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2 Space, Representation, and Practice in the Formation of Izmir during the Long Nineteenth Century

Fatma Tanış and Carola Hein

> "In no city in the world did East and West mingle physically in so spectacular a manner as at Smyrna."
>
> George Horton, US Consul in Smyrna, 1926, 67

Izmir—also called Smyrna—has functioned as a key node in Mediterranean shipping networks, facilitating the exchange of goods between Europe, the Middle East, and Asia since the city became part of the Ottoman Empire in 1425.[1] Shared commercial interests and agreements between the Ottoman Empire and European nations reinforced the city's position in trading networks during the imperial era (1425–1918). Economic opportunities attracted European traders, who mingled with other ethnic and religious groups (i.e. Turks, Greeks, Jews, Armenians) in Izmir. Over time, elite traders and their descendants physically inscribed practices of trade and lifestyles, creating what Carola Hein has called a port cityscape—a spatial, social, and cultural pattern of port-related facilities, including warehouses, waterfronts, and headquarters, and inland infrastructures including merchant villas, places of worship, theatres, and sport venues.[2] The intangible and tangible elements of the port cityscape facilitated trade in ways that drew on and promoted notions of what became known as "the Orient" and "the Occident." Trading families wielded images and narratives of the unknown and exotic, akin to Edward Said's description of Orientalism, to sell their goods far from the places where they were manufactured.[3]

In the long nineteenth century, trader families secured the city's position as a cosmopolitan center at the intersection of the European and Asian continent, between a maritime foreland and an extended West Asian hinterland. Over time, the European-descended trader families established themselves as interpreters—between regions, countries, and trading networks.[4] The urban spaces they built and occupied reinforced this role. Generations of these trading families used their experience and knowledge of Europe and the Ottoman Empire to increase their wealth and social standing. Their trade catalogues featured Oriental carpets and

spices. Some of these goods were displayed in the 1851 London and 1855 Paris World Exhibition catalogues, and they became accepted parts of Western lifestyles.[5] The leading families in Izmir maintained their Western roots and connections in their everyday lives. They were partial to architecture and décor that combined European and West Asian elements: in a mansion, for example, with a neo-classical façade they might display Turkish blue china with floral patterns on top of mantelpieces.[6]

The traders' skills in negotiating between East and West benefited their trade and earned them praise from European observers. In 1902, the English writer, traveler, and archeologist Gertrude Bell, who visited some of the leading traders in their homes, wrote in her letters: "But these people get on with the Turks![7]. Her surprise was very much in line with dominant Orientalist concepts of the time that regarded people in the region as different, mired in traditional practices. The American writer Mark Twain, for instance, commented that "A railway here in Asia—in the dreamy realm of the Orient—in the fabled land of the Arabian Nights—is a strange thing to think of."[8] The trading families' industrial, trade-related, social, and private spaces, their lifestyles in Izmir, and the stories by and about these people have contributed to the emergence of dynamic multiscaled port cityscapes that were interconnected with others across the world. Connecting the representation of the spaces of trade with the actual places of the city and the practices of trader families at the intersection of the imagined Orient and Occident, our analysis explores how European elites secured the production and expansion of trade-related public and private spaces. We argue that these three elements—representation, places, and practices—formed a feedback loop that strengthened the economic power of the city and of select individuals, who then helped expand the larger port cityscape from waterfront to hinterland.[9]

Beginning in the seventeenth century, Izmir became part of the larger global trade network, partially as a consequence of the capital acquired by its prominent European families. The French Girauds, the English Whittalls, and other trader families created a multifaceted social and spatial network in Izmir. They shaped tangible spaces—commercial, residential, and leisurely—as part of their trade activities, and created practices—public service, social life, domestic etiquette, and cultural engagement—in everyday lives that carefully combined features of what they saw as Oriental or Occidental.

Focusing on two trading families, the French Girauds and the English Whittalls, this text considers how human and nonhuman actors shaped sociospatial networks in port cities to promote trade through various channels and with material objects, including buildings, gardens, texts, paintings, and photographs. We follow the sociospatial traces of families

through their professional spaces—warehouses, headquarters, sales offices—from the port to inland spaces. We then focus on spaces of socialization and leisure in the village of Bournabad, present-day Bornova, where traders built and lived in large mansions.

