

An Ottoman-English Merchant in Tanzimat Era: Henry James Hanson and His Position in Ottoman Commercial Life

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Abstract

The period after 1839 is known as the Tanzimat (restructuring) era. The significance of this era is that the initiative for modernization came from government officials with the compliance of the sultan. Economically, the Tanzimat, which marked the beginning of one of the most important turning points of Turkish-Ottoman history, has been intensively discussed after its proclamation in 1839. The second half of the Ottoman nineteenth century observed clear “Eurocentric Business Enterprises” in Ottoman economic and commercial life, consisting mostly of railway projects, as European centred commercial relations within international markets expanded. Reforms and changes in the commercial law system after the Tanzimat saw an increase in market efficiency of Levantine merchants in Ottoman domestic and foreign trade. Among these Levantine merchants, who were effective in Ottoman trade life, one the Hanson family, of English origin, attracted attention with their commercial relations and economic activities. Accordingly, Charles Simpson Hanson (1803-1874) who came to Istanbul for the first time in 1825 and settled for the purpose of commerce, along with his son Henry James Hanson (1838-1935), who was born in Istanbul, together engaged in several commercial fields namely finance, railway construction, imports and exports. Due to their wide range of business interests, the Hanson Family and their company became prominent among all the Levantine merchants that played a key role in 19th century Ottoman trade. This presentation examines different business practices within which Levantine merchants were involved in order to understand how they used Ottoman economic institutions as businessmen between the years 1839 and 1880. It aims to answer broad questions about the Hanson Family’s role in Ottoman domestic and foreign trade by using primary sources in the Ottoman Archive, the British National Archives and Oxford University Saint Anthony’s College Middle East Centre Archive. It will additionally draw from English and Turkish publications belonging to a forementioned period. These business manners which were applied by the Hanson Company shed light upon the activities of Levantine Merchants in the Ottoman Empire and their connections with statesmen through business partnerships after the Tanzimat era.

Introduction

Within world economic history, particularly in the context of the recent studies, Ottoman State is depicted as a passive actor or a walker on. The effective factor in advocating for this approach is that the post-industrial revolution economic development and therefore increased capital accumulation experienced in Europe particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries, does not show the same characteristics for the Ottoman State. Therefore, the requirement to analyze the Ottoman State within the framework of the “Great-Long Divergence” theory and discussion is one of the first general approaches.¹

On the other hand, as a result of fast spread of the capitalist commercial relations developed after the Industrial Revolution, Ottoman State is known to be included in this area of impact after the 1830s. The most important impact within this process is the break in the Ottoman understanding of economics and in its institutions. Ottoman economic structure experienced a serious transformation with the free trade understanding adopted after 1838 in particular. Therefore, the Ottoman economy opened its doors to the capitalist world economy (Western Economy) and breaks in the traditional structure emerged.

Accordingly, works conducted in view of the new understanding of economics claim that the main reason for the economic and commercial development difference between two poles is the discrepancy between Ottoman economic institutions and Western institutions.² It is obvious that the Ottoman State remained behind European economies throughout the 19th century, whereas it was an important economic power in the 17th century.³ In Europe, this period is accepted as the period at industrialisation when first England then other countries in Western Europe turned into manufacturing economies that can produce finished products with low costs and in high quantities. Technological jumps experienced particularly in maritime transportation in the following periods of the century accelerated the increase in the commercial activities.⁴ By contrast, little progress was made in the Ottoman economy until the mid-19th century.

Nevertheless, contrary to the economic history literature, for the Ottoman State, the years commencing with the Imperial Edict of Reorganization mark a period when commercial

¹ See Timur Kuran, *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

² See Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*. (London: Profile, 2012).

³ See Sevket Pamuk, *Osmanli Turkiye Iktisadi Tarihi 1500-1914*. pp. 191-198. (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2007).

⁴ See Pamuk (2007) and Acemoglu-Robinson (2012).

development and activity increased. In the Ottoman economic system, we know that business investment and money-changing transactions were dominated by very small group of entrepreneurs.⁵ As Merchants play a crucial role in this activity.

