THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Black Sea



A History of Interactions

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The opinions expressed in this work are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe.

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Preface



This Teaching Pack is the result of a four year project known as "The Black Sea Initiative on History" which brought together history educators from the countries around the Black Sea under the auspices of the Council of Europe to discuss their shared histories.

History education has always been one of the pillars of the Council of Europe's programmes on education because of its contribution to the education of the future citizens of democratic societies. Activities started in the 1950s through work on history textbooks and entered a new phase in the early 1990s after the fall of the Berlin Wall when the Council of Europe became a truly pan-European Organisation with the new member States from Central and Eastern Europe.

The new challenges in this period – such as the creation of a Greater Europe without dividing lines – provided a new impetus for the activities of the Council of Europe and history education took on a new importance with the renewed interest of the new member States in their national histories. Regional cooperation on history teaching became one of the priorities of the Organisation as it enabled history educators from neighbouring countries to discuss their shared histories in their full complexity in a new spirit.

It is interesting to note that several different regions – almost at the same time – expressed their interest in regional cooperation on history education, primarily because they all felt that there was a lack of information and knowledge about their neighbours. Consequently, the Council of Europe became involved in the Baltic History Textbook Project, "The Tbilisi Initiative" – the preparation and publication of a Joint Caucasian History Textbook and the Black Sea Initiative on History.

The Black Sea Initiative on History was initiated by the Romanian Authorities in 1999 and involved seven countries, all bordering the Black Sea: Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine.

The Council of Europe and the countries taking part in the Initiative believed that it should focus on different topics, which were of concern to all the countries involved. Accordingly, the Initiative was developed around three distinct elements: an exchange of experiences organised around history curricula, history textbooks and the training of history teachers; a network of schools from the countries working on

an archaeological site near the schools and sharing information with a partner school in another country of the region; and the present teaching pack on the history of the Black Sea.

Although the teaching pack focuses on the history of the Black Sea and the countries bordering it, other countries, which have a long historical tradition with this area, decided to contribute to the Initiative. Greece hosted a Seminar on "The Greeks in the Black Sea Region" (Thessaloniki, December 1999) and Norway made a substantial contribution towards the preparation of the teaching pack and is now publishing it because of the "Viking" connection.

The Council of Europe has always supported the view that diversity and intercultural dialogue are enriching factors in the building of mutual understanding in the Greater Europe. These are reflected in the Recommendation on Teaching History in 21st Century Europe adopted by all the member States of the Council of Europe.[1] One of the goals of the teaching pack, therefore, has been to develop new approaches to teaching history based on multiperspectivity and comparative studies using sources.

Taking into account the ongoing debate concerning controversial issues in the history of the Black Sea Region, the teaching pack has not been designed to provide a definitive answer to these issues but to provide an understanding of the complexity of the historical process.

This teaching pack represents supplementary teaching materials for secondary schools and will provide teachers and pupils with more information about the history of the neighbouring countries as well as about the Black Sea region itself. Historians from each of the countries involved in the Project contributed both texts and illustrations to the pack.

The teaching pack covers a wide period from Pre-history until today. The Black Sea is brought to life in the teaching pack not only through political events but also through the presentation of different cultures and social life as well as the beautiful legends created by different peoples in this area.

I wish to thank all those who have been involved in the development of the Black Sea Initiative on History and the preparation of the teaching pack – ministries of education, universities, history educators, educational publishers, history teachers – as well as the members of the History Education Section of our Directorate in the Council of Europe, in particular, Ms Alison Cardwell and Ms Tatiana Minkina-Milko, who were instrumental in the implementation of this Initiative.

The Black Sea Initiative on History has contributed to the establishment of links between historians and history educators in this region and offers an example of good practice in regional cooperation, which will continue to be developed for other regions in Europe.



Gabriele MAZZA
Director of School, Out-of-School
and Higher Education
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[1] Recommendation (2001)
15 of 31 October 2001



Map of the Black Sea region

Black sea Teaching Pack :

Introduction

What is the Black Sea? Some facts and figures

Despite appearances to the contrary, the Black Sea is not a lake, but a genuine sea, lying mainly between latitudes 41° and 45° north. It is shaped like a kidney, with the Crimean peninsula extending out like a rhombus into the deep. The coastline is broken at two points. East of Crimea is a small sound, the Kerch channel, which in antiquity was even narrower than it is today, with a plethora of sandy shoals and inlets at the tip of the Taman peninsula. Beyond this channel lies the Sea of Azov, fed by the waters of the Don and the Kuban rivers.

At its south-western corner, the Black Sea is cut by a defile, between one and four kilometres wide, the Bosporus (Karadeniz Boğazi). It is joined to the Mediterranean by another sea, of Marmara, which narrows to form the "Hellespontine" Straits or Dardanelles.

The distance across the sea from west to east is 1008 km, and from north to south 528 km, except at its narrowest point, between the southern tip of the Crimean peninsula and the Turkish coast, where it measures only 213 km. Near the coast, the sea does not reach more than 200 m in depth, and the same shallow waters extend along a broad shelf stretching from the Bulgarian coast along an approximately diagonal line to include Crimean waters and the Sea of Azov. But beyond this shelf, once out into the open sea, the land drops dramatically to 1830 m, and then to a maximum 2135 m.

Not just a sea – more a life-line

The Black Sea is not a common framework for a piece of historical writing. It is more often seen as a geographical or a political boundary, than a subject of interest in its own right. Perhaps we should not be altogether surprised that a sea, particularly a land-locked one, has attracted few historians. The most popular subjects, for writers as well as readers, are those about exceptional people – heroes and heroines (sacred as well as secular), scientists, artists and explorers; while practical educational demands encourage textbook publishers to focus on political units – nations and continents.

When we consider what the Black Sea means to us, we tend to focus either on the political entities that have bounded it, or on its watery depths. It is difficult to envisage this sea as the *core of a network,* the *beating heart of a body, whose limbs are the different communities linking its shores.* The aim of this teaching pack is to show how we can imagine this network.

Nineteenth century cartoon maps sometimes show the landmasses of Eurasia as if each constituent nation were just one individual, competing amongst the others for power and resources. Yet the body I am describing is very different from such representations. It consists not of groups as such, but of *relationships between people who have something in common.* For many thousands of years, the Black Sea has been the

means by which ideas, skills, traditions, and faiths, alongside the more conventional trade in minerals, spices, foodstuffs and manpower, have passed and repassed from one shore to another. Sometimes such cultural, intellectual or technical exchanges have been consciously nurtured (for example, in religious or linguistic education). Sometimes they have occurred as part and parcel of a process of adaptation (the introduction of new metallurgical and technological processes). Such exchanges are characteristic of all historical periods and of all regions. They do not follow any deterministic laws, but are the cumulative result of sometimes quite personal aspirations. These stories are the deep fabric of history, the loam that makes political events possible. We can capture such stories most effectively when looking at quite specific communities and their preoccupations.

Why is the Black Sea called black?

In antiquity it was referred to as the "hospitable" sea (Eu-xeinos); the 1st century geographer Strabo explains that it was originally thought of as inhospitable, but the name changed. The Persians referred to it as *asxen*, meaning "Black", a word that might be transcribed in Greek as *axeinos* (inhospitable). Perhaps there was always a degree of ambiguity in the terms used to describe a sea that seemed harmless enough when hugging the coast, but could be unpredictable in stormy weather. Half a century ago, historians thought that it was not physically possible to sail from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea before c. 700 BCE.

But Bronze Age anchors fished up from underwater show that it was. Whatever we think today about the dangers of sailing out of sight of land, and of the extraordinary depths below, our prehistoric ancestors were not afraid to explore.

The "blackness" attributed to this sea is found in Slav transcriptions, and reflects a more prosaic acceptance of its potential danger. Whether the term also embodies other associations is impossible to say now.

A land of estuaries

The Danube, the greatest river in Europe, 817,000 km in length, is but one of five great rivers which flow into the Black Sea. The Danube is also the most westerly of this group. Moving in an easterly direction, it is joined by the Dniester, Bug, Dnieper (Dnipro) and Don. Between Ukraine and Turkey, only two major water courses discharge into the Sea: the Kuban, which technically flows into the Azov, and the Rioni, the river that bisects Georgia. The predominantly east-west direction of Turkey's underlying geology deflects groundwater in the same direction, so most of the rivers that flow into the Black Sea from the Turkish coast are smaller, excepting the Halys (Kizil Irmak), the Yesil Irmak and the Sakarya rivers.

Geology and climate account for many of the physical differences between separate parts of its coastline. The northern and western shores have a modified Continental climate, with plant species that include many European varieties of trees, shrubs, cereals and other grasses. Conditions are drier along the north eastern coast. Recent studies of buried soils, containing pollen and other organic residues, in Moldova, Ukraine, and south Russia, show that the comparatively warm phase (c.5500–4000

BCE) in these regions, which succeeded the retreat of the European ice sheet, arrested the development of coniferous and deciduous trees. Climatic fluctuations in subsequent centuries ensured that forest cover did spread again on a significant scale, as far as the Dnieper (Dnipro) and Don river valleys. The pattern of vegetation characteristic of modern steppe conditions developed from c.500 BCE–c.500 CE, with the disappearance of oak, elm, hornbeam, beech, and, eventually, even birch and pine.

The Caucasus range constitutes the greatest barrier to communications around its shores. This consists of two near parallel massifs, the Greater Caucasus, a continuous chain from the Caspian to the Black Sea, and the Lesser Caucasus, which branches to divide off the damp, sub-tropical coastal plain of Georgia from its drier, eastern regions. The coastal plain forms an approximate triangle from Ochamchire in the north to Kobuleti in the south, with its apex near Vani. The Surami Ridge separates the lowland regions (called Colchis and Lazica in the remote past) from the upland region of Iberia. Whereas the open grasslands of the northern and western coasts of the Black Sea have made its inhabitants vulnerable to attack (but also open to change, from the Eurasian Continent, or from the sea), routes through the Caucasus are limited. This is one reason why Oriental connections, including products made from metals, glass, precious stones, and silks, are found in these regions (and from thence on into central and even northern Europe) in the first millennium BCE, a route which should indicate a



The foothills of the Caucasus mountains, with Mount Elbruz in the distance.

precursor of the great Silk Road, which becomes identifiable as an established trade route no later than the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. A network of exchanges thus linked China to the areas north of the Caspian and Aral seas, to Tanais (near Taganrog), on the estuary of the River Don. Geography has made it easier for the inhabitants of the upland regions of Georgia to maintain close contacts with their neighbours in what is now Armenia and eastern Turkey: in the early first millennium BCE, this meant the kingdom of Urartu and the Persian empire; later the Byzantine empire and in the early modern period, the Ottoman Turks.

Between Trabzon and Batumi, the northern Turkish coastline shares many characteristics, in terms of climate and fauna, with coastal Georgia. The **olive**, which does not tolerate harsh winter conditions, can be grown between Sinop and Batumi. Otherwise olive oil has had to be imported from the Aegean. This made a big difference to local communities in the past. The demand for olive oil was one of the principal stimuli for importing products in bulk.



An olive tree

What can you do with olive oil?

Olive can be used not only as a base for various recipes, but also in perfumes, unguents, medicines, and other products, as well as a cleaning agent. In the Black Sea region, two ecologically different subsistence systems met and merged over past centuries – the **oil based** tradition of the Mediterranean, and the **butter based** tradition of Eurasia (using yak's or mare's milk in the steppe regions, cow's, sheep's or goat's milk elsewhere).

The combination of sub-tropical climate and marshy estuaries aroused the curiosity of ancient and modern travellers. The author of the Hippocratic treatise, *Airs, Waters, and Places*, who tries to show how people resemble their environment, describes dug-out canoes, which formed the principal means of transport along the numerous canals (Ch. 15). The Roman architect Vitruvius describes how to construct a typical local house, using huge wooden beams, with a similar roof, sometimes including elaborate towers (*On Architecture*, 2. 1. 4). The seventeenth century merchant and diarist, Jean Chardin, has left an extraordinary account of a journey from Paris to Isfahan, which includes many chapters on Mingrelia (ie West Georgia) and Georgia. Chardin made at least two journeys between 1664 and 1675, and the book on which his experiences were based was first published in 1711, becoming a best seller in Europe.

> "No bread is better than that here, the fruits are excellent and abundant ... The game is incomparable. Boar is abundant, and as delicate as it is in Colchis. The common people live off port. Vines are trained from tree to tree, as in Colchis. Their (the Georgians') manners and customs are a mixture of those of neighbouring groups. This comes, I believe, from the commercial relations that they enjoy with many nations and from the liberty that everyone in Georgia has of maintaining his own religion and customs, to discuss and defend them. One sees there Armenians, Greeks, Jews, Turks, Persians, Indians, Tartars, Muscovites and Europeans ..."
>
> (Jean Chardin, *Voyage du Chevalier Chardin* (Paris, 1711; Librairie Fr. Maspero, 1983) vol. 1.



Sinop – the modern city and its harbour; the ancient city was located in the centre left of the photo.



Wine jar (amphora) from a funeral mound at Butor, Grigoriopol, Dobrudja (Moldova), fourth to third century BCE.

West of Sinop, the climate more closely resembles that of European Turkey and coastal Bulgaria, with mild winters and hot, dry summers. All the coastal districts of the Black Sea have more temperate winters than their neighbouring continental regions. This has made the shores attractive places for settlement, and has encouraged the cultivation of a wider variety of plants and foodstuffs, especially cereals and vines. The vine is, historically, one of the most distinctive products of every part of the coast. From antiquity to modern times, large quantities of wine were imported through all the major ports and harbours – the remains are clearly visible in the form of ceramic *amphorae*, the large clay pots used to transport wine over long distances. Many of the containers were themselves reused, and the wine transferred to skins or other organic vessels. There was also a brisk trade in local wines, such as those of Herakleia Pontika, modern Ereğli (which were popular throughout the Black Sea region, and deep into the neighbouring continents during the later 4th and throughout the 3rd century BCE), Chersonesos (near Sevastopol, Crimea), and Sinope (Sinop, Turkey). The production of *amphorae* in and around Sinop was especially long lived; such vessels were still being made in the 6th century CE. During the Middle Ages, similar vessels were made in the Crimean peninsula and along the Turkish coast, and used to transport wine extensively.

In vino veritas

Studies of early viticulture in Ukraine suggest that, in some regions at least, when Greek merchants first settled on the northern coasts, they propagated vines by grafting new shoots onto native, domesticated, stocks, rather than introducing domesticated varieties and grafting them onto wild vines. In other words, vines were already being domesticated by natives early in the first millennium BCE. Wine making has a long and distinguished history on the shores of the Black Sea, and deep into the interiors of all its neighbouring landmasses.

Human Origins

Fossil remains of anatomically modern humans, referred to by palaeontologists as *homo sapiens*, can be dated back some 160,000 years in Africa. The earliest modern humans first appeared in Europe about 40,000 years ago. These were by no means the earliest hominid groups in Europe. Our picture of human development has been enriched during the last few decades. Remains of a predecessor of modern humans, referred to as "European archaic *homo*", or traces of this species' activities, have been identified at a small number of sites, in Bulgaria (at Kozarnika Cave, near Belogradchik), Romania (Dealul Mijlociu and Dealil Viilor), and Ukraine (at Korolevo, near the Carpathians), in horizons datable to more than 1 million years BP, in the "La Adam" and "Liliecilor" caves in Dobrudja, and at several sites in Moldova (Duruitoarea Veche, Ofatinţi and elsewhere). These date from at least 300–250,000 years ago. The pattern which is now emerging confirms that at least some of these hominids penetrated from Asia into Europe by way of the southern side of the Black Sea. In the Later Palaeolithic (c.40,000–11,000 BP), traces of hominid activity are much more plentiful, particularly in the Caucasus and Crimean mountains, and are widespread in the Ukrainian and Russian steppe, as well as southern Romania and Bulgaria. The dispersal of human communities is closely connected with the climatic, and therefore ecological, changes that occurred between that time and the retreat of the last glacier (c.11,000 BP). Little is known about human activities in the period between 11,000 and c.6500 BP, when the first settlements dating from the Holocene (post-glacial environment) appear inland. There is a strong suspicion among researchers that much of the evidence for the intervening phase lies under water.

In early prehistoric times, human communities were widely dispersed on the huge grasslands, the grass *steppe*, stretching in a giant swathe along the northern and eastern coasts of the Black Sea, and extending as far south as the Danube estuary. Communities settled in more concentrated numbers along the western and southern shores, where ecological conditions were more similar to those in the zone between the Zagros mountains and the east Mediterranean shores, the area where plant and animal domestication of the commonest Eurasian species first took place. It is now becoming clear that researchers have probably underestimated the numbers and extent of these early sites.



Trees covered with ribbons, Georgia; this is a tradition with a very long history, which may go back as far as prehistoric times in the region.

What lies on the bottom of the Black Sea?

A number of teams in different countries bordering on the Black Sea have begun to investigate submerged features and shipwrecks. In Ukraine, this work is sponsored by Kyiv University's Underwater Archaeology Research and Training Centre; in Bulgaria, the Centre for Maritime History and Underwater Archaeology, Sozopol. Underwater surveys are currently being conducted near Poti, on the coast of Georgia; at many sites along the Bulgarian coast; in the harbours of ancient Histria, south of the Danube estuary, and Tomis, in Romania (Navy Museums of Romania and Archaeological Museum, Constanţa); off the Turkish coast at Sinop (the Black Sea Trade Project); at Phanagoria in the Taman peninsula of south Russia. An Ottoman ship is also being investigated at Kiten, Bulgaria, and an Ottoman galley, the Kadirga, in Istanbul's Naval Museum.

Until the development of sonar beams and remotely operated submersibles (electronically operated mini-submarines), it was not possible to find out what lies at the bottom of very deep sea beds. But dramatic strides have been made in the last ten years.

In 1999, a team led by oceanographer Robert Ballard, and colleagues from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Pennsylvania, launched a new project, which aimed to recover information about the Black Sea's bed beyond coastal waters. During the last few years, traces have been found of freshwater molluscs, and perhaps of early settlements, contemporary with the first agricultural communities in Turkey. This is the first clear evidence that the Black Sea used to be smaller than it is today, and that a major inundation c.5500BCE flooded these sites. The theory was first proposed by two marine geologists from Columbia University, William Ryan and Walter Pitman in 1998.

Settlements in the coastal zone of the Black Sea first grew to be significant centres of population in **antiquity** (7th century BCE–3rd century CE). Recent discoveries by archaeologists are beginning to change some long held assumptions about the origins of coastal towns. The appearance of pottery at Sinop resembling early first millennium fabrics manufactured in the Crimean peninsula suggests that seafaring across the Black Sea continued after the Bronze Age. The close similarity between fine grey fired pottery made in Anatolia (Turkey) at this time, and fabrics produced in Thrace (Bulgaria), suggest that there is some substance behind the stories of population movements between the two regions, although the immigrants may have been craftsmen and merchants rather than whole ethnic groups, as the legends reported by ancient writers suggest.

Greek merchant ships began to ply the seas on a regular basis in the second half of the 7th century BCE. Traffic into and out of the Black Sea was not new. Stone anchors, of a type used in the Late Bronze Age (second half of 2nd millennium BCE), which have been found off the coast of Sozopol and Nesebur in Bulgaria, as well as various types of metal artefacts of Mediterranean form found on the northern and western Black Sea shores, show that ships and goods travelled thus far north in earlier times. But such visits were evidently occasional. Scholars have argued for decades about the causes of Greek "colonisation". The likeliest explanation for the remarkable rise of coastal settlements at this time is the simultaneous presence of four essential features for their success:

- A surplus of desirable resources or commodities in the host area;
- A plentiful supply of traders and boats in which the commodities could be transported;
- A network of communities which would readily take these supplies up;
- Favourable conditions in which friendly relations could be maintained between the suppliers, the traders and the recipients.

Throughout the history of the Black Sea, whenever all these conditions were met, the coastal communities grew and prospered. But when one of these could not be met, the whole network of suppliers, commodities and recipients tended to break down. Alongside shipments of wine and oil, textiles, and metal products, came travellers and writers, entertainers and mystics.

Plumbing the depths

The currents of the Black Sea were long known to be treacherous, particularly those in the Bosporus channel. The legendary Argonauts had to row hard against the current of water flowing from the great rivers which feed the Black Sea and on into the Mediterranean. Some modern scholars have doubted whether such a feat was possible before the development of large sea-going ships with banks of oars, in the 7th century BCE.

The first man who demonstrated how the currents of the Black Sea operated was an Italian officer, **Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli**, in 1680. He first put out a line, of the kind sailors use to measure depths, with white painted corks attached at regular intervals. The corks in the upper part of the line flowed with the current around his boat, in the direction of the Mediterranean. But the corks on the lower part of the line began to move in the opposite direction. Local sailors were well aware of the fact that there were two currents in the sea. But Marsigli showed how this happened. He took a tank and divided it vertically into two parts. Into one part he poured sea water, of the kind that could be found near the surface of the sea. Into the other he poured coloured water with a much higher salt concentration. Then he opened a hatch between the two parts of the tank. The coloured water with the higher salt content dropped to the lower part of the tank, while the plain sea water stayed near the surface. The less salty water represented what was flowing out of the Black Sea, a volume fed by freshwater rivers. The coloured water represented the salty Mediterranean current, flowing in the opposite direction, into the Black Sea.

Writing the history of the Black Sea

The chapters of this book have been put together from texts contributed by each of the countries bordering on the Black Sea. These contributions focus on the cultural elements that link historical communities on one side of this sea with their neighbours on the opposite shores. It is not easy to set aside familiar stories of political nationhood in favour of a new kind of history. Inevitably, we are used to thinking of the past in terms of national histories; newspapers, magazines, and television programmes formulate information in terms of national interests. But the past is a complex web of relationships. Nations have histories that encompass a great deal more - culturally, socially, technologically, intellectually - than is reflected in the nation states of the early twenty first century. History incorporates stories that have been submerged by later events. In order to understand the past, we need to try and make sense of it in its own terms, not in terms of our own preoccupations.

As we learn more about the past, historians have increasingly recognised that there may be more than one perspective on how things occurred. Just as different witnesses to an accident may convey different reports, so there may be different interpretations of historical events. Some events and processes still arouse controversy, because the kinds of interpretations put forward appear to be discordant with the evidence we possess, or do not conform to our own understanding of what happened. The contributors to this book have written from their own particular perspectives. Sometimes different perspectives provide divergent, or even contradictory, positions. These different points of view have not been suppressed. If we want to study the past, we need to be aware that such divergences exist, and as students of history we should try



Pomorie salt pans (north of Burgas, Bulgaria): sea salt can be collected as the water in these shallow pools evaporates.

to understand what these different viewpoints involve. In our impatience to master huge tracts of time, we should perhaps remember that we still have much to learn and to discover. So the topics in this book form a new beginning. From these foundations new histories can be built, histories that criss-cross modern geographical and political boundaries.

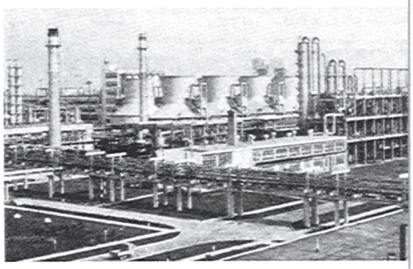
The Black Sea today

What is most surprising is that the story of the Black Sea has not been told before. We get some idea of its importance when government ministers and advisors, from the countries which have the Sea as one of their borders, meet, as they have done since 1993, to discuss the conservation of fish stocks, and the protection of the whole Black Sea environment. On such occasions the interconnections, with which we are concerned here, become starkly apparent. For such negotiations affect not just fishermen and trawlermen, but the management of water treatment plants, industrial processing complexes, bulk transportation, and tourism, and, eventually, anyone who approaches its coastline. We turn our attention away from such dry-as-dust realities, in search of something reassuring and inspiring.

Pollution of the Black Sea

During the second half of the 20th century, the waters of the Black Sea have not only been intensively fished, but have suffered from the phenomenon called "eutrophication", that is, an overabundance of organic and chemical matter. The use of nitrates and phosphates in agriculture, together with the industrial manufacture and use of detergents, has had the unwelcome effect of causing excessive concentrations of all these substances in rivers of the land masses around its shores, and thus in the Black Sea itself.

A bird's eye view of the past



Neftochim oil refinery, Burgas: built in the early 1960s, it has since been upgraded; due to its huge capacity (it contains seven plants), its output is of major importance to the whole east Balkan region.

That reassurance is not far away. North and south of the recently upgraded, state-of-the-art oil refinery at Burgas, Bulgaria, is a plethora of small sites, some acting as harbours, others providing markets further inland, where intensive exchanges took place in antiquity, not just for hundreds, but probably over thousands of years. Ancient Apollonia (Sozopol) was situated just beyond the southern entrance into the Bay of Burgas. Archaeologists at Sozopol have recently announced the discovery of the earliest street system in the city, dating from the sixth century BCE, during rescue excavations. Behind this popular seaside resort rises "Meden Rid", a rocky plateau which constitutes one of the most important sources of copper in the east Balkans. The rock is honeycombed with mining tunnels, dating probably from the Copper Age (c.4000–3500BCE) to the Medieval. There has been some speculation among metallurgists that some of the "oxhide" shaped copper ingots, a widespread Mediterranean Bronze Age form of the unprocessed metal, may have come from Meden Rid.

Meanwhile, investigations of submerged Neolithic and Early Bronze Age settlements in Sozopol harbour and at Urdoviza (Kiten), on a tiny inlet further down the coast, have revealed a remarkable collection of animal bones. In the Eneolithic period (5th millennium BCE), the area bordered on deciduous forest in the direction of the Strandja mountains to the south, and wooded steppe conditions to the north-west. Among the wild species hunted by contemporary inhabitants were the aurochs (*Bos primigenius*), red and fallow deer, roe deer, wild boar, foxes, badgers, but also lions and wild horses. More surprising is the evidence of domesticated horses in the Early Bronze Age. The specimens found at Sozopol and Urdoviza resemble the large-hoofed wild breed, found at previous levels on these sites, rather than the smaller, tarpan breed, which is usually considered to be the ancestor of the domesticated horse. There may well, therefore, have been several different trajectories of horse domestication in early prehistory. The large hoofed breed is known in Bulgaria from the beginning of the Holocene (post-glacial era), as well as from the grasslands north of the Black Sea, from the area of Voronezh and the lower Don estuary.





So where were horses first domesticated?

Early Bronze Age horse bones found at Sozopol and Urdoviza, south-east Bulgaria, resemble the large-hoofed wild breed, found at previous levels on these sites, rather than the smaller, tarpan, which is usually considered to be the ancestor of the domesticated horse. There may well, therefore, have been several different locations of horse domestication in early prehistory: in southern Europe as well as in the *steppe* regions of southern Russia and Ukraine. The large hoofed breed is known in Bulgaria from the beginning of the Holocene (post-glacial era), as well as on the grasslands north of the Black Sea, from the area of Voronezh and the lower Don estuary. Recent work by American scientists has proposed that some form of domestication was already taking place in Ukraine c.7000BCE.



Although fishing is harder to detect, dolphins were the most hunted species in Sozopol harbour after red deer. Both fresh and salt water fish must already have played an important part in the diet of Early Bronze Age communities of the Black Sea. Traces of carp, belted *bonito* (*S. sarda*) and turbot (*R. maeoticus*) have been found at Sozopol and other coastal sites.

A passion for.... Fish!

Fresh fish, and fish products, especially dry salted fish and the pickled variety (Greek *opson* and Roman *garum*), made a welcome change to what was, for most people in antiquity, a rather monotonous diet of cereals and legumes (meat was a rare luxury, usually eaten at festivals). Classical Greek writers, such as the 5th century BCE comic poet Aristophanes, and his near contemporaries, the philosopher Plato and the soldier-historian Xenophon, thought that those who showed a bit too much enthusiasm for fish were decidedly decadent!

Fresh fish was expensive, and therefore a luxury commodity. According to Strabo (*Geography* 14. 2. 21), and the second century man of letters, Plutarch (*Moralia* 667ff.), a bell was often rung in the harbour to let citizens know that a ship's catch had come into port.

North of the Bay of Burgas is a tiny peninsula, inhabited since the Bronze Age. An offshore trading community grew up here in antiquity, which took the name Mesembria (the traditional foundation date is 510BCE). It continued to be a major port and stronghold in Roman imperial times, and a stopping off point along the coast road to Byzantion. In 680 the Byzantine Emperor Constantine IV stopped here for a cure, and may have been buried close by. The earliest programme of church building, dating from the time of the Emperor Justinian, was temporarily interrupted when the city was captured by the Bulgarian Khan Krum in 821. But thereafter ecclesiastical building flourished again between 11th and 14th centuries.

I have chosen just one small area of the Black Sea coast to illustrate, however briefly, how rich and varied the heritage of these shores is. The landscape we see today is constructed from the activities and preoccupations of past communities.





Ancient Artake, modern Erdek: a fine harbour on the southern shore of the Black Sea.

Competing for the sea's assets

The narrowness of the Bosporus has made it possible for communities either side of it to impose tolls on traffic passing into and out of the Black Sea. This asset, first used by the city of Byzantion, on the western bank, from the 6th century BCE onwards, proved to be one of its most lucrative sources of wealth. From the 4th century CE onwards, Byzantion, renamed Constantinople in 330CE, after the city became the capital of the Roman emperor, Constantine I (306–37), continued to expand as the greatest *entrepôt* in Europe. It retained this role after the city's capture by the Ottoman Turks in 1453, when it began to take the shape of the modern city of Istanbul.

Controlling the assets of the Black Sea's waters has been a consistent preoccupation of many different actors. Wealth is what attracted the Goths, who moved south-eastwards from the Baltic region in the early centuries of our era to create a kingdom of their own in what is now southern Ukraine, from c.240 till 1475CE. Equally, it was the lucrative trade with Russia, Ukraine and central Europe that attracted Venetians and Genoese merchants: the former set up residence at Soldaia (Sudak) in Crimea, soon after their notorious capture of Constantinople in 1204, and at Tana, the former ancient emporium of Tanais, at the mouth of the Don; the latter at Kaffa, on the ruins of what used to be a Scythian-Greek community called Theodosia in Crimea, and in the estuaries of the Danube and Dniester.

An extract from a detailed report, written (in French) by the British ambassador to the "Sublime Porte" at Istanbul is included below. Ambassadors had access to all sorts of people and affairs. Some of the most interesting economic information, of the Medieval and early modern period, comes from Arabic and European ambassadors and travellers, who had good reason to take careful note of the resources available to their hosts.

Imagining the Black Sea

The attractions of such material wealth should not distract us from recognising that travellers and natives were also motivated by non-material factors. Jason and the Argonauts, who sailed through the Bosporus to Colchis (modern Georgia), in search of the Golden Fleece (according to the poem written by Apollonios the Rhodian in the early 3rd century BCE), were not just winning a prize, but facing challenges at the limits of their powers. Much of what we read about in chronicles reflects the crises which each community on the Black Sea faced from time to time, not the slow task of copying manuscripts – on which our knowledge of ancient literature very largely depends – or composing festival music. All the geographical knowledge on which our maps are based was built up from the experience of sailors, information gradually incorporated into *portolans*, mariners' charts. The *Argonautica* of Apollonios reflects the very real anxieties of sailors unable to predict weather patterns. Poets and prose writers, from Ovid to Anton Chekhov and beyond, have used the Black Sea shores to mirror their visions of humanity. The picture we make of the Black Sea will depend as much on such abstract considerations, as on the physical movement of people and ships.

A horn of plenty

"The Black Sea is the foster mother of Constantinople, and furnishes it with almost every necessity and comestible, such as corn, barley and millet, salt, beef cattle, sheep, lambs, chickens, eggs, fresh apples, and other fruits, butter – and a considerable amount at that – which comes in great buffalo skins (so rancid, mixed as it is with sheep's fat and thoroughly awful, though the Turks are quite content with it, preferring it to English or Dutch butter).

Snuff, candles – at a very decent price – linen, sides of beef, cow, buffalo (dry and salted, though these are not of the same quality as those that come from Rodosto, Yambol, and other parts of the Mediterranean); wax and honey potash, stone for casting [statues], whetstones, hemp, iron, steel, copper, timber and firewood, charcoal, boxwood, caviar, dried and salted fish. Caviar is in great demand, especially in Italy, the iron comes from the mines at (Stara) Zagora (Bulgaria). A lot more comes from the mines near Plovdiv, the copper from around Erzerum, Trebizond and Diarbekir, where there are also silver mines. There are also some copper mines near Salonica.

The slave trade is a direction not devoid of interest. These slaves are caught by the Tartars on their expeditions or when they make war; or they may be Georgians, or Mingrelians and Circassians, sold by their princes or by their relatives.

The commodities which travel in the opposite direction, into the Black Sea, include cotton and linen, incense, wine, oranges, lemons, lemon juice (which travels to Poland and Russia), dried fruit from the islands, such as figs, raisins.. various kinds of manufactured cloth, muslin, painted fabrics, iron, steel and paper goods, upholstery of Christian manufacture, and various other products either of pagan [Moslem] or Christian manufacture. There is a lot of basketwork, made of cane and straw. The export of coffee and rice is prohibited, to ensure a plentiful supply in Constantinople.

The journey to destinations in the Black Sea is a very long one (one boat may go twice a year) although the return trip to Constantinople may take no more than three or four days... the superstitious tendency of the Greeks has communicated itself to the Turks... The trade with the Black Sea is so lucrative, that one makes no loss, even if only one out of three shiploads comes into port.."

Henry Grenville, *Observations sur l'état de l'empire ottomane* [1766] (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 1966, ed. A.S. Ehrenkreutz), paragraphs 146–49.

Defying geography

The history and traditions of Black Sea communities reflect patterns and associations that cannot be mapped easily. I would like to give just a few examples. One of the interesting, and unexpected, facts to emerge from recent studies of Christianity in the Black Sea area is the role played by the Jewish diaspora, which evidently provided some early adherents. Conversely, the role of Jewish communities in the cultural and commercial life of the region has been underappreciated. A Byzantine general of Georgian descent, Gregory Bakuriani, founded the celebrated monastery of Bachkovo, south of Plovdiv, Bulgaria, in 1083, and prescribed, in Georgian, Armenian and Greek, that Georgians should be given precedence in admission (whereas Byzantines were specifically excluded). Many of the manuscripts circulating in towns and monasteries of eastern Europe were translated from Greek and copied in the monastic houses, organised by ethnic origin, on Mount Athos in the Chalkidic peninsula of northern

The convention BP (= before present) is used by specialists for very remote dates, based on radiocarbon date equivalents, because it is not possible to give these the same precision as calendar years.

