. Theodor Leopold Weiler, *Greeks and Turks in a Viennese coffeehouse (Fleischmarkt 22?)*, 1824, oil on panel, photograph by Birgit and Peter Kainz, reproduced without frame. Wien Museum collection, inv. no. 58778



In 1766 the Austrian authorities decided to take record of all 'Turkish subjects' in the capital, almost all of whom were merchants. The outcome was a 242-page manuscript entitled *Conscription deren allhier in Wien sich befindenden Türken und türkischen Unterthanen*

(literally: 'A record of all Turks and Turkish subjects in Vienna'). It recorded 268 Ottoman subjects (including a few former subjects) operating in the city. However, at the time of this census, only half of these individuals were actually present in Vienna, which is evidently a sign of the mobility required by their occupation. This group of 135 persons included 13 Muslims (10%), 19 Jews (14%), 21 Armenians (16%), and 82 Orthodox Christians (61%), who were collectively recorded as 'Greeks' on account of their confession.¹⁷ Those present were asked to respond to a number of questions, including their name, place of residence, age, town and province of birth, ethnicity and/or religion, marital status, subjecthood, tax-paying status, business partnerships, ownership of a depot, the place and date of their first entry to and last exit from the Habsburg domain, and their intention to make the area their permanent residence.

The reason for undertaking this census is not explicitly stated, but it must have been driven by the need to clarify the tax-paying status of certain merchants.¹⁸ At the same time, this was also simply an age in which the collection of data for the purpose of efficient administration was becoming more common. A systematic registration of Vienna's foreign subjects had only been instituted in 1751.¹⁹ In 1770, only four years after the *Conscription*, Maria Theresia implemented a general census of Austria's population, in which all houses were first given numbers (called *Conscriptionsnummer*) with a view to facilitating taxation and military recruitment.²⁰ The *Conscription deren allhier in Wien sich befindenden Türken und türkischen Unterthanen* was clearly (also) a product of its time.

3. Muslim Merchants' Geographies

Having outlined the framework for the emergence of a Muslim colony in Vienna and the probably reasons that led to the creation of the relevant documentation, I will now analyse the information provided in this document as such.²¹ What is immediately striking is that, of the thirteen Muslim merchants recorded in 1766/67, all but two hailed from Anatolia rather than the Ottomans' European territories, and that they thus appear to have been Turkish-speakers. This contrasts with the case of Muslim merchants active in Venice in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, who were principally from Bosnia and Albania.²² Looking at the origins of the merchants recorded in the *Conscription*, there is another striking common denominator: No less than seven of

17 See Ransmayr 2018, 247, for a corrected count.

18 On this point, see also Katsiardi-Hering 2011, esp. 239. The competition that foreigners posed to local merchants may also have prompted the state to desire greater control. The Catholic merchants of Pest, for instance, complained in 1765 of the dominance of Ottoman subjects there, warning that 'Hungary might become Macedonia' (*ibid.*).

19 Mattl-Wurm 1999, 161.

20 Tantner 2007.

21 As the section on the Muslim merchants only covers twenty pages of the manuscript, I will not refer to specific page numbers each time I use data from this source. The information is organised by individual and can thus be easily retrieved.

22 See Pedani 2008, esp. 5–8; Stoianovich 1992, 1, 50–1.

the total of thirteen Muslim merchants recorded hailed from the Mediterranean port of Alanya,²³ and at least two more came from the inland towns of Konya and Karaman, situated across the Taurus Mountains.

Once a thriving cosmopolitan port with a renowned arsenal, Alanya had lost its importance after the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1571.²⁴ Though the town remained a significant regional marketplace, the surrounding plain became impoverished and partly abandoned. From the fact that the Ottoman traveller Evliya Çelebi visited Alanya in 1671 and specifically noted the lack of a cloth hall (*bedesten*) in the town, we may infer that Alanya was not a hub in the sale of top-notch luxury goods. The same traveller described the locals as 'very brave and courageous people' and as 'handsome, wild-looking adventurers with swords at their waists and Italian muskets in their hands'.²⁵ It may have been their homeland's economic desolation and their adventurous spirit that prompted some to seek lucrative work abroad in the following century.