The second half of the Ottoman nineteenth century especially observed clear “Eurocentric Business Enterprises” in Ottoman economic and commercial life, consisting mostly of railway projects, as European-centred commercial relations within international markets expanded. Reforms and changes in the commercial system after the Tanzimat saw an increase in the market efficiency of Levantine merchants in Ottoman domestic and foreign trade.

Among these Levantine merchants, who were effective in Ottoman trade life operating under certain regulations called Capitulations (Ahdnames),⁶ the Hanson family, of English origin, attracted attention with their commercial relations and economic activities. Accordingly, Charles Simpson Hanson (1803-1874), who came to Istanbul for the first time in 1825 and settled for the purpose of commerce, along with his son, Henry James Hanson (1838-1935), who was born in Istanbul-Tarabya, together engaged in several commercial fields namely finance, railway construction, imports and exports. Due to their wide range of business interests, the Hanson Family and their company became prominent among all the Levantine merchants that played a key role in 19th century Ottoman trade.

The world economy during the 19th century was centered on Britain's early start in the industrial revolution. Current account surpluses led to the English Pound becoming the world's major currency and the gold standard was established creating a system of fixed exchange rates.⁷ Hence, many of the Levant Company's merchants such as Charles Simpson Hanson entered into a connection with Ottoman Government and did business in the region of Ottomans.

In this study, I am planning to emphase on two points. First, to show ‘Bill Brokering’ in Istanbul became a gainfully business for Levantine Merchants. I provide evidence that

⁵ Murat Cizakca and Macit Kenanoglu, “Ottoman Merchants and the Jurisprudential Shift Hypothesis”, *Merchants in the Ottoman Empire* (Edt. Suraiya Faroghi and Gilles Veinstein). (Paris: Peeters, 2008), p. 196.

⁶ Walsh, R. and C., *Account of the Levant: Merchants of England Trading to the Levant Company*, Printed for J. and A. Arch. (1825), p. 5-6.; For additional See. Boogert, Mauritis H. Van den. *The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System. Kadıs, Consuls and Beratlıs in the 18th Century*, (Leiden: Brill, 2005).; “Consular Jurisdiction in the Ottoman Legal System in the Eighteenth Century”, *Oriente moderno* 22 (3), (2003), pp. 613–634 and “Legal Reflections on the Jurisprudential Shift Hhypothesis”, *Turcica* 41, (2009), pp. 373–382.

⁷ See David Ricardo, *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*. (London: John Murra, 2nd ed, 1819). Barry Eichengreen and Marc Flandreau (eds.), *The Gold Standard in Theory and History*, (London : Routledge, 2nd ed, 1997).

Levantine Merchants benefited from currency exchange differences via the records of the Dersaadet Bank (The first Bank of Ottomans).⁸ Second, I evaluate the growth of commercialization in Ottoman territory and the commerce links dominated by Levantine Merchants between Europe and Ottoman Empire. Finally, according to the records of Hanson Family, I will mention about their contributions of social and economic life in Istanbul.

Sources

This study uses various primary records from the Oxford University-St Antony's College Middle East Centre, The National Archives (UK), the British Library, and Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA). There are also published secondary resources related to the merchants, 'beratli' merchants, and Ottoman financialization. My sources comprise Henry James Hanson Collection from Oxford University associated with some anecdotes from Henry James Hanson's life in Istanbul and his business operations, Bank letterbooks from Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi and the Levant Company correspondence. Other sources include bills of exchange, and name list of brokers reference to merchants' companies and how big their operations were.

A major source is the Henry James Hanson Collection with the reference code GB165-0135. This collection is located at Oxford University-St Anthony's College Middle East Centre's Archive library. It contains 'Microfilm printout' (some pages faint) of a manuscript autobiography in three volumes which is approximately 700 pages in total by Henry James Hanson which gives details of his ancestry, his father Charles Simpson Hanson's life in Istanbul and his own memories, including some of the Crimean War. In that collection, the volumes were enriched with newspaper cuttings, family and scene photos, a few watercolours and a family tree with the coat of arms and a pedigree stretching back to the 13th century.