Greece. The highly original designs of Georgian churches built between 4th and 7th centuries CE seem to have most in common with plans in Armenia, northern Mesopotamia, and, ultimately, Samaria. The magnificent tiles used to decorate mosques from the middle of the 15th century were manufactured using Persian technology. The Turkish *dirhem* (a word derived from the Greek *drachme*, a convenient silver coin, and, literally meaning a handful), was a unit of currency found not just throughout the Black Sea area but as far north as the Baltic. The rulers of Moldavia and Wallachia, whilst being vassals of the Ottoman sultan from the 15th century, used the revenues derived from commerce to endow churches in Istanbul, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Mount Athos, as well as in their own principalities. These princes, who had never been subjects of the Byzantine emperors, nevertheless adopted many Byzantine court practices and were keen to make Greek literature better known. The summer palace of the Russian Tsar, built in the resort of Livadiya, Crimea, in 1910–11, presents a fusion of Byzantine, Gothic, and Arabic features. It was here that the Yalta Conference was held in February 1945

Gheorghe Brătianu and his work on the Black Sea

Gheorghe Brătianu (1898–1953) was one of the most prolific Romanian historians. He studied in Iaşi, Cernăuţi and in Paris, becoming a professor of universal history at the Universities of Iaşi (1924) and Bucharest (1940–1947). He was a member of the Romanian Academy and of several international political institutions. He was the leader of the National Liberal Party, attached to the personal policy of King Charles II. In 1941 he volunteered in the campaign for the liberation of Bessarabia and Northern Bucovina. Arrested in 1950 by the communist authorities, he was killed three years later in the prison at Sighet.

In the field of historical research, Gheorghe Brătianu was concerned with the formation and continuity of the Romanian people, the formation of the Romanian Medieval states, the social and political organisation of the Romanian Principalities in the Middle Ages, Italian commerce on the Black Sea and the history of the Black Sea. He published a book on the Genoese colonies of the Black Sea, and was the first Romanian to subscribe to the so-called 'Annales' school of historians, who were keen to explore social and economic history over the centuries, not just political and constitutional affairs.

Brătianu's interest in the history of the Black Sea is demonstrated by his course at the University of Bucharest, *The Black Sea Issue* (1941–1943). To the end of 1948, the historian finished writing a work of geo-history, *The Black Sea.* It was written and published in München, in 1969, under the title *La Mer Noire. Des origines a la conquete ottomane* and re-published in Bucharest, in 1988, as a result of great efforts. Brătianu considered that the political atmosphere of the time when he wrote the book was not appropriate to extend this historical analysis to the modern age.

1 · Prehistory



Statuette from Brynzeni grotto: a female figure with a careful pattern of incised decoration covering her whole body (Late Neolithic, Cucuteni – Tripolye style).

Geological time	living creatures/finds	absolute dates
Pre-Cambrian	Early life forms	3300 million years
	Amphibians and fishes	3000 million years
Palaeozoic	Numerous fossils	570 million years
	Shallow seas widespread	
	Living things come ashore	435 million years
	Rise of reptiles	
	Formation of single landmass (Pangaea)	225 million years
Mesozoic	Dinosaurs walk the earth	200 million years
	Birds and mammals	136 million years
	Dinosaurs extinct	65 million years
		65–3 million years
Cainozoic	Australopithecus (homo habilis)	3–1,6 million years
Pleistocene	Simple stone tools	2 million years
	Homo erectus (Africa)	1,6–1,8 million years
	Use of fire; tool kit	
	Dmanisi, southern Caucasus (Georgia): *homo erectus* jaw and tools	1,5 million years
	Probable appearance of hominids in Europe: Early Palaeolithic	1 million years
	Hunters and gatherers; Korolevo (Ukraine)	
	Kozarnika Cave (Bulgaria)	
	Treugol'naya Cave, northern Caucasus: hominid rock shelter	
	"Archaic" *homo sapiens*	500 000 years
	"Neanderthal" hominids	130 000–30 000 years
	Luka-Vrublivetska, Ukraine	200 000 years
	Ofatinti grotto, Moldova	200–150 000 years
	Duruitoarea. Trinca settlements	>100 000 years

The origins of human kind in the Black Sea

The Black Sea was first formed when the continents of the world drifted apart from what had been one single landmass (Pangaea), approximately 225 million years ago. Subsequent movements of the earth's crust produced folds and rifts, which correspond to the mountains and valleys we see today. The history of all living things represents only a tiny fraction of the whole history of this planet. The ancestors of modern humans (hominids) were among the last living creatures to emerge, some



Georgia – reconstruction of Palaeolithic hominids, male and female, from Dmanisi (Early Palaeolithic). (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia.)

3,000 million years after the first life forms, and about 4,600 million years after the birth of planet earth.

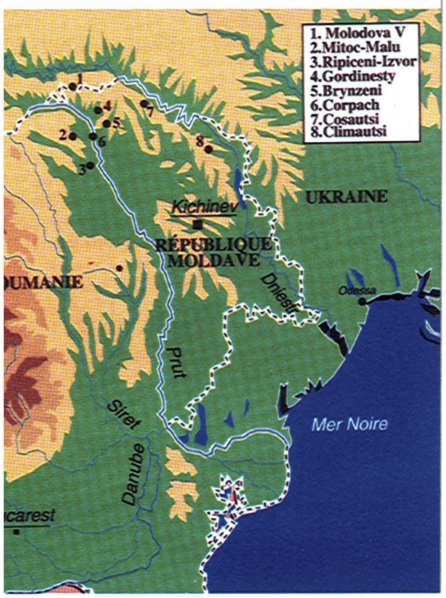
For 99% of their historical evolution, hominids remained hunter gatherers, foraging for food, and living in temporary shelters. Our bodies reflect this lengthy development in forests and grasslands (though not exclusively). DNA sampling of contemporary populations in different parts of Europe has shown that modern humans share important genetic connections with our Palaeolithic ancestors.

The Black Sea connection

The Black Sea was joined by a lateral extension to the Caspian Sea for much of the Pleistocene period, that is the geological era in which hominids first appeared in Europe. Palaeontologists (people who specialise in the remotest periods of world history) call this the Palaeolithic (Greek: *palaios lithos* = Old Stone) age, or the time when hominids first began to use stone tools. Huge advances have occurred in our understanding of these early people during the last half century. This is partly due to the discovery of new, and much more complete, fossilised bones. The locations of human activity suggest that hominids penetrated Europe from the south-east, settling in the Caucasus, and skirting the Black Sea along its western coastline. Alongside the bones of hominids, researchers have also discovered the remains of animals hunted by them. These represent a remarkable range of wildlife. More than 130 different animal species, and more than 6,000 plant varieties, have been identified in the Caucasus region from Pleistocene deposits.

The discovery of new fossilised bones belonging to early hominids tends to confirm the view that *homo erectus* emerged in Africa, where ecological conditions for his survival were especially favourable. But, between 1 million and 100,000 years ago, this species spread to many parts of Asia and Europe. These archaic hominids became extinct, marking the end of the Early Palaeolithic phase, around 200,000 years ago. The newer hominids who succeeded them were anatomically much closer to modern people, and have therefore been classified as *homo sapiens*. They included a separate branch of hominids, the "Neanderthalers", named after a valley near Düsseldorf, in Germany, where bones belonging to them were first discovered, as well as the direct ancestors of people living today. In Europe Neanderthal hominids co-existed with *homo sapiens sapiens* for many thousands of years.

Map of late Palaeolithic sites in the middle Dniester/Prut river valleys.





Georgia: Palaeolithic shell necklace. (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)

Remains of early hominids were identified in western Europe during the 19th century, but little was yet known about their counterparts to the south and east. New discoveries therefore have world importance. The earliest known evidence of hominid activity in the Black Sea region comes from Dmanisi, in the southern Caucasus. To this can now be added new evidence from Korolevo, in Ukraine, where flint tools have recently been found in what must have been an early station or resting place; and from Kozarnika cave, near Belogradchik in north-west Bulgaria, where worked stone and bone tools have been found in association with a range of wild animal remains, including bear, mammoth, a primitive form of tiger, a primitive horse, and even a Pliocene monkey. Herbivores included elephant, deer, cattle and pig.

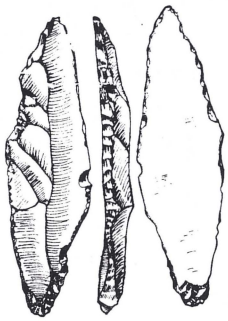
Rocks into tools

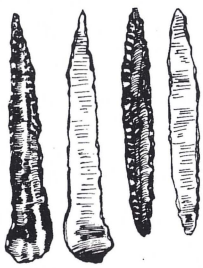
The first tools used by these bands of early hominids to kill and prepare their prey were made from stone such as flint, which could be broken or split to give a sharp edge. At first these tools were simple chopping instruments - hand axes or cleavers. A nodule of the raw material was struck with a few blows to make a rough core, after which a number of flakes would be struck off. The resulting tool might then be thinned and retouched to give a cleaner edge. An alternative technique involved striking flakes regularly off a suitably sized nodule, to produce a facetted tool. These techniques were not only time consuming, they were wasteful of a scarce resource.

Where did ideas come from?

All the technical characteristics exhibited by tools in south-eastern Europe are common to other regions of Eurasia. This is the clearest indication that knowledge was shared between different groups of hunters and foragers. This is not surprising, in view of the relatively small population numbers, and the consequent need to seek suitable partners in other groups. Some mechanisms must have existed to enable kin groups to meet and mix with their peers.

Georgia: Late Palaeolithic flints. (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)





Evolving Hunters and Social Beings

Traces of this technology have been found at a range of cave sites in Romania, Moldova, Ukraine and south Russia. The Treugol'naya cave (northern Caucasus) is among the oldest known rock shelters in the Black Sea region. Somewhat later examples are known from Mersana, Horobra and Horasca in Moldova, as well as true caves (Duruitoarea Veche and Ofatinţi). They coincide with one of the successive phases of climatic cooling (Riss glaciation), during the Middle Palaeolithic. Until the final major series of glacial cycles (Würm glaciation, c.70,000–c.11,000 BP), these cooler phases effectively prevented the systematic expansion of hominid groups northwards. But Neanderthal and cognate hominid groups could keep warm by sewing clothing made from animal skins, and by burning fires. So, notwithstanding the very real challenges posed by climate change to vulnerable populations, the evidence of hominid activity is more abundant than in the early Palaeolithic. More than 80 settlements and seasonal camps of this period have been identified in Moldova

alone, including the site of Ripiceni-Izvor, where six separate occupation layers have been identified (at Buzdujeni as many as eight have been documented). Molodova represents one of the most exciting individual sites of this kind. There are many successive stages of occupation on this open site. The living areas include hearths surrounded by mammoth bones, perhaps used to form windbreaks or shelters, and stone tools used in the preparation of food.

The creative urge – Palaeolithic art

At Molodova (Ukraine), in addition to stone tools, some of the items discovered by archaeologists show traces of deliberate decoration. A mammoth bone has cuttings engraved on it, enhanced by polychrome pigments. At Mizyn, near the river Desna (25,000–14,000 BCE), a mammoth shoulder blade was decorated with a maeander (broken key) pattern. Even more ambitious carvings were attempted in the late Palaeolithic period, when examples of portable art proliferate in various parts of Europe, including Muntenia and Transylvania, as well as Ukraine.



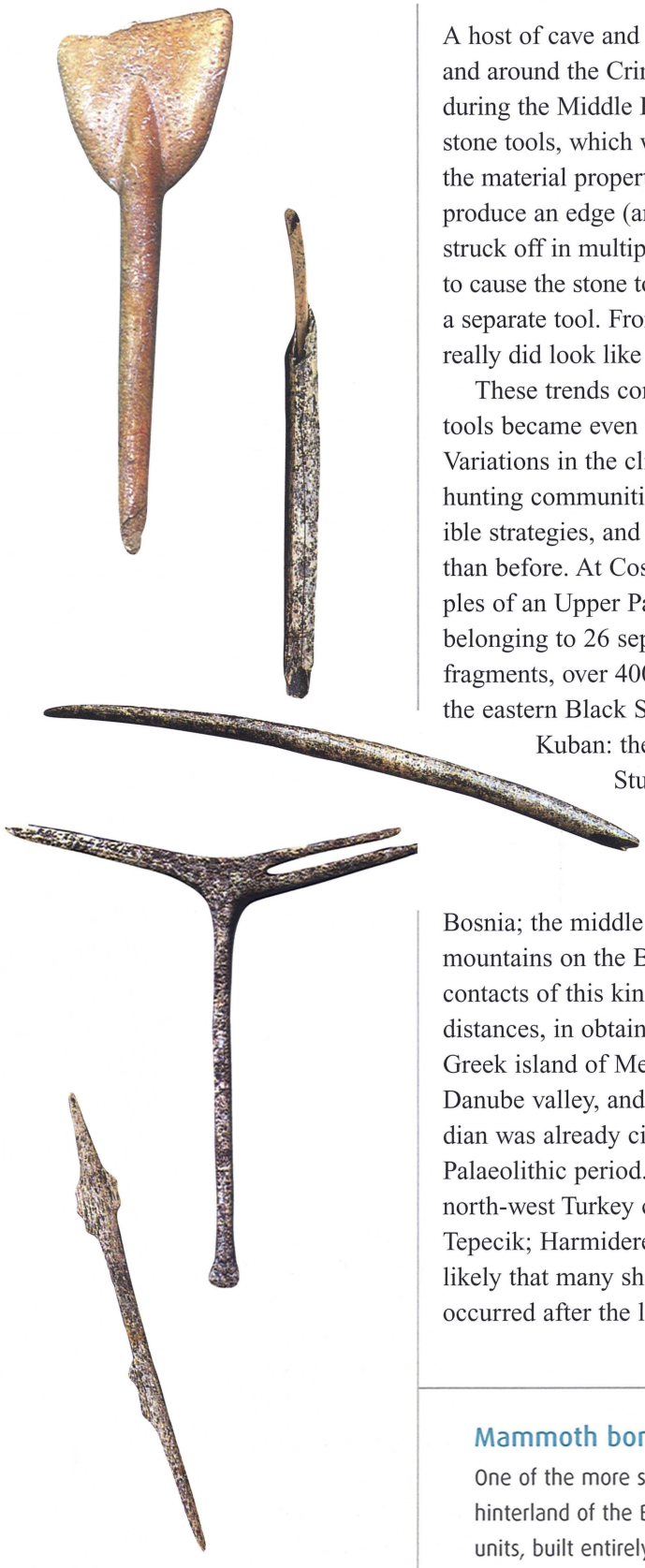
Branzeni grotto, a Late Palaeolithic site.

Among the finest examples are the bone ornaments from Kostenki, on the lower Don. These include carved mammoth ivory animal heads and complete female figures (c.35-23,000BP). An ornamented mammoth skull was found, like the Kostenki figures, in a living area at Mezhirich on the middle Dnieper (Dnipro). But similar carvings are also found decorating the bodies of several burials at Sungir' near Vladimir, north of the River Don.

Cave paintings depicting wild animals, observed during hunting expeditions, have been discovered at Shan-Koba and Tash-Air in Crimea.

Advanced Palaeolithic hunters

homo sapiens	100,000 years BP
Middle Palaeolithic age	**200,000-40,000 years BP**
Kiyik – Koba, Şaytan Koba, Ukraine	100,000 years
Chetrosu settlement	80,000–60,000 years
Hunter-gatherer grotto, Buteşti	60,000–45,000 years
Bacho Kiro cave, Bulgaria; Brînzeni grotto, Moldova; Molodova, Ukraine:	45–40,000 years
Bone ornaments, Kostenki, R. Don, Russia	35–22,000 years
Late Palaeolithic era	**40,000–10,000 years BP**
Mammoth bone "house": Mezhirich	25–14,000 years
Mizyn, Dobranicevca (Ukraine), Climauţi II (Dniester), Kostenki (Don) Cosăuţi station	22,000–10,000 years



Bone tools made by Late Palaeolithic craftsmen for completing various specialised tasks (from Brynzeni, Mitoc, and Cosăuţi). Note the elegant shapes and neat decoration.

A host of cave and open air sites (Kiyik-Koba, Şaytan-Koba, Çukurca, Staroselye), in and around the Crimean peninsula, illustrate major technological advances made during the Middle Palaeolithic. New methods were adopted for the preparation of stone tools, which were not just more economical, but reflect a clear understanding of the material properties of rocks such as flint and chert. Instead of striking a nodule to produce an edge (and discard much of the material in the process), thin blades were struck off in multiples by pressure flaking - that is, by hitting the core in such a way as to cause the stone to split vertically into many individual blades, each of which acted as a separate tool. From now on, the aim was to produce slim slivers of stone, which really did look like knives, scrapers, borers, graving tools, other blades, and points.

These trends continued into the Late Palaeolithic period, when the repertoire of tools became even wider, supplemented by bone (awls, harpoons, fish hooks). Variations in the climate affected the availability of wildlife as a food resource, and hunting communities seem to have adapted to fluctuating herd sizes by adopting flexible strategies, and planning the procurement of food in a much more systematic way than before. At Cosăuţi, on the River Dniester, lies one of the best preserved examples of an Upper Palaeolithic hunting station. Here successive deposits were found belonging to 26 separate seasonal dwellings, with more than 150,000 worked flint fragments, over 400 pieces of mammoth ivory, bone, horn and other materials. On the eastern Black Sea coast, caves continued to be frequented, notably those in the Kuban: the Barakaevskaya, Monasheskaya, and Tubskaya caves.

Studies of the kinds of flint registered at Temnata Dupka, in north-west Bulgaria, show that, apart from stone quarried locally, from large nodules, the raw material for flint tools was obtained from north east Bulgaria, the middle Sava river basin in Bosnia; the middle Danube (Vojvodina), north of the Danube; and the Rhodope mountains on the Bulgarian/Greek border. Although only some sites show extensive contacts of this kind, people were evidently prepared to seek out resources over large distances, in obtaining good quality tools. Obsidian (volcanic glass) mined on the Greek island of Melos and in the Taurus mountains of Turkey was well known in the Danube valley, and beyond it, in Central Europe, in Neolithic times. But some obsidian was already circulating along the valleys of the Danube and Pruth in the Late Palaeolithic period. Some of the best evidence for Upper Palaeolithic activity in north-west Turkey comes from sites close to the Black Sea (Gümüşdere, Domali, and Tepecik; Harmidere, near the Sea of Marmara; Musuçeşme, near Lake Manyas). It is likely that many shelters of this period were submerged by a rise in sea level that occurred after the last Ice Age (c.11,000–c.5,500BCE).

Mammoth bone houses

One of the more spectacular survivals of the Late Palaeolithic era in the northern hinterland of the Black Sea is a series of constructions, probably representing domestic units, built entirely of mammoth bones and supported by mammoth tusks. The interior thus created was usually between 6m and 10m in diameter, with an ashy hearth near the centre. The bones were stacked up, one upon another, in rows, or set vertically in the ground. On the outside they were probably covered with animal skins. "Bone houses" of this type have been found at a wide number of sites in Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Poland.

Commemorating the dead

Neanderthalers consciously arranged and disposed of their dead members, at least in certain cases. Among the most striking examples is the grave of two boys aged 8 and 13, at Sungir', north of the Upper Don. Their bodies were laid head to head in a fully extended position. Beside each boy was a spear of mammoth ivory, flint tools, bone pendants and animal figurines. Over each body lay around 3,500 ivory beads, which must once have been attached to some items of clothing.

Post-glacial environments

In the ninth millennium BCE, the previous period of climatic and ecological variation, with phases of strong glaciation alternating with warmer and wetter interglacials, came to an end. Temperatures rose, enabling plants and animals to revive and spread back into regions that had previously been dominated by tundra-like conditions. These changes are visible in buried soil samples, and are also reflected in the marine life. The earliest well preserved examples of manufactured items made of perishable materials, such as wood, date from this period (dug-out canoes, bows, birch bark containers, nets). The variety of fish hooks and harpoons (barbed antler points) suggests the importance of fishing in the diet. The large mammals of the Pleistocene epoch did not survive the final glaciation in the regions north of the Black Sea. Cave sites continued to be utilised (Atsinskaya cave, near Sochi). Post glacial communities may have moved from one temporary station to another, in a seasonal pattern, following the routes used by grazing herds of deer and smaller herbivores. Although it is difficult to demonstrate attempts to breed particular animal species, it is likely that some herding was practised, and that hunting was selective, so that natural growth patterns in herds were not unduly affected. Foraging was still significant, for plants, fruits, birds, eggs, shellfish and nuts. The archaeological finds from the region of Pobiti Kameni and Devnya (near Varna) – scrapers, blades and arrow points, made of flint – date from this period.

Holocene	**Mesolithic era**	**c.10,000–7,000 years BP**
	Grebinyky, Odessa; Mirnoe, Moldova	
	Shan Koba, Murza Koba	c.12,000–5,000BCE
	Pobiti Kameni, Bulgaria	
	Neolithic	**c.6500–c.3000BCE**
	Turkey - Çatalhöyük; Fikirtepe, Pendik, Tuzla, Ilipinar, Ağaçli	
	Bulgaria - Karanovo, Ovcharovo, Slatina	
	Neolithic Moldova	5500–5000BCE
	Bugo-Dniestrian culture	
	Criş culture	
	Linear Pot (Linear Band Keramik) cultures (Carpathians)	

The abbreviation BP = "before present" is used by archaeologists for periods when dates rely wholly on scientific techniques, such as measuring the "half life" of radioactive carbon, and adjustments cannot be made with sufficient precision to give an "absolute" date, ie. in calendar years.

Eneolithic/ or Copper era **5000–3000 BCE**

Romania, Moldova, Ukraine - Cucuteni-Tripilye culture

Bulgaria - Varna cemetery; Krivodol and Cernavoda cultures

Romania - Gumelniţa, Salçuta

South Russia - Pit Grave culture; Usatovo culture

Using technology for exploration

The settlers of the northern Black Sea Coast discovered fishing, and made one of the earliest attempts at sea navigation (about 12,000 BCE). Artefacts from Grebinyky (near Odessa), Suren II, Shan-Koba, and Murza-Koba (Crimea), show that people travelled a good deal during the Mesolithic period.

They were highly adept at chipping stone to make knives, scrapers, arrowheads, and spear points. They carved fishhooks and harpoons from bone, learned to weave nets and scrape out logs to use as dug-out canoes. Using such boats, people were able to catch more fish and improve their methods of travel. The sea-side settlers also made the first pottery. These clay pots and bowls allowed people to store food and water, thus making their daily lives easier.

These Crimean settlers were also the first to domesticate wild dogs. Once trained, the dogs helped to guard and protect people and their property. Large parts of the Northern Black Sea coast were explored at this time.

The New Stone Age and the advent of farming

During the sixth and fifth millennia BCE, the populations of the Black Sea region were transformed by a series of inter-related developments. As the climate improved in the post-glacial era, the range, size, and variety of wild plants and animals increased. It was becoming possible for groups of people to settle on a more or less permanent basis in particularly favourable locations, where they could exploit a variety of natural resources. Sea levels rose to within 25–40m of present day levels, submerging many of the areas that had previously been exploited in the period 16,000–10,000BP. The first domesticated animal species (sheep and goats, cattle and pigs), together with the primary domesticated cereals (wheat and barley), and legumes (peas, beans and vetch), are found in these "Neolithic" settlements (*neos lithos* = new stone). Since the wild forms of these domesticates are found no further north than eastern Anatolia (Turkey), the earliest domesticates must have been physically transported into new environments.



Clay bowl from Harsova, Romania, belonging to the Cucuteni (A3) culture, fifth millennium BCE, in the Harsova Museum on the Danube. The elaborate geometric patterns in black, red and white pigments are found across a wide geographical area.

Studies of newly domesticated species of plants and animals show that this was a process that spread from the ancient Near East (modern Iran, Syria, Israel and Palestine), to present day Turkey, and from there penetrated north-east-



Statuette from Cernavoda, Hamangia culture, sixth - fourth millennium BCE, c. 25cm high. The lack of facial features and the emphasis on the belly and haunches indicates that fertility (the idea of abundance in the natural world) was central in the belief system of the early agriculturalists.

wards, to the Caucasus region, and north-westwards, into Europe. Some scientists believe that there may be traces of very early agricultural settlements under the southern parts of the Black Sea, since investigations of the region's geology would indicate that what had been a freshwater lake, became a saltwater sea some time early in the 6th millennium BCE. Before this cataclysmic event, the coastline of the Black Sea would have been much smaller.

Hunting and gathering continued, especially when climatic conditions were less favourable, the inhabitants of these settled communities could devote time to other activities. The shape and design of tools was improved. In place of the small flint blades that were commonplace in the Mesolithic, a variety of rocks was used to make polished stone axes and adzes, used to cut down trees to make space for agricultural land. New forms appeared, such as bone sickles, to harvest cereal crops, and hoes or other garden tools to prepare the soil for planting. The new crops needed to be stored and processed. Pottery vessels were now made for the storage and serving of food.

The most advanced settlement of the Neolithic within the Black Sea region was at Çatal Höyük, south-east of Konya, in central Turkey (6800–5700BCE). This is a huge mound, made up of at least ten separate layers of housing. Family homes were built in a rectangle around a courtyard, with a living room, kitchen, and store-room, equipped with hearths and ovens, as well as benches. They were built of mud with wooden beams, and decorated with painted mud plaster. Layer upon layer of painted plaster has been discovered, with floral and geometric patterns, figure scenes, wild and domestic animals, even an erupting volcano, in red, pink, brown, white and black. A similar, though smaller site, at Hacilar (south of Burdur), is slightly later. The red and brown handmade pottery from Hacilar was moulded into animal and bird shapes, as well as cooking pots.

In the territory of modern Bulgaria, approximately 500 settlements are known dating from the Neolithic age. One of the best known is the mound near the village of Karanovo, near Nova Zagora, in east central Bulgaria. These settlements began life as small villages, concentrated at locations where the inhabitants had good access to water, forest, and arable land for farming, often on low hills or peninsulas above a river. There are many other sites near the Black Sea coast. Many of these belong to the "Karanovo culture". Archaeologists use the term "culture" to describe material remains from a group of settlements that have many features in common. From Neolithic times onwards, we find common features in the production methods and outward appearance of finished tools and everyday items in stone, baked clay, and other materials. These similarities show that techniques and fashions were shared between sites within particular regions. Among the first settled communities of this kind, from the northern shores of the Black Sea, were those at Tash-Air and Kay-Arala, Crimea.



Neolithic clay jar from Moldova, painted with sophisticated geometric patterns in red and black on a white background. The row of horned animals around the neck may be deer (reindeer?).

The Copper Age (fifth and fourth millennia BCE)





Painted Neolithic bowl of the Tripilye (sometimes called Tripolye) culture, from the Cherkassy region in Ukraine, fourth millennium BCE.

The most significant technical innovation at this time was the introduction of metallic tools and other objects. Stone tools continued to be important. But it was discovered that certain rocks, when roasted, produced molten metal, which could then be formed into prescribed shapes, using stone moulds. Metallic ores often have distinctive colours, so miners could recognize minerals once they knew what kind of metal could be derived from which type of ore. Copper-bearing ores are usually bright green or blue-green, and copper was the easiest metal to smelt. Some copper ores also contain other minerals, such as tin or arsenic, which give the metal more resistant qualities. In such situations, the metal produced would be bronze rather than copper. Bronze is a more effective material for the manufacture of tools and weapons than copper, which is relatively soft. Once metalsmiths learned that it was possible to add minerals, particularly tin, to copper, bronze became the preferred metal. Gold, which does not bond with other metals, and is therefore easy to separate from surrounding rocks, was also moulded or hammered into sheet metal for decorative purposes and display.

Copper was being smelted to make tools and weapons in various parts of Anatolia during the period 5000–3000BCE. The ability of early metalsmiths to heat metal ores to high enough temperatures to melt them, was probably influenced by knowledge learned from potting. Potting seems to have affected other crafts too; potters were producing vessels of a much more sophisticated kind, with thin walls, and often decorated with painted motifs in red or black. Clay figurines of human and animal form were painted in a similar way. During the Copper Age and the early Bronze Age (4th–3rd millennia BCE), the northern Black Sea coast was populated by communities of the "Cucuteni-Trypilian culture" (also sometimes called Tripolye). Trypilians built sturdy houses made of clay and wood, arranged in small villages. At Trypilye (Trypolye) itself, this simple village formation was later transformed into a huge circular city. The inhabitants created decorative pottery dishes and ornaments. They learned to weave cloth from plant fibres and animal hair. In addition Trypilians began to use animals such as oxen to pull an early form of plough. The use of draught animals in farming, in addition to manual labour, made it possible to prepare, sow, and reap larger areas of land, and produce larger harvests. The earliest demonstrable evidence of systematic horse breeding coincides with the period c.4000BCE .

As farming became the dominant form of subsistence, the knowledge of when and where to carry out various agricultural practices also became more important. We do not know how our remote ancestors in prehistory kept track of time. Observing the stars, and the passage of constellations, was the only reliable way of keeping note of the length of seasons. This knowledge had to be communicated orally before the development of a coherent written script. But visual signs already form a new kind of vocabulary in the Neolithic period. Pottery is our best guide to shapes and designs. Curvilinear and geometric patterns were applied, using sticks and other sharp implements, as well as impressions made using fibres or string. At Trypilye there were clay stamps decorated with simple patterns, which might also have some linguistic value that we cannot reconstruct now. But similar developments have been documented elsewhere in the Balkan-Aegean area.

Although many features of these early settled communities show that local cultures were developing, some characteristics seem to be distributed over much wider geographical areas. Similar patterns (owl-like faces, bulls' horns) are found as far apart as Trypilye and Kamares (Crete), or Mohenjo-Daro (India).



Items found with a male burial, perhaps a tribal chieftain, in a large cemetery near Varna, Bulgaria, belonging to the Chalcolithic or Copper Age (3200 – 3000BCE), discovered in 1972 (Regional Historical Museum of Varna).

A unique collection of gold items from the 4th millennium BCE, found in the excavation of a cemetery near the city of Varna, offers a snap-shot of social relations in the Chalcolithic (Copper Age). One of the burials belongs to a 40 or 50-year old man, surrounded by a number of objects made of stone, clay and gold. The 990 gold items have a total weight of 1.5 kg, and include several hundred beads, four solid bracelets, and appliqués for clothes. There was also a stone axe-sceptre. Scholars suppose it to be the oldest gold in the Balkans, and proof of a highly developed, though non-literate civilisation. On the other hand, the marked differentiation in the number and quality of grave goods at Varna suggests that the societies represented by these burials were equally divided between a restricted group of powerful and influential individuals, and a powerless, impoverished mass of ordinary people. Of the 211 burials excavated, 23 had no grave goods, 170 between one and ten items, while the remaining 18 contained the vast majority of the finds. But the distinctions made in death are not straightforward. 56 burials were cenotaphs, that is, they contained no surviving evidence of human remains.

The abstract notions of the prehistoric tillers and stock-breeders in Bulgarian lands are expressed in reserved sacred spaces, or sanctuaries, and in plastic artworks. These were mainly figurines of human or animal form, decorated with patterns similar to those found on ceramic pots. The shapes and materials of grave goods from the Varna cemetery reflect long distance contacts between the Balkans, Asia Minor (Anatolia) and the eastern Mediterranean.

Bronze Age	**2700–900BCE**
Early Bronze Age: c.2500–c.1600BCE	
Ukraine/south Russia	"Pit Grave" followed by Catacomb culture
	Komarovo culture;
Romania/Moldova	Relief decorated pottery culture: Tei,
Verbicioara, Zimnicea, Coslogeni	
Dobrudja/Bulgaria	Cernavoda, Ezero
Turkey	Beycesultan, Alişar, Kültepe, Alaca Höyük
Georgia: Kuro-Araxian culture	
Later Bronze Age: c.1600–c.900BCE	
Southern Russia, Moldova, Ukraine: Noua and Sabatinovka cultures; southern Romania/Bulgaria: Gava and Babadag cultures;	
Turkey: Hittite Empire (c.1750–1200BCE)	
Georgia: Colchian culture	

Bronze Age warriors and rulers

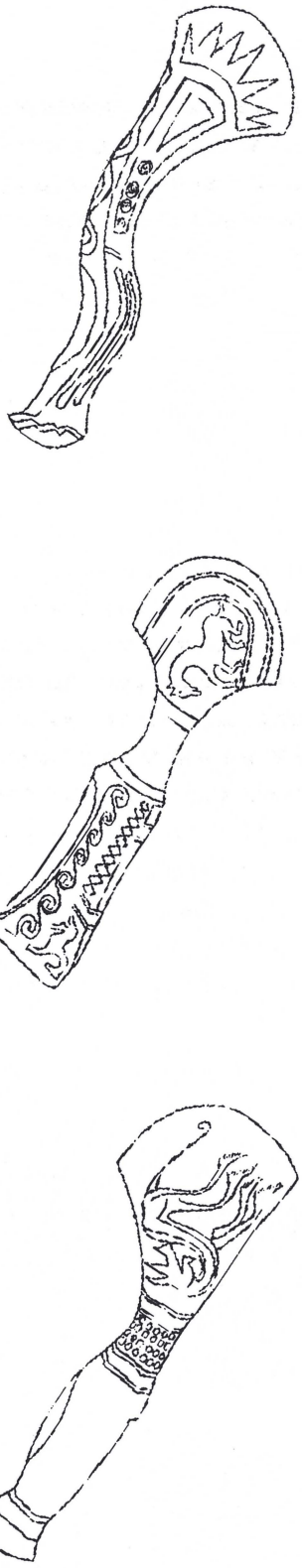
Bronze making developed early in Anatolia, in the late 4th and early 3rd millennium (c.3000–2000 BCE). Stone moulds and finished objects have been found at Alaca Höyük, north east of Ankara, and at other sites in the same region. These were not just knives and axes, or spear heads, but also decorative objects, some of which are quite elaborate. A series of tombs has been discovered at Alaca Höyük that show how the local rulers liked to express their power. They were buried in underground stone chambers roofed with wood, and accompanied by the sacrificed remains of sheep and goats (to provide food for the dead). The buried chieftains had around them vessels and ornaments made of clay, gold, silver, electrum (a natural alloy of gold and silver), bronze, but also agate, amber, rock crystal, and even iron. The people buried in these tombs, like those from Horoztepe, south of Samsun, have been identified with the Hatti, whose name has been preserved in some of the earliest written records known from the region.