Our research builds upon the work of historians who have explored the history of Izmir with a focus on selected spaces such as the quay and warehouses and on economic conditions in the Ottoman Era.[10] Their scholarship has helped to reveal networks within the city, and between the city and the surrounding world. Sibel Zandi-Sayek has written about the construction of the quay and the influence of traders in decision-making.[11] Malte Fuhrmann has addressed the social life of inhabitants on the quay of Izmir.[12] Onur İnal has studied the role of the Anatolian hinterland for the emergence of Izmir as gateway port.[13] Several researchers have also documented the history of key trader families and their residences in Izmir. Their writing is based on inventories such as building surveys, historic preservation surveys, and interviews with family descendants. They have also explored family genealogies and personal correspondence within the families and with officials like consuls.[14] However, there is room for further investigation into the connection between social and spatial interventions and the reciprocally constructed relationship between East and West.

Our contribution emphasizes the trade and daily life of Izmir's European residents who were active in overseas trade activities in the port cityscape. Through consultation of varied materials and spaces, we aim to understand how Orientalism shaped the social practices, economic development, and representation of the European-descended traders. We also explore descriptions of Izmir by foreign observers. Their writings and depictions captured their impressions of these physical spaces and local urban life. Commentaries include those by well-known British writers, traveler Gertrude Bell, and journalist Eustace Clare Grenville Murray.[15] Together with other accounts and visual historical material, they provide insight into the multiple facets of space and life in Izmir. We also explore written accounts by trader family members, such as Geoffrey W. Whittall's (1906–2002) family history or the scrapbook of Ray Turrell (1911–2000), who was a granddaughter of the merchant and botanist Edward Whittall (1851–1917). These materials are crucial sources for understanding the lives of traders, which contrasted with the Orientalist expectations of European travelers.[16] Turrell's scrapbook was not published until 1987, but it does provide a vivid glimpse of Bornova and the life of Turrell's family in the village.[17] Interviews conducted by Fatma Tanış with descendants of the Whittall and the Giraud families (Brian Giraud and his son, Mark Giraud), who still live in Izmir, further illuminate how families produced spaces that reflected their commercial interests and how they interpreted their chosen place of work and life as an intersection of East and West.[18]

European Trading Families in Izmir

Through their business activities and private lifestyles as well as the spaces they created, Izmir's elite traders introduced European practices to the region and also shaped the way Westerners in Europe and elsewhere imagined "the Orient." By the mid-nineteenth century, the workplaces and houses of the elite traders became important forces in this new image construction when they attracted the attention of travelers and local writers and painters. Accounts of the families' everyday leisure lives promoted the family businesses mainly to a European audience.[19] In 1887, Octavious Whittall wrote of the English families in Bornova and their social life in Murray's Magazine.[20] Beside these kinds of articles, prominent trader families also appeared in the well-known tourist guide Murray's Handbook.

Charlton Whittall's Big House appeared as one of Bornova's most important and inspiring spaces in Izmir in contemporary written accounts. The Big House and its large garden appear in several memoirs.[21] Letters by and photographs of travelers, such as English archaeologist and traveler Gertrude Bell, provide evidence of these intertwined families and their economic contributions to the Ottoman Empire. The Whittall family's property and luxurious lifestyle impressed Bell, [22] who wrote of her fascination with the family's Big House and their lives there in letters following her visit in 1902.[23] She noted that women sometimes wore local dress.[24] Bell was impressed by the size of the house and amazed by the beautiful garden; she noted that Edward Whittall had donated tulips to England's Kew Gardens, the famed national botanical garden outside of London.[25] The Whittall garden was also featured in postcards and other public images.[26] Such depictions helped to promote the trading families in the eyes of the European elite.

The traders themselves carefully created accounts and images to serve their interests. Their ambition was twofold. European trading families, including the Whittall and Giraud families, played a crucial role in establishing Izmir as straddling an imagined Orient and Occident. Personal engravings, scrapbooks, letters, and photographs of the families, their spaces, and their products were used as a form of marketing in trade catalogues. Company brochures combined Orientalist images of the city including camels and local peasants in traditional costumes with depictions of European buildings and trader families in European-style dress. What was meant as a promotional tool initially can be used as an analytical tool today. The images hint at the race, status, and gender differences in the city that supported European trade families. While Turkish, Greek, and Armenian girls in the villages of Western Anatolia were weaving carpets for export, the men from those villages were working in factories. Meanwhile, elite family women enjoyed the culture of their homes and male traders promenaded on the quay in their fine clothes.

