Chapter IX

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The subject of my paper "The E. of T."

to be given in the Classical Club this
afternoon needs some excuse and explanation.
At first glance the E. of T. has nothing
to do with the interests of the C. Club. And,
frankly speaking, I did my best to per-
suade the members of the Club that
such a subject would be too far-fetched.
But the gentle, friendly and, I may say,
decisive persistence of one of the young
members of the Club has finally changed
my mind. So that this afternoon I
am going to speak on the E. of T. in
the C. Club, although feeling that
it would be perhaps better not to do so.
Many years ago, on my way from the Caucasus to C-le, I visited Tr., a second-rate maritime city in Turkey on the southern shore of the Black sea. At that time I was a student at the Univ. of SP in Russia, and I did not know that Tr. was to become, long after, a special subject of mine.

From my very youth - it is hard to say why - the lure of Tr. has been strong to my imagination, and I am not the only one I have learned, who has fallen under its charm. To Fallmerayer, a German scholar who a century ago wrote the first history of the E. of Tr., Tr. was "a country of dreams from his early youth, with its soft and melodious name." Trebizond! Really it sounds beautiful!

And in sober fact, the panorama of Tr., set among eternally verdant mountains, seen from ship's bow, is almost unforgettable.
Tir was originally an old Greek colony, founded in the early period of Greek colonization, in any case before 756 B.C., the date given by later tradition. Here we have an essential link between the future E. of Tir and the Classical Club. The name of the colony, Trapezus in Greek, is derived from the tabular appearance of the rock on which the first settlers dwelt (the Greek word Trapeza means a table). They excused my insolence to make this elementary statement before the audience of the Classical Club. The colony seems to have enjoyed freedom and peace during the classical period of Greek history. Under the Roman Empire the economic importance of Tir was well understood; roads radiated in all directions from the city to carry Roman products into Asia. In the 2nd A.D. the emperor Hadrian built there an artificial harbour, of which remains still existed in the XIX c.
According to a Greek writer of the 5th C. A.D., Tz. was "a great and populous city defended by a force of 10,000 men and above its usual garrison and was surrounded by two walls."

Christianity early reached Tz. and a local tradition ascribes to the Apostle Andrew the propagation of the gospel in this far-off corner of the Hellenic world. Under the persecution of the Emperor Diocletian, at the very outset of the 4th C., Tz. produced several martyrs, and one of them, Eugenios, became the patron saint of the city. During the middle ages Tz. took part in the wars of the Byzantine emperors with the Persians and later with the Turks.

An Arab geographer of the Xth C. writes that in his time yearly markets in Tz. were attended by a large number of Moammarians, as well as Greek, Armenian and other merchants. Beginning with the XI C., the remote situation of Tz. from Cilc and its strong fortifications caused some local leaders who had successfully defended
the city against the Seljuk Turks to regard themselves as practically independent rulers. This was the basis for the succession of Tri. from C-le and the formation there of an independent empire.

In 1204 the Western Crusaders of the IV Crusade took possession of C-le, mercilessly sacked it and founded in place of the Byzantine Empire a Latin Empire of C-le, which lay too far away to be taken became an independent center of Hellenic culture in the far east. In the same year (1204) the E. of Tri. was proclaimed.

Who was the founder of this new empire and under what circumstances was it established? The dynasty which was to rule over this empire for 257 years (1204-1461) belonged to a brilliant Byzantine family, the Comneni, who had occupied the throne of C-le from 1081 to 1185. In the latter year a revolution broke out in C-le. The population, discontented at the tyrannical rule of the last representative of the Comnenian dynasty, Andronicus II (1182-85), burst into revolt at
the alarming news of the approach of the Normans, accusing Andronicus of making no preparations to resist the enemy. With surprising rapidity Isaac Angelus was proclaimed emperor, opening a new dynasty of the Angeli on the Byzantine throne (1185-1204). Andronicus died under atrocious tortures.