Other important sources can be classified within two parts in order to interpret commerce and finance business issues properly. First records related to commerce arise from The National Archives (UK) and the British Library. The other records connecting the finance and banking history of the Ottoman Empire are from Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA). These resources have some relevant information about merchants name and bill broking turnover.

⁸ See Ü. Serdar Serdaroglu, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde İlk Banka: Dersaadet Bankası ve Poliçe İşlemleri*, Unpublished Master Thesis, (Istanbul: Istanbul University, 2011).

Finally, according to the literature so far reported, French, Dutch and Italian markets were dominated by Ottoman Beratli merchants until the 19th century. In the 17th and 18th centuries, France, Holland and Italia were prominent partners of the Ottoman Empire. However, in the last decade of the 18th century, significant intense competition between British and Dutch-French companies in the east Mediterranean started and lasted until the 1820s.⁹ During and after the Crimean War (1854-1856), the major commercial links and financial sectors which were dominated by British and Armenian merchants surfaced for the Ottoman world.¹⁰ In the light of this information, Hanson Family's economic activities in the Ottoman Empire territory need further explanation.

Henry James Hanson's Family

This family (Hansons) is descended from the district or Parish of Halifax; which is located between Manchester and Leeds nowadays and known by the alias Rastricks since 1250.¹¹ Henry James Hanson (1838-1935) was born on 27 July 1838 in the Pera district of Constantinople; he was fifth of the nine of Charles Simpson Hanson (1803-74).¹² His father Charles Simpson Hanson the well-known Banker who arrived in Turkey as a merchant of Levant Company. Also Henry James Hanson was known as a Levant merchant in Constantinople. He was married to Edith Anna Oldham (d. 5 May 1869) on 9 April 1863. Henry James was educated in England. He lived in Constantinople until 1887. Then he moved and emigrated to Canada and then returned to England in 1895 where he died in 1935.¹³

⁹ Pamuk, (2007), p. 162-165.

¹⁰ Bedross, Der Matossian, "The Armenian Commercial Houses and Merchant Networks in the 19th Century Ottoman Empire." *Turcica* 39, p. 151. (2007).

¹¹ Henry James Hanson Collection (hereafter HJHC) (GB165-0135), Archive library, Middle East Centre, St Anthony's College, Oxford University, V.1, p. 5.

¹² Children of Charles Simpson & Charlotte Hanson: Louisa Grace, Born in Pera 29 March 1831, Baptized at Therapia 2 July 1831, d. 10 Jan 1910, m. 1853 R.W. Cumberbatch Charles Constantine, Born in Pera 16 Oct 1832, Baptized at Therapia 11 July 1833, d. 12 July 1907, m. 1857 Fanny Catherine d. of Charles Ede Helen Jane, Born in Therapia 12 June 1834, Baptized at Therapia 21 June 1835, d. 1864, m. 1862 G.H. Clifton Esq. Constance Fanny, Born in Therapia 20 June 1836, Baptized at Therapia 9 Oct 1836, d. 29 Dec. 1888, m. 1857 Capt. F.H. Butler Fellows RNCB Henry James, Born in Therapia 27 June 1838, Baptized at Therapia 1 April 1839, m. 1863 Edith Anna d. of Henry Oldham Esq. Adeline Eliza, Born in Pera 30 Dec 1839, Baptized at Pera 19 April 1840, d. 29 Jan 1921, m. Henry Rumball Esq. Arthur Walker, Born in Therapia 24 Jan 1843, Baptized at Therapia 2 July 1843, d. 10 Feb. 1884, m. Alice Margaret, d. of T. Ogilvy Esq. William Wellesley, Born in Pera 21 Nov 1845, Baptized at Therapia 1 Aug 1846, d. 7 May 1905, m. 1870 Mary Grace, d. of Henry Oldham Esq. Alfred Ernest, Born in Therapia 24 July 1850, Baptized at Therapia 29 Dec 1850, d. 23 April 1851.

¹³ HJHC, V. 1, p. 30.