The Bronze Age is the period of prehistory that has most inspired poets and explorers for many centuries; the palaces of Knossos, Troy, and Mycenae, tales of adventure and valour that have been passed from mouth to mouth (and especially through the epic poetry of Homer), as the stories of Achilles, Hektor and Agamemnon. The Homeric poems, the Iliad and Odyssey, as well as similar epics created in imitation of them, were not written down until some time in the 7th century BCE. They purport to describe events in the Bronze Age (bronze is very prominent, iron has not yet appeared), but were composed as oral verse, at most a few generations earlier. They do not describe the Bronze Age that archaeologists have recovered. In fact, the poems show apparent ignorance of what Bronze Age societies were actually like. In other words, they are not in any sense historical records. What they do preserve is the idea of a magnificent past, peopled by heroes and gods.

The Black Sea region had a spectacular Bronze Age too, and one that was quite intimately connected with the better known sites and monuments of the Aegean. Copper ingots, shaped like an ox's hide, and similar to those known from Cyprus, the Levant, the central and western Mediterranean, as well as the Aegean, have been found off the shores of the Black Sea. The shapes of bronze tools and weapons, of pottery vessels, metal ornaments and beads, resemble similar items found in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean. Merchant ships were evidently sailing into the Black Sea, carrying metal ingots or products in exchange for local materials. At least one epic poem from the century after Homer's verse described the voyage of the ship



Ceramic shapes and decoration from the Georgian Early Bronze Age. (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)



Drawings showing the wrought patterns on decorated bronze axes from the Georgian Bronze Age. Horses were a popular motif, but so were sun symbols – running spirals, waves, rays, and various curvilinear forms. (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)

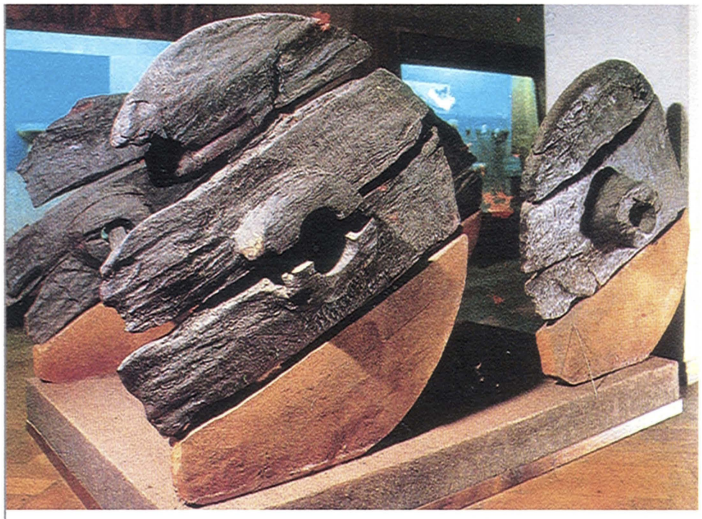
Argo, and her crew of heroes, the Argonauts. The story of the golden fleece, ascribed by legend to Colchis, the coastal region of present day Georgia, reflects not only the excitement and fear generated by exploration of the Black Sea, but also the exotic things to be had from around its shores. Copper was first smelted in Colchis and Iberia during the fifth millennium BCE. From the 3rd millennium onwards, there is evidence of systematic mining, and of the complex casting of copper objects. The people who made and required these objects no longer lived in small villages between the marshes, but in larger settlements, with planned irrigation networks, supplying water in the dry season to their fields. These communities have been called the "Kuro-Araxian culture" by archaeologists.

The bronze industry of the east Balkans, and along the western and northern shores of the Black Sea, was no less lively than in Georgia. On the territories of present day Bulgaria and Romania, moulds for casting axes, hoes, knives, swords, arrow heads, and cult objects, have been found on settlement mounds. At the same time, new plants were being grown, including lentils and peas. Vines were beginning to be cultivated. Horses are now found among domestic animals. The range and quality of pottery production became quite diverse, both in form and function. Ceramics, dwellings and the abstract values of people living in the Balkans suggest close proximity, to, and parallels with, the Bronze cultures of Asia Minor, the Aegean islands and the northern Black Sea region. Migration of considerable numbers of people probably took place from the Near East and Asia Minor to the Balkan Peninsula. Interactions among the people in this geographical area intensified.
The custom of burying selected individuals under an earthen barrow appeared during the early Bronze Age (3rd millennium BCE), but is better documented in the 2nd millennium. Some of the most spectacular burials of this kind have been found at Trialeti, in Georgia, where community chiefs were buried with a vast array of weapons, jewellery, and other domestic objects, all of extraordinary workmanship, and including large numbers of gold and silver items. Some of these earthen mounds have survived to this day, proudly proclaiming the high status of their occupants.

Megaliths

"Megaliths" (Greek, *megas lithos* = big stone) is the term used for very large natural stones, often shaped and worked in quite sophisticated ways, which survive even to modern times in rural (and sometimes even in urban) environments, as monumental markers of places that had a particular significance for ancient cultures in the Black Sea region. They are found in many parts of the littoral, and expressed one and the same religious symbolism. Although the meaning of these symbols is hard to reconstruct, there is some agreement that the four "elements" of nature, earth, water, wind, and fire, were connected. Sometimes specific images have been carved into the rock; sometimes it seems that the shape or location of particular rocks played a role.

One of these barrow burials was 8m high and almost 100m in diameter. It occupied approximately 1 ha (100m x 100m) of land. In the centre of the barrow was a chamber, 6m in height, built of stone blocks, with an area of some 150 m^2. It had been roofed with wooden logs. The entrance faced east. The barrows were destined for military leaders. The burial rite seems to have been quite complicated. The corpse had been cremated, then the ashes were laid on a bier, or wooden bed, and placed in



Trialeti, Georgia: reconstruction of a wooden cart found inside a barrow burial. The wheels are made of solid wood, jointly with the hubs. (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)

the chamber, along with proper grave goods: polished and painted pottery adorned with geometric ornaments, bronze daggers, axes and spearheads resembling those known from the Aegean or Near East. The most fascinating are specimens of goldsmiths' work - the sophisticated forms and refined techniques of jewellery production found in these barrows testifies to the existence of highly skilled artisans.

A curious ritual scene is represented on a silver bowl from one Trialeti barrow. Twenty-two standing human figures, with clothes resembling ancient Oriental or Hittite garments, are holding drinking cups, and facing a seated central figure, clothed and modelled in the same way. A three-stepped altar and a "Tree of Life" are depicted in front of and behind him. It is still not clear whether we are dealing with representations of a religious ritual, linked with the worship of a fertility deity (a god or goddess of plenty), or whether the seated figure is the supreme clan god in the company of community deities. Some believe that the figures are priests engaged in the mystery of a fertility deity.



Trialeti, Georgia: figure - decorated silver cup from a barrow burial at Taşi, showing scenes of worshippers with cups raised (in sacrifice, honour or worship). (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)

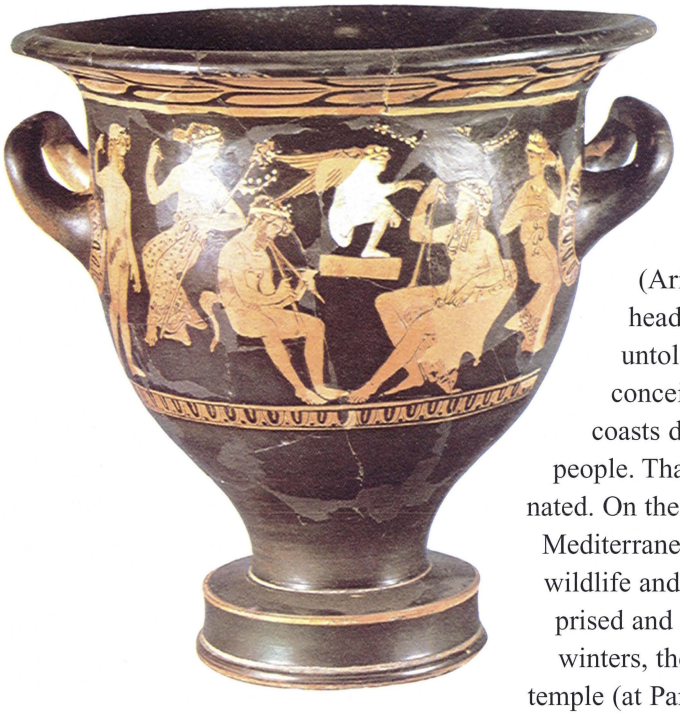
The Assyrian trading houses of Anatolia (1950–1750 BCE)

In the early second millennium BCE, merchants from northern Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), set up a trading house in Anatolia at the city of Kültepe, just north of Kayseri, in the central Anatolian plateau. They traded from the "Karum" of Kani, which was the name of the lower city. They paid taxes and rent to the local Hattic rulers, so that they could obtain silver and gold, in exchange for which they sold tin, goat hair felt, cloth and clothes, as well as ornaments and perfumes. About twenty other similar markets, organised by Assyrian traders, are known to have existed in the region. This was the first systematically organised long distance trading system on land in Europe. The merchants recorded their transactions on clay tablets, using a system of writing made up of wedge-shaped notches. These documents give us some idea of how sophisticated the system of transactions was, between settlements within Anatolia, and between these and other regions.

2 · Antiquity

Early historic peoples around the Black Sea coast

The northern coast



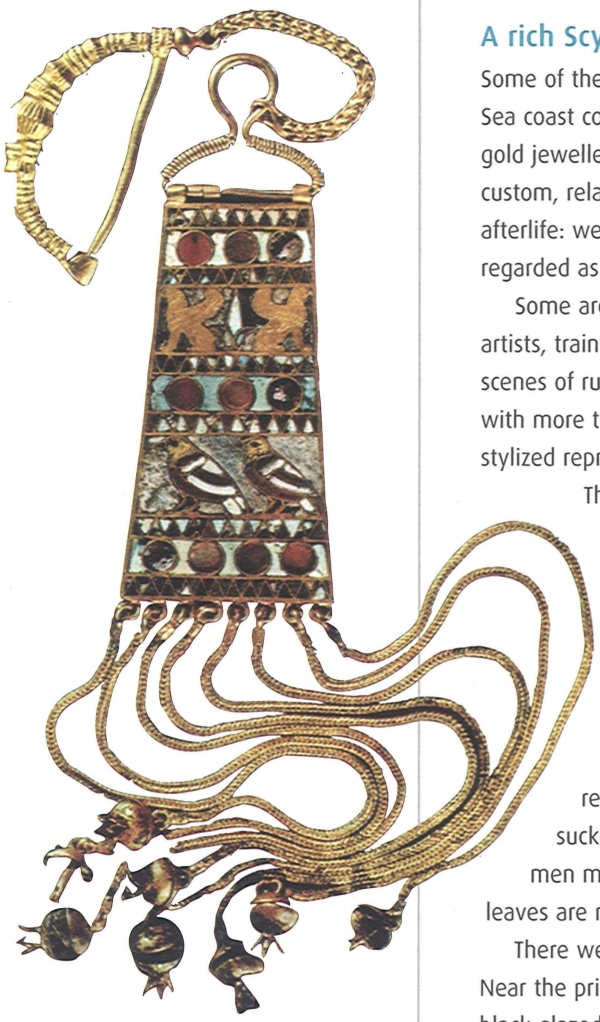
The earliest written accounts of the inhabitants of the Black Sea shores occur in fragments of Greek poetry of the 7th, 6th and 5th centuries BCE. Poets have vivid imaginations, and we do not have to assume that people in the remote past believed everything that poets concocted about strange places far away. But for those who did not travel about, stories of one-eyed monsters (Arimaspians), who fought griffins – winged monsters with heads and beaks like eagles, and bodies like lions – for the untold heaps of gold in the far north, it might just have been conceivable. Merchants and ship's captains who travelled to the coasts did not seem to have much trouble dealing with native people. That is how the great port cities along the Black Sea originated. On the one hand, there was much that seemed familiar to the Mediterranean visitor – similar cereals, trees and many shrubs; similar wildlife and domesticated species. But there were also things that surprised and frightened the stranger. For those accustomed to mild winters, the concept of a cavalry battle on ice, or of a bronze jug in a temple (at Pantikapaion) cracking in intense frost (two anecdotes reported by the historian Herodotus), were shocking facts. Culturally, the encounters between newcomers and natives proved to be both positive and negative.

The first peoples we hear of on the northern shores were called *Cimmerians*. Stories about them are rather vague, apart from persistent claims that they penetrated not just the steppe regions and the Crimean peninsula, but crossed the Caucasus range, and attacked the Phrygians under their king Midas (in what is now central Turkey), then the Lydians, under Gyges (another monarch famed for his wealth in gold), further west, as well as challenging the Assyrians in Mesopotamia.



(above) A wine mixing bowl (krater) from a burial at Varna, ancient Odessos (third quarter of the fourth century BCE). The figure scene shows the Greek god Dionysos surrounded by his followers, dancing and playing music (Regional Historical Museum, Varna); (below) gilded silver bowl from Bashova Mogila, Duvanli, Bulgaria, of the late fifth century BCE, showing chariots, with horsemen stepping on and off the rails. This was a special Athenian sports contest. The silver bowl could have been made by an Athenian silversmith for a local Thracian nobleman (Plovdiv Archaeological Museum).

The Cimmerians acquired a taste for Near Eastern ornaments. Patterns and designs which originated in Assyria, Iran and northern Anatolia henceforth became part of the repertoire of steppe peoples, enriching the "Animal style" so popular across the Eurasian grasslands. In 7th century BCE, Iranian-speaking *Scythian* tribes, who had come from Asia, forced the Cimmerians out.



A gold safety pin and pendant, with multi-coloured inlays in panels, including sphinxes and birds (fifth century BCE, from Colchis, western Georgia) (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)

A rich Scythian princess

Some of the largest concentrations of Greek artefacts discovered on the Northern Black Sea coast come from Scythian princely tombs *kurgans* (burial mounds): bronze, silver and gold jewellery, coins, decorative metal and ceramics. According to ancient Scythian custom, relatives put alongside the noble dead everything he or she would need in the afterlife: weapons, harness, food, ornaments, and so on. These artefacts are now regarded as among the most extraordinary examples of antique art.

Some are fashioned in the so-called *Animal Style*. Scythian princes commissioned artists, trained in the workshops of the Aegean, to combine naturalistic motifs, including scenes of rural Scythian life (men drinking mares' milk; men breaking in a wild horse), with more traditional Greek subjects, besides traditional floral and geometric designs, and stylized representations of real or fantastic animals.

The finds from the Tovsta Mohyla (Tolstaya Mogila), (lower Dnipro/Dnieper (Dnipro)) illustrate these changes. The tomb of a young Scythian princess was discovered there in 1964. The decoration of the princess's clothes consisted of large and small golden plates. Her neck was covered with a valuable pectoral (necklace) weighing 4785gr., which is composed of three bands of relief ornament. Two of these are *à jour,* showing wild and fantastic creatures in the lower register (griffins attacking horses; a lion attacking a stag, and two others a boar); and an idyllic scene in the upper register: two Scythians holding a fleece are in the centre, while either side are suckling animals (a horse and foal; a cow and calf), as well as two more Scythian men milking sheep. In between is a panel with a very fine floral chain – flowers and leaves are modelled in high relief, with traces of coloured enamel.

There were two large pendants on both temples, depicting an enthroned goddess. Near the princess's shoulders was a silver goblet decorated with stylized horses, and a black glazed bowl, together with beads, pins, fragments of opaque glassware, and perfume flasks. Not far from the burial were two large pits, containing the bones of horses. The bridles of three horses in the first pit had been encrusted with gold, the ones in the second pit with silver. The discovery of these and similarly elaborate, exceptionally rich objects in other female burials, indicates that some women in this society were highly respected. Some are thought to have been priestesses.



Georgia – a silver coin of Phasis (modern Poti), of the fifth century BCE. On one side we see a lion, on the other a kneeling female with a bull's head. (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)

Excavations in the Crimean peninsula have shown that the indigenous population inherited some of the traditions of the Bronze Age "Trypilyan culture". These people were called the Tauri by ancient writers, and the peninsula itself thus acquired the epithet "Tauric Chersonese", after a legendary founder, Tauros. The extraordinary tales about the inhabitants of the Black Sea shores did not disappear in the Middle Ages. According to the Italian epic poet Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533), its eastern shores were inhabited by the Cimmerians, the northern shores by Scythians, and Issedones, who were one-eyed people; farther to the north, griffins watched over their gold, and beyond them lived the blessed Hyperboreans, the people "beyond the north". This mental map reproduces some of the groups referred to many centuries earlier by Herodotus.

Opposite page: The gravestone of Deines, son of Anaxandros, cut by an Ionian sculptor in Apollonia (Sozopol), probably in the early fifth century BCE. It represents a smiling young man playing with his dog (National Archaeological Museum, Sofia).

Herakles and the snake-tailed maiden

"The Greeks of the Black Sea region have a different story about Scythia and the country beyond it. In this version, Herakles brought the oxen of Geryon in these regions, which were uninhabited at the time... the weather was atrocious; it was very cold, so he drew his lion's skin over himself and fell asleep. While he slept, his chariot horses, which had been let loose, mysteriously disappeared. Having woken up, Herakles began to look for them, searching high and low until he came to "the Woodland", where he found a snake-woman in a cave – down to her hips she was a woman, but below that, a snake.

She replied that the horses were safe in her care, and that she would return them provided Herakles slept with her. Herakles complied. But the snake-woman delayed handing the horses back, so as to keep Herakles as her lover for as long as possible.

At last she let him have them, saying, "I kept these horses safe for you when I found them here; and I have received my reward too, for I have three sons by you. Now tell me what I am to do with them..."

"When the boys grow up to be men, you will not be mistaken if you do what I tell you now. Whichever of them you find can draw this bow, as I do, and put on this girdle in the way I show you, should settle down in this country. But if any of them fails to do either of these things, they must be sent away."

When the boys grew up, their mother named them in order Agathyrsus, Gelonus and Scythes, and carried out Herakles' instructions. (The two older boys failed but) .. the youngest brother, Scythes, son of Herakles, became father of the line of Scythian kings."

Herodotus, The Histories, Bk 4, Chapter 9.

Gold à jour pectoral (neck ornament) from Tovsta (Tolstaya) Mogila, Ukraine, fourth century BCE. In the upper row are shepherds with a fleece, surrounded by their animals; in the lower row, combats between mythical beasts.



To Mediterranean people in antiquity, *the Scythians* were strangely exotic. They were nomadic pastoralists instead of sedentary people; they tattooed their bodies (Greeks and Romans wore masks instead); they drank mare's milk instead of cow's or goat's; they were archers, who fought on horseback, not infantrymen with spears and shields. All these characteristics made Scythians seem utterly alien. Perhaps this is why we hear so much more about them than any other people of the period. In reality there were Scythian farmers as well as nomads, commercial middlemen as well as hunters of wild animals.

Herodotus, the "father of history", described many aspects of Scythian society around the middle of the 5th century BCE in some detail, in Book 4 of his Histories. He delineated a considerable part of the lower Dnipro estuary, sketching the population inhabiting both banks of the Borysthenes (Dnipro). He divided the Scythians into there huge "tribes": Nomads, Royal Scythians, and Ploughmen. He states that as far as "Hylaia" (the wooded creeks near the Dnipro rapids), there were Scythian farmers who sowed wheat for sale to Olbian merchants. He refers to a journey of forty days' sail as far as a place called Gerrhus. Beyond there, the Dnipro was apparently navigable as far as the burial ground of the Royal Scythians. Herodotus describes the elaborate ceremonies conducted following the death of a Scythian king. The huge earthen mounds or



Kurgans that were raised to commemorate this elite group among the Scythians are silent reminders of the wealth and power of these highly successful men and women.

The western coast

The *Thracians* considered themselves to be one of the oldest peoples of Europe (in contrast with the Scythians, who thought of themselves as among the youngest). They were referred to, briefly (as a people fond of horse rearing) by the poet Homer, in the Iliad and Odyssey. According to Herodotus' *Histories*, the Thracians were one of the most numerous ancient nations. In antiquity, Thracians were particularly associated with music and poetry. Legendary figures such as Orpheus, Mousaios, Linos and Thamyris, were said to have come from Thrace. Thracian-type artefacts and settlements have been found as far north as the Carpathian mountains, eastwards along the valleys of the Prut and Dniester, as well as in the east Balkans. Today scholars are apt to distinguish between two large groupings: the southern Thracians and the north Thracians. The north Thracians included the Getae, a group of kin-based communities on either side of the Danube, and others, who were identified in the final centuries of the first millennium BCE as Dacians. Over 160 words in use today in Romania are derived from Thracian or Dacian dialects, and many more place names have a similar derivation. The southern Thracians are taken to include some "tribal" groupings north of the Balkans (such as the Triballoi), and all those south of this natural barrier (such as the Odrysoi).

During the 1st millennium BCE, when iron was first developed as a metal suitable for making tools and weapons, new cultures, and new settlements, emerged in the Balkans and around the northern shores of the Black Sea. The centres of population that had concentrated farming families for centuries in the Bronze Age came to an end, and were replaced by dispersed villages and fortified upland refuges. This trend started a new pattern of rural settlement that lasted until the emergence of towns in the second half of the 1st millennium BCE, when the intensification of exchanges deep into continental areas, by road and river transport, transformed country areas.

The custom of burying privileged individuals below earthen mounds continued and expanded during this time, and much of what we know about contemporary populations is derived from burials. In the steppe regions of southern Russia and Ukraine, in the Dobrudja, inland Bulgaria, and western Turkey, warriors, and sometimes distinguished women (perhaps priestesses), were buried in wooden compartments or actual chambers, accompanied by a variety of everyday objects, items denoting personal status, sacrificial animals, and sometimes even human victims. In the first half of the first millennium BCE, more durable chambers were sometimes built below the earth banks, made of huge monolithic stones, and popularly known today as "megaliths". Such megalithic

chamber tombs are known in south-central Bulgaria (particularly in the Sakar and Strandja regions), in the Rodopi and Evros districts of Aegean Greece, and in the Taman peninsula of southern Russia. Rock-cut tombs are also known in a more restricted area, but these have analogies in north-west Turkey. Carvings and niches in the rocks from which megaliths and rock-cut tombs are derived suggest that rocks had a special abstract meaning in these areas. The incidence of sun symbols, snakes, and other features, including boats, provide us with a rich visual vocabulary, albeit one that is hard for us to decipher. Legends about the movement of Thracians from Europe into north-western Asia Minor (Bithynia), suggest that there was rather more interaction between people in south-eastern Europe and western Asia than we can currently detect from material remains.

One of the most characteristic finds to emerge in graves from 7th century BCE onwards, in all areas surrounding the Black Sea, is the horse bit, accompanied by various kinds of horse trappings, made successively of bone, bronze, and iron, in some cases elaborately decorated with sheet gold and silver. Horse rearing and riding played a very significant role in these Iron Age societies. The earliest examples have been found in the south Russian steppe, but moved quickly west and south.



A very large mug made at Athens in the mid fourth century BCE, and found in the region of Burgas. On the body of the vase is a satyr, followed by a maenad (both followers of the god Dionysos); Regional Historical Museum, Burgas.

Zalmoxis and the afterlife of the Getae

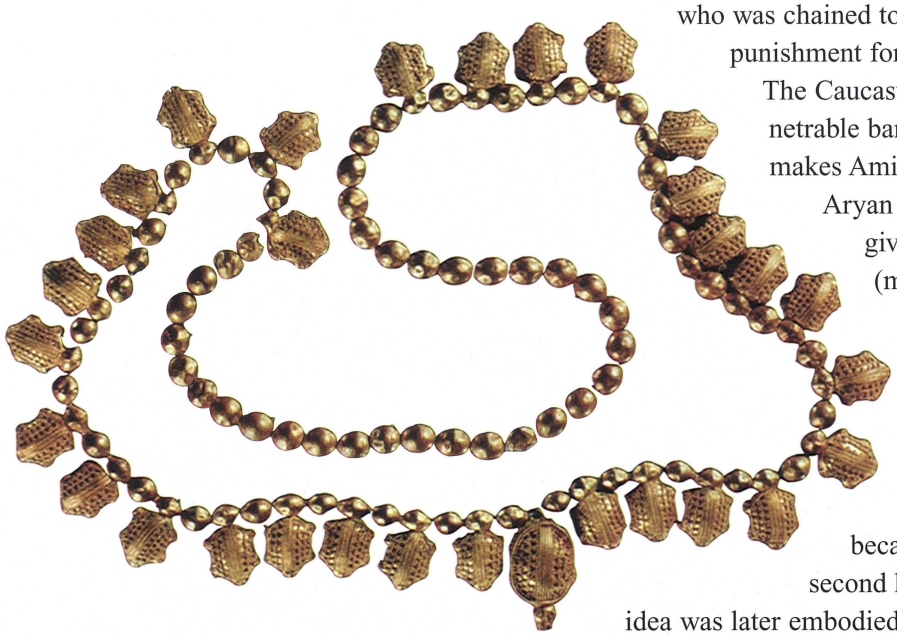
The historian Herodotus described the distinctive beliefs of the Getae about the afterlife. The communities who lived in the lower Danube area seem to have impressed their contemporaries with the clarity and force of their attitudes to a world beyond the here and now. There was one individual in particular who gave a specific shape to these ideas. His name was Zalmoxis (also known as Gebeleizis). We do not know if such a man really existed. But many stories about him circulated in the Black Sea area during Herodotus' lifetime.

Zalmoxis was a kind of prophet. Diodorus the Sicilian, a historian of the 1st century BCE, mentions Zalmoxis alongside the Persian prophet Zarathustra, and the Jewish Moses, as religious reformers of note. Zalmoxis was portrayed as a man, but also as a semi-divine being, a *daimon*. Herodotus describes how he descended into an underground chamber and reemerged many years later, in a different location. Zalmoxis' name is preserved in the philosophical works of Plato (the 4th century BCE founder of one of the most influential philosophical movements in antiquity), because of the ethical ideas that came to be associated with him. For Plato, Zalmoxis was a king who acquired the status of a god after death, having been a distinguished healer in life.

(Herodotus, Histories, 4. 94-6; Plato, Charmides, 156d–158b)

The eastern and southern coasts

The most evocative and enduring tale of naval exploration in antiquity must surely be the voyage of the Argo, and her crew, the Argonauts, on a quest to capture the legendary Golden Fleece from the hands of king Aetes of the *Colchians* and of his daughter Medea. Behind this tale of superhuman powers, involving heroes of more than human stature, lies the genuine experience of seamen and captains: the difficulties of penetrating the Dardanelles, then the Hellespontine Straits; the treacherous currents in the channel; the unpredictable behaviour of one's hosts; and the wealth of metallic resources available. Another legend concerns Prometheus, who was chained to a rock in the Caucasus mountains as a punishment for stealing fire from the Olympian gods. The Caucasus was, in Mediterranean eyes, an impenetrable barrier. A Georgian version of this story makes Amiran the hero. Amiran is linked to the Aryan god Mithras (Mithra-gayô-dâ, "the life giving one", Gaim in Georgian). Georgia (mostly Iberia) was strongly influenced by Aryan ideas (another deity adopted from these sources was Aredvi Sura Anâhita: Ainina in Georgian) in the early 1st millennium BCE. The Iranian divine concept of Ahurô Mazdâo (pure wisdom, pure idea), became a highly influential one in the second half of the 1st millennium BCE. The idea was later embodied in the person of the hero, Armazi.



Gold necklace with pendants shaped like turtles from Colchis, western Georgia, fifth century BCE (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)



Gold jewellery from Iberia, south-eastern Georgia, fifth century BCE; the patterns reflect Iranian (Persian) and Aegean Greek influences. (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)



During the Iron Age, there were two cultural foci in the territory of Georgia. In the eastern uplands of Iberia (Kartli), where the herding of sheep and cattle was prominent, there were farming villages, dominated by hereditary clans, in the valleys of the rivers Mtkvari (ancient Kura), and Choroki (Acampsis). In the western lowlands, known as Colchis, settlements were concentrated especially in the valleys of the River Rioni (ancient Phasis). The prevalence of humid, marshy territory made it necessary to dig irrigation ditches, which watered the fields in drier conditions. The Svani and Lazi were mountaineers, who populated the wild upland regions of the north and south-west.

Greek settlement in the Black Sea

It is surprising that Greek writers described the northern shores of the Black Sea as a severe land. They saw lowlands covered with dark forest and hidden in mist and gloomy clouds. At the time the northern and eastern shores of the Black Sea were characterized by a moist, misty and mild climate. By the end of the 7th century BCE, Greek merchants from a variety of Aegean centres had developed a lively trade with the peoples of the Black Sea shores. In later centuries, local historians were keen to give every major harbour town a suitable pedigree, preferably with a founder of repute. But modern investigations show that reality was not so neat and tidy. Comparatively little is known about maritime traffic around the Black Sea in the early centuries of the 1st millennium BCE, after the collapse of the extensive late Bronze Age networks. If, as seems likely now, there was some native seafaring between the Crimean peninsula and the southern shores, and between the west and south, this represents local traffic within the Black Sea, before Greek merchantmen penetrated the Straits on a regular basis.

There were two principal phases in the early settlement of coastal areas by immigrant merchants. The first phase, beginning in the early 7th century, brought occasional traffic to the northern shores, and Greek settlers to the south-western and western



The coastline of Sozopol, ancient Apollonia.



Ancient masonry tomb at Parium, modern Taş kule, Kemer, on the northern Turkish coast.

shores (Histria, near the mouth of the Danube in Rumania; Apollonia (Sozopol), and Odessos (Varna) in Bulgaria). The second phase, which began in the second quarter of the 6th century BCE, and was partly triggered by the expansion of the Lydians, then the Persians, into the territories controlled by Greek-speaking communities on the western coast of Turkey, involved the systematic immigration of whole communities from western Turkey (ancient Ionia) to the northern and eastern shores of the Black Sea.

The immigrants frequently chose the estuaries of big rivers, which provided convenient landfalls for ocean-going ships, but equally waterways to the interior. This enabled the Greeks to penetrate farther into the continent. Good sources of fresh water and fertile soils were preferred. They sowed cereals and grew grapes. Crafts such as ceramics, metallurgy, and textile production, appeared in these settlements. Merchants from the Aegean brought wine, olive oil, fish, arms, textiles, and vases made of clay or metal, which were traded in exchange for slaves, cereals, animal skins and honey with the native inhabitants. This trade was profitable for both sides, and became the basis for the development of peaceful relations between newcomers and natives. The philosopher Plato remarked that there were settlements of Greek-speakers distributed around the Mediterranean "like frogs around a pond". The phrase could equally be applied to the Black Sea.

The first settlement of immigrant Greeks on the northern shores of the Black Sea, at Berezan, at that time a peninsula in the mouth of the river Bug, came from Miletus. It was soon succeeded by another site, on the flood plain of the rivers Bug and Dnieper (Dnipro), which became the city of Olbia. New coastal settlements on the Crimean peninsula followed in the 6th century BCE, on the territory of present day Kerch (ancient Pantikapaion), and south of it (Theodosia, modern Feodosiya), and subsequently in the Taman peninsula (Phanagoria, modern Taman). In the western part of Crimea, Chersonesos (near Sevastopol), became a major centre from the 5th century BCE. Pantikapaion, Nymphaion, Tyritake, Phanagoria, and some other cities united to form the kingdom of the Cimmerian Bosporus. A native dynasty, the Spartocids, were rulers of the indigenous communities in Crimea and Taman, but held the chief magistracy in the cities, from the third quarter of the 5th to the 1st century BCE.

Obverse and reverse sides of a copper coin of Dioskourias, a city on the north Georgian coast (105-90BCE). Copper coins were used for everyday transactions in the coastal cities.





Spartocid power never extended as far as Olbia and the Bug estuary.

Most of the population in the new coastal settlements began to strike their own coins or used those of other states. In the territory of Olbia, for instance, the following range of coins has been recorded: Cyzicene staters (from Cyzicus, in the Hellespontine Straits), Athenian tetradrachms, Roman asses, together with Olbian and Theodosian coins. The Colchians produced bronze and silver coins in regular issues.

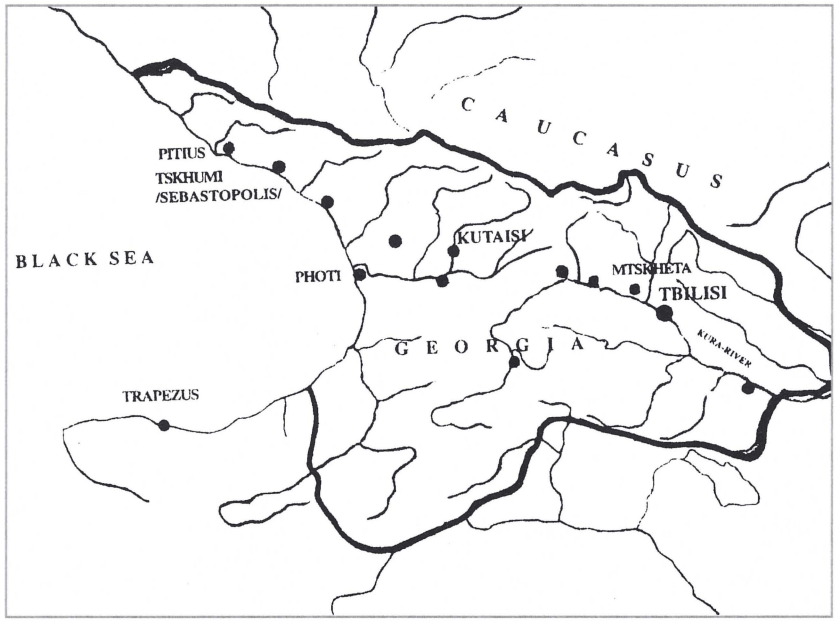
Milesians and other Greeks were also the instigators of new coastal settlements on the eastern Black Sea coast, at Pityus (Pitsunda), Phasis (Poti), Dioscurias (Sukhumi), and Apsaros (Gonio).

Timber from Colchis

"The country is excellent both in respect of its produce – except its honey, which is generally bitter – and in respect to everything that pertains to ship-building. For it not only produces quantities of timber, but brings it down on rivers. And the people make large amounts of linen, hemp, wax and pitch. Their linen industry is famed far and wide, for they used to export it ... and it was from this country that the king (Mithridates of Pontus) received most aid in the equipment of his naval forces."