While the Alanya natives registered in Vienna in 1766/67 were apparently not directly related, all but one had a brother or cousin figuring as a business partner in Istanbul. The Ottoman metropolis appears to have been their bridgehead to the commercial landscape of Europe's eastern half. Here, we may see parallels with factors that Stoianovich believed were responsible for the success of his 'conquering Balkan Orthodox merchants' in the eighteenth century: These merchants' businesses were often family affairs, with different members of one family resident in different locales of relevance to their trade. This enabled them to avoid the expensive middlemen or brokers to which non-Ottoman merchants had to resort.²⁶

Interesting, if somewhat untypical, is the case of the 40-year-old Alanya native Emir Ahmed Efendi. The course of his career can be reconstructed to a good extent from information provided in the *Conscription*: Born in Alanya around 1725, he established himself at the two empire's Danube border, at Belgrade, around 1750. Apparently without a partner in Istanbul, Ahmed initially resided in Habsburg towns close to the Ottoman border before eventually moving to Vienna in 1762. This was perhaps in order to be closer to the source of his trade. For he mainly exported Viennese embroideries

23 I have used the modern name of the city used since the 1930s, when under Atatürk the old name 'Alaiye' was replaced with 'Alanya'. In the *Conscription* the town's name is rendered as 'Alaja' and 'Allaja'. The old Italian name for the place, Candelore, though still used in the late Middle Ages, seems to have been forgotten by that time.

24 Alanya gained prominence under Seljuk rule in the thirteenth century, when it became the sultan's winter residence and site of an arsenal. After the Mongol invasion of 1242 it changed hands from the Karamanoğulları and the Lusignan of Cyprus to the Hamidoğulları, the Mamluks, and finally to the Ottomans in 1471. After the conquest of Cyprus, Alanya ceased to be, as travellers had described, 'one of the best cities of the world' or 'the greatest spice market for Asia Minor.' For these quotations, see Halil İnalçık, 'Bursa and the Commerce of the Levant'. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 3.2 (1960): 131–47, 143.

25 Crane 1993, esp. 164–5 and 167–8.

26 Stoianovich 1992, 53.

to the Ottoman domain, storing them in his Vienna apartment. Luxury goods made of glass, textiles, or metal, such as clocks, were in fact the typical exports of Muslim merchants. They brought cotton, mastic, alum, leather and coffee to Vienna. Currency was also frequently traded.²⁷

On average, the Muslim merchants in Vienna were in their mid-30s. This made them slightly younger than the Jewish and Armenian Ottoman subjects registered in the *Cconscription*. Typically, they had first crossed the border to Habsburg territory in their mid-twenties. By the time of the census, they had spent an average of two years on Habsburg soil without re-crossing the border.²⁸ This suggests that they were indeed well-established in Vienna and clearly not constantly on the move. It is because of their remarkably stable situation and perhaps also because of their concentration in a certain area of Vienna, as will be discussed below, that it might be defensible to continue to qualify this group as a 'colony.'

Regarding their itineraries to Vienna, almost all of them first entered the Habsburg domain at Belgrade, which had been a border city since 1739. Only the two natives of Inner Anatolia entered through Trieste. Of these two, Emir İsmail is of particular interest due to the extensive scope of his business activities: Originally from Konya, he relocated to Istanbul and specialised in importing yarn and pipe heads made of sea foam from Ankara to Vienna, while exporting merchandise from Nuremberg and Styria to the Ottoman Empire. Prior to settling in Vienna, he had lived in Venice and Ancona.

Vienna was also not the first station in non-Ottoman territory for other Muslim merchants. The case of the embroidery-exporting Emir Ahmed Efendi, who first resided in Zemun and Petrovaradin – that is, within the orbit of the Belgrade borderland – has already been touched upon. Another Alanya native, Molla Hasan, who specialized in exporting Central European glassware, declared that he had previously resided in Timișoara and Pest. In most cases it is unclear from the document's wording whether the merchants personally travelled to places like Nuremberg, Graz, or Prague, or if they merely purchased goods produced there in Vienna. In the case of a merchant named Molla Hüseyin, however, it is specifically mentioned that he travelled 'throughout the Holy Roman Empire.'²⁹ This native of Alanya, whose business partner was his brother in Istanbul, possessed no fewer than six depots in Vienna. However, Hüseyin told the census official that he was keen to return to his Ottoman homeland, which he had visited relatively recently.