According to the memory of Henry James Hanson, his father had his house at Therapia from 1831 for many years, his father and mother and the family were spending the summers there and going to their other (properly a modern flat) house in Pera for the winters. After that, in 1847, his father purchased a large wooden house adjoining Fishing Station on the Anatolian side nowadays. After 1857, they just lived at that house located in Candilli.¹⁴ He had four brothers and sisters. They lived in Istanbul together, but Henry did not get a chance to work with his brothers in the Hanson Company. Henry was together with his father. He helped his father's businesses and wanted to learn the key parts of management. His brothers, by contrast, preferred to be apart from these.

In addition to all these activities, he also refers to some difficulties about plague, the absence of Chaplain and illnesses in his diary:

*The long intervals between the births & baptisms were I think due chiefly to difficulties arising from various causes inseparable from the times – plague, absence of Chaplain, illness etc.*¹⁵

The Hanson Family's Business Operations: The Interaction between Finance and Trade

It is important to know what sort of a development process the banking institution and the monetary transactions underwent within the frame of bank or suchlike organizations in order to understand the foundations of the modern system. It is a well-known fact that the Ottoman Empire structurally experienced a process of integration with the European and world economies during the nineteenth century in the economic sense.¹⁶ The Ottoman banking activities, which shaped in parallel with these developments, were carried out by *Sarrafs* or *Merchants*¹⁷ families like bill brokers and bankers until they grew into an organizational structure.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 30 and 83.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 8-10.

¹⁶ Resat Kasaba, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Dünya Ekonomisi*, p. 12, (İstanbul, Belge, 1993).

¹⁷ See. Bağış, Ali Ihsan. *Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayrimüslimler*. (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 1983).; Boogert, Mauritis H. Van den. "Beratlı." *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 3rd Edition.; Said Salih Kaymakci, *The Sultan's Entrepreneurs, The Entrepreneurs' Sultan: Beratlı Avrupa Tüccari and Institutional Change in The Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire (1835-1868)*, Unpublished Master Thesis, (Istanbul: Bogazici University, 2013).

The bill broking activities, which were performed in the Galata district during the pre-Ottoman period, were carried on by non-Muslim people after the Ottoman sovereignty.¹⁸ Accordingly, bill brokers and bankers assumed such operations like changing the Ottoman and foreign currencies, storing and safekeeping the countable sources as bank deposits and opening credits under certain conditions.¹⁹ They are also known to have given credit to the Ottoman government, financed the tax farmers/money landers within the frame of tax farming, and even performed the task of tax farming and bill of exchange dealers.²⁰

It is known that the currency system was characterized by an unstable structure due to the great debasements during the reign of Mahmud II before the reforms of the Tanzimat period. Before the rescript, especially in the 1820s and 1830s, an intensive debate was going on about the issues of the currency system and the renewal of financial institutions in the economic structure of the Ottoman State.²¹ Following the Treaty of Baltalimanı in 1838 and other treaties of the same characteristics signed afterwards, the customs revenues and the commercial activities of foreign traders in the Ottoman territory increased. When the foreign trade volume that grew after this date merged with the issue of preserving the value of the Ottoman currency, which was an endogenous problem, the need for a stable currency order was further increased.²² Interaction between Finance and Trade is closely related to the economic conditions of this period. There existed a question of exchange stabilization and complicated currency order as a result of the increasing foreign trade volume before and after the reform period and the applications of debasement.

When Hanson as a member of the British Levant Company came to Istanbul, Sir Stratford Canning was the British Ambassador (during 1825-1828). In 1826, Sultan Mahmud II organised a new force after the pattern of European armies and he intended to proscribe the Janissaries. This term exceedingly showed political uncertainty and economic instability situations. Therefore, it can be asserted that political conditions affected the currency system of the Ottoman State and the 'kaime' (banknotes) prices negatively. This currency system included the kind of money which had different measures and fineness and which were also

¹⁸ Albert Howe, Lybyer. "The Ottoman Turks and the Routes of Oriental Trade", *The English Historical Review*, V. 30, NO: 120, p. 582, (1915).

¹⁹ Arslan, Yuzgun, "Türk Bankacılığının Tarihsel Gelişimi" *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, V. 3, p. 155, (İstanbul, 1985).