The new emperor was not satisfied with the death of Andronicus but planned to eliminate all the members of the family. Andronicus' two grandsons, then children, who had been born just before the revolution of 1185, in order to escape the brutal persecution of Isaac Angelus, were secretly removed from Cilicia to the far-off country of Georgia in the Caucasus. There they were educated sheltered by the famous queen of Georgia, Thamar (Tamara), their paternal aunt. Thamar was an outstanding and picturesque figure in the Near East. Under her rule Georgia had become a flourishing country and in foreign politics she had made her authority keenly felt.

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the frontiers of her own state. In her personal life she was not very happy with her first husband, a Russian prince, who was a degenerate man who passed across his easy life at the court of Thamar in a condition of almost continuous inebriety (intoxication). She was happier with her second husband, a Caucasian prince, a type of an obedient husband, who faithfully supported the imperialistic policy of his energetic spouse. Of the type of revered husbands existed in reality, Thamar's second husband would be a perfection.

Thamar left a deep impress in the Georgian literary tradition. Georgian chroniclers extol her to the skies. She is "a second Constantine." She is seated on her sublime throne beautiful as Venus, magnificent as the sun of Apollo, ecstatically admirable to contemplate, exciting enthusiasm and capture among those who approach her and look at her... She is a masterpiece of Divinity." Thamar
possessed "the mildness of David, the wisdom of
Solomon, the energy and foresight of
Alexander (the Great) ... She was an emulator
of Alexander". A Georgian poet of that
period proclaims that "neither Aeneas
nor Homer nor Plato ... nor Zoroaster nor Aristotle
would be able to sing her praises. Thamar's
political wisdom, the military glory of
Georgia ... Thamar is God!" But the
Muhammadan writers, who from Thamar's
military successes over the Muslims had no
reason to favor her, have given a
different portrait of the Georgian queen.
A writer of the XIII c. remains in rather
Oriental style: "Owing to her female
nature, Thamar, the Queen of Georgia,
has given the reins of her heart into
the hand of lust, so that when she
happened to hear of a handsome
prince, she immediately fell in love with
him without seeing him" (right unseen).
At Thamar's court the young Comnenian
Alexius and David, who were educated; after living in Georgia
about 20 years they probably spoke Georgian
better than Greek. When the tidings of the
taking of C-le by the Crusaders in 1204 reached
Thamar, she decided at once to take advan-
tage of the opportunity; she provided
Alexius with a body of Georgian troops
and he set out from Georgia toward
Tr. Alexius easily took possession of
the city, while his impetuous brother
David, also supported by a body of Geor-
gians, conquered some districts west of Tr.
According to a source, Tr. as "herald and
foresigner" of Alexius he seems to have
been on the way to C-le. But if the
idea of taking C-le from the Franks ever
existed, it must have been soon given up.
Thamar had no troops strong enough to
undertake so complicated an expedition
against such a distant city. But Alexius
succeeded in making himself master of Tr.
and founding an empire there, and "in the bombastic style of oriental majesty" he styled himself Grand Comnenos. The dynasty of the Grand or Great Comneni was destined to be the longest lived dynasty in Greek medieval history, lasting, as we have noted above, 257 years (1204-1461).

It cannot be said, however, that the Empire of Th. was strong externally or internally. The ever growing power of the Turks in Asia Minor was a constant danger to the empire, which shortly after its foundation had to pay tribute to them and to submit to the exorbitant and often humiliating demands of the Turkish sultans. Due very probably to this forced submission, the Emir of Th. in 1461, finally fell into the power of Mohammed II, when all the Slavonic countries in the Balkan peninsula and the pitiful remains of the Byz. empire, including "the God protected city of C-le", had been conquered by the Turks.
As to the internal life of the empire, the permanent struggle of political parties and the almost continuous rivalry among various pretenders to the imperial throne, often accompanied with bloody and cruel extravagances, were fatal to the wealth and prosperity of the politically important empire. At first sight, the economic position of the city of Tr. was very favorable; the capital was an extremely important commercial port and a center where many roads from Asia converged. But the local population was not very active economically. The Greeks were absorbed in political strife and were in a state of disorganization; the indigenous Lazes, with their herds of cattle and primitive methods of agriculture, were too little developed to be able to carry on commerce and trade.