27 On this point, see Panova 1993, esp. 323.

28 On border-crossing in this period and space, see Pešalj/Ehmer 2023.

29 At the eve of the French Revolution, this 'empire' would still include the territories of the modern nations of Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Luxembourg, and Slovenia, as well parts of Croatia, Italy, and Poland.

4. The Social Life of Expats

The *Conscription* is relatively silent with regard to the merchants' interaction with each other, with the non-Muslim Ottoman merchants, and with the locals of their host city. Given that most of the Muslim merchants came from the same region south of the Anatolian plateau, it appears rather likely that they had close bonds. At the same time, we must also consider that they were competitors, trading in very similar goods. Their business partners resided elsewhere, usually in Istanbul, and their partners in Central Europe appear to have been mostly non-Muslims, both Habsburg and Ottoman subjects. From the dates and places of their first and last border crossings, meticulously recorded in the census, we can also establish that none of them made their first entry or last exit at the same time. Hence, they appear not to have travelled together. Perhaps they only met in Vienna after stopping in Istanbul or other places along the way.

It is much harder to establish how they interacted with the Viennese. It is perhaps unlikely that all of them knew German or other languages that would be useful for doing business abroad. This is possibly confirmed by the fact that an Armenian and a Greek compatriot are recorded as having worked as interpreters for Ottoman merchants in Vienna. Two Jews from Sofia and an Armenian from Constantinople (named 'Jean Paul') are recorded as primarily reselling goods purchased by other Ottoman merchants in Vienna, Bratislava and Pest. This may illustrate some of the problems faced by Muslim merchants in Vienna with regard to direct business contact. And although the *Conscription* provides no such hint, it is tempting to imagine that the Muslim merchants may have had contacts with the many local 'ex-Muslims': prisoners from the Habsburg-Ottoman wars who (were) converted to Catholicism. As late as 1766, first-generation converts appear to have lived in Vienna.³⁰ It is also tempting to imagine that students at the *Orientalische Akademie*, which was founded in 1754 to provide the state with competent interpreters of Eastern languages, may have had contact with Muslim merchants in order to practise their Turkish.

The limited available data offers no ready answer to the interesting question of whether there was a sense of community among Ottoman merchants of different creeds. However, it does seem to suggest considerable interaction between different faith groups. The aforementioned examples demonstrate this at a business level, corresponding to the nature of the document. A curious example of social interaction is the case of Todor Dimitrović, who, according to the census, was the barber to all the Ottoman merchants – a business he ran from his apartment. We also learn that Emir İsmail of Konya was on good terms with the Greek 'Demetr Christoph,' with whom the former stored his goods. Also, the 24-year-old Istanbul Armenian 'Emmanuel Baptista' was recorded as doing business with a certain Hacı Musa, who was in Istanbul at the time of the census, and as having a Greek-sounding assistant named 'Nicolas Phronis.'

³⁰ Tomenendal 2000, 30, relates that conversions under the patronage of members of the royal house are recorded as having taken place at the city palace's chapel until 1746.

Finally, Emir İbrahim of Karaağaç even seems to have found a local partner in the Danube captain named 'Johan Woina.'

That there was more interaction on a personal level than the above suggests may be inferred from the fact that almost all Ottoman merchants lived or worked in the same areas of Vienna: either in the quarter between the St Stephen's cathedral and the Danube – a part of this area once being labelled the *Griechenviertel* (Greeks' Quarter)³¹ – or across what is now the *Donaukanal* in the formerly insular suburb of Leopoldstadt. Like their businesses, the Vienna of the Ottoman merchants was oriented towards the Danube.