Strabo, Geography, 11. 2. 17.

Colchis and Iberia exported minerals (especially metals) and agricultural produce, as well as timber, but the two regions were also links on the transit trade from the Far East to the Mediterranean and Europe. Spices, precious wood, and stones, came from India along the rivers Indus, Balkh (ancient Baktra), and Amu-Darya (Oxus), which was a tributary of the Caspian Sea, and thus provided a direct route to the Mtkvari and Rioni rivers. From the 2nd century BCE onwards, the Transcaucasian branch of the route was joined to the Silk road via Chinese Turkestan.



Sketch map of Georgia, showing the location of some important ancient sites in Colchis.

Transformations

The cities that emerged from commercial interactions between Greeks and natives all along the coasts of the Black Sea began to acquire an urban character from the 5th century BCE onwards. The public buildings that arose around the market place in each centre resembled structures familiar in cities of the Aegean, or southern Italy and Sicily–sanctuary enclosures, temples, theatres, halls, and council chambers. The acropolis at Pantikapaion, or the theatre at Olbia, symbolised the collective identity of citizens in that city. Wealthier individuals helped to pay for some of these building works, especially in times of crisis or scarcity. The language of public business was Greek, but those who lived in these cities, and who became magistrates and business-men there, came from many different places. The Roman orator Dio, called "the golden tongued" (*chrysostomos*), visited Olbia at the end of the 1st century CE, and gives us an interesting account of the spread and survival of Greek influence among the so-called Scythians inhabiting the lower Dnieper (Dnipro) region. He remarked, "practically all the Borysthenites (people of Olbia) have nurtured an interest in Homer, perhaps because they are a warlike people, although it could also be due to their regard for Achilles, for they honour him a great deal... Although they no longer speak coherent Greek, living as they do among barbarians, virtually all of them know the *Iliad* by heart." (*Discourse 36, Speech about Olbia*, v.9). "... a respected old man said [to me], " Those who usually come here are Greek only in name, because in fact they are more barbarous than we are, traders and market men, fellows who import cheap rags and poor wine, taking out with them produce of no better quality. But you would appear to be sent to us by Achilles himself... we may not be familiar with your refined sort of philosophy, but we are, as you know, great enthusiasts of Homer, and some, not many, even of Plato." (v.25–26).

Southern Thrace (modern Bulgaria), was dominated by a native princely dynasty from the Odrysian tribe (5th–1st century BCE). Their rulers acquired control over a vast area, between the ancient city of Abdera, on the north Aegean coast, to the mouth of the Danube (ancient Istros), and extending as far as the city of Byzantion (later Constantinople – Istanbul) on the Straits of the Bosporus. There was regular



Akalan, northern Turkey: in the first millennium BCE, there was a native settlement on the peak of this promontory, set back from the sea, and sheltering behind the coastal mountains. The local inhabitants seem to have had close contacts with Greeks living at Amisos, 14km away on the coast.





Fifth century BCE gold earrings from Iberia decorated using the technique of granulation. (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)

contact between the indigenous Thracians and the incoming Greeks. Emporia (markets) were set up inland, as well as near the coast, to facilitate exchange. The Thracians shared some cults in common with their Greek neighbours, including Dionysus (god of wine and song), Artemis (the huntress), Ares (patron of warriors), and Hermes (the messenger). Sculptors and stone masons trained in techniques hitherto known only in the Mediterranean, constructed new types of monuments – public (meeting halls, temples), as well as private (tombs, houses), in continental areas far away from the coast.

In the 4th century BCE, a Scythian kingdom was established in the steppes of the Crimea. Its capital became Neapolis, which was situated in the south-eastern part of the peninsula, near present-day Simferopol. The capital, Neapolis (from the 3rd century BCE till the 4th century CE), is of special interest. In the centre of the excavated sector, there was a large public building with columns. This structure was later used as a mausoleum of Scythian noblemen. One of the skeletons belonged to prince Scilurus. Another burial belonged to a Scythian princess. This Scythian principality was at its weakest at the time of Scilurus and his son Pollis. Under pressure from a new nomadic group, the Sarmatians (3rd century BCE), the Scythian population of Crimea began to decline.

The fortresses of the Getae and Dacians

Getic and Dacian settlements were of two types: unfortified and fortified, the latter being called DAVAE. In the 6th–3rd centuries BCE, most of these fortresses were located in the central and northern parts of the Carpatho-Dniestrian region. 160 hillforts are known today. Many were on the banks of the river Dniester, particularly on its left bank. The most famous are: *Cotnari-Cătălina* (in the county of Iaşi, Romania), *Stânceşti* (in the county of Botoşani, Romania), *Brad, Racatău* (the county of Bacău, Romania), *Poiana* (the county of Galaţi, Romania), *Rudi, Iorjniţa* (in the county of Soroca, Moldova), *Raşcov, Caterinovca, Cunicea*, (the county of Dubăsari, Moldova), *Saharna, Mateuţi, Butuceni, Trebujeni-Potârca* (Orhei, Moldova), *Hansca* (in the county of Lăpuşna, Moldova), *Orlovca* (Reni region, Ukraine.)

Athenian Red Figure jug (pelike) of the mid fourth century BCE, found at Manta, Cahul, Moldova.



From the 2nd century BCE onwards, such fortresses were concentrated in the Carpathians, and, increasingly, in their south-western section, the Orăştie Mountains (in the county of Hunedoara). Here, during the 1st century BCE, there was a major military and religious focus, consisting of the capital of Dacia, *Sarmizegethusa* (Gradiştea Muncelului), and a number of hillforts, including *Costeşti, Blidaru, Piatra-Roşie, Băniţa, Căpâlna*.

During the reign of king Burebista (82–44 BCE), the Getic and Dacian tribes were unified under one ruler. In this period Dacia reached its maximum extent in the Balkans. During Burebista's reign, the independent kingdom of Dacia became sufficiently powerful to attract the aggressive attentions of the Roman Senate. Legionary forces first penetrated as far as the Danube in 74–72 BCE, when the coastal Greek colonies concluded treaties of alliance with Rome. The death of king Burebista led to the dissolution of the state into separate kingdoms. According to the geographer Strabo (c.64 BCE–c.21CE), there were four Dacian kingdoms, but during the reign of the Emperor Augustus their number apparently increased to five. During the second half of the 1st



The Old Orhei: a magnificent setting in a bend of the River Rauh, a tributary of the Dniester. Virtually all historical periods are represented here. In the seventh century BCE, there was an open settlement on Butuceni hill, which was fortified with ditches and wooden palisades from the fifth century BCE onwards. A more ambitious gateway, built of limestone ashlar slabs, reflects masonry techniques more at home in the coastal cities of the Black Sea.

century BCE and throughout the 1st century CE, Sarmizegethusa continued to be the political and religious centre of the Dacians, governed by a series of able rulers, particularly Decebalus. In the second half of the 1st century CE, Dacia reached the apogee of its development, presenting a powerful challenge to the power of Rome.

The expansion of Roman power into the Black Sea region

By the 1st century BCE, the coastal cities came under pressure from the expanding Roman protectorate. The central Thracian authority, under local dynasties, proved unable to resist, first diplomatic pressures, then military challenge. Some Greek communities (including Tyras, Olbia, and Chersonesos) became vassal states of Rome. The Roman armies managed to take possession of the western and southern territories of the Black Sea. A new province, Moesia, was created in 15 CE, including territory on both sides of the Danube. Thrace became a Roman province in 46 CE, under the Emperor Claudius, when Dobrudja (Dobrogea) was annexed to Moesia. Later, Chersonesos served as the main base of the Roman army in the region, and its garrison was located in the fortress of Charax, 9 km from present-day Yalta. The Kingdom of the Cimmerian Bosporus remained strong and prosperous until the middle of the 3rd century CE.



A Geto-Dacian mug from Saharna, Rezina, Moldova (fourth – third century BCE).

The Dacian kingdom was an uncomfortably powerful neighbour for the new administrators of the Balkan provinces of Rome. The Emperor Domitian made good the military defeats of Roman troops in 85 and 86 CE, but Decebalus was recognised as an independent ruler. It was not until the reign of Trajan that a well planned series of Roman campaigns (101–102, 105–106 CE), led to the eventual liquidation of the Dacian kingdom, and its replacement by two new provinces, Dacia (incorporating Transylvania, Banat, and Oltenia), and *Moesia Inferior* (incorporating the Dobrudja and southern Moldova). Local magistrates were paid in Roman money to support the new administrative arrangements, and the political policies of the provincial governors, who were defended by a powerful new network of military forts, dividing imperial territories from the non-Roman world beyond.



Silver coin of Aristarchos, ruler of Colchis (the portrait head on the obverse shows the Roman general, Gnaeus Pompeius – Pompey the Great – not the king; 52/51BCE).

"Trajan's ramparts"

In the southern Carpathians and Dniester lowlands, Roman legionaries built a complex pattern of successive earthen banks, in order to protect the province Moesia Inferior from the north and east. These are popularly known as "Trajan's ramparts". This defensive system was built in the steppe region, extending from the southeastern curve of the Carpathians in the direction of the River Prut, and from thence towards the River Tyras and on to the Black Sea. Two separate systems can be distinguished: "Trajan's Downward Wave" (along a line from Isac to Bolgrad and Lake Catlabuga) and "Trajan's Upper Wave" (Leova-Tighina), with a length of 124–136 km.

As incorporated provinces of the Roman Empire, the south-western and southern coasts of the Black Sea quickly began to acquire Roman institutions and adjust to a Roman way of life. The presence of Roman legions and auxiliary forces was the



Bronze helmet from Olanesti, Stefan Voda; it was found in a cache of arms dating from the fourth and third centuries BCE.

most obvious emblem of this new authority. Less apparent, but of greater lasting value, was the introduction of the Latin language, which became the language of law and government, and of business affairs, in the Danubian provinces. Elsewhere in the region, where Greek was already established, Latin had a lesser impact linguistically, although institutionally and culturally Roman traditions were of fundamental importance in every region. Each of the territories that bordered on the Black Sea consciously recreated many features of Roman life and adapted these to local taste and priorities – Roman law, administration, urban planning and architecture, social amenities, and education. Membership of such a complex political and social network as the Empire stimulated industries and the exploitation of natural resources. It enhanced investment in specialised crafts and brought rural areas more closely into touch with urban ones, although at the cost of great personal inequalities in status and property. An edict of the Emperor Caracalla in 212 CE granted Roman citizenship to all free men in the Empire, the first example of mass suffrage in the history of the world, even if this political privilege had more to do with providing access to law, and enhanced status as a private individual, than any real voting power.

At the beginning of the 1st century CE, the kingdom of the Cimmerian Bosporus was conquered by the Germanic tribe of Goths. In 253, a Gothic party raided Colchis. The population of Colchis had swelled since the 1st century CE with the influx of Abasgs, Aphsils, and other recruits to the Roman army, while Lazi soldiers volunteered to join the Roman fleet at its naval headquarters in Trapezus. In the 4th century CE, barbarian pressure on the northern Black Sea coast increased, and in 375 CE the Scythian principality of Crimea effectively collapsed. The peninsula was invaded by the Huns, who caused considerable damage and many deaths.

Roman citizenship – passport to international status

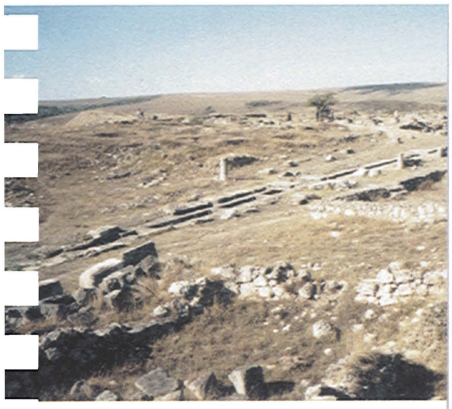
Leading men in the provinces of the Roman empire were often granted Roman citizenship as a way of fostering loyalty to the hierarchy of state, as well as a reward for services rendered. A silver cup, made in the 2nd–3rd century CE, names Flavius Dades, a local Iberian (east Georgian) ruler. The name suggests that citizenship was first conferred on a predecessor by the emperor Vespasian or Domitian. Similarly, Publicius Agrippa, the commander-in-chief in Iberia under Hadrian, received his citizenship from the governor of Syria, G. Publicius Marcellus. Moschus, a man from Mesheti (south Georgia), was an admiral in the 1st century CE, in the time of the emperor Otho.

Marble statue of the Roman goddess Fortuna, holding a horn of plenty, above a tiny figure of the god of the Black Sea, Pontos (second to third century CE, Constanta Museum of Archaeology).



The Romans and the Black Sea – the City of Tropaeum Traiani

The ancient city of Tropaeum Traiani is located south of the River Danube, near Adamclisi, in the southern part of the Dobrudja (the region between the northward bend of the Danube, and its estuary). Its history, like the history of almost any other ancient city in the Black Sea region, is represented by the co-existence and clash between civilizations. The ancient name refers to the monument, erected by the Roman Emperor Trajan (98–17 CE), to commemorate the soldiers who fell in battles with the Dacians in the years 101–102 CE, while the modern name (Adamclisi) is of

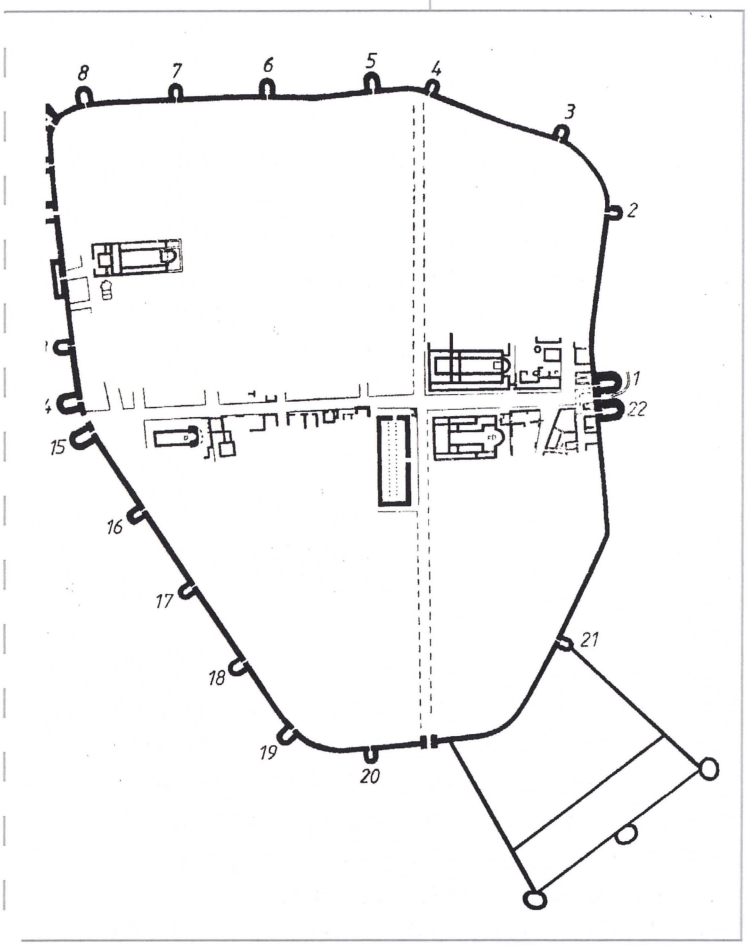


The main street of Tropaeum Traiani. The Romans spared no effort to ensure a constant supply of water for the inhabitants of the city. The main road covers a channel that brought water from between 12 and 20 km away, to private houses and the public bath.



General view of the Roman city of Tropaeum Traiani. It was constructed soon after the first Dacian War (101-102 CE). The Romans wanted to control and protect the roads and water sources in the southern parts of Dobrudja. This was not a new settlement and there were native Dacians living here, as well as Greek traders (storage amphorae were imported from as far afield as Sinope). The city was reconstructed at least once during the reign of Constantine the Great.

Turkish origin. The archaeological investigations undertaken there for more than one century (it is the oldest archaeological site in Romania), show that its history is longer and much more complicated than a town that rose around a battle memorial.



The prehistoric remains

The first traces of human habitation date to the Neolithic period. Clay pots and stone implements have been found under the Roman buildings and in the area surrounding the ancient city. The pottery revealed in the excavations shows that the local community had links with other habitations to the north and south. These relations are even better highlighted in the last millenium BCE. Recent excavations show that, on a plateau in close proximity to the city, a rich community developed commercial and cultural ties with the Greek colonies on the shore of the Black Sea. Greek ceramic wares from Histria (ancient Istros) and Mangalia (ancient Callatis), amphorae from other cities in the Black Sea and from more distant parts of the Mediterranean, are indicative of the extent to which this region was an place of exchange between Thracians, Dacians, and Greeks. Even a small altar dedicated to Dionysos, the god of wine, was unearthed several years ago.

Plan of the Roman city of Tropaeum Traiani. Four separate basilicas can be identified, one of them protecting the remains of some martyrs (and one in the former public baths). In the Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods, the city was a major religious centre.

The Roman period

The first century CE brought with it significant changes. The power of Rome was well established in the southern parts of the Balkans and was approaching the Danube, considered to be the limits of the Empire from the beginning of the century. At around 46 CE, Dobrudja was incorporated into the province Moesia.

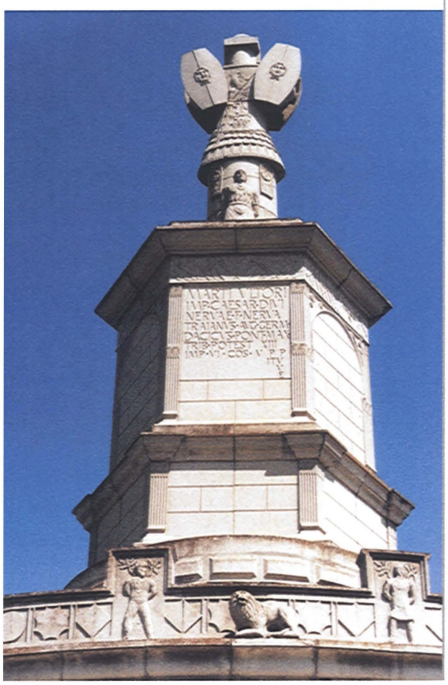
But all was not peaceful; the conflict between Rome and the Dacian state (101–102, 105–106 CE) affected this region also. In the winter of the year 101–102, the Roman legions repelled a Dacian army, in the southern parts of Dobrudja, which was trying to enter Moesia. It was one of the bloodiest battles of the war. After the conquest of Dacia, the Emperor Trajan erected a monument (imitating a funeral mound) close to the battle site, and established a Roman city, called Tropaeum Traiani. Trajan's monument was also intended to commemorate almost 4,000 Roman soldiers who were killed in the region during the Emperor Domitian's campaigns in Dacia in 86–92 CE. Nearly 4,000 names are listed on an altar in their honour.

The city was built in accordance with the architectural rules applied by Romans throughout the Empire, namely a rectangular grid, separated into four parts by two major roads (*ordo* and *decumanus*), orientated along the four points of the compass (North, East, West, and South). The city had paved streets, with a huge *forum* (market place) for local and foreign merchants, who could trade agricultural or manufactured products there (grain, wine, cattle, ceramic ware), in exchange for money, or for other imported goods (luxury items or exotic foods). This is the period in which, throughout Dobrudja, Roman artifacts spread, even to rural communities. Roman *amphorae* (storage jars for wine, oil, and similar bulk liquids), are found even in the most remote areas of the region. The city developed so much that it became the ruling center of southern Dobrudja, due to its economic and strategic importance.

Beside the shops and houses, a public bath was erected, and other important buildings. But agriculture remained the principal means of subsistence; there are several inscriptions dedicated to the gods in the hope of ensuring much needed rain to the inhabitants. The aqueducts built by the Romans span a length of over 10 km and show the concern to obtain drinking water. The 3rd century CE, however, represents a period of decadence. The Germanic invasions affected this region too. Situated on the main route towards the Balkans, with its rich cities and good land, Tropaeum Traiani was attacked several times and destroyed. That is why, after the 3rd century crisis was over, the Emperor Constantine the Great (306–337 CE) rebuilt the city "of the Tropaeans". A new period of development began, although it did not regain the level attained in the first centuries of its existence. The city was once again the main administrative centre of the region. The Christian Church was expanding, and established a bishop here, who had responsibility for the spiritual (and to some extent, material) life of the Christians in the area. The importance of this religious centre is demonstrated by the four basilicas that were erected there, some of them with marble ornaments. The early Christians of the region sometimes led a precarious existence. On a list of martyrs at Constantinople, several names are connected with Tropaeum.

This last period of greatness came to an end during 6th century CE. Groups of Slav speaking people, migrating in the direction of the Roman Empire, attacked the province, now called Scythia, several times, and finally succeeded in occupying it, as well as the region to the south of the Danube. Although the city was abandoned, squatters appear to have lived in the ruins, using old building materials for their own needs. The city and its memory were gradually lost, only to be rediscovered in the 19th century by scholars investigating the history of Dobrudja.

Close-up view of the crowning sculpture, representing a set of captured armour, and the inscription commemorating the Emperor Trajan's victory over the Dacians, on the monument known as Tropaeum Traiani, 103-106 CE. It stands on a giant stone drum, which was decorated with 52 reliefs, carved in local stone, representing scenes of battle, prisoners of war, and the capture of civilians. It is located near the Roman city of Tropaeum Traiani (Adamclisi, which in Turkish means "the church of man"). The Dacian wars involved some of the bloodiest battles in Roman history and secured the Dobrudja for the Empire.





Gold chain necklace from Iberia, Georgia, second century CE. (Simon Janashia State Museum of Georgia)

The advent of Christianity and the spread of Judaism

Christianity was the most significant and enduring religion that penetrated the Black Sea region during the Roman Imperial age. Less well known is the spread of Jewish communities along various trade routes northwards from the Levantine coasts, particularly after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, and defeat of the Jewish revolt against the Roman occupation in 71 CE (the *diaspora*, or "sowing out" of disenfranchised Jews). The missionary journeys of Saints Paul and Barnabas are among the best known pioneering ventures of the disciples of Jesus Christ, whose aim was to spread the message of spiritual salvation that constituted the most novel and radical aspect of this new faith. Indeed, the very concept of a "faith" was something entirely new to the experience of Mediterranean societies, whose traditional religions were not based on beliefs or well articulated ethical principles, but on less clearly defined collective values. Paul and Barnabas visited Jewish communities in south-west Asia Minor (modern Turkey), among whom they sought adherents to the new faith, which at first shared many elements of the Jewish religion, before mutual suspicions caused barriers between them.

The apostles Paul (52 CE) and Andrew (65 CE) preached in the southern Balkan lands. Andrew founded a number of Christian communities in the Black Sea region. In the Middle Ages, his relics were preserved in one of the churches of Mesambria. St. Nikita played an important part in the process of Christianisation of the Thracian tribes in the 4th century. The episcopal centres of Odessos, Anchialos, Marcianopolis, Durostorum, along the Black Sea coast were the nodes of the church's organization. An impressive monument of early Christian church architecture is the basilica in Mesambria. A built chamber in a tomb of Silistra (4th century), the basilica at the village of Tsar Krum (in the region of Shumen), and the tomb in the village of Osenovo (the region of Varna) are interesting representatives of late Antique and early Christian painting. Jewellery is presented by the Varna treasure (6th century) belonging to a local bishop.

Constanţa – a city on the Black Sea

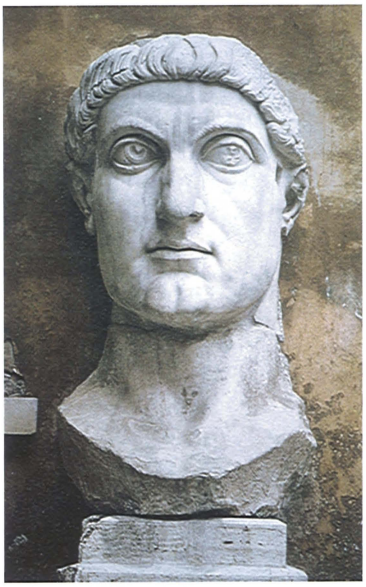
Constanţa is the most important Romanian city on the Black Sea. It stands on the ruins of an ancient Greek maritime community, and later became a prosperous Roman city, Tomis. The spiritual patrons of the city were the Dioscuri (the brothers Castor and Pollux). Once the barbarian invasions began, the city went through a period of decay. It was rebuilt by the Emperor Constantine the Great, who renamed it Constantiniana or Constanţia. The city flourished and became a bishopric. In the 10th–14th centuries, it became a typical Byzantine city, and an important commercial centre. The Genoese often used Constanţa as a market for their exchanges. The city is mentioned in documentary sources and maps of the Middle Ages. A sign of the Genoese presence in the city is the lighthouse they built in the 13th Century. In 1393 Constanţa was conquered by the sultan Baiazid I. The city's name became Köstence, and it continued to be used as a commercial junction, but only for the transit of merchandise to Constantinople. After Dobrudja's union with the former Kingdom of Moldavia and Wallachia in1878, when the state of Romania emerged, the city went through a period of great economic development, becoming the main port of the country. In 1923 it became the centre of an Orthodox bishopric.

3 • Byzantium

When the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great made Byzantium his chief headquarters (in 324 CE), renaming it Constantinople, the Black Sea region became intimately connected with the policies and fortunes of the new imperial administration. But the empire of Constantine was a very different one from that of the 1st and 2nd centuries CE. Whereas, in the Early Empire, civil and military authority followed a fairly simple and straightforward pattern of command, in the Late Empire the number of administrators, and the range of bureaucratic procedures, greatly increased. Constantine hastened this process with the new posts he created. The imperial seat of power swelled with court personnel and attendants, particularly as protocol at the imperial court had given rise to a carefully differentiated social hierarchy. The rank



Tsilkani icon, 9th century, from eastern Georgia, showing the Blessed Virgin and child Jesus, framed by angels. (Shalva Amiranashvili State Art Museum of Georgia)



Constantine the Great

of an individual became a symbol of that person's power. The Roman Emperor had always been a ruler in all but name, with unique powers. Now his person was invested with almost magical authority.

The "new Rome" did become a genuine counterpart of the Italian capital, with magnificent public buildings constructed out of imperial funds, and senators, drawn from distinguished families, representing the ruling elite. But the language of international exchange at Byzantium, and in the whole Black Sea region, was Greek, not Latin, as in the west, and Greek language and cultural values came to dominate the imperial court. Over many hundreds of years, the language, style, and traditions of the new imperial seat were to have a profound influence on all the neighbouring regions around the Black Sea.

After Constantine's "conversion" to Christianity (he was baptised only on his deathbed), Roman emperors also acquired a new kind of religious authority. Roman tradition dictated that those in power were also the principal participants in religious ceremonies, relying on priests and others to advise them. So it was easy for Christian emperors to assume an active role in decision-making in the affairs of the fledgling church. As the Christian religion became widespread in the Empire, and was given official recognition (313 CE), so uncertainties and disputes began to arise, as the cultural foundations in different parts of the Empire encouraged different approaches to community worship and doctrine. It thus became possible for individual emperors to arbitrate between church representatives from different regions. Constantine presided over many meetings of bishops and priests, including the most famous of such events, the Councils of the church.

The main reason for the shift in power away from Rome, and towards the eastern end of the Empire, was the constant pressure of incursions from without. Emperors, and their deputies, spent much of their time campaigning with huge field armies. Constantine himself fought against Goths, Sarmatians, and others along the eastern borders of the Empire. Some of the most serious pressures occurred in the 4th and 5th centuries. Two contrary forces were about to clash (in 375CE). The Ostrogoths, a Germanic group, were moving south and eastwards, while the Huns, and allied nomadic horsemen from central Asia, were tending to move westwards, at a constant, but comparatively slow rate. The Ostrogoths petitioned the Roman Emperor Valens to settle south of the Danube, but in 378, an Ostrogothic army defeated the Romans at Adrianople (Odrin), and the Emperor himself was killed. The Huns, who had settled with their herds in the region of Turkestan in the early centuries CE, had penetrated as far as the Caspian Sea in the 2nd and the Ukrainian steppe in the 4th century. Their most prominent leader, Attila (c.404–53CE), came to power in 443, driving destructive raiding parties into western Europe for a decade. After his death, the Hunnic Confederation disintegrated, but various nomadic horsemen, including many Turkic-speaking communities, continued to move westwards. One of these, the Bulgars, settled in the area between the River Volga (Turkic Itil) and the Black Sea, and was the first Turkic Muslim state in Eurasia (from 922 onwards).

In the 5th century, groups of people speaking Slavonic languages, who had settled in the former Roman provinces of Pannonia and Dacia (modern Hungary and Romania), started to expand into imperial lands south of the Danube. The sudden, and violent, incursions of the Huns (441–453), horsemen armed with specialised double curved bows, caused great dislocation throughout Europe. In their insatiable bid for mobile resources, from Central Asia to the lands north of the Caucasus, and from the Caspian Sea to the Sea of Azov, they had put pressure on the Slavs. Slavonic-speaking groups have been identified with users of distinctive pottery

forms, who lived in open farming villages in a series of broad territorial zones stretching from the Elbe and Vistula basins, through Bohemia, along the valleys of the Bug, Dniester, and Dnieper (Dnipro), and can be connected with communities in north west Russia, who buried their dead under earthen mounds.

Bulgaria

By the late 6th century and beginning of the 7th century, the "Sclavini" as Byzantine writers called the Slav newcomers, were already living in concentrated groups within the Empire. Contacts with the sophisticated lifestyle of Constantinople, and long term settlement in the fertile lands south of the Danube, changed the way of life of the southern Slavs. The Slavs believed that there were many gods; Perun, the god of thunder, was also their principal divinity; Volos, the god of herds; Dazhbog gave fertility to the land. In the 7th century, the Slavs began to integrate themselves into larger community organisations, conventionally called "tribes".

In the 670s, a new ethnic group – the Turkic-speaking Bulgars (also called "proto-Bulgarians" to distinguish them from present-day Bulgarians), settled in the delta of the Danube. In 630 the Bulgars set up an independent state, headed by Khan Kubrat, in the lands between the Caspian Sea, the Black Sea, the Caucasus and the Dnieper (Dnipro). In the early 670s, the "Ancient Greater Bulgaria" of Khan Kubrat disintegrated. A part of the Bulgars, led by one of the old khan's sons – Asparouh – set out westward and settled in the lands between the lower reaches of the Dniester, the Prut, the Danube and the Black Sea coast. Here, influenced by the contacts with the local Slavic population, they continued to change their life-style toward building permanent settlements. The Bulgarians had a different system of beliefs from the Slavs: the Heaven as supreme Deity (the god Tangra), as well as the heavenly bodies – the Sun and the Moon. They used a lunar calendar.



Nesebur, Bulgarian coast: church of the archangels Michael and Gabriel, 13th – 14th century



Hoard of gold items from Preslav, ninth to tenth centuries. It includes a necklace, two rings, earrings, appliqués for a diadem, buttons, and probably belonged to an early Bulgarian aristocratic family. Found during excavations of the city in 1978 (Archaeological Museum, Preslav).

In the summer of 681, the Byzantine emperor concluded a peace treaty with Khan Asparouh. Retaining their special cultural traits, the Slavs and the Bulgars started living together in a common state. To the east, this entity reached the Black Sea (as far as Odessos), to the south – the Haemus (Balkan) mountains, to the west – the Timok (a tributary of the Danube) and to the north it encompassed parts of the north-Danubian plain. Pliska, not far from the Black Sea, became the focus of power and institutions for the new state. The khans wanted to emulate Byzantine rulers. After the adoption of Christianity in 864/865, by two missionaries from Thessalonica, Cyril and Methodius, the imprint of Byzantium became clearer still. In 927, the khan was affirmed as ruler by the Byzantine Emperor, and a Byzantine princess was sent in marriage, accompanied by numerous followers, to the Bulgarian royal court. The administrative organisation of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (12th–14th centuries) was also based on the Byzantine model.

The Proto-Bulgarian lands were criss-crossed by important roads; that connecting Constantinople with Europe, the so-called diagonal road from Constantinople to Hungary and Germany; the old Roman *Via Egnatia* – from Dürres to Constantinople; the Black Sea road – from the Dnieper (Dnipro) and the Dniester across the mouths of the Danube, along the Black Sea towns towards the capital of the Empire. Alien forces made their way along them, but, more often than not, there were merchants' caravans lining these routes. Until the 11th century, Bulgarian commodities and agricultural products (flax and linen, honey, beeswax, wheat, furs) were exported particularly to the two biggest cities of the Empire – Constantinople and Thessalonica. Expensive clothes, jewellery, and other luxury items, travelled in the opposite direction, from Byzantium to the Bulgarian kingdom. Trade relations were established also with Kyivan Rus', from whence furs, slaves, and raw materials were brought in, while ceramics, jewels, and arms were exported. The Bulgarian, Ukrainian, and south Russian lands were the granaries of Europe.

Although not numerous, the local population (Thracian, Greek, Slav) left a signi-

ficant cultural inheritance to the new settlers at the establishment of the Bulgarian state. The Bulgars created a ruling group in administration. Slav-speakers formed the largest language group from the start, and once the Slavonic language became the official language of the state, Slavonic cultural traditions merged with those of the newcomers. The adoption of Christianity as the official state religion (864–865) stimulated the fusion of the two ethnic groups. Baptism accelerated the process of assimilation, because common ethical and legal regulations, adopted from Byzantium, were applied universally. The new Bulgarian Church played a leading role in religious and moral unification. The replacement of Greek by the Slavonic language in liturgy and administration after 893 was of invaluable importance for the formation of a common cultural heritage over the following centuries.

The periodic influx of different ethnic groups that had characterised the early Medieval period in the west Balkan region was echoed by similar infiltrations between the 11th and the 13th centuries, when new nomadic groups passed into the area – Oghuz, Pechenegs, and Cumans, all Turkic-speaking communities. From the late 12th century whole communities from Wallachia came to live in the lands between the Danube and the Balkan Range. They took part in the uprising led by the Assen Brothers (1185), which restored the independence of the Bulgarian state.