²⁰ Huseyin Al, *Osmanlı Devletinde Kambiyo İstikrarı Uygulaması (1839-1863)*, p. 4-5, (İstanbul: Birleşik, 2011).

²¹ Ali Akyıldız, "Tanzimat", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, V. 40, P. 2-3, (İstanbul: 2011).

²² Zafer Toprak, "Tek Para Sistemi ve Sorunları", *Türkiye Tarihi Cilt 3- Osmanlı Devleti 1600-1908*, 7. Edition, (İstanbul: 2002), p. 241.

available in circulation. In the post-reform period, about 36 coins were circulated in the market.²³ This number is remarkable in terms of revealing the complexity of the currency system. This complicated structure in the Ottoman currency system produced the problem of an unfavourable equilibrium exchange rate that emerged due to the foreign trade volume which increased with the Baltalimanı Treaty.²⁴

The cost of foreign trade payments also increased due to the money of different measures and fineness circulating in the currency market. Various points of views that were brought about as solution offers, existed about how this situation would be prevented. The most known of these views, which were also accepted by the Ottoman statesmen, suggested not to use gold and silver in foreign trade payments. Until establishing the Bank of Dersaadet, the function of this method can be understood better within the framework of this solution offer which meant that the precious metal stock would not be sent abroad.²⁵

Charles Simpson Hanson is known to have come to Istanbul for the first time in 1823 within the aforementioned economic conjuncture. When he came to Istanbul for settlement purpose, C.S.Hanson used to be known as a merchant working for the British Levant Trading Company.²⁶ Before coming to Istanbul, Hanson worked as a ship broker in other countries outside England. The Markets, where Hanson worked can be listed as Italy, Germany and Russia.²⁷

Simpson Hanson's economic activities after coming to Istanbul can be divided into two as before and after the Imperial Edict of Reorganization. This distinction also marks a difference between two different sectors. Accordingly, the Hansons can be said to have been occupied with trade for the period from the Imperial Edict of Reorganization to 1845. Contrarily, after 1845, upon the development of banking and financial sectors in Istanbul, we witness that the family business worked as a commissioner-bill broker and lent money.

Regarding the first period, in Henry's father's time, the revenues generated generally outweighed the costs from Persian Trade via Trabzon and Erzurum cities. This trade from Constantinople and the West was the shortest and quickest route for Persian trade in that time. The improvement and safety of the roads was always well maintained. Even when the Russians

²³ Sevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Paranın Tarihi*, 2. Edition, p. 152, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı ve Yurt Yayınları, 2000).

²⁴ Al, (2011), p. 18-19.

²⁵ Serdaroglu, (2011), p. 36-37.

²⁶ HJHC, V. 1, p. 10.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 18.

had conquered the Circassians and made a railway from Poti to Tiflis, merchants and travellers preferred the Trabzon route as it was always thought of being such political strategic and commercial importance that the Turkish Government should give its utmost attention to it, but fate and inertia were against them.²⁸ Eventually the Russians perfected their railway system and secured Batumi, the only good port excluding Sinop on the South coast of the Black Sea, and Kars the fortress which really commanded Erzurum and the neighbourhood.

The through trade was of course lost. According to Hanson's anecdotes he remembers something regarding the trade to Trabzon when before 1847, the P&O steamers, Austrian Lloyds and other independent lines or steamers competed for the traffic of goods and passengers. There was always a large number of Armenian and Turkish hammals [porters] and Oda Bashis / care takers coming from and going to Van and other places on this route. The regular lines endeavoured to choke off the others by cutting down fares; at one time deck passengers were carried gratis and one company at last out-did the others by giving even deck passengers his full of pilaf [rice] each day.²⁹

Moreover, according to the records in the Ottoman archive, Hansons are seen to be involved in different businesses, in addition to long distance trade. Hansons used to do these works of different types, with their partner Zohrab Family³⁰ in general. These businesses can be listed as salvation of the sunken-ships,³¹ coffee trade,³² wheat-barley transportation and trade,³³ coal export to Crete Island (Girit) under state assurance³⁴ and opening ship building and repair pool and workbench at Pine Port in Halki.³⁵