As the elite traders constructed a narrative of harmonious Oriental and Occidental integration, they excluded depictions of modern production and traditional exploitation.

The port cityscape of Izmir emerged from a long history of cross-cultural exchange.[27] During the eighteenth century, commercial alliances combined with political unrest in European countries, particularly in France, encouraged traders to migrate and develop new trading lines. Eventually these traders and their descendants established new urban forms. Following the establishment of commercial treaties between France and the Ottoman Empire in 1740,[28] Izmir started to attract French merchants, including trader Jean Baptiste Giraud, who earned his fortune in import and export.[29] Increasing long-distance trade put Izmir on the map for other Europeans. The Ottoman Empire provided traders incentives such as tax exemptions, secure houses and work offices, and exemption from the Ottoman Laws. These policies were meant to encourage migrants to develop cities.[30]

The wide trade network of the city offered an important market for traders to sell products. The Ottoman port controlled one quarter of the Empire's trade of raw cotton, spun cotton, waxes, dyes, and leathers, linking Izmir to Livorno, Genoa, Messina, Trieste, Ancona, Venice, Marseille, Amsterdam, and London.[31] Izmir's hinterland was rich in cotton cultivation, fertile in fruits and vegetables, and had large potential in underground mining. The natural features and the privileges that were given to foreign merchants benefited an established commercial network, attracting Englishman Charlton Whittall. In 1809, he came from Liverpool as a representative of the trade company Breed & Co. to extend the company's commercial influence in the Ottoman lands.[32] In 1811, Whittall founded his own firm, C. Whittall & Co., the start of the commercial establishment of the family in the city.[33] European merchants often established themselves and became long-term residents through trade networks and marriage. Marriages created the Whittall trading dynasty, which would shape Izmir's buildings and urban spaces and inspire paintings and texts that served to reinforce ideas about the relationship between East and West.

Between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, the elite traders settled along the waterfront. The waterfront served as a hub of economic activity and was frequently depicted in paintings and engravings such as the 1702 engraving by Joseph Pitton de Tournefort.[34] Approaching Izmir from the sea in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a viewer would see ships with different flags and the residences of European merchants, including the house of J. B. Giraud, among the customs houses and warehouses that supported port activities. Traveler Léon de Laborde included a drawing of the waterfront entitled *Débarcadère du Quartier Turc* in his 1838 account *Voyage de L'Asie Mineur.*[35] His depiction included sailboats and fishing boats alongside Turkish city

inhabitants. In this era, all functions of the port cityscape—shipping, trading, living—were concentrated on the waterfront, where locals and foreigners mingled.

After the plague repeatedly reached Izmir (several times between 1720 and 1837), many trader families fled the waterfront, settling in the village of Bornova on the city's outskirts, allowing the port cityscape to develop new spaces.[36] The Whittall family, like many of their peers, moved their family life to the outskirts of Izmir but kept their workplaces in the center of the city. New railways linked the port with the mainland, passing through elite villages like Bornova, which included the family quarters of the Giraud and Whittall families. Industrialization and the construction of railroads led to further spatial separation of public and private life in Izmir for these families. The port cityscape expanded to include places where European practices co-existed with local ones.

The Imagined Orient and Occident in Buildings and Trade Catalogues

Traders in Izmir used their international networks, knowledge of European cultures, and their location at the edge of the imagined Orient to sell and promote their goods. In the early nineteenth century, C. Whittall & Co. was engaged in several branches of export, which included sending goods such as figs, raisins, and bales of raw cotton to Liverpool.[37] The family was also active in marine insurance, mining, and the opium trade.[38] They used their income to shape the architecture of Izmir. The company maintained trade in several offices on the quay and in the center of the city. Photos taken from the sea and from the quays document the warehouses and production process, indicating their relevance to the city's everyday affairs.[39] Western-style buildings stood on the quay, greeting the ships arriving from Europe with familiar architectural forms.