Therefore, the Genoese and the Venetians, two most important economical factors of the later Middle Ages, took advantage of
the economic stagnation of T. to found there commercial factories. They became almost independent of the feeble central power, and holding in their hands the whole economic life of the empire, both within and without T., they heaped up enormous wealth and for almost two centuries were the leading economic power in this remote corner of the Black sea.

As to the personalities of the rulers of the empire, with a few exceptions, they were not able statesmen, but often weak, vicious, and profligate men who could not stem the tide of internal strife and external danger.

We must admit, however, that no matter how talented and energetic the rulers of the E. of T. might have been, they would still have been unable to withstand the ever growing military power of the Ottoman Turks. In the late summer of 1461, eight years after Cäle had fallen into the power of Mohammed II. (1453), the same sultan put an end to the dwindling E. of T. A powerful Turkish fleet
and a very large army blockaded the city. Which, according to a fairly reliable source, was betrayed by a high Greek official in Tr. George Amoixoutzes. Hence, as it was believed at Venice, the Turk acquired Tr. rather by fraud than by arms!!
The taking of C-ke by the Turks in 1453 has been told many times, with all possible details which we have from our rich and reliable evidence on this fatal event in the history of the world. But the taking of Tri by the Turks in 1461 has been told very seldom. Of course, saying so, I do not intend to compare these two events from the point of view of their historical importance; in this respect it would be absolutely idle task to make any comparison: the event of 1453 belongs to one of the most important events in all world history; the event of 1461 belongs to one of the important events in the history of the Near East, as a final blow to the existence of a classical survival on the southern shores of the Black Sea.

Dealing with my paper of to-day with the E. of Tri, I believe it would be
rather appropriate to tell here a few words on the last page of this very little known empire, on the basis of our reliable sources.

When the spring of 1461 came, the Sultan, Mohammed II, the new Master of Cile and the destinies of the Balkan peninsula and the Near East, prepared a fleet, variously estimated from 300 to 100 vessels, provided with all the necessary materials for a siege and manned by his strongest and most experienced men under the command of his best admirals. He himself did not leave Cile till after June 22. After he had sent his European land forces over into Asia, he proceeded to Brusa, in Asia Minor, where he found all his Asiatic troops also assembled. The collection of so large an army - 60,000 cavalry and not less than 80,000 infantry - caused widespread alarm at Tr. and elsewhere; no one knew who would be the first victim, for the objective of
the expedition had been kept a profound secret; indeed, Mohammed declared that if a single hair of his beard knew the secret, he would pluck it out and cast it into the fire. After a few days' stay at Brusa, he went to Angora, where he threw off the mask; Mohammed ordered his fleet to sail straight for Tr., proceeding himself by land into Armenia against Hassan, a relative of the last Emperor of Tr., David. Hassan submitted; thus David, deprived of the only effective ally, was isolated and left to his fate.

Before Mohammed reached Tr., from Erzerum his fleet had arrived; the crews repulsed a sortie (sally), burned the suburbs, and besieged the city for 32 days, so that nothing could be brought in or out; although the garrison continued to make sorties, in probable ignorance of Hassan's surrender. But when, a day or two before Mohammed's arrival, Ismael Pasha,
with the advance guard of the army, in camp not far from the citadel, it was seen that the case was desperate. Mahmud sent a messenger to parley with the Emperor and the citizens, and to point out that it was their interest to surrender on favourable terms. In the event of a refusal, he told them there would be no more question of conventions and treaties, but of steel, with the prospect of being plundered, enslaved, or put to the sword. David replied that he had broken no treaty; he professed his willingness to make peace on condition that the Sultan married one of his daughters—the usual device of the Imperial diplomacy—and gave him land which would yield him the same income as before.