In medieval Bulgaria there were areas with ethnically mixed populations. In the big towns, groups of Jews and Armenians commonly made up distinctive minorities. Merchants from Venice, Genoa and Dubrovnik formed their own communities in the new capital, Veliko Turnovo, in the Black Sea towns, and in the other large towns in the countryside. Byzantine sources record the construction, by foreign settlers (Jews, Armenians, Wallachians, Moslems) of sanctuaries for their own faith communities, as early as 13th century.

Migration did not just involve groups of people moving into the west Balkan area. It also involved those who, for a variety of reasons, wanted to travel abroad. The movement of Bulgarians, to and fro across the east Balkan landmass, was an incessant process in the Middle Ages. After the Byzantine reconquest of Bulgaria (1018), large groups of Bulgarians were transferred forcibly to Asia Minor and Armenia. At the same time, membership of a larger political entity afforded opportunities. Many Bulgarians moved to Milan, Beneventum, Naples, Venice, and Sicily. As the Ottoman armies expanded their hold over the eastern territories of the Byzantine Empire, large areas north of the advancing armies were abandoned by the local population. There were mass migrations towards Serbia, Wallachia, Moldavia, Hungary, and some of the refugees even reached Moscow. Records suggest that both in Byzantium and in Bulgaria, the population and, to a certain extent, state and church authorities, tolerated the different ethnic groups and faiths. Anti-semitism was comparatively rare in this part of the European Christian world.

In the 9th century, Bulgaria adopted the Byzantine rite of Christianity. First the ruler Boris was baptised in 864, then mass Christianisation of the population followed in the next few years. The progress of the Christian faith, and the development of a church in Bulgaria, were complicated by the resistance of the aristocracy (who organised a riot under the pretext that state sovereignty was infringed). In 870 an ecumenical Council in Constantinople proclaimed the establishment of a Bulgarian church, which was to have the status of a bishopric, and places of worship built on the Byzantine model. In 927 Byzantium officially recognised the rank of its junior partner, by establishing a separate Patriarchate. Christianity changed the view of life and the way of living of the medieval Bulgarians. Two periods can be distinguished in Bulgarian medieval culture: a "pagan" one, and a Christian one. Until Christianity

became recognised as the state religion, official culture had been connected with the life-style, priorities, and tastes of the ruling Bulgar (proto-Bulgarian) aristocracy.

High culture was open to Byzantine influence, because Greek had been the language of the khan's administration, and of the educated strata of the aristocracy, since the beginning of the 7th century. Achievements in architecture, stone, the plastic arts, and literary works, from the 8th and first half of the 9th centuries, reflect the impact of the Iranian and Sassanian worlds, as well as Byzantium, on the culture of "pagan" Bulgaria. An emblematic monument of the plastic arts of that time is the imposing relief of "the Madara Horseman", erected in the proto-Bulgarian cult centre of Madara (near the Black Sea coast). It is a unique creation in Europe (and is an accredited world heritage site). Further testimony to the cultural wealth of pagan Bulgaria are 94 inscriptions, carved in Greek letters (three of them written in proto-Bulgarian), which make up an archive in stone of the early Bulgarian state.

After the advent of Christianity, interrelations between Bulgaria and Byzantium intensified. The common cultural heritage of Eastern Orthodoxy ended with the formation of a Byzantine and Slavonic church and cultural community. One of the biggest Orthodox monasteries – that of St.Ivan of Rila – was established in the 10th century in the Rila mountains. The building of churches changed the outer appearance of Pliska, Preslav and other large cities. The Large Basilica at Pliska, and the Round (the Golden) Church in Preslav (comparable in its layout to the church of Charlemagne in Aachen), are among the greatest achievements of Christian architecture between the 10th and 11th centuries, while the mural paintings in the church of St. George in Sofia, and the ceramic icon of St. Theodore Stratelates from Great Preslav, are their counterparts in art.

The disciples of the remarkable Byzantine missionaries, Saints Cyril and Methodius – Kliment and Naum – in the 8th century brought Slavonic liturgical



The Madara Horseman: a low relief hewn into the sandstone cliff at a height of 23m near the village of Madara, in the region of Shumen. A composition of three figures (a horseman, a dog, and a lion) at an easy and solemn pace. The cliff forms part of a complex dedicated to the Bulgarian god Tangra. The horseman is thought to represent Khan Tervel (700-721 CE).



A painted and glazed terracotta icon of St. Theodore Stratelates from the monastery of "St. Panteleimon" at the second Bulgarian capital of Preslav, near Varna. The icon is an unusual example, the only one of its size, of a kind of tile decoration unique in Medieval Europe.

books from Greater Moravia to Bulgaria, thereby laying the foundations of Slavonic education in the region. In the 9th and 10th centuries, Bulgarian Christian culture reached its apogee during the "Golden Age" of tsar Simeon the Great, an eminent patron of culture, and a graduate of the famous Magnaura School in Constantinople. A Slavonic literature came into being in the numerous monasteries in eastern and western Bulgaria. Alongside translations from older Greek texts, the first original Slavonic works were written there. Naum of Moesia, Constantine of Preslav, John the Exarch, Chernorizets Hrabar and Simeon, the ruler himself, worked in Pliska and Preslav. The literature of early Medieval Bulgaria was disseminated to Kyivan Rus after its evangelization (988) and provided the leaven that helped to integrate the Byzantine and Slavonic communities of eastern Europe.

The social classes that characterised Medieval European society as a whole were also to be found in Bulgaria. There was a landed aristocracy, a clergy, and the common people (peasants, craftsmen, merchants). Social and geographical differences determined the way of life of individuals. The rulers' palaces in Pliska, Preslav and Turnovo, and other residences, were imposing and richly ornamented. The populace lived in modest dwellings, in large family units. Meat, citrus fruits, and sugar (from sugar beet), as well as jams and other preserves, were becoming common at the tables of rulers and the aristocracy, following the fashions of Constantinople. But these delicacies were unknown to the common people, who were nevertheless benefiting from developments in popular cuisine. Contemporary poems and travellers' accounts describe salt pork and cabbage stew, as well as the flavourings that created variety and interest in what would otherwise have been a mundane vegetarian diet; vinegar, salt, honey, pepper, cinnamon, cumin, carraway, and other herbs. Cheese and offal were the main sources of protein, occasionally fish and shellfish.

Until the advent of Christianity, the Slavs and the Bulgars wore a characteristic set of traditional clothes, made of wool or linen. The fashions of the rich were subsequently much influenced by those of court officials at Constantinople. They began to wear fabrics imported from Byzantium, Italy and even from China. Frescoes and miniatures depict women in brocaded garments, decorated with pearls and precious jewels. Bulgarian women wore jewellery of gold, silver, enamel and copper. The Church calendar determined the times and dates of festivals, but pagan rites and customs did not cease altogether.



Partial view (with one tower) of the late Roman city of Dinogetia. The site shows evidence of continuity into Byzantine times, when the city was an important early Christian centre.

Dinogetia, Romania

The ruins on the island of Bisericuţa (Garvăn, Tulcea county) were firstly identified in the first half of the 19th century. A sketch by E. Desjardins was also published in 1868. But no archaeological research was done there until the summer of 1939, when the National Museum of Antiquities of Romania began its investigations, under the direction of Gheorghe I. Ştefan. The purpose was initially to uncover the outlines of the fortress. As work proceeded, several levels of settlement were identified, the most important being those belonging to the early Roman (1st–3rd centuries CE), the later Roman Empire (4th–6th centuries), and the Middle Byzantine period (10th–12th centuries).

Located in the centre of a bend in the Danube around Măcin, Galaţi and Gura Prutului, the Roman fortress of Dinogetia-Garvăn had initially been a *castellum* (a small fortress), with a minor role in the defensive system on the Lower Danube. More important were the Roman fortresses from Barboşi (Galaţi county), Troesmis (Tulcea county), which was the headquarters of *legio V Macedonica* until CE 168, and Noviodunum (Isaccea, Tulcea county), the naval base of *Classis Flavia Moesica* (the Roman fleet on the Lower Danube). In addition, stamped bricks certify the presence at Dinogetia of some further Roman military units: *legio I Italica, legio V Macedonica, cohors II Mattiacorum, cohors I Cilicum, Classis Flavia Moesica*.

But, by the end of 2nd century CE, when barbarian invasions had begun, the strategic importance of Dinogetia progressively increased, especially after the abandonment of the Dacian province by the Romans. During the great invasion of the Costoboci into the Balkans, when outside forces penetrated as far as central Greece for the first time since the creation of the Roman Empire, the fortress was seriously damaged. Then, after a period of reconstruction at the beginning of the 3rd century, Dinogetia was again a target for barbarian invaders later in the same century. After the abandonment of the province of Dacia, the Roman emperors Aurelian, Probus and Diocletian initiated a policy of fortifying the entire Danubian frontier (called the *limes*), Dinogetia included.

From the Later Roman Empire, bricks stamped with the mark of *legio I Iovia Scythica* record the presence, at Dinogetia, of legionary units drafted from the north eastern fringes of the Empire, and there is similar evidence of Gothic confederate troops. The 4th century witnessed the construction of the commander's house (*domus*), as well as the baths, which demonstrate a stable Roman military presence in the area. Written sources, such as the *Notitia Dignitatum* (a list of official administrative posts for the Empire, drawn up at the end of the 4th and beginning of the 5th century), record the presence of some *milites Scythici* (*NDOr*, XXXIX, 24), which seems to confirm the archaeological evidence of foreign nationals serving in imperial units close to the north eastern frontier, and relatively close to their place of origin. In ecclesiastical sources, the deaths of Christian martyrs are registered in the area, dated in the reign of Licinius (co-Emperor, 308–24), and many of them were serving in the army. This is an important indicator of the degree to which Christianity had begun to take root in the area.

The fortress was inhabited until the end of the 6th or the beginning of the 7th century, when, in the context of Phokas' rebellion, in 602, the entire *limes* of the Lower Danube collapsed under the pressure of Slav tribes. Dinogetia was abandoned as a military strongpoint. The fortress was rebuilt and became the headquarters of a



Byzantine garrison after the successful campaigns of the emperor Ioannes Tzimiskes (969–976) against the Russians, when Dobrudja was again incorporated into the Empire. The presence of Byzantine troops is documented until the 12th century, when Dinogetia was gradually deserted and finally abandoned, perhaps in 1186.

The northern Black Sea coast and the Crimean peninsula

The northern shores of the Black Sea drew the attention of Byzantine Emperors from the time of Constantine onwards. Overland trade routes between the Black Sea and the Baltic followed the great rivers – especially the Dnieper (Dnipro), the Dniester, and Bug – and issued at coastal ports. An important role in this trade (which brought with it cultural and political expansion), was played by Cherson, the successor of the ancient city of Chersonesus, near modern Sevastopol. In the late 4th century, settlements in the steppe regions adjacent to the northern Black Sea Coast were invaded and sacked by successive attacks of the Huns. Farming settlements of the Cherniakhiv culture, in the western part of the region, expanded again only in the 5th–6th centuries. Another incoming group from the east, known as the Antae, later became integrated with these settled agricultural communities. The Antae are described in Byzantine sources. The well known court historian, Jordanes, who was himself of Gothic origin, wrote (c.550), "the Antae are the bravest in the lands, where the Sea changes its shore and spreads from the Dnister to Dnieper (Dnipro)".

During the 6th–9th centuries, the number of agricultural settlements diminished once more, as a result of incursions made by a variety of nomadic tribes: Avars, Alans, Bulgarians, Khazars and Hungarians. The emperors of Constantinople were anxious to reduce the risks posed by such attacks to their own dominions, and to the interests of the Empire in general. A Byzantine military presence was considered



A jour (cut out) metal figures from the Martinivka cave, Cherkassy region, Ukraine (7th century CE).

necessary. By order of the Emperor Justinian (524–565), the fortresses Aluston and Gorzuvity (present-day Alushta and Gurzuph) were built. The Bosporus region (the former principality of Bosporus, based at Panticapeum/Pantikapaion), became the headquarters of a Byzantine administrative unit. But the main inland part of the Crimean peninsula, between Panticapaeum and Cherson, was under the control of Huns, who were nevertheless obliged to pay tribute to Byzantium.

The remains of the Scythian and Sarmatian populations, evicted by the Huns, escaped to more remote areas, and survived in the so-called cave cities, such as Eski-Kermen, Mangup-Kale, and Chufut-Kale. In the second half of the 6th century, the Crimean peninsula was invaded by the Khazars, a group of Turkic-speaking pastoral nomads, who quickly mixed with the earlier populations and settled here. They decided against Christianity, which St. Cyril preached to them, and became Jews instead. The advent of the Khazars reestablished a single authority over the neighbouring steppes, albeit temporarily.

In the 8th century, refugees from the Byzantine Empire appeared on the territory of the peninsula. This movement of people, in the opposite direction to the prevailing trend from the east, also had very different origins. These newcomers were being pursued because of a religious disagreement. In 730, the Emperor Leo III had outlawed the use of icons. The refugees were some of those who could not accept this decree. The iconoclastic controversy has bequeathed to Crimea the original culture of the cave monasteries (Chylter, Shuldan, Kalamyta, Mangup). At the end of the 8th century, the ancient trade route from the Black Sea to northern Europe along the Dnieper (Dnipro) river, which was formerly controlled by the people of Olbia, the city at the mouth of the Dnieper (Dnipro) (ancient Borysthenes), between the 7th–3rd century BCE, and later by the Antae (5th–7th century CE), was reactivated. During the 9th century, Vikings (Norsemen) from Scandinavia sailed the rivers from the



Mangup area in present day Ukraine. The latest excavations proved that the first settlements appeared in this area during the first centuries of our era. In the 5th–6th centuries the first fortress was built on the Mangup Plateau, and in the 11th century the town appeared. It became the centre of the Mangup Kingdom, which existed until the middle of the 15th century. Even now one can find remains of the fortress on this plateau.



Mary as Worshipper: the Mother of God with arms raised; eleventh century mosaic from the central part of the portal in the Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv.

Baltic Sea and from lake Ladoga (via the Vistula and Dvina rivers) each autumn. When winter came, they loaded their ships on large sleds, and hauled them across the snow to one of the rivers that flowed into the Black Sea (Dnister, Dnieper (Dnipro)). When the ice melted in the spring, they sailed south to the Black Sea coast. After trading their goods, they retraced their route to their Scandinavian homelands.

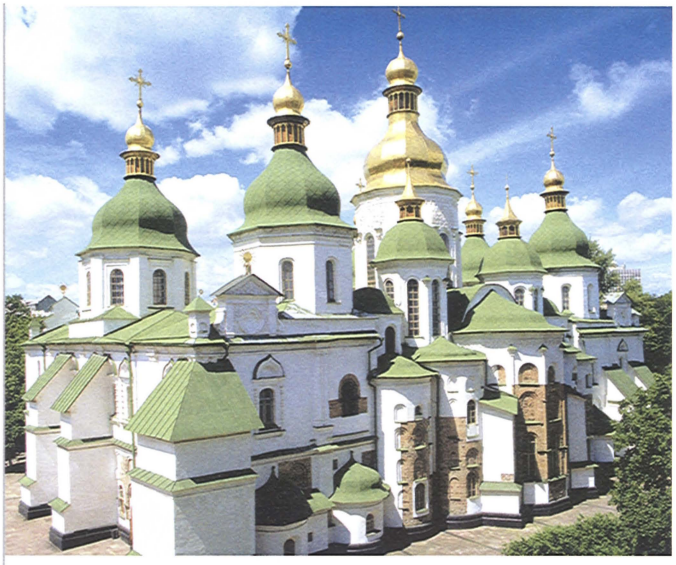
The iconoclastic controversy

The ban on the use of *icons* in the Byzantine Empire was in part an attempt to curb the power of the Church and of monasteries. Successive emperors in the 8th and 9th centuries (726–87CE, and 813–43CE) zealously persecuted "iconophiles". Defenders of icons, such as St. John of Damascus, and St. Stephen the Younger, wrote in support of their viewpoint, and urged monks to escape to remoter regions, which had remained faithful to this vision of Orthodox Christianity. Thus monks from various parts of the Empire fled to Cherson, Bosporus, and "Gothia", where, in the late 8th to early 9th century they founded the so-called cave monasteries in the mountain region (Chylter, Shuldan, Kalamyta, Mangup). The refugees believed that images were essential in helping people to imagine the divine. No wonder then that the walls in the cave monasteries are covered with *frescoes,* which present different religious subjects.

One of the biggest cave monasteries (Kalamyta) included 8 above ground and crypt churches, linked by passageways and stairs, among which the best known is the church of St. Klyment (St. Clement). Near Eski-Kermen there is the Temple of Three Horsemen (12th century). It was carved from a monolith, had two entrances and only one window. The Temple was named after the famous original fresco that has been preserved there. On the northern wall we can distinguish three horsemen. One of them vanquishes a dragon with a spear.

One of the most interesting architectural designs of early medieval Ukraine is the sanctuary of St. John Predtecha (St. John The Baptist) in the centre of Kerch. The ancient icons and remains of frescoes and *mosaics* (coloured designs formed with inlaid pieces of stone and glass), date from before the beginning of the 10th century. The single most famous artifact from the same place of worship is a wooden carved cup, dating from the 4th century. The oldest part of the church, the chancel with one single vaulted dome, was built in the Byzantine style in the 13th century. Some of its features (the form of the dome, frontispieces) were later reproduced in the construction of ancient Rus churches (for instance, the Spas Church in Chernigiv).

The veneration of images was restored by a synod in Constantinople, in 843.



Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv; the original shell dates from the eleventh century, reconstructed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The city of Kyiv prospered from the 5th century onwards, because of its strategic location astride the main trade route called "the road from the Varangians (Vikings) to the Greeks (Byzantines)". The strengthening of the nascent state of Kyivan Rus enabled its citizens to take under their control the regulation of trade in this direction, and to guarantee the safety of traffic passing through the city. According to an important document for the history of this period, known as the *Chronicle*, based on a manuscript at the Ipatov Monastery, the route along the middle and lower Dnieper (Dnipro) is called the "Greek road", and two more roads are mentioned at the same time, the "Salt road" and the "Iron road". At the crossing of these two roads along the middle Dnieper (Dnipro) is Kyiv city, and at the river's mouth there was the port of Oleshia.





Silver coins showing the image of Volodymyr Svyatoslavovych, dating to the end of the tenth or early eleventh centuries.

Kyivan Rus traded agricultural goods, wood, iron, salt, and other products, to the Byzantine Empire. The most important of these goods were fur, wax, honey, animal hides, flax , hemp, burlap and hops. In return the people of Kyivan Rus obtained wine, silk, religious art objects, spices, precious stones, steel and horses. During the 4th–5th centuries, Cherson (modern Sevastopol), played an important role in the economic and political relations between Byzantium and Kyiv. In 988 the Kyivan Grand Prince Volodymyr Svyatoslavovych captured Cherson, where he was converted to Christianity. After this, he began to propagate Christianity from the Crimea throughout Rus.

The military, commercial and cultural activity of Grand Prince Volodymyr and his precursors (Igor and Sviatoslav) made it possible for the rulers of Kyiv to gain a foothold in the Crimean peninsula, where in 10th century the Tmutorokan Principality was established. In the 11th century it included both the Taman and Kerch peninsulas. An interesting artifact from the kingdom, known as the Tmutorokan Stone, records the event in 1068, when the straits between the two peninsulas in the Kerch Gulf were completely locked by ice, and Prince Glib had the distance between them accurately measured. At that time, the Black Sea was called the "Rus Sea" in Arabian sources.

Anna Yaroslavivna (c.1024-75), daughter of Yaroslav the Wise and Queen of France.



From the 11th century onwards, the south-west of the Crimean peninsula was controlled by the Mangup Principality (in later sources it is called Theodoro or Gothia). Its population was mixed, consisting of Scythians, Sarmatians, Greeks, Armenians, Karaims (Jews who originally came from Mesopotomia), and slaves. They were united by a common version of Byzantine Orthodox Christian culture.

In the 9th century, on the western part of the northern Black Sea coast, the Slavonic tribes of the Ulychi and Tyvertsi established a trading centre at Bilgorod (on the territory of the former Classical settlement of Tyras, on both sides of the Dniester).

During the 10th–12th centuries, the district near the former ancient Greek Classical colony of Kerkinitis was settled by emigrants from Kyivan Rus, who also set up trading centres at Korchev (modern Kerch) and Surozh (modern Sudak). The latter was considered to be the greatest trading city of the Black Sea on the *Great Silk Road*. From the west, merchants imported textiles, glassware, and metals; while from the east they brought cotton, silk, and spices.

Turkic migrants in the steppe regions, 9th–12th centuries

Various Turkic-speaking groups penetrated the steppes during the Medieval period. One of the most important, for Black Sea history, was that of the Pechenegs, who controlled a large nomadic confederation, and played a key role in the diplomatic relations of the Byzantine court between the 9th and the 11th centuries. They were joined, in 11th century, by the Turkic Oghuz ("Uz") tribes, who crossed the Volga and settled further west in the Balkans. The Balkan Gagauz, who adopted Christianity, the "Vardariots", and other Turkic groups may be their descendants.

Of greater long term importance were the Kipchaks (Cumans), who remained a loose nomadic tribal federation. Their control of extensive parts of the Eurasian steppe (11th–13th centuries) gave them considerable international power, and, despite armed conflicts with the state of Rus', the Byzantine Empire, the peoples of the northern Caucasus, and with other Turkic groups, they formed alliances with these same peoples, and had an enduring influence on the cultural, linguistic, social, and military character of the northern Black Sea region. Some of these features are still apparent in the heritage of the Volga-Ural Tatars, the Crimean Tatars, the Karachay-Balkars, Nogays, Kumuks, and other present day Turkic speakers of the region. In linguistic terms, the Kipchak legacy is apparent in words such as *kermen* (fortress), which is also the origin of the word Kremlin. The Macedonian town Kumanova/Kumanovo preserves a Kipchak name.

The Kipchaks settled sporadically in various parts of the Balkans. There were Kipchaks among the rulers of the Second Bulgarian Empire, who were Christians. Kipchaks founded the Mameluke dynasty in Egypt, and brought their language and literature long before the Ottoman conquest of Egypt.

The first settlements of Armenians appeared in the Crimea in the 10th–11th centuries, as a consequence of Arabic conquests in the Caucasus. The steppe regions of the northern Black Sea coast were occupied by the Pechenegs in the 9th–10th centuries, and later (in the middle 11th century) by the Polovtsians (Kipchaks), another nomadic people. It weakened the commercial and political influence of Kyivan Rus over Crimea, apart from some cities in the south-western parts of the peninsula. In the 12th century, the Arabic geographer Idrisi mentions Jalita (present-day Yalta) as the city of the Polovtsians. However their capital in Crimea was situated at Solhat, in the east central part of the peninsula.

Maps and travel guides

The most detailed and best known world map and guide book of the Middle Ages was *The Book of Pleasant Journeys to Faraway Lands*, a work commissioned by King Roger of Sicily of the Arab Geographer, Al-Idrisi (c. 1100–64). It contained 70 regional sections, as well as a world map. The explanatory text drew on the work of the ancient geographer, Ptolemy (c.90–168), whose *Geography* had been translated by Arab scholars in the 9th century, and remained the most detailed and accurate description of the known world until Idrisi's time. Al-Idrisi sent travellers across the globe to collect extensive reports. This monumental work took many years to complete, and was finally presented in 1154.



Page from the Ostromirov Lectionary, showing St. Luke the Evangelist. This copy of the New Testament was made for an official called Ostromirov in Novgorod, between 1056 and 1057 (Saltikov-Shcherdin Public Library, St. Petersburg).

The diffusion of Byzantine influence in the region of Crimea was connected with a conscious and deliberate defensive policy. The Byzantine court historian Procopius of Caesarea (6th century) wrote a treatise called *On Justinian's Buildings*, which contains a great deal of useful information about the geography and topography of the Empire, as well as descriptions of buildings. He referred to the construction of two forts in southern Crimea by order of the Emperor Justinian (527–65): Aluston and Gorzuvity. The remains of two enormous stone towers in the centre of modern Alushta are the most visible remains of this imperial heritage. Byzantine architects were masters of the self-supporting arch and vaulted dome, and understood how to create a sense of space as well as pleasing proportions.

Cave towns in Crimea

The so-called cave-towns of Crimea are among the more curious and unique survivals of the Middle Ages. The original names of sites like Mangup-Kale, or Eski-Kermen, are nowadays unknown. Eski-Kermen is located on a precipitous mountain, covers an area of 10 ha, and contains almost 350 caves. The fortress town of Chufut-Kale, which lies on a high plateau, arose, according to some sources, in the 6th century, to others in the 10th – 11th centuries. Ruts made by cart wheels in the solid rock are eloquent reminders of life in this distant age, as are the powerful defensive walls, remains of dwellings, a mausoleum, and caves cut out of the rocks. Caves in this town were used for domestic habitation.

In the 3rd century CE, if not earlier, Christianity appeared in Crimea. In Tepsen (near Karadag) alone, there were five Christian churches. The farmers of the steppe region at that time, the Antae, believed in a multitude of gods – Dazhdbog (the Deity of the Sun), Veles (the Deity of Cattle), Strybog, Svarog, Lada, Dyv and others. The Taurians of the inland areas, and the Huns, remained pagans for a long time. The culturally heterogeneous, multi-religious character of societies on the northern Black Sea coast during the Byzantine epoch both defined the distinctiveness of some customs in the region, and prepared people for cultural tolerance. Thus the cultural traditions that developed on the northern Black Sea coast during the Byzantine epoch have played on important role in the evolution of all peoples who lived there.

Legends: the origin of rivers and valleys

Once upon a time, there lived a nomad dragon. He ate lots of people, as there was no one stronger than he was in the world. At the same time, there lived Kuzma and Demyan in the city of Bilgorod. They made up their minds to get rid of the dragon. The dragon rushed at them, but they hid in the smithy, and shut the iron door.

– Kuzma, Demyan, open up, otherwise I'll swallow you and your smithy! – said the dragon.
– If you are strong enough to lick the door down, we'll sit on your tongue, and you can swallow us – they answered.

The dragon started licking the door with his fiery tongue, and the holy people were heating iron and forging tongs. The dragon licked the door through and put

his tongue in. Kuzma and Demyan caught hold of the dragon's tongue with tongs, and began hitting it with hammers... They tired the dragon out, yoked it to a plough made for twelve pairs of oxen, and started tilling. They ploughed the steppe lengthwise, and they ploughed it crosswise; but they never once gave the dragon anything to drink.

They ploughed for a long time and they ploughed for a short time, until they reached the Black Sea. The dragon jumped into the sea and began drinking, as though he had never drunk before. He went on drinking until he had swallowed all the sea, and then ... he burst.

So that is how, if you want to know, rivers and valleys appeared in the steppe. Kuzma and Demyan from Bilgorod ploughed deep until they had tired the dragon out, and rivers flowed there. As soon as they tired him out, they ploughed shallow; and valleys appeared there.

The Byzantine Empire and ancient Russia

One of the first annalistic accounts about ancient Russia dates back to the year of 862, when the Slavs invited three Varangian (Viking) leaders with their armed forces from the tribe Rus. The eldest of the three brothers, Rurik, began to reign in Veliky (great) Novgorod – the first capital of ancient Russia. He was the first of a long



"Christ not of human making": icon, 12th century, Moscow (Tretyakov Gallery).



"Monomachos' cap": a crown of gold with gold lace filigree ornament and sable fur. The Byzantine Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos, is said to have passed the imperial regalia to his grandson, Volodimir, prince of Kiev (1113-25), whose mother, a daughter of Constantine, had married Prince Yaroslav the Wise of Kiev. This crown was first used by Ivan III (1462-1505) and for the last time in 1682.

The "Grand Zion", sacred gifts from the Cathedral of St. Sophia, Novgorod.



dynasty of great princes, later tsars, which lasted until 1598. Rurik's successor, Oleg, made Kyiv the Russian capital. Kyiv was the centre of ancient Russian politics and culture for about 300 years.

The development of culture in ancient Russia was greatly influenced by the Byzantine Empire. A new way of life, new traditions and customs, became rooted in the landscape, and developed distinctive characteristics in these new conditions. This process was successful mainly due to a common religion. Russia adopted Byzantine Orthodox Christianity. Long before 988 – the official date of Russia's christening – many Russians, Princess Olga among them, became Christians, owing to their personal contacts with the Byzantine people. In Kyiv several Orthodox churches were functioning.

The adoption of Christianity was a powerful spur to the development of ancient Russian literature and art. Church books and books of religious and educational character were needed for public worship. They were translated from Byzantine Greek and were disseminated in Bulgarian as well. Russia came into contact with Byzantium through the mediumship of the Slavonic rites created for Bulgarian Christians, by the apostles from Thessalonica, Cyril and Methodius. They invented an enlarged alphabet to accommodate the Slavonic letters of old Bulgarian, and thus a common written language for all Orthodox Slavs. Bulgaria gave Russia a complete set of church books and books dealing with the Christian outlook. Not being quite satisfied with the amount of Bulgarian literature, under the government of Yaroslav the Wise, the Russians founded their own translating school, and the first original literary works of ancient Russian authors appeared.



Communion chalice, Moscow.

With the use of archives, folk legends and foreign literature, chroniclers have given us a broad and interesting picture of the development of the early Russian state. The sophisticated Greek literature of Byzantium penetrated the consciousness of these chroniclers, and their accounts show a maturity and complexity that was in turn translated into a national historical self-consciousness. Here are the first articulate thoughts about the future of the Russian land, concepts of positive and negative heroes of Russian history, the first attempts to express the unity of the ancient Russian national character.

Byzantium also had a profound impact on the evolution of old Russian architectural forms and of mural painting. Russian architects who had already got some experience in the construction of fortresses, palaces, wooden heathen temples, mastered the new Byzantine technique of brick-building, and decorated the largest Russian towns with magnificent monuments. Although the designs were based on Byzantine models, changes were soon introduced, which formed the basis of a national Russian style. In 11th century Kyiv, Veliky (great) Novgorod and Polotsk, three large cathedrals dedicated to St. Sofia were erected, modelled on St. Sofia's Cathedral in Constantinople. The aim was not merely to imitate, but to compete in a very dramatic manner. Size expressed the idea of the state grandeur of Russia from the south (Kyiv), to the north (Veliky Novgorod), and to the west (Polotsk).

The sacred architecture of ancient Russia cannot be separated from painting. Walls and vaults were decorated with frescoes, and icons drawn on wooden boards added much to the church interior. The Byzantines pioneered the construction of churches with vaulted roofs, and created religious frescoes and icons, using tradition-



(above) Liturgical book, twelfth century: title page (Moscow History Museum).
(below) Title page from a twelfth century Gospel (Moscow History Museum).





Novgorod, St. Sophia's Cathedral, eleventh century.



Novgorod, St. Sophia's Cathedral,fragment of a wall fresco, showing the Old Testament King Solomon.



(above, right) Martvili cross, eighth to ninth century, Georgia. (Shalva Amiranashvili State Art Museum of Georgia)

al Greek methods of painting and material. Local apprentices worked alongside specialists who had travelled from the principal imperial cities – bricklayers, plasterers, glass manufacturers, and paint grinders. The native craftsmen quickly learned the secrets of their arts, acquired the skills of independent creation, laying down the foundation of the old Russian school of architecture and painting.

Byzantium was also early Russia's most important trading partner. Down the river Dnieper (Dnipro), and farther along the western coast of the Black Sea, ran a trade route known as "the road from the Varangians to the Greeks," which was used by Russian, Greek and Varangian convoys of trade ships and warships that travelled to and from Constantinople. The latter's world market, provided for by the best European and Oriental craftsmen, looked very attractive to the Russian aristocracy. Furs, honey, wax and other goods from the Russian interior were bartered for silk, silver and gold jewellery, expensive arms and utensils. Some of these imported materials were brought to Kyiv and other Russian towns, but the bulk of it was transported to Europe by two trade routes: from Kyiv to Krakow and Prague, and from Kyiv via Smolensk and Novgorod to the towns situated on the shores of the "Varangian Sea" to be sold there.

Georgia and the Byzantine Commonwealth

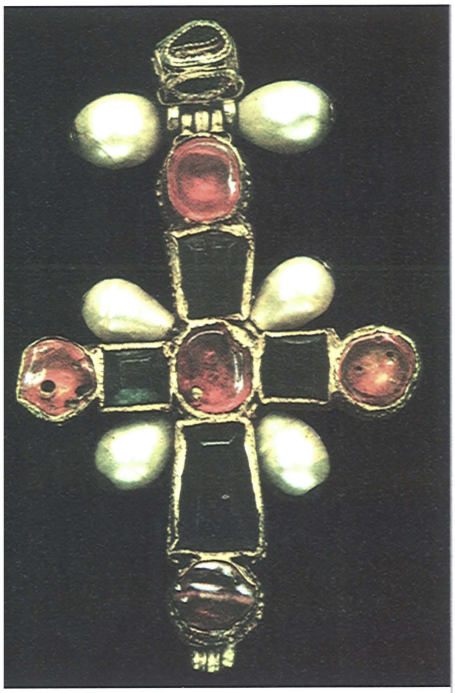
The Greek colonial influences that played a significant role in terms of overseas connections during antiquity were superseded in the early Middle Ages by the cultural and religious impact of the Byzantine Commonwealth. The cultures of eastern Georgia (Iberia) and the west (Lazica) merged to create a more homogeneous entity, with Georgian as a common language, alongside Mingreli, Svanetian and Abkhasian. In economic terms Georgia was flourishing. In political terms, the centre of administration of the united kingdom was located first at Kutaisi, in the west, later at Tbilisi in the east. Both capitals were a source of poetic inspiration.



(below, right) gilded silver relief roundel showing a saint on a lion, from Gelati, Georgia. (Shalva Amiranashvili State Art Museum of Georgia)

Legends

The emergence of urban societies provided ready subject matter for legends. The perceived absence of a venerable past created the motivation for fictional accounts. The inhabitants of the towns wanted to see their role, represented in story form, in the drama of national evolution. A founding story about Tbilisi tells of the victorious king Vachtang Gorgasal, who saw a wounded pheasant alighting at a warm mineral spring ("tbili" means warm). This location seemed ideal for a town. The incident takes place during the king's campaigns against one of his most formidable oppo-



The cross of Queen Tamar (1184-1210).

nents, the Persians, and thus became linked with the tale of national origins. But Georgians were clearly aware of the fact that Tbilisi had older roots. Kutaisi, and the adjacent monastic complex of Gelati, were described in prose and poetry as "the new Athens", the "new Rome", or the "new Jerusalem".