The carpet trade was a key business in Izmir and serves as a good example of the exchange between East and West. Prominent traders from Izmir established companies that took part in different stages of carpet production and its global distribution.[40] These companies worked with local producers in the hinterland who fabricated objects that would make their way into European homes, lending them an exotic feeling.[41] To sell their goods, trade catalogues often included local elements like traditional costumes or scenes of production. In 1886, G. P. & J. Baker's carpet catalogue included extensive descriptions of the villages of Kula and Uşak, where peasants wove carpets.[42] The World Fairs (e.g. 1851 London, 1855 Paris) were places to promote products. Charles La Fontaine, the brother of the merchant Sydney La Fontaine from Izmir and one of the owners of the five companies

constituting the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers (OCM),[43] was responsible for the 1851 World Fair's Turkish Section.[44] The fame of Turkish carpets spread rapidly in England when Queen Elisabeth ordered one.[45] The increasing demand for carpets and concomitant increases in production and workforce numbers indicate the success of these marketing strategies.[46]

In the second half of the nineteenth century, as trading families prospered, the port cityscape in Izmir expanded. In the 1850s, foreign merchants initiated a petition to build a new quay, which was finished in 1865.[47] The new quay connected the city's port with its outskirts via a new perpendicular railway system.[48] The Whittall and the Giraud families played an important role in developing a network of buildings (warehouses, sales offices, depots) along the waterfront, in the city's industrial zone northeast of the city center, and in villages on the city's edges. Building design reflected waterfronts in Europe. Between the 1860s to the 1920s, the waterfront became, as one scholar has put it, "the business card of the city."[49] Postcards and paintings commissioned by merchants show the city like an extension of Europe in the Orient with European-style sales offices. The quay also hosted several consulate buildings, and multiple hotels, theater and cinema buildings, and cafés. Gothic revival styles, neoclassical ornaments, and symmetrical façades in the commercial part of the quay emphasized a European look. Many postcard depictions of Izmir feature the quay with the tram and European elites along the waterfront in European-style clothing. Memoirs written by merchants' children support this image of European urban life along the shore.[50]

In their promotional literature, the companies included elements—e.g. camels, mosques—of the imagined Orient and Occident. Postcards and other representations of Izmir sometimes featured a mosque and a European-style building[51] belonging to the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers (OCM).[52] The OCM building with its late baroque architecture and ornamented door profiles was depicted in a company promotional photo album of 1908.[53] In that brochure, the painting of the building features a distorted reality. The European style building was shown with a mosque that can be seen in the background of the image, while, in reality, the mosque was not visible, given that the neighboring building was closing the view (Figure 2.1).

Other attempts at mixing Orient and Occident are evident in the OCM trade album that was distributed through agents in various trade centers, including London, Paris, Vienna, and New York. Traders used the fabled Orientalist image of camels to promote the city. OCM's prosperity depended heavily on work performed inland, where peasant workers wove carpets in their own houses. The OCM board members were in charge of the company's marketing strategies and used images of this work to promote their goods. Illustrations in OCM's promotional photo album

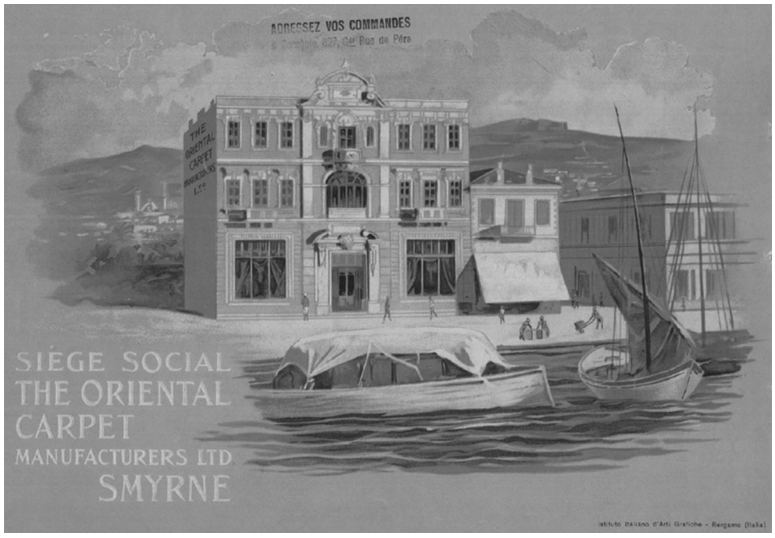

Figure 2.1 Painting of the headquarters of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers with an imagined mosque in the background. Courtesy of the Levantine Heritage Foundation.

depict Turkish, Greek, and Armenian women working on their carpet looms in their houses in the villages of Kula, Uşak, Burdur, Isparta, and Eskişehir. These villages were located in the Western part of Anatolia, between 200 and 400 kilometers from Izmir. Camels or trains transported the carpets from villages to the port. The company's promotional literature showed the camels that Europeans would associate with the fabled East, but not the trains, considered signs of European modernity and superiority.