In the period following the Imperial Edict of Reorganization, Hansons are seen to make business rather in the financial markets. That the reputation of C. S. Hanson gained after his coming to Istanbul as a banker, rather than a merchant is an indicator of this. The news appeared in the newspapers after his son's decease with the heading "Mr. C.S. Hanson the

²⁸ Ibid. p. 68.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ *'The Zohrab family is of Syrian origin. At the end of the last century, 18th, Hodja Hanna Zohrab, father of the late Dr, was 1st dragoman to the Dutch legation in Constantinople. Dr Zohrab in 1865 entered the service of the Khedive Ismail Pasha as family physician, got the title of Bey and gift of a farm at Broussa to which on departure of Ismail Pasha from Egypt he retired about 2 months ago. He returned to Constantinople and took up his abode at Therapia where he died in 1883. He leaves no wealth but that of the good name who has followed him through life...'* See HJHC, V. 2-3.

³¹ BOA, A.}AMD. 28/1, 13 Ra 1267 (Hicri).

³² BOA, HR.MKT. 50/6, 05 M 1269 (Hicri).

³³ BOA, HR.MKT. 75/31, 24 B 1270 (Hicri).; BOA, HR.MKT. 99/16, 19 R 1271 (Hicri).

³⁴ BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 390/17, 02 Ca 1284 (Hicri).

³⁵ BOA, DH.MKT. 1752/50, 02 M 1308 (Hicri).

well-known Banker who arrived in Turkey at the beginning of last century” that shows Hanson as a banker can be shown as an evidence of this fact.³⁶

Mentioning the bill broking activity performed by C.S. Hanson in the Ottoman markets before the fund support that Hansons provided railway constructions in Ottoman lands with shall be chronologically more adequate. Hanson’s general business before commencing the railway constructions used to be bill broking. Thus, as can be traced from the Bill of Exchange Minutebook of Dersaadet Bank, which is the first bank opened with the permission of the Ottoman administration in 1849, they can be told to have involved in bill broking commissioning.

If we exclude the Smyrna Bank that began operations in the Otoman State, but not allowed to make transactions by the Otoman administration, the first bank established was *Dersaadet Bankası (Banque de Constantinople)*. According to a document in the Ottoman archive, although a consensus was achieved to establish Dersaadet Bankası on 24 March 1849,³⁷ the bank could commence operation only within the following 5-6 months. The Bank’s financiers were Jak Alyon(Jacques Alléon), Emmanuel Baltacı(Emmanuel Baltazzi) and the Ottoman government.³⁸ Bank’s total capital was agreed to be 25,000,000 piastres. Out of this capital, 10,000,000 piastres was covered by the government and the remaining amounting to 15,000,000 piastres by the aforementioned bankers.³⁹ We can reach the policy transaction volume that C.S. Hanson acted as a broker for in 1849-50-51 according to Dersaadet Bankası’s Bill of Exchange Minutebook. Accordingly, it can be seen from the tables that Hansons were one of those making the most transactions after the bank’s partners based on the policy transactions made in London and Marseilles, which are the two most important centers Dersaadet Bankası used to realize policy transactions:

³⁶ *Levant Herald*, July 12 1907.