Migration and Population movements

Although most Georgians adhered to the Orthodox Christian religion, the country embraced other faith communities, including Jews, Zoroastrians, Monophysite (Armenian) Christian sects, Muslims, and others. Ethnic variety in Georgia also encouraged a general sense of toleration. One specific example of the inclusiveness of Georgian confessional attitudes is the basilican church plan, with three naves, frequently found in Iberia during the 6th–7th centuries. The lines of columns constitute the standard basilican plan, while the exterior walls make up three separate units. Each of these three units was used by one of three separate confessional groups – Diophysites (according to whom Jesus Christ had two perfect natures, as God and man), Monophysites (those who believed that Christ had one nature only, a divine one), and Zoroastrians (worshippers of the ancient Iranian cult of fire). The Byzantine commonwealth continued many of the civil institutional traditions that characterised the earlier Roman Empire, as well as providing a model of Orthodox Christian practice. The rulers of Georgia inherited some of the symbolic aspects of Byzantine Roman rule. They were given the dual title "king and *Kuropalates*", "king and *Sebastos* (venerable one)", "king and Caesar". This dual style of titles is well reflected on coin legends, where we read phrases such as "Christ, Bagrat, king .. and Nobilissimos". From the 6th century onwards, such titles became part of a ranking system, with a prince or king advancing from the rank of Kuropalates, through Nobilissimos, Sebastos, Caesaros, to Autokrator (single ruler). In intellectual terms, Byzantium inspired many generations of Georgian scholars, who lived and worked mainly in the Georgian monasteries of the Byzantine Empire, such as those on Mount Athos, Greece, the Petritsoni Monastery in Bulgaria, and in the Holy City of Jerusalem. Some of the best known spiritual leaders of Georgia were monks: Petre (Peter) the Iberian (5th century), Giorgi (George) of Athos (11th century), and Ioane (John) Petritsi (11th–12th century). Monks read the works of ancient philosophers, such as the 4th century BCE thinker Plato, but differentiated between knowledge that could be acquired from studying human behaviour and the material world, and divine knowledge, which could not be acquired through reasoning.

The Khazar kingdom of the steppes

The Khazars were one of the nomadic Turkic groups to emerge from the grasslands of central Asia, and settle in the steppe regions of Ukraine and south Russia. The leading horsemen were Turks and Iranians, but the kingdom that was created under their command was of mixed ethnic origin, and included all the peoples that had previously settled in the region, from the Scythians and Thracians, to the Slavs and Goths, professing Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, as well as a variety of "pagan" faiths. Islam was the religion adopted by many Khazars, including the Hakan/kagan, their ruler, but it was Judaism that became the faith of the majority in the 8th–9th century.

The kingdom emerged c.630CE, and lasted until 970, when it was conquered by Prince Svyatoslav of Kyiv. The administrative centre of the realm was in the territorial nucleus of Khotzir, in Crimea, but the territories subject to the Khazars were very extensive. There were three main provinces, the most important of which was Kwalis, centred on the twin cities of Amol-Atil on the lower Volga River (on the site of what was later to become the city of Tsaritsyn), together with Semender, on the River Terek, and Sarkel, based at a fort built by Byzantine engineers on the River Don. Seven minor kingdoms, and seven tribes formed further dependent territories.

The Khazar kingdom was famous for its religious tolerance and vigorous commercial life. Although its diplomatic relations with Byzantium waxed and waned, the Khazars tended to favour alliance with Constantinople. In 737 Khazar forces successfully prevented an Arab army from penetrating north of the Caucasus.

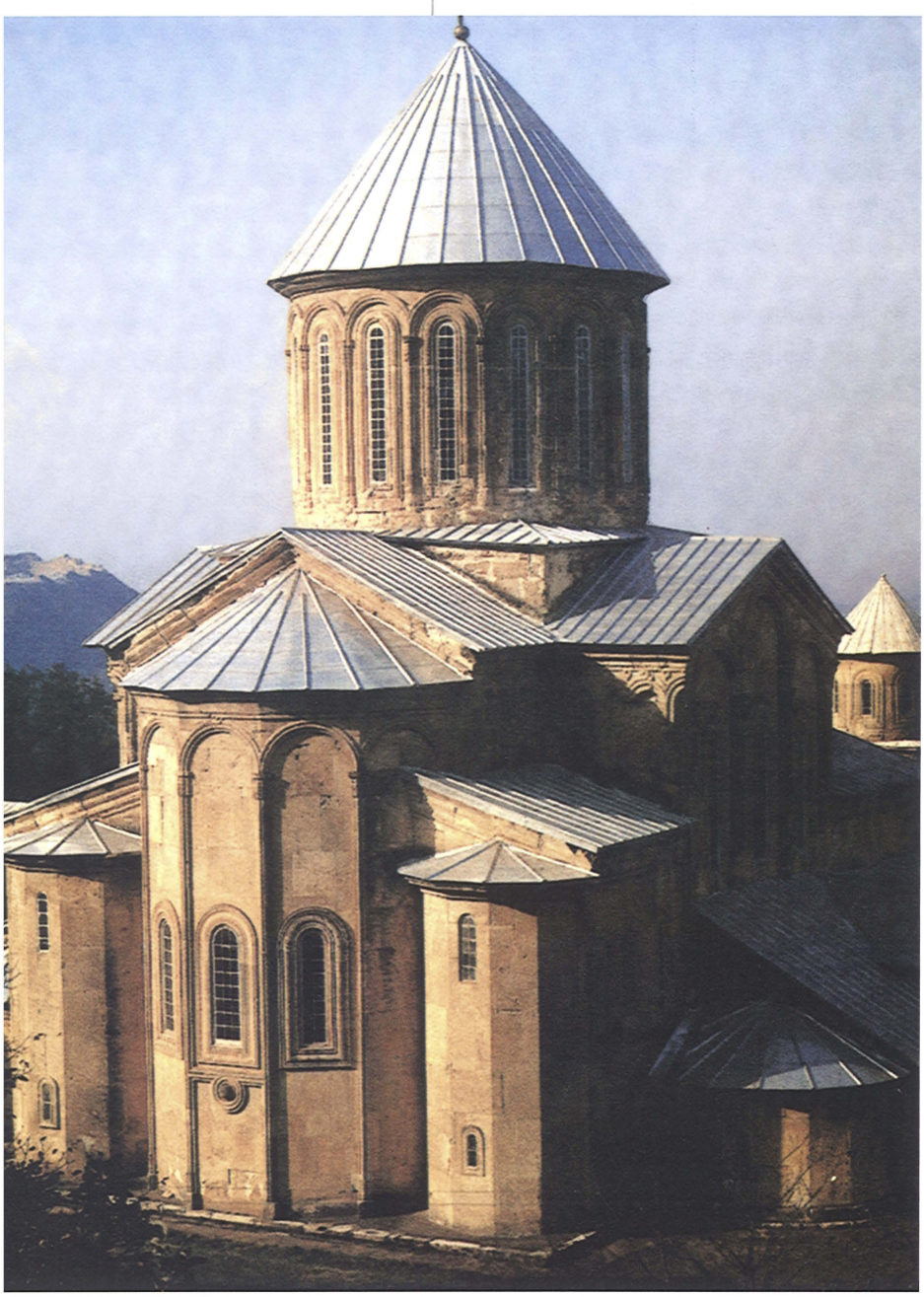
Trade and Trade routes; navigation

The Black Sea provided an excellent environment for commercial enterprise. The Byzantine historian, Agathias, praises the Lazi for their skills in seamanship. Byzantine gold coins formed a common currency in the region, and have been discovered in many parts of Europe, as far north as Scandinavia. Even Georgian coins have been found on the territory of present day Russia, Estonia, Germany, and Sweden. This widespread distribution can be explained as evidence of trading contacts between Russia and Georgia, via Tmutoracan (in what is today the Taman peninsula). Commercial contacts linked Georgia with central Asia as far as India. The transcaucasian route to the east was the preferred one, but when the Seljuk Turks conquered Persia in the 1040s, Armenia in the 1060s, and Jerusalem in 1070, the eastward cultural and commercial networks of the Byzantines, and their eastern Christian neighbours, were effectively halted. A secondary commercial route was invigorated, north of the Caspian Sea.

The emergence of a new, militant Islamic state in the Near East caused severe disruption to existing patterns of exchange between the Black Sea entrepôts and the Arab communities of central Asia. A 10th century Arab merchant, Ibn Fadlhân, has left an account of his journeys from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea river ports, describing the goods that were exchanged, and the merchants from different parts of Eurasia who took part in commerce there. The distribution of Arab *dirhems* (pure silver coins, worth one tenth of a dinar), provides yet more confirmation of who was involved in these transactions. In the early 9th century, these came from the Abbasid Arab kingdom of north Africa. They are thought to reflect trade between the emerging Arab kingdoms of the Middle East and the Khazars, whose headquarters were in the Crimean peninsula. Later in the 9th century, the coins came mainly from central Asia. From the 11th century onwards, Arab coins were supplanted by western European silver, which shows that the location of many commercial transactions was moving further north in Europe.

Culture and Science

Byzantine influence is apparent in Georgian church architecture of this period (notably the high central dome of Svetistkhoveli, Mtskheta, or Alaverdi church), as well as in frescoes and mosaics, such as those in Gelati and Pitsunda. The Georgians remained loyal to the tenets of the Byzantine Christians. They adopted the Greek alphabet as a model for their own letters, and Greek religious texts, including the Old and New Testaments, were translated into Georgian, alongside Lives of the saints, and ancient Classical Greek texts. Georgian epic poetry was very original. The earliest native Georgian literature emerged in the 15th century, drawing on several cultural strands: a collection of historical writings, known as "Kartlis Tskhovreba" (The Life of Kartli), and ancient Classical history and literature (which, together with astronomy, were taught in the Greek pagan school at Phasis in the 3rd–4th centuries, and subsequently in the Georgian academies at Gelati and Iqalto).



Gelati. 12th century, Georgia.

Customs

Georgian Christianity inherited some celebrated pagan images. One example is the worship of Mithras, the youthful Iranian god of the sun and light, and thus of justice, by the leading men of the bilingual (Greek and Colchian) city of Trapezus. Mithraism in its ancient form was a mystery religion, restricted to men, with seven progressive grades of initiation. Admission was achieved following a series of ceremonies and ordeals. Initiates were promised a happy afterlife. They were expected to conform to a high moral code, and to respect virtue and courage. In Georgia the worship of Mithras seems to have owed a lot to its traditional roots in Iran. On Georgian coins, the god appears as a horseman, in a Phrygian cap with radiating sun rays, accompanied by a snake. His image is similar to the way in which St. George is usually depicted.



Coin of Trapezus showing Mithras (the rider is wearing the god's characteristic Phrygian cap).

4 • 13th–15th Centuries: The Italian Republics



The Holy Trinity by Andrei Rublev, fifteenth century (Moscow, Tretyakov Gallery).

In 1203–4, the city of Venice, which, from the 9th century onwards had been a vassal of the Byzantine Empire, persuaded the western European knights who assembled there to embark on the Fourth Crusade, to divert their course to Constantinople. The Venetian doge, Enrico Dandolo, planned to have his nephew, the exiled Emperor Alexius IV, restored there. The Crusaders depended on the Venetian fleet, which also acted as a police force against pirates, to get them across the Mediterranean. In the event, Alexius IV was strangled, but the Crusaders successfully attacked the city of Constantinople, and burned and ransacked its properties, and imposed Baldwin, Count of Flanders, as ruler. The Empire was systematically divided up among leading Crusader knights as "Latin" fiefdoms, and the Venetians acquired a string of colonies, in the main islands and ports of Greece, and extended their by now vast commercial network to the Black Sea. The Byzantine Empire was now formally divided into two parts – the "Latin" kingdoms in its former heartlands of Thrace and Greece, and a rump state based on Nicaea in Asia Minor, and the city of Trapezus (Trebizond), which formed the terminus of the overland silk route to China, via the Caucasus, along the shores of the Caspian and Aral seas.

In 1082 the Venetians were granted freedom of transit and exemption from taxes within the Byzantine Empire, west of the Bosporus. They had three quays reserved for them in the port of the Golden Horn. Venice had assisted the Empire in its wars against the Normans in Italy. Over the next century, the Venetians expanded their commercial interests into Dalmatia, Greece, Crete, and Cyprus. Their fleet provided the best protection for commercial convoys and ships, bringing silk, spices, minerals, silver, slaves, timber, corn, and salt, back to western Europe. Although the Emperor Michael VIII Palaelogus recaptured the city of Constantinople in 1261, the Empire was never put back together again, becoming thereafter simply one among many Balkan and Black Sea powers. The Venetians retained dominance of the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean sea routes. The Genoese benefited from the western conquests to establish trading colonies in Black Sea ports.

Chinghis Khan and the "Golden Horde"

By the mid 13th century, most of the immense territories from the Japanese Sea to the Hungarian Plain fell under the rule of the empire founded by Chinghis Khan and his nomadic Mongol forces. This vast empire nevertheless disintegrated within a few decades. It had a successor in the "Golden Horde", another nomadic kingdom of virtually imperial proportions, extending from western Siberia in the east to the Carpathian mountains in the west, and the Caucasus to the south, and dominating large parts of the Black Sea coastline. Although the leaders and administrators of Chinghis Khan's empire, and of its successor entities, were Mongolians, many of his followers were Turkic-speakers, originating from Turkestan. Thus the "Golden Horde" became increasingly dominated, certainly at the start of the 14th century, by Turkic-speaking Muslims. The significant numbers of Kipchaks within the Horde's territories explains why it was sometimes called the "Kipchak Khanate". The nomadic horsemen belonging to the Horde came to be called Tatars, who were mainly Turkic speakers, and were Muslims in terms of religious affiliation.

Chinghis Khan



Unable to withstand the onslaughts of Timur (Tamerlane), and riven by internal power struggles, the Horde itself disintegrated, like its predecessor, into a number of smaller successor states, during the first quarter of 15th century. The strongest of these was the Crimean Khanate, which established a Turkic and Muslim civilization,

in the steppe hinterland and on the northern shores of the Black Sea. Literature, arts, and education flourished. In 1475, the Khanate entered into an alliance with the Ottoman Empire. Thereafter the traditions of the Kipchaks, the survivors of the Golden Horde, and the Ottoman Turks, survived in various forms in the culture of the Crimean Tatars, whose Khanate was finally annexed by Russia in 1783.

The northern Black Sea coast

In the first half of the 13th century, the northern Black Sea coast was invaded by groups of nomadic Mongol horsemen, who came from the Asian steppe west of the Ural range. Most of the region remained under Mongol control until the late 15th century. Solhat (formerly the main city of another steppe people, the Polovtsians) was transformed into Kirim (The Ditch) and become the capital of the Crimean *ulus* (province) of the Golden Horde. The Mongols chose Crimea because it let them keep under their control both the steppe part of the peninsula, inhabited by the Kipchaks, and the routes to Surozh and Feodosiya. In 1299 they plundered the south-west of the peninsula (Chersonesus, Eski-Kermen, Yalta). Only the Mangup Principality resisted this invasion and preserved its influence in the region.

In the Lower Dnieper (Dnipro) the Mongols dealt with the military and trade settlements of the so-called *Brodniks,* who had penetrated the region since the 11th century and inhabited the marshy Lower Dnieper (Dnipro) islands overgrown with reeds and light forest. For centuries they had maintained highly developed military tactics; they had practised Christian customs and rites, and had controlled the transit route for imports to western Europe. Their institutions included traditions of self-organisation that were later adopted by the well known Zaporizky Kozaks.

In 1266 Italian traders from the city-republic of Genoa were granted land near the ancient city of Theodosia (Feodosiya) by officials of the Golden Horde, and founded a trading colony there, Caffa. For two centuries it became the focus of other Genoese colonies in the Crimea. It was a huge, multinational city, inhabited by some 70,000 residents. Among them were Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Ukrainians and Russians.



View from the Taman peninsula, south Russia, in the direction of Crimea.

Cerccio (modern Kerch), Soludaia (modern Sudak), Caffa and other Genoese sea-ports (about 40 in all), became the gateways of trade for and with the Golden Horde. In addition, Moncastro (modern Bilgorod-Dnistrovsky) linked the Black Sea region with Lithuania and other European states.

In the 15th century the name of the peninsula (Tavrica) was changed to Kirim (after the main city of the Kipchak Turks, subsequently called Tatars, in the region). During the 13th–14th centuries, the Crimean Tatars emerged as a distinct socio-political entity in the steppe part of the Crimea. Formerly there had been a variety of different Turkic-speaking ethnic groups: Khazars, Polovtsians, and others, who mixed with the local population of the steppe region subject to the Crimean Khanate, and guided, in religious and cultural terms, by Sunni Muslim traditions. The Khanate officially became independent of the Golden Horde in 1433. Haci-Geray Khan I transferred his residence to the well protected mountain stronghold of Kirk Yer or Kirk Or (in the Tatar language this means "The forty places" or the "forty forts" – modern Chufut-Kale).

The 15th century was also a time of sharp competition between the traders of the Genoese cities and those of the Mangup Principality. During the first half of the century, the sea-port Avlyta and the nearby fortress Kalamyta (modern Inkerman) were founded by order of Prince Alexei (who belonged to the famous Greek Gavras dynasty, whose representatives had ruled Trapezus/Trabzon at an earlier period). Genoese traders interpreted these developments as a challenge to their power in the region; war ensued. For the first time, the Mangup Principality had an advantage, and was supported by the Crimean Khan Haci-Geray. But in 1434 Genoa sent to the Black Sea a special squadron, consisting of galleys with twenty banks of oars, and 6000 soldiers under the leadership of Carlo Lomellino. The war brought only destruction to both sides. It defined the kinds of changes that both states were henceforth to adopt in their foreign policy relations. Peaceful cooperation between them led to the strengthening and prosperity of their respective peoples.

Culture and science, customs

The Tatars did not try to impose their way of life on the peoples they had conquered. They wanted only to collect taxes, or receive them from dependent governments. This explains why Tatar influence in the region (leaving aside the steppe part of Crimea), was political, rather than cultural. During the 13th–14th centuries, most of the local population continued Byzantine traditions, and developed their own distinctive features. The Mangup Principality looked to the Empire for religious and cultural inspiration. It is not surprising, therefore, that religious aims and subject matter dominated the work of Mangup artists. At the same time (and in spite of the Empire's traditions in this respect), their attitude to icons was idiosyncratic. Icon painting became the main Mangupian art form. However artists made no attempt to show figures as three-dimensional. They believed that the second of the Ten Commandments ("thou shalt not make any graven image for thyself") prohibited any art resembling sculpture. Thus they chose mosaics, frescoes and icons – which were two-dimensional – as the only correct representations of religious subjects.

Examples of Mangupian artists' mastery are the representations of Saints Constantine and St. Helen on the dynastic Basilica of the Mangup Princes. They seem to be very realistic. Remains of beautiful mosaic floors, with floral and geometric designs, were also found. The walls inside the Prince's Palace were decorated with



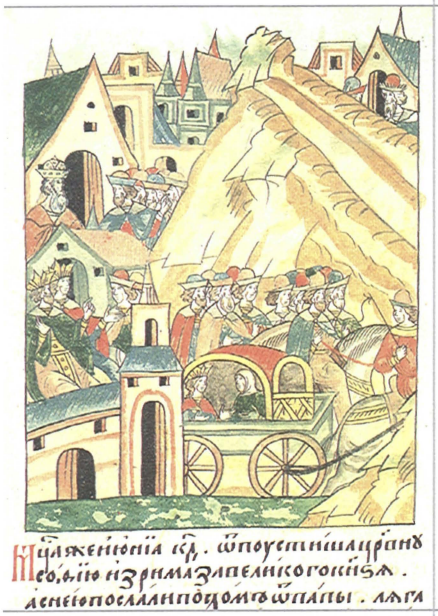
Moscow, the Kremlin: Uspensky Cathedral of the Dormition of the Holy Mother of God, designed and built by Aristotele Fioravanti, 1475-79. He used high quality brick and mortar, as well as local limestone blocks.

frescoes, mosaics and carved marble details. These illustrate a vividly expressed originality, manifested in specific forms of ornamentation, stylized representations, and generalized images. The remains of a stone plate, showing the emblem of the Mangup Princes, were excavated by archeologists. The representation of a double-headed eagle in its center also testifies to Byzantine influence.

Genoese remains in the Crimea

Genoese culture is presented in the region mainly in fortress architecture. The remains of such forts have been preserved in Sudak, Feodosiya and Kerch. The famous fortress in Soludaya (Sudak) was built in 1371–1469, at the top of a huge coral reef. It has a double line of defences. Within each of them lies a residential complex, provided with churches and taverns. Above the second line of defences we can see today the remains of Concul's Castle (13th–15th century), the Church of the Twelve Apostles (14–15th century), and, uniquely, a mosque (13th century). It was built by the Turks (Seljuks) in the early 13th century, as a mosque. Then it was used as an Eastern Orthodox church, and later as a Catholic one. In all, the fortress complex includes about 20 towers. The Patrol Tower is one of the most interesting among them. The representation of the Catholic Madonna, whose heart was pierced by seven swords, has been preserved on a fresco under the vaulted ceiling of the first floor. (This is apparently the origin of the structure's later name – Kuz-Kule: the Girl's Tower. But in Tatar "The Patrol Tower" sounds quite similar, Kiz-Kule).

There is a good example of peaceful coexistence between people of different confessions in the Crimean Khanate. In the 14th century, Kirim became the Muslim centre of the peninsula. At about the same time, a *Medrese* (centre for Muslim religious education), and the oldest mosque in Crimea, that of Khan Özbek (1314), were built. There were many other churches in the city. The Armenian Monastery of "Surp-Khach" (The Holy Christ), constructed in 1338, is the most famous among them. The prosperity of *kenases* (temples), of the Karaim, in Chufut-Kale (14th century), during the whole period of the Khanate's existence, can be regarded as further evidence of Tatar religious tolerance.



Princess Sophia's journey from Italy to Russia. Front page from a book of annals. The niece of the last Byzantine Emperor, and ward of the Pope in Rome, Sophia married the recently widowed Grand Prince Ivan III. He thus acquired the dynastic connection that enabled him to claim the title "tsar" (=Caesar).

Legends – The Magic Arrow

Once upon a time, there lived a Mangup Prince in Crimea. He had a magic arrow, which contained great destructive power. He often used it against cruel enemies, who planned to invade the Principality.

Old age came to the Prince unexpectedly. He hesitated to leave the Magic Arrow for his sons because they were so young. So he said to them: "Take it, break it into small pieces, and throw them into the depths of the sea."

His sons did not carry out their father's order. They hid the weapon in a narrow cave. When they returned home, their father knew what they had done, and urged them to obey his command. At last, the sons broke the Magic Arrow into the sea as ordered. Suddenly, the water changed colour. It became dark and angry. Since that time, this sea has been called "Black".

Russia in the period of the Italian Republics

In the 12th century, the ancient kingdom of Rus broke up into several independent princedoms, which were in a state of war with each other. In 1237–1240 they were conquered by the Tatar-Mongols, and became vassals of the Mongol Empire for the next 240 years. Kyiv was desolated, and at first Vladimir became the capital. Later on, Moscow took its place. It was the city of Moscow that united independent Russian princedoms into a single state around itself. This process was almost complete in the reign of Ivan III (1462–1505). After the death of his first wife, Ivan III decided to marry Princess Sofia, a niece of the last Byzantine emperor, Constantine XI, who was killed during the seizure of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. Sofia and her father – Thomas Palaeologos – had taken refuge in Rome. Accepting the proposal of marriage, Sofia Palaeologos left for Moscow with a large suite, consisting of Greeks and Italians, and led by the Pope's ambassador, cardinal Anthony. The strategy of the Vatican was to explore, by means of this marriage settlement, whether Moscow might be inclined to support the idea of reunion between the Catholic and Orthodox churches, divided since the great schism of 1054. But Ivan III remained firm in his religious convictions, and officially declared Muscovy Russia to be a successor of the Orthodox Byzantine Empire, thus proving that his marriage had far-reaching political aims. Dozens of scholars, who did much to give the Muscovites access to Greek and Italian culture, came to Moscow together with Sofia Palaeologos.



John the Baptist by Theophanes, the Greek; fourteenth century icon.

The Mongolian conquests did not bring to an end the traditional cultural contacts between Russia and the Byzantine world. Information about the Byzantine Empire was regularly reported in the Russian chronicles. Greek painters came to Russia. Russian citizens often visited the Empire as well. Russian monasteries possessed rich collections of Greek books. Russian scribes lived in Constantinople and on Mount Athos.

There were many Italians by birth in Moscow, mainly from the Italian colonies near the Black Sea and from Venice, famous for its gunsmiths, painters, and other specialists. Italian masters did much to acquaint the Russians with architectural masterpieces of the Renaissance. Maximos the Greek introduced the classical heritage of



Aristotele Fioravanti at work on the Cathedral of the Dormition, Moscow. Front page of a book of annals. (St. Petersburg Public Library).

antiquity, and the new ideas of the Renaissance to the Russian people.

The Greek Theophanes was an outstanding artist who worked in Novgorod and Moscow. He came from the Empire, where he had been a master of church painting. Having taken in the best traditions of Byzantine art, he had a noticeable influence on many Russian painters, developing his own talent owing to the perception and creative development of Russian pictorial art at the same time. Theophanes the Greek painted frescoes for several churches in Novgorod and Moscow. Many Russian artists were his apprentices, the most famous being Andrei Roublev.

A well-known Florentine master, Aristotle Fiorovanti, was invited to design the Cathedral of the Assumption in Moscow. In a very short period of time, from 1475 to 1479, he managed to build a church that astonished his contemporaries by the majestic beauty of its exterior and interior. It is an unsurpassed masterpiece of world ecclesiastical architecture and the best of Aristotle's creations. The Assumption Cathedral is a synthesis of the architectural thought of ancient Russia and Italy in the Renaissance period.

The formation of the enormous Mongol Empire, covering a territory from the Pacific coast to the steppes of the northern shore of the Black Sea, had a positive influence on the development of trade. Trade caravans from China and Central Asia reached Black Sea ports without leaving the jurisdiction of one state. Commercial activity and old caravan routes were revived and new routes appeared. The Russian state took an active part in international trade. Convoys of trade ships sailed along the Volga to the Golden Horde, the Caspian and the Black Sea countries. Wax, furs, saddles, swords were taken to the Horde from Russia, and silk and cotton fabric, salt, herds of steppe horses were brought back to Russia from Oriental countries.



Sixteenth Century Gospel. (Moscow, the Armoury Chamber).

Russian people often visited the Byzantine Empire, for commercial or political purposes. There was a permanent Russian settlement there. The route to Constantinople from Moscow lay along the Don, into the Azov Sea, and then through the Kerch Strait to the Black Sea. Sometimes travellers went to Constantinople along the Volga up to Sarai-Berke, then by land to the Don, and again by sea to Azov and further on to the Black Sea. Finally, one could reach the Empire, crossing the Ukraine and Moldavia. Free access to the Black Sea was of great importance for Russia's economic and political development.

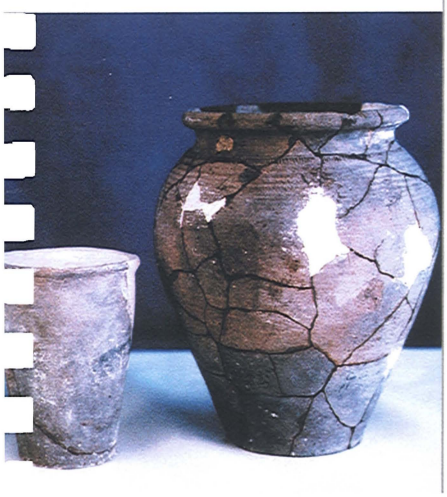
In the 15th century Russia actively traded with the Crimea. Trade routes from Moscow to the Crimea ran via Ryazan and the steppes of the Don, also via Kyiv, down the Dnieper (Dnipro) and across the steppe to Perekop. Russian merchants met with Italian and Greek merchants in the Genoese colonies of Crimea – Surozh (Sudak) and Caffa (Feodosia). Gyrfalcons, furs, leather, linen, armour and jewellery were exported to the Crimea, while via Crimea such goods as silk, jewels, spices, Flemish and English cloth were imported.



Belgorod (Cetatea Alba): view of the fortifications belonging to this stronghold and sea port from the Black Sea shore. The original 13th century fort was enlarged in the 14th century, and refortified by Alexander the Good, Stefan II, and Alexander III of Moldavia.

Obverse and reverse of a late fourteenth century Moldavian coin.

Fourteenth to fifteenth century cooking and storage pots. The glaze, which made them impermeable, is on the interior. It represents an important technological development. Such pots were widespread as far as the mouth of the Danube.



The Romanians between the Dniester and the Danube

At the end of the 1360s, the Mongolian Tatars were obliged to leave the territory between Danube and Dniester after their defeat at the hands of the Lithuanian duke Olgherd and his troops, at the Sinie Vodi (1363). The first recorded reference to Belgorod (Cetatea Alba, the White Fortress) is in 1386. Prince Bogdan I of Moldavia (1359–65) built a fortified outpost on the southern bank of the *liman* (enlarged estuary) of the River Dniester, located within the confines of the ancient Greek trading settlement of Tyras. He thereby provided a direct link between the territories of the newly independent Moldavian principality (1365+) and the international commercial traffic of the Black Sea. An overland trade route connected this coastline to central Europe: from Belgorod (Cetatea Alba), along the righthand bank of the Dniester, via Lapuşna, Iaşi, Suceava, Dorohoi, and Cernautsi, to Lvov and beyond. A branch route led through the customs centres of Tighina, on the river Dniester, to Crimea. This Moldavian commercial road superseded the earlier "Tatar road", which, at the time when the Ottoman Turks and Tatars dominated the region, passed along the left bank of the Dniester.

Silk, soft fabrics, pearls, spices, rice, raisins, and similar exotic commodities were brought from the east to Europe. The Moldavian authorities guarded this road and charged the merchants customs fees. In 1408, the prince of Moldavia, Alexander the Good, granted privileges to the commercial merchants from Lvov, who carried transit trade through Moldavia.

Belgorod (Cetatea Alba) also played a certain role in the consolidation of the Orthodox Christian religion in Moldavia. At the beginning of the 15th century, Alexander the Good (Alexandru cel Bun) brought the relics of the martyr, Saint Ioan cel Nou (thought to have been martyred in Caffa), from Belgorod (Cetatea Alba) to Suceava. This saint was considered the patron and protector of Moldavia.

Belgorod (Cetatea Alba) became an important bastion in the defence of Moldavia during the reign of Stephen the Great (1457–1504), at a time when Ottoman power



Prince Alexander the Good of Moldavia (1401-31).

was expanding. There were almost 20,000 inhabitants in the town; alongside native Moldovans lived Genoese, Greek, and Armenian merchants. In 1484 Ottoman troops attacked Belgorod (Cetatea Alba) by land and sea. Despite strong resistance, the fortress fell to the Turkish army. Most of the townsmen were sold as slaves, or deported to Istanbul. The town itself, renamed Akerman by the Turks, became, in turn, an Ottoman fortress.

The town and port of Chilia

At the end of the 14th century, the prince of Wallachia, Mircea the Old (Mircea cel Batran, 1386–1417), was extending his authority over Dobrogea (Dobrudja). During the same period, this prince added to his domains the territories east of the Danube delta, together with the town and port of Chilia. This territory was called Bessarabia, after the name of the founder of the princely dynasty in Wallachia. Mircea built a powerful fortress at Chilia. The Genoese community in the town lost its administrative authority. However, the town itself continued to play an important role in the grain trade of the Black Sea and beyond.

At the beginning of the 15th century, a new Turkish attack was expected, and Mircea of Wallachia transferred the territories on the left bank of the Danube, except Chilia, to Alexander the Good, who had, as his remit, the defence of the Danube estuaries. In 1412, Alexander the Good imposed his authority over Chilia too. By taking over this second port, Moldavia was acquiring control over another commercial road coming to central Europe, that to Braşov, which then passed through Wallachia to Chilia. In 1448 the town of Chilia was lost once more by the Moldavians, when it was handed back to Wallachia, and a Magyar garrison was installed in the fortress to protect the town from Ottoman soldiers. It returned to Moldavian hands in 1465, with the intervention of the Moldavian prince, Stephen the Great. The population of Chilia was somewhat smaller than that of Belgorod (Cetatea Alba), but it had a greater share of international trade. Like Belgorod (Cetatea Alba), Chilia was conquered by Ottoman forces in 1484.



Cetatea Soroca, a fortress on the River Dniester, which succeeded the Genoese fort on the same site. Stefan cel Mare was active here, and it was rebuilt by Petru Rareş. This is one of the best preserved Medieval forts in the region, with a circular outer circuit wall, surrounded by four semi-circular bastions.



Icon of the Blessed Virgin and child from Nesebur, 1342.

The Bulgarian kingdom

In the 13th–14th centuries, when, due to the aggressive creation of the "Latin" kingdoms, and the effective competition of Italian merchants, the Black Sea ceased to be a "land-locked Byzantine lake", Constantinople lost its commanding position in Bulgarian foreign trade. Through a series of agreements, Bulgaria gradually introduced new trade regulations with Dubrovnik, Venice and Genoa. The merchants from Dubrovnik in practice monopolised trade by land. Merchants from Venice and Genoa carried on trade mainly through the Black Sea and the Danubian ports. The range of exported goods included wheat, silver, furs, honey, wax, which was especially valued on the international markets of the day. The volume of imported goods constituted a considerable increase of scale in comparison with the Early Middle Ages: cloth (from Florence and Barcelona), spices, arms, paper, precious objects, olive oil, sugar, southern fruits, ironwork. The merchants from Italy and Dubrovnik were granted royal protection. Venice and Genoa established official consulates in major ports along the western Black Sea coast: the Venetians in Varna, the Genoese in Nesebur.

The restoration of the (Second) Bulgarian kingdom in 1187 gave new impetus to spiritual life and literature. Bulgarian culture in the 13th and 14th centuries was a variant of the common cultural heritage of the Eastern Orthodox world. The Bulgarian capital Turnovgrad ranked alongside major Byzantine centres, such as Constantinople, Thessalonica, and Mount Athos, as a centre of learning and literary production. The Gospel of tsar Ivan Alexander of 1356 (which can be seen today in the British Museum), was among the more remarkable books created in the 14th century. The works of the Bulgarian men of letters, Patriarch Evtimiy, Theodosiy of



Queen Tamar of Georgia (reigned 1184-1213), as shown on a contemporary wall painting.