The OCM grew and prospered financially, allowing its core members to expand their grip on the port cityscape. When the company was founded in late 1907, it immediately became the biggest nongovernmental corporation in Turkey.[54] Within four years it dominated the world market for oriental carpets.[55] In 1911, OCM produced 40,294 square meters of carpet, owned 20,000 looms, and employed 100,000 weavers. The company had factories and agencies in twenty-seven towns.[56] According to a trade catalogue published in the 1930s, the carpets were shipped around the world from company headquarters in Izmir.[57] The trade built on production in the Mortakia region and the commercial distribution from the Izmir port generated prosperity in the villas of the Bornova neighborhood.[58] The activity of human actors was enhanced by nonhuman actors, including the industrial spaces of Izmir's port cityscape.

Imaginaries of Occident and Orient in the Domestic Sphere

Imaginaries of Orient and Occident were not limited to the spaces of trade. Rich traders would work in the city but live with their families in the outskirts. There, large mansions and gardens, such as those belonging to the Giraud and Whittall families, accommodated luxurious European lifestyles.[59] While the men of the Whittall and Giraud families traveled between the waterfront and the outskirts, their wives and children remained in the village of Bornova. Mansions and the family neighborhood housed leisure, sports, and social activities, which helped to maintain family cohesion and status. Social activities helped secure trade interests.[60] Most members of these families had studied in Europe, and families cherished their family traditions and values.[61] Frequent visits to England, among other European countries, continued to shape their cultural memory and identities. Bornova's mild local climate fit with preexisting European references. Hortense Wood, daughter of the Steinbüchel family and related to the Whittall and the Giraud families, associated the view in Bornova with those she had enjoyed in Switzerland.[62] The sense of similarity was reinforced by European-style houses that were built in the family quarter.

The Whittall family home reflected profits from overseas trade and how the social status of the family traded on a bending of local architectural forms to accommodate European standards. In the early eighteenth century, a Greek monastery had occupied the site of what would come to be known as the Big House.[63] When James, brother of Charlton, bought it, it was only a one-story building.[64] Over time, the family extended the building, adding a floor for reception rooms, a third floor, two ballrooms, a large dining room, a drawing room, and a library. A kitchen, storage rooms, and rooms for local Ottoman housekeepers and other servants occupied the so-called garden floor. High living standards led to spatial modifications of the buildings. Ballrooms and large dining rooms show the importance of social gatherings in family and trade networks. The house was the site of large family occasions that included royalty: King Otho of Greece in 1833, Sultan Abdülmecid in 1849, Sultan Abdülaziz in 1863, and Prince Andrew of Greece in 1921.[65] The Big House served as an important location for diplomatic gatherings and was exceptional in this regard among private properties in Izmir.[66]

Public spaces in Bornova played a crucial role in connecting the trading families, facilitating collaborations and marriages, and providing places to display wealth (Figure 2.2). The trader families pursued their social lives in clubs, ensuring solidarity between elites. The exclusive clubs only accepted registered members. Sports clubs and social activities depicted in postcards became part of the city's identity.[67] Murray's Guide included these images and information about the social life of