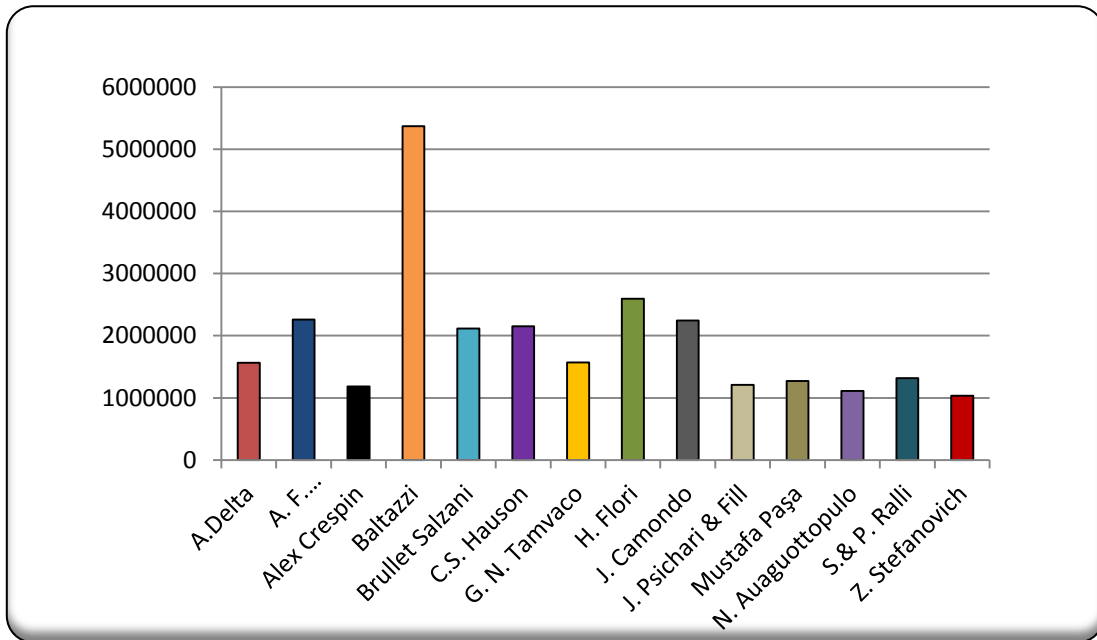
³⁷ BOA. A. MKT. 184/28, 29 Rebiülahir 1265. 24 March 1849. “... zikr olunan bankanın vaz’ı niyyet-i mezkureye mebni idiğü ve ol veçhile kimse, icbar olunmayub oraya ka’ime götürüp götürmemekle de herkesin ihtiyarı elinde bulunduğü mülabesesiyle bunda ne kava’im ve hizanenin ,’tibarına ve ne tüccarın menafi’ine dokunur madde olmamasıyla bunun dahi kararı sabık veçhile icra-yı iktizasıyla mezkûr konturato heman imza olunub müddet-i merkumenin hitamında icab-ı halin bi’l müzakere tesviye ckılınması müte’allik ve şeref-sudur buyurulan irade-i seniyye hazret-i tacidari iktiza-yı celilinden bulunmuş olmakla ol bab da emr u ferman hazret-i veliyyü’l-emirindir.”

³⁸ BOA. A. MKT. 199/28, 28 Cemaziülahir 1265. 21 May 1849.

³⁹ BOA. A. MKT. 184/28, 29 Rebiülahir 1265. 24 March 1849.; Edhem Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, (İstanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi Araştırma Merkezi ve Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı Ortak Proje Yayını, 1999), s. 21.

Bar Chart 1

To Marseille (April 1851 - 1852 December)