Turnovo, Bishop Cyprian, Grigoriy Tsamblak and Konstantin Kostenetski became widely popular in Wallachia, Moldavia, Serbia and Russia. After the Ottoman conquest of Bulgaria they continued their work in Orthodox countries that still remained free. Cyprian was Metropolitan of Kyiv, Moscow and all Russia (1390–1406), Grigoriy Tsamblak was Metropolitan of Kyiv and Lithuania. The Bulgarian clergy and scholars took part in the ecclesiastical, monastic and literary development of Wallachia and Moldavia. The most important depository of old Bulgarian literature of the 9th–14th centuries was in Moscow, Russia, as a result of the numerous copies made during the 15th and 16th centuries.

The Italian Republics and Georgia

As the political power of the Seljuk Turks increased, so that of the Georgian kingdom declined. But whereas Armenia was absorbed into the Turkish state, Georgia retained its independence. David IV, the Restorer (who reigned 1089–1125), succeeded not only in defending Georgia, but also turning the kingdom into the chief power of the Caucasus region. In the south, individual warlords established dukedoms of their own in Samtskhe. Queen Tamar (who ruled 1184–1210), patronised over a court where literature and art flourished. An epic poem, *Knight in a Tiger Skin*, by Shota Rustaveli, which has been described as "the first breath of the Renaissance", was dedicated to her. Georgian political power expanded into Azerbaijan and Armenia.





Local Georgian imitations of silver coins minted in the city and port of Trapezus. Such coins were usually intended to make transactions easier when there were not enough original coins in circulation.

When Constantinople fell in 1453, soon followed by Trapezus (Trebizond) in 1461, the ambitious princes of the Jakeli family from Samtskhe, southern Georgia, in effect took the place of the Grand Comneni of Trapezus as representatives of Orthodox rule in the coastal region of Georgia. Many Greeks fled from Trapezus to the safety of Samtskhe. The reputation of the Jakeli princes was much enhanced because they had not been made to recognise Turkish suzerainty. They also benefited from a different kind of religious connection. Symeon, a Greek, was bishop of Atskuri. In one of the churches of Atskuri was a venerated icon, which, legend held, was a portrait of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, painted by St. Luke. Legend also maintained that the icon had been brought to Iberia by the apostle Andrew, who is widely believed to have made a missionary journey there. The Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (610–41CE) was reputed to have built a church in which the icon was to be housed. During the Muslim campaigns on Georgian territory, the icon was thought to have been seized or burnt. Nevertheless, it reappeared, allegedly by miraculous means, in Samtskhe.

Trade and trade routes; culture and science

In 1261 the Emperor Michael VIII Palaelogus had signed a treaty with Genoese representatives, confirming a variety of commercial concessions to the republic, together with their own quarters in Constantinople and other ports, and free access to Black Sea ports. No such concessions were made in Georgia, but a trading station had been established at Sebastopolis (a Greek name for Sukhumi), in 1354, which traded at a good profit until 1454, when the Ottoman Turks first launched a serious offensive. Genoa organised the silk and spice supplies for much of Europe via the North Caspian regions, the northern Caucasus, to Crimea, with Caffa as their principal seaport. The rest of the route was as follows: Sebastopolis – Trapezus – Galata – Italy. This profitable transit trade was brought to a halt by two developments: the territorial expansion of Mehmet II, and the great voyages of exploration, which ended the monopoly of the spice trade by the inland route. Local trade still existed. Georgian imitations of Trapezountine silver money are an indication of this. The maritime journey from Sebastopolis to Trapezus lasted three days. Georgians still continued to sail on the Black Sea and along rivers. Ambrogio Contarini, Venetian ambassador to the Persian court in 15th century, has left us a written account of this local trading network.



St. George, fifteenth century icon. Georgian enamelwork (Shalva Amiranashvili State Art Museum of Georgia)

In intellectual terms, this was still an outstanding period for the Byzantine Empire. Works of high quality were produced everywhere, stimulating provincial schools, like those in Georgia. Money was beginning to run short, but the continuation of major building projects, such as the monastery of Saphara (Samtskhe), and the frescoes in Likhni and Ubisa (Imereti), are extremely beautiful. Within the royal administration, there were still men with the capacity to enforce law and order. A complete codification of Georgian laws took place in the 14th century, superseding the confusion and opaqueness of former codes with clarity and concision. The writing of history was also becoming a fascinating subject for scholars. An anonymous 14th century author, about whose life we know very little, created a narrative account of Georgian affairs during the Mongol expansion westwards, which is vivid, straightforward, and persuasive. Spices transported by the Genoese have become common features of the native, especially in west Georgian cuisine. Such menus are served mainly at festival time.

5 • 15th–18th Centuries



led by an *emir* or *bey* (viceroy). After the middle of the 13th century, eastern Anatolia was under the command of the Seljuk sultan of Konya, while western Anatolia was in the hands of Turkoman *beyliks*, ruling a chain of provinces made up of former Byzantine territories. The capture of Constantinople, and of all the former territories of Byzantium in the Balkans, gave these western viceroys an unrivalled position. Tradition dictated that the land and subjects of a Turkish *bey* were his personal patrimony. On the other hand, the *dhimma* law of Islam granted protection and religious freedom to non-Muslims who accepted the political authority of the *emir* or *bey*.

The founder of the Ottoman rulers, Osman, was a frontier commander answering to the *emir* of Kastamonu. In 1299–1300, he and a group of other Turkoman *beys* took advantage of the relative weakness of the Ilkhanid Mongol control of Iran, and of eastern Anatolia, to launch an attack on Iznik (ancient Nicaea) and other Byzantine cities on the western Anatolian shores. A Turkish army, called in by the Byzantine Emperor for support, succeeded in defeating a Serbian army in Thrace (1352). Osman and his followers established a bridgehead across the Dardanelles and could not be dislodged by a joint force of Hungarians and Venetians with Papal support. The Turks had already occupi-

The emergence of Ottoman rule

Turkish groups belonging to the Oghuz tribes, which had penetrated into Anatolia after the victory of the Seljuk sultans over Byzantine armies at Malazgirt (Manzikert 1071), were modest in number, compared with the mass migrations of Turkomans, mainly from Iran and Azerbaijan, from the 1220s onwards. Marco Polo, who travelled through eastern Anatolia in 1279, called the area 'Turkomenia'. Mongol expansion westwards was the chief reason for this dramatic, and systematic, resettlement. The Seljuk sultans divided their conquered territories in Anatolia into provinces control-



(opposite page, above) Ottoman miniature showing the reception of a foreign envoy.

(opposite page, below) The Ottoman coat of arms.

ed Adrianople (Edirne), in 1361. The Ottoman Sultan Murad I succeeded in resisting an Anatolian uprising on the one hand (1387), and a combined army of Bulgarians, Serbs, and other Slavs at Kosovo in 1389.

By 1398, Sultan Bayezid I had established a vast empire, composed of many small states in Anatolia and the Balkans (called Rumeli by the Ottomans). Ottoman power in Anatolia was threatened by another Turkic ruler from the east, Timur (Tamerlane), who defeated and captured Bayezid himself. But the Balkans provided the base from which Ottoman rule was successfully reestablished, notably in the reigns of Mehmed I (1413–1421) and Murad II (1421–44, 1446–51). It fell to Murad's son Mehmed II to add the jewel in the crown, the city of Constantinople, to the Ottomans' territorial acquisitions, in 1453. In symbolic terms, Mehmed II combined Turkish, Islamic, and Byzantine imperial traditions. He declared himself the only legitimate successor to the Roman Empire, and hoped to make Istanbul the centre of a new world power, expressing one faith as well as one rule. He could not allow rival claimants to question his legitimacy to the Byzantine imperial title, and for this reason felt impelled to get rid of the Greek rulers of Trabzon; the Palaelogi, rulers of the Morea, in southern Greece; the Genoese Gattilusi, who were related to the latter; and all the remaining local dynasties. Finally, in 1480, he invaded southern Italy, and the ports of the Crimean coast, once ruled by the Byzantines. The Ottoman navy too was developed to rival and outdo the Venetians in the Mediterranean and the Genoese in the Black Sea.



Sultan Mehmed II (the Conqueror) in an Ottoman Chronicle. (Silsilaname Istanbullu Hüsoyin, UGM Library/Archive, Ankara)

The Genoese colonies of the Black Sea were forced to pay tribute to Istanbul from 1454/55. Amastris was invaded in 1459, Sinop and Trabzon in 1461, Caffa/Kefe and Sudak in 1475. The voievod of Moldavia was also obliged to pay tribute, from 1455, and the Crimean Khanate became a dependent ally in 1475.



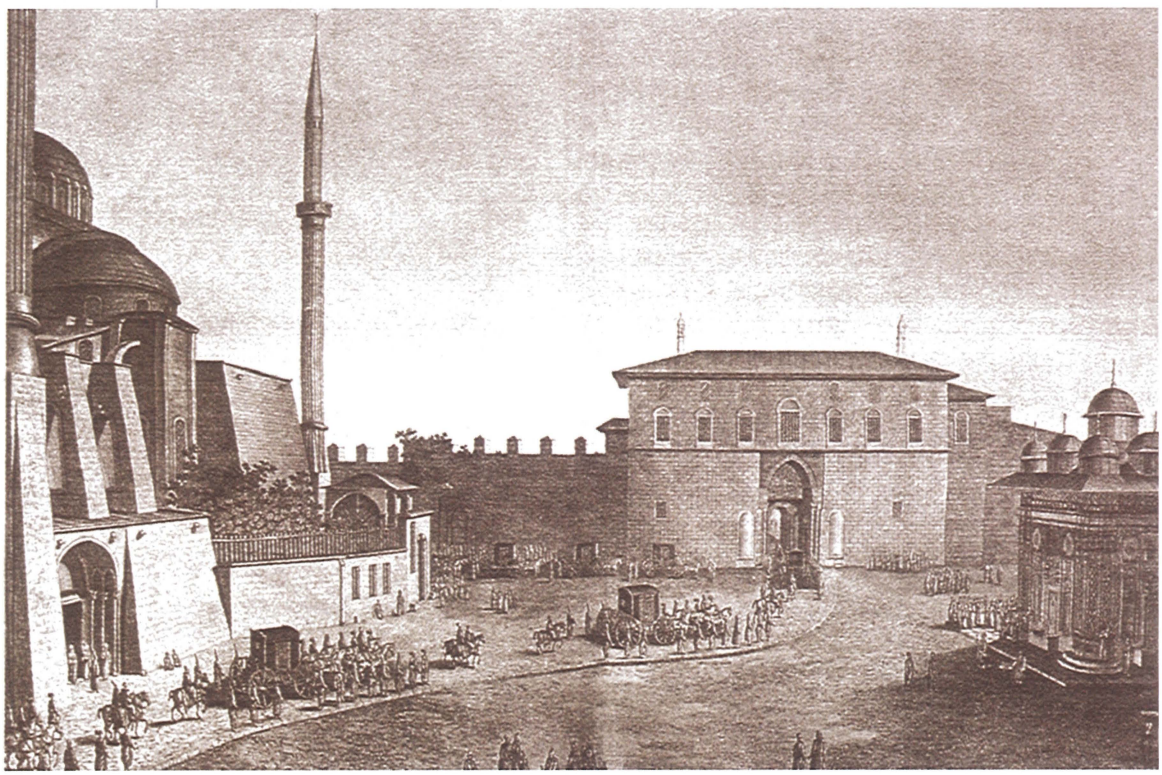
Horse frontlet (armour for the front of a horse's head), with elaborate floral decoration of sophisticated workmanship.

The Classical Age of the Ottoman Empire

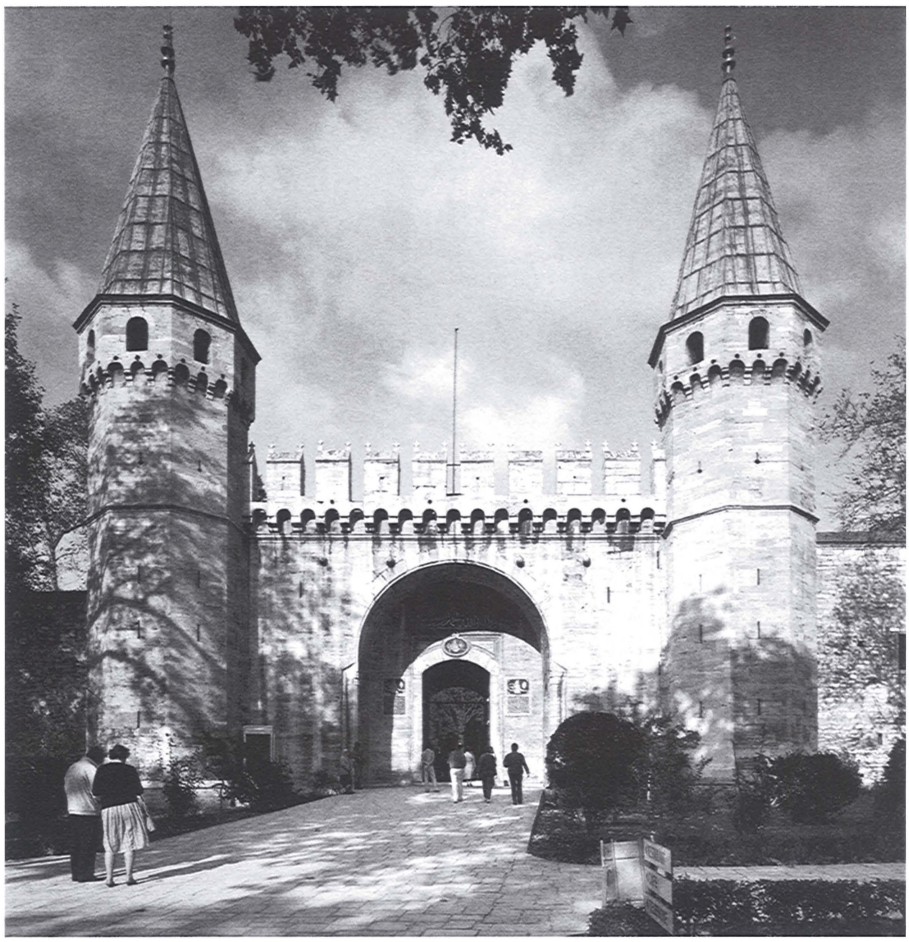
In its earlier stages, Ottoman culture was open to outside influences. The writer Tursun Bey (late 15th century) refers to the three principal styles in the art of the time, that of the Anatolian Turks, of Timurid central Asia, and of the Europeans. There was an interest in foreign cultures at the Ottoman court, and foreign scholars and artists were invited to visit. A room was built for them at the palace. Under the patronage of the sultans, master craftsmen who adhered to the classical art of Persia and of central Asia in the fields of miniature painting, literature, architecture, and Islamic sciences, were warmly invited to Istanbul. However, towards the end of the reign of Suleyman I, a distinctive Ottoman style emerged, and the Empire became refractory to foreign influences.

Ottoman culture had a profound impact on the social and cultural life of the Balkans in particular. The close proximity of the imperial court, and the prestige with which it was naturally associated, meant that Ottoman fashions were imitated by non-Muslims in many parts of central and southern Europe. Culture and the arts flourished under the patronage of the imperial palace. According to custom, sultans were themselves trained in a particular craft, and some achieved considerable skill. Suleyman I was an accomplished goldsmith. As in most Islamic societies, literary skills were much admired, especially poetry. A talented poet in his own right, Suleyman I strongly supported the cultural life of Istanbul, seeking to make his court the most splendid of the age.

One of the most prolific architects at court was a janissary named Sinan. Living to the advanced age of 99, Sinan designed buildings to commemorate Ottoman imperial power. His massive, interconnecting structures, surmounted by domes, became the hallmark of Ottoman architecture throughout the Empire. While the Suleymaniye complex of mosque, schools, hospital, bath, shops, and cemetery, is the largest of his creations, the Selimiye mosque in Edirne, outside Istanbul (completed 1575), is



Imperial Gate of the Topkapi Palace, Istanbul.



Main gate into the Topkapi Palace, Istanbul.

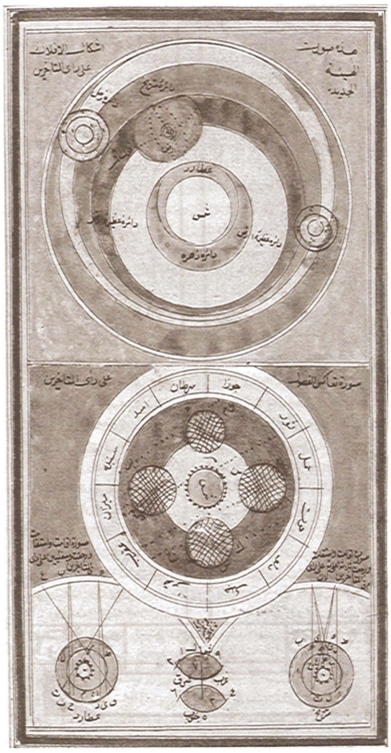


Textile embroidered with an epigraphic inscription (a pattern made up of words and letters).

generally considered his best work. The architects, miniature painters, poets, jewellers, musicians, tailors (making *kaftans* and *hilats*), the carpet weavers and silk manufacturers, were chosen from among the most skilful in the bazaar, or from abroad. These artists created splendid works for the sultan and for his elite. Within the palace, boys called *devşirmes*, who would later produce the governors of provinces, were trained in the arts. In every city, an architect was appointed, who was dependent on the chief architect in Istanbul, who directed the construction of public works.

The Turkish language continued to develop, borrowing words from both Arabic and Persian. Arab and Persian influences are also evident in literary and artistic forms. Some poets wrote in Turkish and Arabic. Historians recorded the expansion of empire and the military exploits of successful rulers. At the same time, there was a lively folk literature. The new imperial buildings were decorated with "Iznik" tiles, which show motifs derived from Chinese porcelain, and were themselves much copied on European ceramics. Ottoman textiles, particularly carpets, became extremely popular among wealthy Europeans. Ottoman craftsmen also made significant contributions to the art of silverware, book binding, and calligraphy.

The Ottoman Empire created a centralised administration based on Istanbul, which developed rapidly in the reign of Mehmed II. Other urban centres that underwent similar expansion were major nodes of trade: Bursa, Adrianople, and Gallipoli. Italian merchants were superseded by Muslims, Greeks, Armenians, and Jews. Textiles were among the chief local industries, which served a growing export market, as well as providing products to major cities of the Empire: cotton in western Anatolia, mohair around Ankara and Tosya, silk in Bursa and Istanbul; broad cloth in Istanbul and Thessaloniki (Turkish: Selânik). Coarser woollen goods were made at Yanbolu, leather and shoes at Adrianople (Turkish: Edirne).



Watercolour diagram showing the months and seasons.

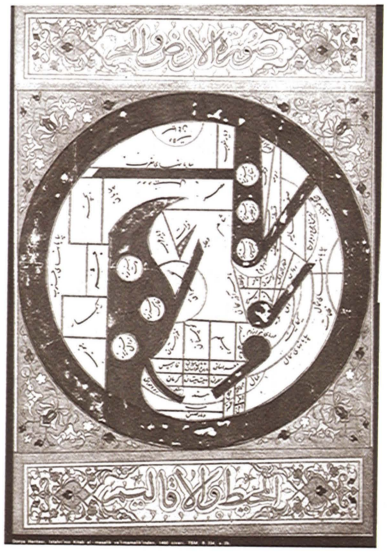


(above, right) The shores of South America, as mapped by the celebrated geographer, Pîrî Reis, 1513.

Bursa became the final stopping point for Muslim caravans bringing Arabian and Indian spices through Damascus, Konya, and Adana, to the Mediterranean shores and Europe. Genoese and Florentine merchants came to Bursa to buy silk in exchange for other textiles (in Egypt and Syria they were obliged to pay for it in gold). Bulk goods, such as timber, travelled by sea, to Antalya and thence to Bursa. Wood and iron were exported from Anatolia to Egypt.

Scientific developments in the Classical Ottoman Age

An Ottoman world map.

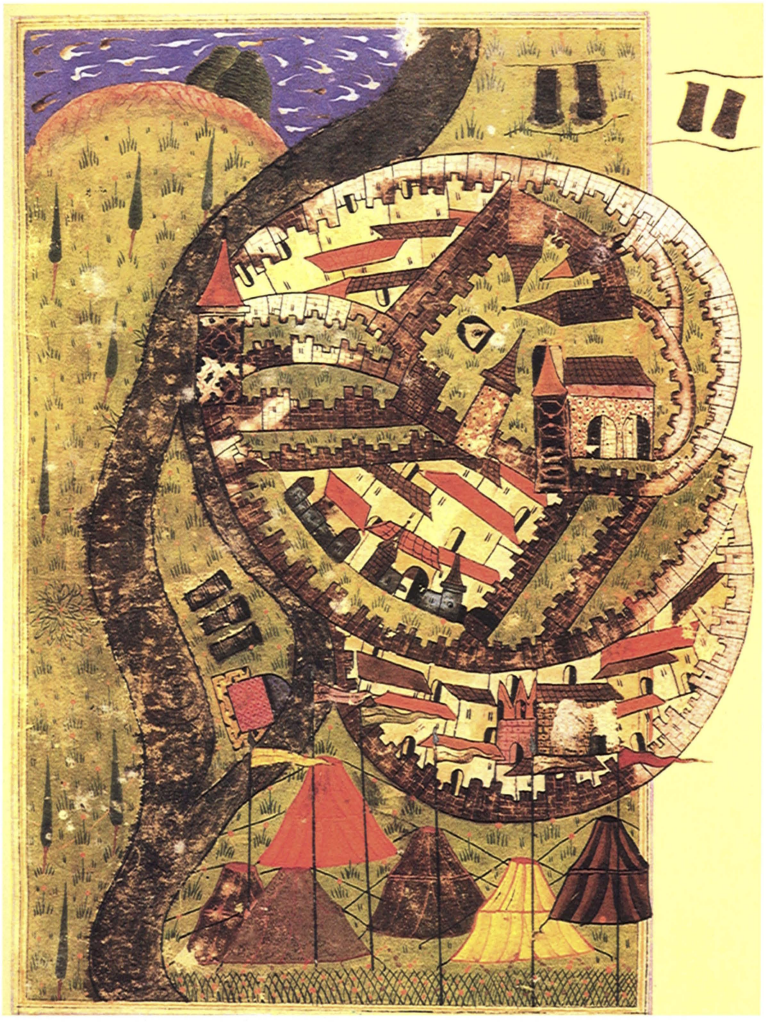


Mehmed II was one of the great patrons of science. He founded a number of educational institutions in Istanbul, which produced some brilliant scholars, who made original contributions to science and philosophy. His interest in European culture had been stimulated when he was a young prince in the palace of Manisa. The Italian Cyriac of Ancona (Ciriaco de' Pizzicolli), a distinguished antiquarian, and other humanists, taught Mehmed Roman and European history. He instructed the Greek scholar from Trabzon, Giorgios Amirutzes, to translate Ptolemy's *Geography* into Arabic, and to draw a world map. Among the notable scholars of the later 15th and early 16th centuries were Ali Kuşçu, a mathematician and astronomer, his grandson Mîrîm Çelebi, and Molla Lûfti, who wrote a treatise about the classification of the sciences, and a book on geometry (which was partly translated into Greek). Suleyman the Magnificent was also a great patron of science. Musa b. Hamun (d.1554) was a Jewish physician of Andalusian descent, who wrote one of the earliest known works on dentistry, based on Greek, Islamic, and Uygur Turkish medical sources. In the 16th century, the Egypt-Damascus school was the most prominent centre of astronomy and mathematics, while Taki al-Din al-Rashid (d. 1585) was one of its greatest figures, combining the traditions in astronomy of this school with those of Samarkand.

One of the other principal areas of scientific innovation in the Ottoman period was



The punishment of a felon.



The fortress of Estergom, Hungary. This painted plan includes elevation drawings of the principal buildings, together with an outline of the fortifications on the ground, thus combining the maximum amount of visual information.

in the field of map making. Pîrî Reis was one of the most distinguished contributors to this discipline. His first map, drawn up in 1511, and based on his own drafts, as well as European maps, included preliminary information about the New World. It is a *portolan*, the kind of map used by ships' captains, without longitude and latitude measurements. His Book of the Sea (Kitâb i Bahriye), shows maps and drawings of many cities of the Mediterranean, with extensive nautical and navigational information. Admiral Seydî Ali Reis (d.1562) also wrote on astronomy and on long distance voyages, based on his own observations about the Indian Ocean. It seems clear, from an anonymous map called the *History of Western India* (Târih-i Hind-i Garbî), presented to Sultan Murâd III in 1583, that the Ottoman court was well informed about European explorations of the American continent, from Columbus in 1492 to Pizarro in 1552.

The Ottoman rulers and their subject territories

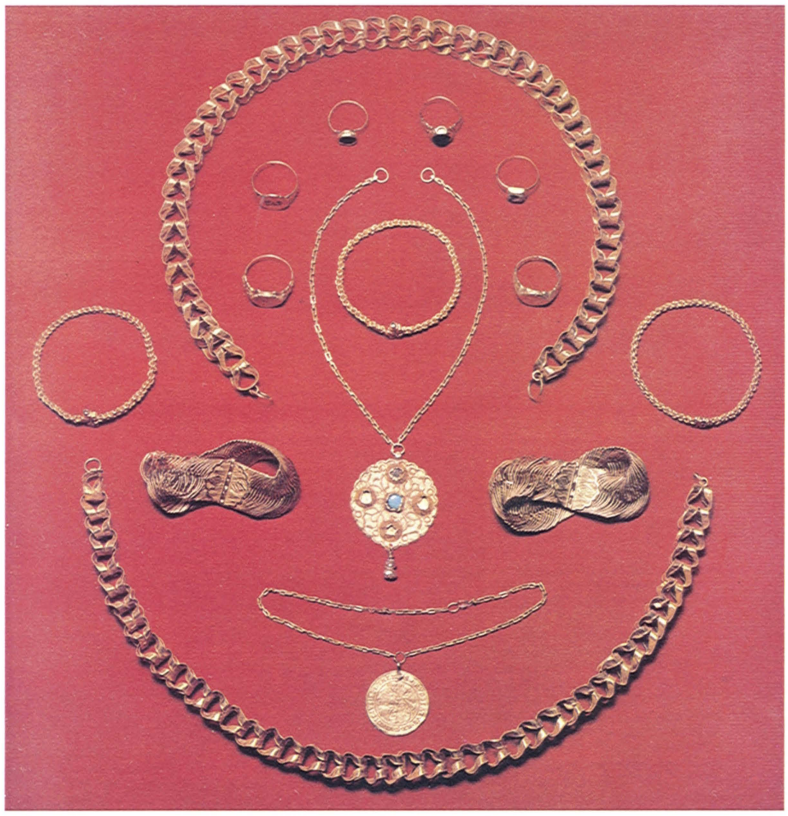
The interpretation of Islamic rule adopted by the Ottoman Turks prompted the division of subject territories according to their relationship with the central authority. Vassal states were part of *dar-al-ahd* (The House of Peace), an intermediary regime between that of *dar-al-Islam* (The House of Islam) and *dar-al-harb* (The House of War). The lands around the Black Sea did not all share the same status under Ottoman rule. The territory of present-day Turkey, Bulgaria, and southern Georgia became parts of *dar-al-Islam*, and were administered as provinces of the Empire. The *dar-al-ahd* regime applied in northern Georgia, Moldavia, Wallachia, and Transylvania. In such situations a native ruler from a princely family occupied the throne, and the political, administrative, military, judicial, and ecclesiastic institutions were preserved. The boyars elected the prince (Dieta in Transylvania) and the sultan confirmed this decision. After the consolidation of Ottoman power, the Sultan ceased consulting local landowners in the appointment of titular rulers.

The Ottoman Empire and the Bulgarians

The Ottoman armies of Murad I (1362–89) and Bayezid (1389–1402) conquered the territories of the Bulgarian kingdom in the final three decades of the 14th century, and replaced its institutions with new methods of administration. Religious institutions, which exercised considerable social and political influence through their educated clerics, as monastic leaders, teachers and advisors, as well as economic power, vested in landed property and buildings, were weakened. The Patriarchate of Turnovo was abolished, and its religious responsibilities passed over to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Ecclesiastical and cultural links with other parts of Christian Europe gradually loosened. Without an effective political hierarchy, based on local and regional administrators, social evolution within the native population also slowed down. Although the structure of church organization was curtailed, so that there were fewer clerics in positions of authority, the church provided one of the few ways in which cultural individuality (literary, artistic, and musical) could be expressed. In the



Jesus Christ enthroned: icon from Nesebur, early 17th century. Nesebur was one of the centres where the tradition of Christian Orthodox painting continued under Ottoman rule. National Gallery of Art, Sofia, St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral.



Nesebur treasure, 17th century; the items of jewellery making up this set represent different designs, some based on traditional local forms, others related to eastern (Ottoman) fashions. National Archaeological Museum, Sofia.

network of monasteries, monks continued to preach and teach. The Bulgarian monastery of "St. George Zograf" continued to attract monks and scholars to Mount Athos, in the easternmost peninsula of Chalkidike, in northern Greece (where there was an autonomous monastic settlement, first recognised by Emperor Basil I in 885, and confirmed by Ottoman rulers from 1430 onwards). The monastery of St. Ivan of Rila was destined to become the greatest Bulgarian religious and spiritual centre. Old books were still copied in the monasteries. But, deprived of the patronage of the state, the aristocracy and the Church, Bulgarian culture lost its educated élite, and thereby its writers, social reformers, and leaders. From the 16th century, however, contacts between the Bulgarian people, and the European Catholic world, were reactivated. Catholic clergymen in the 17th century worked hard and selflessly to defend the Bulgarian cause before the European ruling elites.

The culture of the illiterate majority of the Bulgarians was dominated by oral folk tradition – songs, legends, folktales. These preserved, albeit in abbreviated form, the historical memory of a former cultural identity, and kept alive the notion of a collective autonomy, distinct from the administrative structures of the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, the notion of what this identity was did not remain ossified. Situated on the interface between the worlds of Christianity and Islam, the Bulgarians inevitably lived side by side with Moslems. Islamic culture remained alien and inaccessible to most Orthodox Christians. But as the centuries went by, interaction on an everyday basis led to the development of shared approaches, techniques, and knowledge. Some of these shared practices can be documented in terms of labour skills. In the fields of stock-breeding, agriculture, trades, jewellery, music, or cooking, some Arabic and Persian practices became popular among the Bulgarians. Those among the Moslem population who had previously led a nomadic way of life, learned the skills of farming from the Christian Bulgarians. Words of Turkish, Arabic and Persian origin were adopted into the Bulgarian language.

Everyday interactions between Christians, Moslems and Jews were characterised by co-operation. Confined by the same political and economic pressures, people of different religious backgrounds, but inhabiting the same geographical space, coexisted successfully. Tolerance prevailed over intolerance and conflicts. Bulgarian society was

Tombul mosque, Shumen, near Varna, 18th century. A fine example of Islamic architecture in Bulgaria.



Baths at Tribujeni, Orhei, Moldavia, 12th century.



deprived of its social leaders, which caused deep social fissures. Christian Bulgarians could not participate in the governmental, military and financial structures of the Ottoman state. The family and the Bulgarian local communes, whose existence was recognised and retained by the Ottoman authorities, remained the bedrock of Bulgarian society. The family preserved the Bulgarian language, the ethical principles of Christian tradition, and the customs of native cultural life.

From the 15th century onwards, the outward appearance of Bulgarian towns became visibly more oriental in style. People of various religious and cultural backgrounds lived together, albeit differentiated by dress, habits, and other religious or ethnic principles: Turks, Bulgarians, Romanians, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Tatars, Gagauzi, and Gypsies. Big cities such as Varna, Rouse, or Shumen, had a particularly marked multi-ethnic character. Greeks formed a sizeable percentage of the populations in Nesebur, Sozopol and other major settlements on the Black Sea coast. During the whole period of Ottoman domination in the Balkans, Christians prevailed in number over the rest of the population in this part of the Empire.



Stephen the Great, Prince of Moldavia (Stefan cel Mare, 1457-1504).

Relations between Wallachia and Moldavia, and the Ottoman Empire

From a political point of view, the Danubian states enjoyed a considerable measure of autonomy under Ottoman rule; they were not colonised by immigrants from other parts of the Empire, land was not confiscated from existing owners, and Muslims were prohibited from owning and building mosques in these lands. The rulers were nevertheless obliged to have the same friends and enemies as the Ottoman Sultan, and to take part in all military campaigns organised by him. Transylvania, which was to become an independent principality, enjoyed a superior status compared to Wallachia and Moldavia, mainly because it was a neighbour of the Hapsburg Empire. Compared to Moldavia and Wallachia during the period of Ottoman rule, Transylvania possessed more independence in the election of their princes.

The principal pressures imposed by the Ottoman Empire on the region were military and fiscal. Important defence posts, such as the fortress of Akerman, were occupied by units of janissaries. In some cases, such forts also became the headquarters of a territorial unit, such as the *sancak* created around Tighina fort in 1538, put under the authority of a *bey* (local Turkish ruler), and the transformation of the fortress Hotin into a *rayah* in 1716, which included not just the territory of the fortress, but also some villages from the vicinity of Soroca, Iasi, and Cernãuţi. The Turkish authorities encouraged the movement of Moslem Tatars into Moldavia and Wallachia. According to the Turkish chronicler Evliya Çelebi, in the second half of 16th century the Tatars amounted to some 30,000 people. Written sources show an increase of up to 45,000 in the Tatar population of southern Moldavia by the middle of the 18th century. They were called the Tatars from Bucak (Bugeac) or *Nogay.*

The Romanian princes were obliged to pay *haraç* (official tribute) and *peşkeş* (official gifts to the sultan and his magistrates). From the 17th century onwards, Romanian princes paid the Ottoman Porte a new money tribute called *mucarer*, which to start with was paid once every three years (the big *mucarer*), then annually (the small *mucarer*). The Romanian states were obliged to offer the Ottomans grain, cattle, wood for ship construction, and other commodities. The tribute for Moldavia was set at 10,000 florins, then increased to 15,000 (1575), and by the end of 16th century, the *haraç* paid by Moldavia had increased from 8,000 *galbeni* (gold money) to 65,000, while the tribute paid by Wallachia went up to 155,000. Meanwhile, the *peşkeş* were much reduced. The ownership of property was restricted. The property of princes, boyars and monasteries was requisitioned by the Ottoman state, and divided among the military victors. New territorial divisions were created for fiscal purposes



Tighina Fortress; a 14th century Genoese colony, Tigin, was captured by the Ottoman Turks in 1538, and renamed Bendery.