An indicator of how the Ottoman merchants, Muslim or not, may have managed to survive socially in a foreign and possibly even hostile place like Vienna is found in a letter of Lady Montagu, who visited the city in 1717 (admittedly, a very different time): 'It is true,' she wrote, 'the Austrians are not commonly the most polite people in the world, nor the most agreeable. But Vienna is inhabited by all nations, and I had formed to myself a little society of such as were perfectly to my own taste.'³²

Perhaps the Ottoman merchants did just that. Their presence does not seem to have been widely regarded as disconcerting. They were just one group among many foreigners.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to revisit the statements cited in the introduction to this paper, particularly those concerning the supposed unbridgeable gap between careers in the military, religious institutions, and trade. All of the Muslims registered in 1766/67 provided their names to the census official alongside certain titles. These were not hereditary aristocratic titles, which did not exist in this form in the Ottoman Empire, but titles (such as *ağa* or *beşe*) that suggest their association with administrative and military institutions, or titles (such as *molla* or *imam*) that betray their training in an institution of higher education, a *medrese*. Among the thirteen merchants registered, *molla* appears no less than five times, *beşe* three times, and *imam*, *efendi*, and *ağa* once each. This seems to suggest that, quite remarkably, six or seven of these merchants probably had a *medrese*-education while several others had connections to janissary regiments, their specifics of which were occasionally recorded by the census official. One has to be careful not to read these titles as indicating much more than that the individuals in question had successfully acquired the tax-exempt status reserved in the Ottoman system for members of the *askerî* class, which included both men of the sword and men of the pen. In the case of the Muslim merchants of Vienna, their titles quite evidently signify their membership in certain networks rather than active military service.

The case of Molla Mustafa Boşnak, a 40-year-old Bosnian who became wealthy importing Macedonian cotton, is of interest in this regard. Recorded as associated with the 97th Janissary Regiment, he also used the title of *molla*. It is an exceptional circum-

31 On which, see also Ransmayr 2018, ch. 4.2.

32 Montagu 1888, 60.

stance that this individual can also be identified in an Ottoman source: His death in H. 1193 (AD 1779/80) was recorded in a local chronicle of Sarajevo, in which Mustafa the merchant was also remembered as once having operated as the *müezzin* of that city's Sultan's Mosque.³³ This seems to confirm that he began his career in religious-educational institutions but eventually opted for trade.

In summary, irrespective of the possible exceptional nature of our case, the source examined in this essay provides clear evidence of a significant number of Muslim merchants conducting business in Vienna and, therewith, outside the Ottoman realm. It also shows that such activity took place in the eighteenth century as well, not merely in earlier times, and that the merchants involved also hailed from Asia Minor and not only from the Balkans. In this case, changes in Ottoman-Habsburg political and commercial relations in the eighteenth century, coupled with a shift in the economic geography of the region from the Adriatic to the Danube, appear to have facilitated their enterprise. Specifically, the 'long peace' between 1739 and 1787 created an opportunity for Muslims to engage in trans-imperial trade from outside Ottoman territory. For at least a couple of decades, they were able to conduct business from the very capital of the Ottoman Empire's former archenemy.

In the course of my research, I also came across cases of Muslim merchants in several other Habsburg towns, most notably Trieste,³⁴ which remain to be explored. Thus, while the evidence presented here may not prove Lewis and other scholars wrong in declaring that non-Muslims predominated in trade between the Ottoman Empire and other countries, especially in later periods, it does seem to show that Muslims from unlikely places could occasionally work as merchants in equally unlikely places. Perhaps more importantly, it appears to refute the idea that the spheres of military/government, the religious establishment and profit-making professions were separate and unbridgeable. The case of the aforementioned Mustafa from Sarajevo is perhaps the best example of this. Not only was he a former religious functionary associated with military institutions; he also made a fortune in trade with the infidel.

33 Bašeskija 1968, 127. Koller (2008) has used the same source in his portrait of a entrepreneurial Muslim family in eighteenth-century Sarajevo.

34 In AT-OeStA/FHKA NHK Kommerz Lit[torale] Akten 1048 and 1049 can be found evidence for the activity of men with names like Abdullah Ağa, Osman Ağa, Molla Salih, and Mehmed Beşe doing business in Trieste in the 1760s and 70s. Even so, Marco Dogo (1997. 'Merchants Between Two Empires: The Ottoman Colonies of Trieste in the XVIII Century'. *Études balkaniques*. 3–4, 93) reported only of a 'sporadic presence of Turkish Muslims in Trieste.'

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