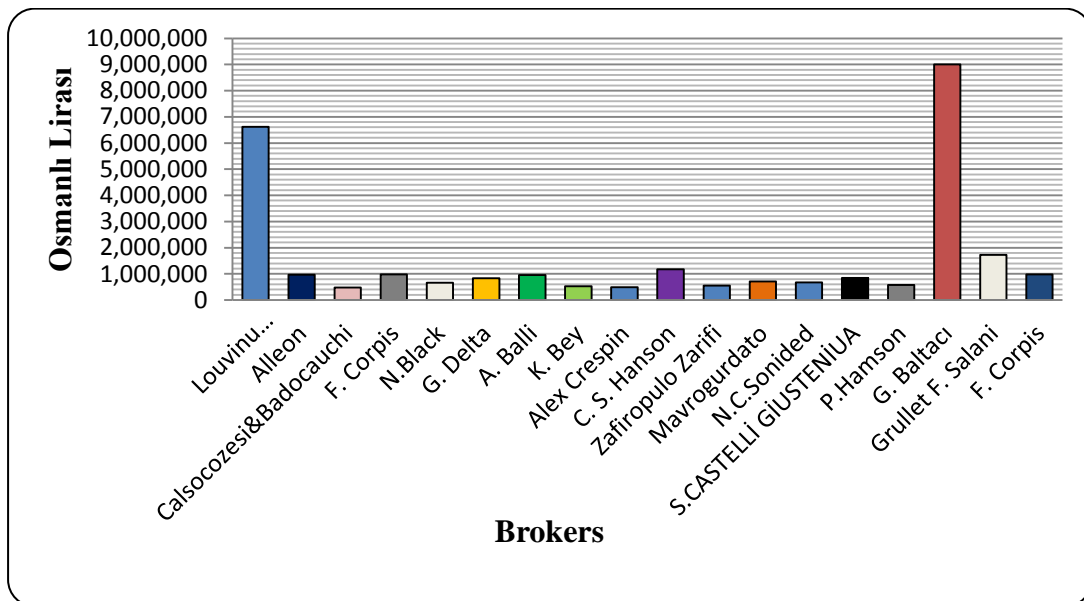


Notes: Indicators have shown on the Bart Chart in Turkish Lira Currency. (1 Pound = 0, 75 Lira)

Source: BOA, *MAD. d.* nr. 12494.; nr. 12496.; nr. 12499.; nr. 12497.; nr. 12498.

Bar Chart 2

From London (April 1851 - 1852 December)



Notes: Indicators have shown on the Bart Chart in Turkish Lira Currency. (1 Pound = 0, 75 Lira)

Source: BOA, *MAD. d.* nr. 12494.; nr. 12496.; nr. 12499.; nr. 12497.; nr. 12498.

In addition to their bill broking business, The Hansons are also known to have procured domestic debt for the Ottoman State several times both over their own companies and along with their partners. In this regard, they can be claimed to be an application source for Ottoman statesmen in the sense of banking.⁴⁰ They also became effective in the railway construction process that commenced in Ottoman territory after 1856; the Hanson family, operating as the Hanson Company tried to take part in these corporations as a partner. Two railway constructions can be shown as examples. The first one is the railway between Constanta-Danube and Varna-Ruse. The other one is the railway construction between Izmir-Aydın-Kasaba. The Hansons, who played roles in securing the guaranteed bills-reserves in the Aydın-Izmir railway construction in particular, provided fund support for this railway construction.⁴¹ Moreover, due to the trust in them, Ottoman statesmen decided at Meclis-i Vukela to make an offer to the Hansons to operate the Haydarpaşa railway.⁴²

Conclusion

This study is an effort to show that the activities of C.S. Hanson, who came to Ottoman land as a Levant Company-member merchant and carried out commercial and financial activities in the capital Istanbul, and his son Henry James Hanson suggest a greater and more vibrant financial and economic scene within the Ottoman economy than is widely accepted. The study is based on the documents and books available in the Henry James Hanson Collection at Oxford University and in the Prime Ministry Ottoman State Archives.

This financial activity indicates that new business fields emerged and bill broking, as one of these fields was well applied by Hansons. At the same time, this study tried to understand how the commercial developments experienced in the Ottoman capital and its periphery are considered by an English merchant.

Accordingly, contrary to the general opinion, the last period and particularly the one after the Imperial Edict of Reorganization is a thriving period, rather than a recessed one. It was determined that economically new business fields emerged, derivative markets began to develop and what is seen so important was not the one dominating the activity, but on the contrary was the business volume and increase in trade.

⁴⁰ BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 242/21, 01 R 1279 (Hicri).; BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 254/16, 07 Ş 1279 (Hicri).

⁴¹ BOA. *HR.MKT.* 22/8, 11 B 1274.; BOA, A.}MKT.NZD. 423/71. 08/Z /1278 (Hicri)

⁴² BOA, İ.MMS. 134/5718, 27 M 1297 (Hicri).; BOA, Y..PRK.TKM. 3/11, 23 R 1297 (Hicri).

It is also concluded that for making wealth of the Ottoman land possible, required arrangements and granting several rights to Levantine merchants that are meaningful from this perspective.

Lastly, it was seen that the corporate transformation experienced by the Ottoman Empire in the economic sense was shaped by the trade and finance markets and business volume expanded as a result of the interaction between the state and merchant with the Hansons playing a prominent role in this activity.

Archival Sources

- Henry James Hanson Collection (HJHC) (GB165-0135), Archive library, Middle East Centre, St Anthony's College, Oxford University, 3 Volumes.
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