When Mahmud reported this answer to his master, who had then arrived, the latter was wroth (angry), and resolved to take and enslave the city. But finally he changed his mind: David was to yield up his Empire, keeping all his treasures, servants and movable property.
When the Emperor heard this, he came forth with his children and all his household and did obeisance, meeting with a kindly reception from the conqueror. The Turks took possession of the city, and Mohammed afterward made his entry. A Greek historian wrote: 'Mohammed ascended to the citadel and the palace, and saw and admired the security of the one and the magnificence and splendor of the other, and in every way he judged the city worthy of note.'

Such is the historical account, but popular ballads and Turkish traditions represent the outlying forts as having offered a longer resistance. The Turks of Tr. preserved a legend that the citizens, expecting relief before dawn, agreed to surrender at cockcrow; but on that fatal occasion the cocks crowed in the early hours of the night, whereupon the Turks kept the besieged to their word.
and a very large army blockaded the city, which, according to a fairly reliable source, was betrayed by a high Greek official in Tr., George Amouroutsis. Hence, as it was believed at Venice, "the Turk acquired Tr. rather by fraud than by arms".

The chief churches were converted into mosques. Mohammed sent David, the last emperor of Tr., with his children, relatives and nobles to C-le. He was first ordered to reside at Adrianople, but accused of intrigues against the sultan, he was brought to C-le and there put to death by the sword on Nov. 1, 1463, together with his sons and his nephew. Tr. became the chief city of a Turkish vilayet, as the administrative divisions are called.

Perhaps it would not amiss to remember that Trapezuntine women have always been and are now famous for their beauty, and in the later Middle Ages Trapezuntine princesses were sought as brides by Byzantine emperors and Turkish sultans.
The nephew of the last Byzantine Emperor, Constantine XI Palaeologus, who had died heroic death at the Taking of C- ....

by the Turks in 1453, Andreas Palaeologus transmitted his rights, of course, imaginary and unreal, to the Empire of C-le and T. to the King of France, Charles VIII; and later, Andreas again transmitted these rights to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain (Castille). This act, of course, had no practical result.
To-day very few people, especially in this country, have even heard of this far off-retired city. But for 257 years, while the Empire of Ti. existed, it was the center of an active religious and commercial life maintaining important relations between West and East.

In the XVe. ambassadors from the emperor of Ti. appeared at the court of the French king in Paris and in the same century representatives of Ti. attended the famous Council at Florence in Italy, which resulted in the conclusion of the Union between the R. Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches. Through Ti., western missionaries, ambassadors, travelers, and merchants penetrated to the depths of Asia, especially to Persia and there carried on their manifold transactions.
Unfortunately, our material on the subject is very scanty and scattered. At the outset of the 19th c., the history of Tz. was almost unknown. But in the twenties of that century, among the books of Cardinal Bessarion preserved at Venice, a German professor J. Fallmerayer found the Chronicle of Michael Panaretos, who covering the period from the foundation of the empire in 1204 to the year 1426. He is a special historian of the 8th to 12th century. In spite of the dryness and excessive sometimes tantalizing conciseness of his chronicle, writing chronicles for the first time permitted us to reconstruct, of course approximately and with very important gaps, the course of the historical events of the empire.

The scanty literary information on Tz. might have been supplemented to some extent by the study of the archaeological remains in situ, the walls and ancient churches converted into mosques; but the hostile attitude of the pre-war Turkish government to any investigation of this sort.
has always been an almost insuperable obstacle to any such study. When in 1916 during the
war Russian troops took possession of Tr., Russian archaeological expeditions, headed
by the well known Russian Byzantine scholar, Th. Uspensky, began a thorough study
of local monuments and archaeological remains, and they had succeeded in obtaining
very important results; but the unexpected evacuation of Tr. by the Russian troops in
1918 put an end to the work. In this respect much remains to be done at Tr., and a well
organized historical-archaeological expedition would be very desirable and doubtless pro-
ductive of important results.