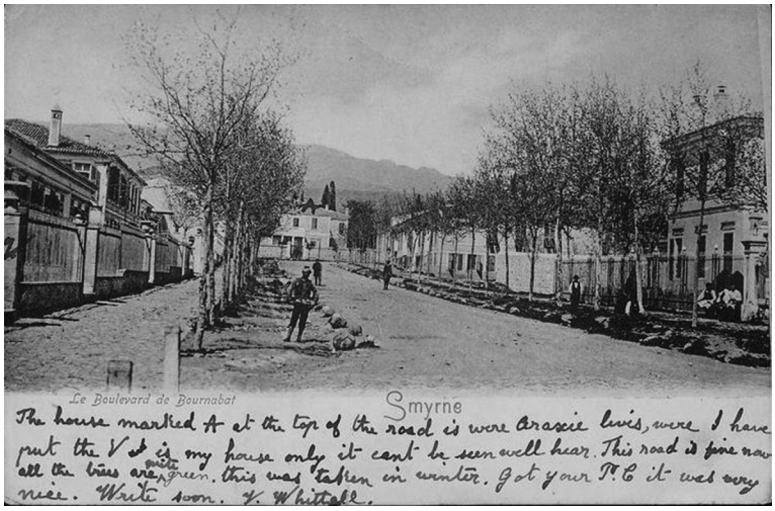

Figure 2.2 Postcard, sent by a descendant of the Whittall family, shows the road and some of the Whittall houses in Bornova. Courtesy of the Levantine Heritage Foundation.

trader families.[68] Religious spaces contributed to the social cohesion that formed the backbone of trade. The elite families constructed churches that became a social space for young men and women where they could get to know each other in respectable ways.[69] Charlton Whittall built a church in Bornova in 1857 in the Big House garden.[70] Elite families also used their financial power to establish and maintain streets, a water system, and clubs.[71]

The long-term resident European migrant community in Bornova did not often seek entertainment elsewhere, as the community was large and, as one former resident noted, "life was delightful" with access to local theaters and gatherings.[72] By 1880s, they formed their own tennis and hockey clubs in Bornova.[73] The families introduced multiple European sports to the city, as Brian Giraud explained in an interview.[74] These spaces and social activities influenced socioeconomic relations in the city, fostering societal connections in Izmir.[75] Social practices were often based on cultural memory constituted in their home countries. The building in 1840 of the Hippodrome in Buca—another village in Izmir—provides an example. The Whittall, Rees, Forbes, and Giraud trading families helped to introduce European horse racing in Turkey.[76] Izmir-based photographers Zachariou and Kouris captured this social life, featured in French- and Ottoman-language postcards. In their private sphere, these European families introduced and disseminated a European lifestyle in Izmir.[77]

Conclusion

In Izmir, family affairs of European-descended migrants fostered trade through shipping, producing overlapping commercial and social networks that were inscribed in the physical spaces and social practices of the port over a period of several hundred years. Trading families depended on their European roots, knowledge of an imagined Orient, and connections with the Turkish governors. Their economic and social power shaped development within and beyond Izmir. Partnerships entrenched the socioeconomic power of these families, integrating the city into broader patterns of industrialization.[78]

By developing the links between East and West, the merchants created new infrastructures, which expanded and unified the city in ways that benefited this small group. Within this context, international trading families like the Whittalls and the Girauds inspired writers and painters, which in turn shaped how the city and its products were seen and sold abroad. Trader families also could pick and choose elements of what they imagined as two different worlds to create a particular image of Izmir. Their international trade network helped to distill the city's complex reality into a mixture and disseminate this image to other parts of the world.

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43 OCM was established before 1908 and owned by the De Andria, Baker, Habif and Polako, Spartali, Sykes, La Fontaine and the Giraud family.

44 "Journal De Constantinople," 1851, cited in Turan, "Turkey in the Great Exhibition of 1851," 67. On the family tree, see also Edmund Giraud, *H. A Record of the Origin and the History of the Giraud and the Whittall Families of Turkey* (1934), 131.

45 Wynn, "Three Camels to Smyrna," 21.
46 Ibid., 48.
47 Zandi-Sayek, "Struggles over the Shore: Building the Quay of Izmir, 1867–1875,", 60; ibid., 59.
48 The railway reached to Uşak in 1897. Wynn, "Three Camels to Smyrna,", 37.
49 Hein, *Port Cities*, 11.
50 Giles Milton, *Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922: The Destruction of Islam's City of Tolerance*. Paperback ed., London: Sceptre, 2008: 7–8.
51 More information about the trade book can be found in Wynn, "Three Camels to Smyrna," 273.
52 An example can be seen in www.levantineheritage.com/punta.htm.
53 *Istituto italiano d'arti grafiche*, Bergamo, Italy. The painting can be seen in the Trade book of the OCM Company in the Levantine Heritage Foundation, www.levantineheritage.com/ocm.htm, retrieved date: April 14, 2019.
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