We must not forget that the archives of Venice and Genoa still keep many secrets, and a thorough investigation of those archives may throw new light on many
other pages of the history of the E. of Tr.
We know that the Crusaders never reached Tyre. And it is interesting to note that during the Crusades, Trebizond lost its reality and has turned to be a fairyland without any connection with the history of Tyre. This fairyland of Tyre was filled with wealth, beauties and fascinating mysteries, most famous works of.

In the French, Spanish, and English literatures of the XVI and XVII centuries, the name of Tyre occurs several times. The well-known French satirist of the XVI c. (1553), Rabelais, in one of his writings, "I am going to tempt the students of Trebizond to leave their Fathers and Mothers, etc.

This passage has nothing to do with our Trebizond; Rabelais uses here Tyre for Paris, deriving the word from trapeza-table, and hinting at the gormandizing life of the monks who were 'real gluttons.' In his immortal poem Don Quixote, Cervantes writes: "The poor hidalgo already saw himself by his arm's might crowned (Emperor of Tyre)."

[Imaginabase el pobre ya coronado por el valor de su brazo, por lo menos, del Imperio de Trebizonda].
In connection with this, in my belief, a misleading indication must be definitely eliminated. In Chevalier's biblio-
graphic work *Topobibliographie* (under Trebizond, 3153) and in some articles on Trebizond, for instance, in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* and *Encyclopedia Americana* (Lv IV, 10), the first book on Trebizond is given by Thomas Gainsford, "The Histoire of Trebizond" (London, 1616). I do not know whether the authors of articles and Chevalier have ever seen this book. Of course, it is a very rare book. As to myself, I could not get it in Paris and finally found it in the British Museum. This book proved to be a collection of phantas-
tic stories which take place in the Near East; indeed, the name of Trebizond is several times mentioned. But the book has no histori-
ical significance whatever and cannot be given as one of the books referring to the History of Trebizond.
In his "Paradise Lost" Milton wrote: "And all who since baptized or infidels jousted in Apramont, ... Demasco, or Marocco, or Trebizond, or whom Bizerta sent own Afric shore, when Charlemagne with all his nobility fell by Fontarabia." (I, l. 5384).

The very well known impostor of the XVIII c. in France, Calglistro, called himself Count de Calglistro, son of the Grand Master of Malta, Pinto, grand-son of the Sheriff of Mexico, and heir of the Empire of Trebizond...

In the domain of music there are two light operas: one, Princesse de Trebizond, opérette en un acte, musique de M. Louis, Carlo, Thierry et Weberlin (Sept. 4, 1853); the other, Princesse de Trebizonde, opéra-bouffe en trois actes, musique de Offenbach (Dec. 7, 1869).

In Spanish a word Trebizond means quarrel, dispute, disension; a verb - trapisondear - to be quarrelsome; and finally a tremendous noun "trapisondista" - persona que arma trapisondas o ande en ellas.
One word more on an essential side of the history of the E. of T. The Empire had very great importance in the history of Christianity in general, and in particular in its struggle against Islam, which late in the middle ages received new strength from the Ottoman Turks.
As long as the E. of T. existed, the spread of Mohammedanism among the Christian population of Asia Minor and on the shores of the Black Sea along the Caucasus and in the Crimea met some opposition, but with the fall of T. in 1461 this came to an end.

"One who knows the fate of the inhabitants of these countries since 1461 will keenly feel in the history of T. the light and warmth of the setting Byz. sun."
One scholar writes that grandeur of the E. of T. exists only in romance; another historian says that the Medieval E. of T. is one of the curiosities of history. Well, but at all events the economic and cultural significance of the empire, not only for its own sake but also as an essential factor in the history of the economic and cultural relations between East and West in the middle ages, contributes to its history a fascinating interest and unusual freshness. And here, we must always remember that the roots of the culture of the E. of T. go back to the Ancient World and to Hellenic and Hellenistic civilizations.

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