(*rayahs*). The local leaders of the Christian (Orthodox) church answered directly to the Metropolitan Church in Constantinople.

The Danubian Principalities at the end of the 17th Century

The 17th century ended in the turmoil represented by a significant change in the patterns of power around the Black Sea. The golden age of Poland as a great power, linked both to the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, came to an end. Instead, the Ottoman Empire continued its wars with the Hapsburgs on the Danube and the fringes of south eastern Europe, and with Spain in the Mediterranean, although serious defeats at the end of the century checked further advances in that region. Two new powers-to-be appeared at the extremities of Europe. Albrecht von Hohenzollern, the last Grand Master of the Teutonic Order of Knights, turned Prussia into a secular fiefdom of the Polish kingdom, but secured his inheritance for relatives in the duchy of Brandenburg, who made the enlarged territory into an independent state in the middle of the century. Russia (Muscovy) expanded significantly, acquiring Kyiv and western Ukraine, as well as exploring eastwards into Siberia. Although the Russia of the new Romanov dynasty had yet to assert itself on the shores of the Baltic Sea, it had an active role in south eastern Europe through its religious and cultural links with most of the peoples in the region.

The Danubian Principalities had to carve out a policy of their own between these growing states. They were subjects, albeit with a degree of internal autonomy, of the Ottoman Empire. But the two states (Moldavia and Wallachia) were also Christian states with a long tradition of conflict with their sovereigns. The Austrian offensive after the siege of Vienna (1683), and their seizure of Transylvania, represented an important message for the princes of Wallachia and Moldavia. Some of them (Serban Cantacuzino, Constantin Brâncoveanu) even had secret contacts with them, although the first of them was obliged to accompany the Turkish army to the siege of Vienna. After the Peace of Carlowitz (1699), the orientation of some political groups in the Danubian Principalities towards an alliance with Austria or Russia grew stronger.

This period was also one of significant cultural development. The last echoes of the Renaissance, and the first signs of the Baroque, are evident in the architecture of the period. Printing activity increased and, although mostly confined to the printing of religious texts, is indicative of the degree of interest of the state and the nobility (especially the Brâncoveanu and Cantacuzino families), in cultural matters.



The mosque in Constanţa, Romania.



Hotin/Khotin fortress, on the right bank of the River Dniester, Chernovitsy region, Ukraine. An Iron Age Dacian settlement, named after a chief, Kotizon, was succeeded on this site by an early Slav craft and trading centre, in the Halych duchy, linking Kyivan Rus with the Black Sea. The fort has its origins in the 13th century, and was substantially rebuilt, first under the Moldovan princes, then in 16th century, under Polish suzerainty.

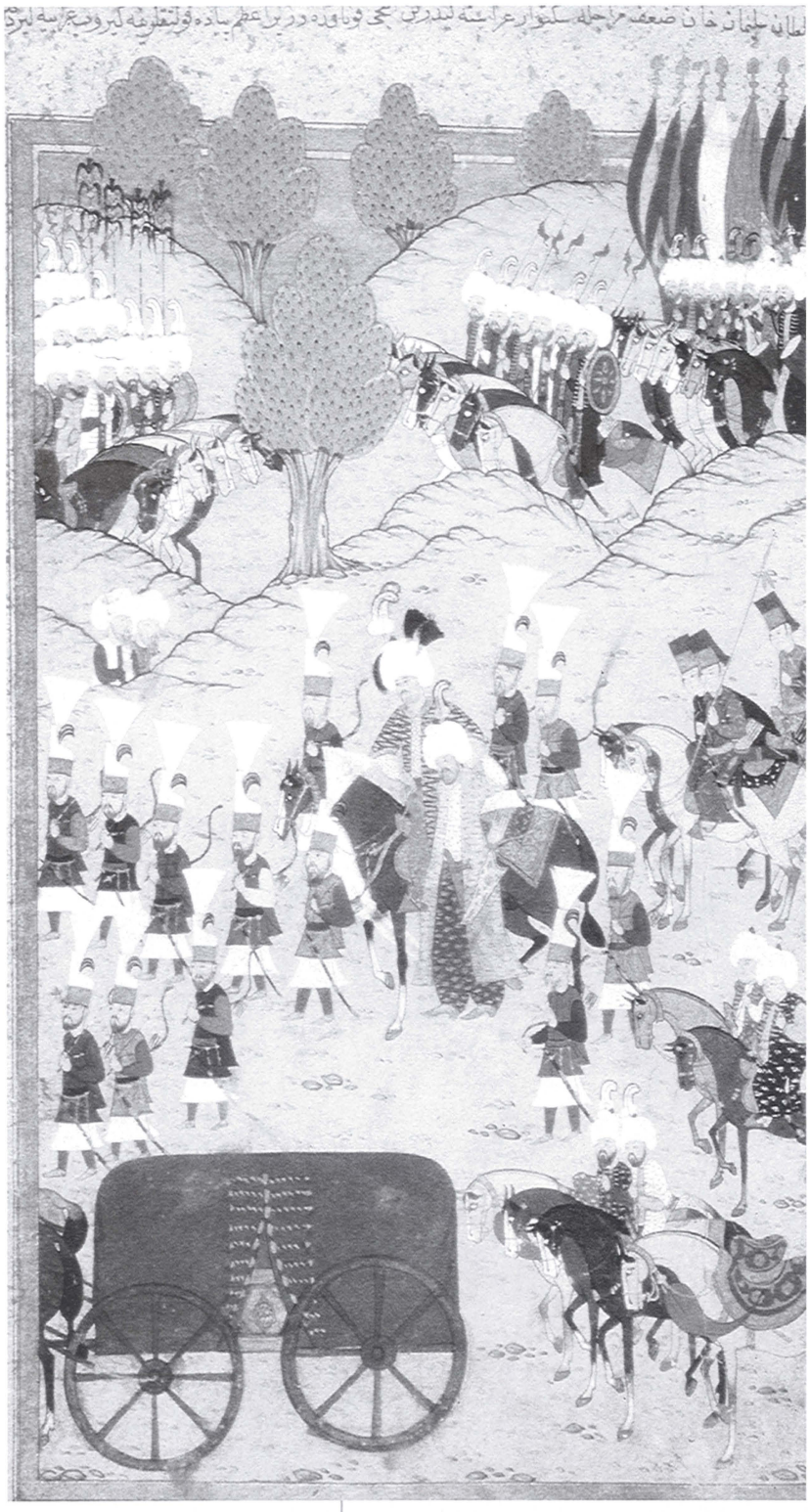
The life and activities of Metropolitan Antim Ivireanul (Antim the Iberian)

The cultural life of Wallachia (Ungro-Vlachia), at the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century, was a period of significant cultural development. Great personalities were active in this period, and the princes were sponsoring cultural activities (printing, the opening of new schools, the bestowal of promising young people to study abroad, invitations to illustrious teachers to visit the country). Some of them, like Dimitrie Cantemir, were in contact with other important European intellectuals and had a thorough knowledge of the region. But all of them were also involved in politics. Constantin Cantacuzino, the brother of Serban Cantacuzino and the uncle of the prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, was even beheaded for his involvement in politics, while Dimitrie Cantemir, winner of a Berlin Academy prize, ended his years in exile, in Russia, as a close friend of Czar Peter the Great, and chancellor of the Russian Empire.

Among such figures, Antim Ivireanul has a special place. Born in Iberia (the old name for eastern Georgia), he was a member of the Orthodox clergy, and travelled, probably through Asia Minor, to Constantinople. There, the prince Constantin Brâncoveanu met the young monk and, impressed by his broad culture, invited him to come to Bucharest. In Wallachia he became familiar with printing techniques, under the supervision of Mitrofan, archbishop of Buzau, in the press that produced the so-called "Bible of Serban Cantacuzino" (i.e. the first printed Bible in Wallachia). Later, as *egumen* (abbot) of the Snagov monastery, he organized a printing workshop, where several young people learned the trade. One of them, Mihail Stefanovici from Transylvania, would later travel to Georgia, to convey



The Antim church, Bucharest, early 18th century. This monument was built as a centre of education for young clergymen, and as a resource for helping the poor of the city.



The last expedition of Süleyman I (the lawgiver) to Sigetvar (Szigetvar), 1566. Süleymannãme (Arifi).

a printing press to king Vakhtang VI, which had been sent as a gift by Constantin Brâncoveanu. The young Mihail Stefanovici settled down in Georgia, inspired by the wonderful surroundings and people. Another printing press was sent to the patriarch of Antioch, to work in Aleppo, Syria.

The career of Antim was on the rise; in time, he would become bishop of Râmnic (in the western part of Wallachia), where he established another printing press. Later (1708), Antim became metropolitan (head of the church) of Ungro-Vlachia, a position granted to him by the will of the previous metropolitan. In his capacity as metropolitan, he ordered the construction of a monastery in Bucharest, which is known today as the Antim Monastery.

During his entire life, Antim was a very active cultural figure. He was known principally as the translator of various books of philosophy (mainly translations from the Greek language), poetry, as an important writer of theological books, and of religious discourses. Two books were dedicated to the training of the Orthodox clergy (1710, 1714). Among the books by other authors, which he had printed, are several bilingual religious books in Greek and Arabic. He also printed Plutarch's "Parallel Lives" (biographies of famous ancient Greeks and Romans).

But this highly regarded intellectual was a victim of the general political situation. The ambiguous attitude to the imperial government of Constantin Brâncoveanu, who was executed for alleged treachery against the Ottoman Empire, and the outright alliance of Dimitrie Cantemir (prince of Moldavia in 1710–1711), with Peter the Great against the Ottomans, persuaded the Turkish authorities to change their attitude towards the Romanian Principalities. From 1711 onwards in Moldavia, and from 1715 in Wallachia, the princes were no longer to be elected in the traditional way by the local nobility (boyars). Instead, they were selected and appointed by the Sultan from among the Greek families from the Phanariot area of Constantinople. Some of them, at least those who enjoyed a longer reign, proved to be rulers with a special interest in the cultural development of the Principalities, promoting activities such as the translation and printing of new books; the development of the school system; increasing the number of Romanian students abroad, and the encouragement

of foreign teachers to the principalities; the construction of monasteries, which acted as cultural centres. These were the main areas of cultural evolution during the 18th century. One writer, Constantin Mavrocordat, even wrote a "Constitution", which questioned the established order of society, proposing the elimination of serfdom, by which peasants were obliged to farm the land owned by the nobles ("boyars"), and this was in a period when the sacred role of the monarch and his actions were virtually an article of dogma in Europe. But princely involvement in regional politics had to be restricted and closely watched by the Sultans. These princes were valued by the Ottoman authorities not for their culture, but for their fidelity to the Ottoman Empire, which could not be taken for granted, particularly in view of the fact that Austria was beginning to expand her own Empire towards south-eastern Europe.

In 1716, Austrian troops enter Wallachia, with the aim of occupying it. The then prince of Wallachia, Nicolae Mavrocordat, father of Constantin, decided to retreat towards the Danube, hoping for a swift response from the Turks. With him was the entire court, including metropolitan Antim. The latter, however, left Bucharest most reluctantly, and, so the contemporary sources say, tried to go back under various excuses. It is not clear if Antim wanted to reach an agreement with the Austrians. As legal representative of the prince, during a possible vacancy of the throne, he would have had a major role to play. Prince Mavrocordat decided that Antim had acted as an enemy, and deposed him. Later, Antim was confined to a monastery, but on his way there he disappeared, possibly at the hands of hired killers. His prestige proved to be too cumbersome for the prince, so, it would seem, the ruler decided on a drastic way of getting rid of a troublesome cleric.

The Ottoman Inheritance in Moldavia and Wallachia

Notwithstanding the absence of an effective Ottoman administration north of the Balkans, there was positive Turkish-Ottoman influence. The Ottoman market ensured the sale of many Moldavian and Wallachian products (sheep, cattle, horses, barley, salt, bee honey, wax and tallow, wood, hemp). It was through trade with the Ottoman Empire that new comestibles reached these areas – rice, American maize (known at first as "Turkish wheat", and subsequently a new staple in the Romanian peasant's economy), tobacco, cotton, aniseed, coffee, sesame, water melon (the Romanian popular word is *harbuz*, and in Turkish, *karbuz*); some flowers (tulip, lilac, hyacinth, carnation). Perhaps the most lasting Turkish-Ottoman influence is reflected in cuisine. Some dishes, such as *sarmalutele* (Turkish *sarma*) became Moldavian national specialities, although they can be found in virtually all the Balkan countries. Elsewhere Ottoman influence can be seen in local embroidery patterns, costumes, fabrics, and ceramics.

The Ottoman Empire and Ukraine

The Crimean Khanate was established during the first quarter of the 15th century, when Haci Geray Khan, a prince of the Chingisid dynasty, succeeded, by means of a military campaign, in detaching an independent principality from the former domains of the Golden Horde. He ruled over the Turkic Muslim Kipchak population in the



Bogdan Khmelnitsky, in an 18th century engraving of V. Gondius.

Crimea and of the adjacent steppe regions to the north. It is from these peoples that the Crimean Tatars were to emerge. Initially the capital of the khanate was at Eskikirim (Solhat), but Mengli-Geray Khan I, son of Haci Geray, moved his residence to Bahçesaray, the "Garden Palace". The administrative structure of the Crimean Khanate was a unique synthesis of Golden Horde and Ottoman traditions. The Khans modelled their institutions on those of the Ottoman sultans. Notwithstanding the fact that a large number of the Khan's subjects in the steppe areas were nomadic or semi-nomadic, sedentary life was the norm within the Crimean peninsula. Apart from the historic port towns of Kefe and Gözleve, which continued to be the crossroads of lively trade routes, the capital, Bahçesaray, flourished as a centre of administration, education, and the arts.

The arrival of the Ottoman Turks had rather different consequences for the region. First, the Crimean Khanate was anxious to preserve its independence as far as possible. At the same time, it received the support of the Ottoman Turks in their campaigns northward. In 1475, Mengli Geray concluded an agreement with the Sultan Mehmed II, which allowed the Ottoman rulers to take possession of the Genoese ports, while the Khanate accepted Ottoman overlordship. During the 16th–17th centuries, the Crimean Khanate was significantly enriched by its forays against Ukrainian and Russian landowners, and limiting the southward expansion of Muscovy.

In the early 16th century, the Turks founded the city fortress of Gözleve (Kozlov), which became one of the largest slave-trading markets in this region. Around the same time, the Tatar fortress of Kara-Kermen (on the right bank of the Dnieper-Bug estuary), was captured by the Turks and renamed Özü Kale (present-day Ochakiv). In order to rebuff Ottoman and Tatar aggression in the Lower Dnieper (Dnipro) area, groups began to emerge calling themselves Kozaks (in Turkish this means "freedom-loving people"). With this aim in view, they created a system of fortresses down the Dnieper (Dnipro) rapids during the 16th century, which later became the "Zaporizka Sich", a military, administrative and economic centre of the Lower Zaporizka army.

In the 16th century the Ukrainian Kozaks resisted the occupiers under the leadership of Orthodox Prince Dmytro Vyshnevetsky. He was responsible for the adoption of a strategy of pro-active defence of Ukrainian lands. Besides the strategy of resistance to invasion, he organised the Kozaks' campaigns against Crimean and Turkish fortresses in the region of the Lower Dnieper (Dnipro). Later, the Kozaks attacked the larger Turkish sea-ports (Sinope, Trebizond, Istanbul), in their famous ships (called "Chaykas", or seagulls). A contemporary writer called Beauplan (and author of a "Ukrainian History", printed in France), provides interesting technical specifications for these *chaykas*: "...each boat is 60 meters long, 10–12 meters wide and 8 feet deep with two helms." The Kozaks captured Caffa/Kefe (present-day Feodosiya) several times. In 1675, under the leadership of Chieftain Sirko, they liberated 7,000 slaves there.

The Turkish invasion of the northern Black Sea littoral led to the decadence of the Mangupian and Genoese sea-ports after 1475. Only Caffa (renamed Kefe) preserved its previous commercial role in the region, though this consisted mainly of slave trading. There was an official residence of the Turkish Pasha there, and a considerable garrison to exert military control, under the royal patronage of the Crimean Khan. The traditional trade routes that connected the eastern Mediterranean states with western Europe were displaced to Egypt. From the end of 15th century onwards, the main traffic in eastern goods moved to the west through Cairo. The Black Sea thereby lost its previous role as the principal highway of Eurasian trade.

At the same time, the role of overland routes in the steppe part of the region significantly increased. These routes were used by the Tatars for directing campaigns



The Kozak Mamay, by an unknown painter (18th – 19th century).

against their northern neighbours, as well as providing the means by which traded goods travelled inland. Sources mention the "Volosky" road (from Pokuttia to Akkerman), the "Kuchmansky" road (from Podillia to Özü Kale), the "Chorny" road (from the middle Dnieper (Dnipro) to Gazi-Kermen and Bahçesaray) and "Muravsky" (from Muscovy to Crimea). The Dnieper (Dnipro) river crossing was at first controlled by the Tatars. Beauplan described one of them – the well known Kichkasky crossing near Khortitsa island: "The Tatars have a convenient river crossing there as the Dnieper (Dnipro) does not exceed 150 paces at that point, the banks are easily accessible, the area is open. That is why they were not afraid of any ambush." Later, however, all these sites were kept under Kozak control for a long time. During the 16th–17th centuries, the boundaries between the populations of the northern Black Sea coast and a variety of inland groups fluctuated considerably. The Nogay "hordes" that were situated along the sea coast (besides Crimea) were the following: from west to east in turn were the Bucak, Yedisan, Cemboyluk and Yediçkul "hordes". They settled in the area in the second half of the 16th century and became dependants of the Crimean Khanate and Ottoman Empire.

Since the 17th century, the territory above the rapids of the River Dnieper (Dnipro) belonged to the Zaporizka Sich, and was divided into Kozak districts called *palankas*: the Inguletska, Bug–Hardivska, Kodatska and so on. There were two *eyalets* (Ottoman administrative units) in the region. One of these, centred on Kefe, the former Kaffa, present–day Feodosiya, included the southern part of Crimea and both the Taman and Kerch peninsulas. The second one was located in the area of the Lower Danube, Dnister and Bug rivers, the main city being Özü (present–day Ochakiv). In the second half of 18th century, Ukrainian farmers extended their activities outwards, colonising land below the Dnieper (Dnipro) rapids. Consequently the Prognoyivska palanka was formed.



The Peresopnitsk New Testament, 1556-1561.

The situation changed after the Russo–Turkish wars (1768–74; 1778–1784; 1806–12; 1854–6), when the Russian Empire strengthened its influence in the region. The Empire could not accommodate so powerful and independent an association as the Zaporizka Sich, which explains why the Russian Empress Catherine II ordered its destruction in 1775. Later, a younger generation of Kozaks founded "Zadunay Sich" in the delta of the Danube. Their descendants became founders of the Black Sea, or Kuban, army, and were among the founding troops of the Azov army (1792–1860). Crimea was joined to the Russian Empire in 1783, together with the remaining parts of the north western Black Sea coast, between the Dnister and Bug rivers.

Culture and science, customs



The presence of Turkish officials and troops in the region encouraged Muslim activities, and the outward signs of Muslim civilization, at the expense of other faiths. The Christian churches in Sudag (Sudak), Inkerman and Kerch were transformed into Muslim mosques. Kefe (Caffa, present-day Feodosiya), was radically rebuilt, and decorated with graceful minarets, vaulted mosques, and the elegant structures of the Eastern Baths. This was the period when Oriental culture spread into south-eastern Crimea. One of the best known architectural monuments bestowed on Crimea by Devlet Geray Khan I is the Han-Camii (Khan's Mosque) (1552–1564) in Gözleve (Yevpatoriya). It is famous for its original *mihrab* (prayer niche), *mimber* (pulpit) and 36 metre high minaret.

In the steppe part of the peninsula stood the city of Bahçesaray ("The Palace of Gardens"), which, during this period, became the principal centre of Crimean handicrafts. All over the region the distinctive features of Crimean products, made of copper, skin, morocco leather and gold, were recognised and appreciated. Crimean shoes, knives and daggers were believed to be the best available. The Crimean Khan's Palace was constructed in the 16th–18th centuries by local master builders, Ukrainian and Russian captives, as well as by master builders from Iran, Italy and Turkey. It was a residential complex of medieval feudal type, which included all the functions necessary for the Khan's everyday life. There was a main building, the Falcon Tower (Şahin Kulesi), a stable, a pantry, a garden with a harem, the Khan's mosque, a cemetery, and so on. Among the palace's more remarkable structures is the famous "Fountain of Tears", created by the Tatar master, Omer, and later commemorated by the Russian poet, Alexander Pushkin.

During the 16th–18th centuries, the Crimean Khanate continued to exercise the tradition of religious tolerance practised by its administrative predecessors in the region. The Uspenskaya Church that was located in Chufut-Kale (as well as Karaim kenases) became, in the 16th–17th centuries, the centre of Orthodox Christianity in the region. The church was supported by the Russian Tsars Fyodor Ioanovich and Boris Godunov, and in the 18th century, on the initiative of local clergy, was moved from Crimea to Northern Azov. The first printing press in the region was established in Chufut-Kale in 1731. It was introduced on the initiative of the Karaims, and Jewish type faces were specially commissioned from Venice.

In the Lower Dnieper (Dnipro) region, associations of Zaporizky Kozaks started to be formed from the 15th century onwards. The word "Sich" is derived from "Zasika", meaning a fortress built in a natural strategic location, made of wood, earth, and stones. These associations were not ethnically homogeneous. The population of these "sichs" was made up of local Ukrainians, who probably constituted the majority, but they also included a sizeable number of refugees, from Russia, Belorussia, Moldavia, Lithuania, Poland, Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, the Crimean Khanate, and others. The Lower Zaporizka Kozak Army had certain democratic features. The Kozaks did no accept slavery, and traditionally observed the equality of all members of their society, inspired in part by the ideal of Christian fellowship. The common assemblies provided the forum for disputes about peace and truth. The associations administered rivers, lakes, and pastoral territories that were shared, first among unmarried Kozaks, and last among married ones. The common assemblies elected foremen to the association's council, including a chieftain, judge, and military clerk. The associations honoured their heroes and commemorated them. Memories about one national hero, for example, Dmytro Vyshnevetsky (Bayda), are enshrined in a heroic ballad, "The song of Bayda", in which his determination, courage and high spirit, whilst being a Turkish captive, are described. Hanging from a hook by one rib, Bayda lived for a few days, without losing his sense of dignity. After the elimination of the Zaporizka Sich, a younger generation of Kozaks and immigrants from Ukraine, living in the Danube estuary and in the Taman peninsula, inherited and preserved for a long time the traditions of the "Sich" – of their people, their way of life, customs, culture and arts, in their own language.

The Mermaid and Arzi's Fountain

Long, long ago, when Crimea was under the command of the Turkish Sultan, there lived a Tatar peasant, named Abiy-Aka in the village of Miskhor. Abiy-Aka had a graceful and beautiful daughter. Her name was Arzi. Everyone was delighted by her great, big eyes, which shone like wondrous stars, as well as her delicate cheeks, which reddened like a velvety peach.

Everybody admired Arzi; but crafty old Ali Baba paid her special attention. People did not like Ali Baba. They said that he looked after beautiful young girls, spirited them away, and later sold them to the Sultan's Harem for a great deal of money.

One day, Arzi made up her mind to marry a courageous young man. Before the marriage was due to take place, she decided to take a copper jug and say goodbye to her favourite fountain. There she was kidnapped by Ali Baba, who sold her to Istanbul, where she gave birth to a child. However, Arzi was very unhappy in the Sultan's Harem. That is why she one day took her child with her from the Palace and rushed into the waves of her native Black Sea.

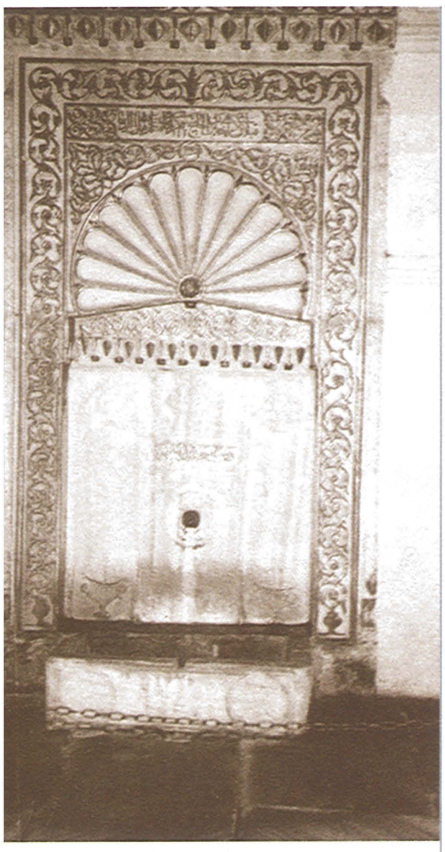
Since that time, a sad mermaid appears near Arzi's favourite fountain in Miskhor every year. Then she disappears again.

Russia and the Ottoman Empire

In 1480 the Russian state became independent of the Golden Horde, which finally broke up into a great number of khanates, including the Crimean. At the same time the Ottoman Empire began to conquer the northern coast of the Black Sea. In 1475 the Turks seized Caffa/Kefe, then Surozh, and other coastal towns of the Crimea, the northern coasts of the Black and the Azov seas. The Ottoman Empire was in command of the northern coast of the Black Sea for the next 300 years. This newly acquired region became a *sancak* (a military-administrative unit) of the Empire. A Turkish pasha had a residence in Caffa/Kefe, where a large garrison was based. The Crimean khan, who was an ally of the Turkish Sultan, acquired the northern steppe part of the Crimea and the downstream area of the Dnieper (Dnipro).

Since the end of the 15th century, the Ottoman Empire became Russia's leading trade partner on the Black Sea. Russian furs, leather and leather goods, were sold in Ottoman markets. Silk, pearls and spices were imported from the Ottoman Empire. The Russian state took an interest in the development of peaceful trade relations, and resisted all attempts of the western countries to be drawn into war with the Ottoman Empire.

At the end of the 15th century, the Crimean khans did not impede Russian-Turkish trade relations, but, in the 16th–17th centuries, they tried to limit the development of mutual Russian and Turkish commercial expansion on the Black Sea. The Crimean khans made numerous raids on the southern outlying districts of Russia for the purpose of robbery, and to seize captives, who were later sold on slave markets. One of the khans, Devlet Geray Khan, even managed to break through to Moscow and burn it down (1571). In 1636, the Crimean Khan, instead of setting out against Iran on the side of the Turkish Sultan, seized the Turkish fortress of Kaffa in Crimea. Russian runaway peasants – the Kozaks – were another destabilizing force in the areas close to the Black sea at this time. They earned their living by war marches and robbing trade caravans. The Kozaks were a powerful self-governing military force.



The "Fountain of Tears" (Kozyaş Çeşmesi) in the Khan's Palace (Hansaray) at the capital of the Crimean Khanate, Bahçesaray, 1764.

In 1637 they took by storm the town of Azov, which was a fortified Turkish fortress in the mouth of the Don, and held it for five years. The Kozaks offered Azov to the Russian tsar, but the latter preferred to make up with Turkey and told the Kozaks to leave Azov.

In the second half of the 17th century Russian-Turkish relations grew very complicated. The main reason for this was the annexation of the Ukraine by Russia, the Ukraine being an object of the Ottoman Empire's aggressive plans. The first war between Russia and Turkey began with the invasion of Ukraine by Turkish and Russian armies in 1667. It ended in 1681 with the signing of the Treaty of Bahçesaray, under which Turkey acknowledged the ceding of Kyiv and Ukraine west of the Dnieper (Dnipro) to Russia. The southern part of Ukraine, from the right bank of the Dnieper (Dnipro) remained under the dominion of Turkey.

In 1686, Russia signed an "eternal peace" treaty with Poland, and that act obliged it to become a member of an anti-Turkish coalition. Carrying out its obligations, Russia organised two campaigns to the Crimea (in 1687 and 1689), which did not lead to the conquest but made Crimean khans pass from making raids to defending their territory. Peter I, having become a Russian tsar, also undertook two marches to the south (in 1695 and 1696) and took the Turkish fortress Azov by storm.

In the 18th century antagonism between Russia and Turkey continued to develop. The Sultans tried not only to preserve their territories on the northern coast of the Black Sea, but to expand them. In Russia, Peter I made access to the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea the main goals of his foreign policy. The absence of any compromise in the situation caused four wars (1710–1711, 1735–1739, 1769–1771, 1787–1791).

The result of the Russo-Turkish wars of the 18th century was the annexation of the northern coast of the Black Sea, from the Dniester to Kuban, to Russia. Active economic and cultural development of the new lands began soon afterwards. The



The Bahçesaray Palace in Crimea, present day Ukraine.

Black Sea coastal steppes, which had been home to bellicose nomads, were colonised by Russian settlers and opened to the spread of Russian culture. A number of new towns, including Ekaterinoslav, Nikolaev, Odessa, Sevastopol, and Kherson, appeared on the coast. Since the consolidation of Russia's power in the Azov Sea and on the northern coast of the Black Sea, foreign trade began to develop via southern ports – Taganrog, Odessa, Sevastopol, Kherson. The proportion of the Black Sea trade was not large, because Turkey did not let any foreign ships pass through the straits, but later bread export in the Black Sea became very important. The fortune of Odessa, which was founded in 1794, and had an advantageous geographical position, was closely connected with the agricultural development of the northern coast of the Black Sea and with wheat export.

Since 1774 Russian trade ships got the right of free navigation in the Black Sea, and it led to the growth of Russian Black Sea trade. For the next 20 years, to the end of 18th century, its turnover grew from 400,000 to 2,000,000 roubles.

Georgia and the Ottomans

The decline of Georgia towards the end of the 16th century enabled the Ottoman rulers to increase their territories at Georgia's expense. The Turks established their authority over southern Georgia. Many of the native inhabitants of areas, who had previously been Christian, adopted Islam, since the upper classes of the region wanted to maintain their social status within the Ottoman Empire. Sometimes even west Georgians became vassals of the Ottomans. This political and administrative change divided Imereti in the west from Kartl-Kakheti in the east.

Culture and Popular Movement

The Ottoman rulers began to settle communities from other parts of the Empire in southern Georgia, such as Turks and Kurds. Since the frontier defences were not being maintained, there was no effective opposition to larger migrations. Thus many Turcomans settled south of Tbilisi, Ossetians in the highlands, and Armenians moved to Georgia in increasing numbers. The influential role of Greek and Italian merchants in west Georgia was superseded by Jewish communities. Many Georgians were members of the imperial administrative order. The Persian army was strengthened by a new élite corps of 12,000 Georgians, the Shahisevani. Georgians were also appointed to key administrative posts in Persia.

Other Georgians moved abroad. Prince Archil Bagrationi became the distinguished leader of an expatriate community in Moscow, and was the founder of a free Georgian printing works there. His son, Alexander, a friend of Tsar Peter the Great, fought against the Swedes as an artillery general in the Russian army. Some Georgian kings are buried in Russia. The Ottoman army was paid for from imperial revenues. The Janissaries, a crack regiment of soldiers who served for life, and became the imperial bodyguards, were originally composed of Christian or ex-Christian slaves. Subsequently Christian families from various parts of the Empire supplied the candidates for service. Many Georgians were among them. Some even enjoyed exceptional power, as Grand Viziers (Hadim Mehmet Pasha, Melek Ahmet Pasha, Ağa Yusuf Pasha). Georgian captives also provided a supply of manpower for the élite Mameluke leadership in Egypt.

In 1811, Mehmed Ali Pasha, the Ottoman viceroy, invited the Mameluke leaders of Egypt to a banquet on the citadel in Cairo, where they were massacred for having plotted against him. One man escaped. Spurring his horse down from a high wall, he is said to have "disappeared into heaven".

Within half a century, the commercial empire of the Genoese in the Black Sea vanished, as did the Byzantine Empire itself, before the Turkish advance. The slave trade was revived, while trade declined. Some features of international trade continued, as the presence of European and Ottoman silver coins attests. River boats, plying the principal waterways of Georgia to the Black Sea ports, continued to convey raw materials and finished products to Istanbul (a journey of eight days); this traffic is described in the writings of the 18th century bishop of Kutaisi, Maxim.

During the 18th century, members of the Georgian royal family acted as patrons of education and the arts. Vakhtang VI initiated some important changes in the legal code. His son, Georgi Bagrationi, was widely remembered as one of the founders of Moscow University. His younger brother, prince Vakhushte Bagrationi, was a brilliant historian. Although there were as yet no academies of learning, seminaries were nevertheless established in Georgia, and printing presses. In 17th century, two outstanding literary personalities emerged, king Teimouraz Bagrationi, and prince Archil Bagrationi, who were interested in history and developed their own ideas of a national historical narrative in verse. This poetic tradition was continued in the 18th century by David Guramishvili and Besarion Gabashvili. Guramishvili actually lived in Ukraine, while some other prominent Georgian churchmen, including Anthimos the Iberian, lived in Wallachia. Erekle II encouraged the nascent theatre of Georgia. The Georgian kings patronised urban development, making use of *Amkari*, guilds of artisans, who followed particular codes of moral behaviour. Some of the folklore that emerged in the developing city centres was based on oriental rather than occidental styles.

6 • The Modern Period



Waterfall in the Crimean mountains.

Russia in the 19th and 20th centuries

In the 19th century, not only was the northern coast of the Black Sea included in the sphere of Russia's interests, but so was the eastern coast. In 1783 the Georgian tsar Erekle II, pressed by Persia, had come under the patronage of Russia. After the death of his successor, George XII, in 1801, Kartl-Kakheti recognised the sovereign power of Russia. Following Georgia's example, Imeretia (1810), Mingrelia (1857) and Gouria (1828) recognised the sovereign power of Russia. These developments led to wars with Persia, and to the secession of several of its regions ruled by governor-generals: Shemakhin, Noukhin, Baku, Nakhichevan, Yerevan and other regions. The accession of Transcaucasia to Russia gave rise to a policy of conquest in the intervening region, among the tribes of the Caucasus, a process that ended in 1864.

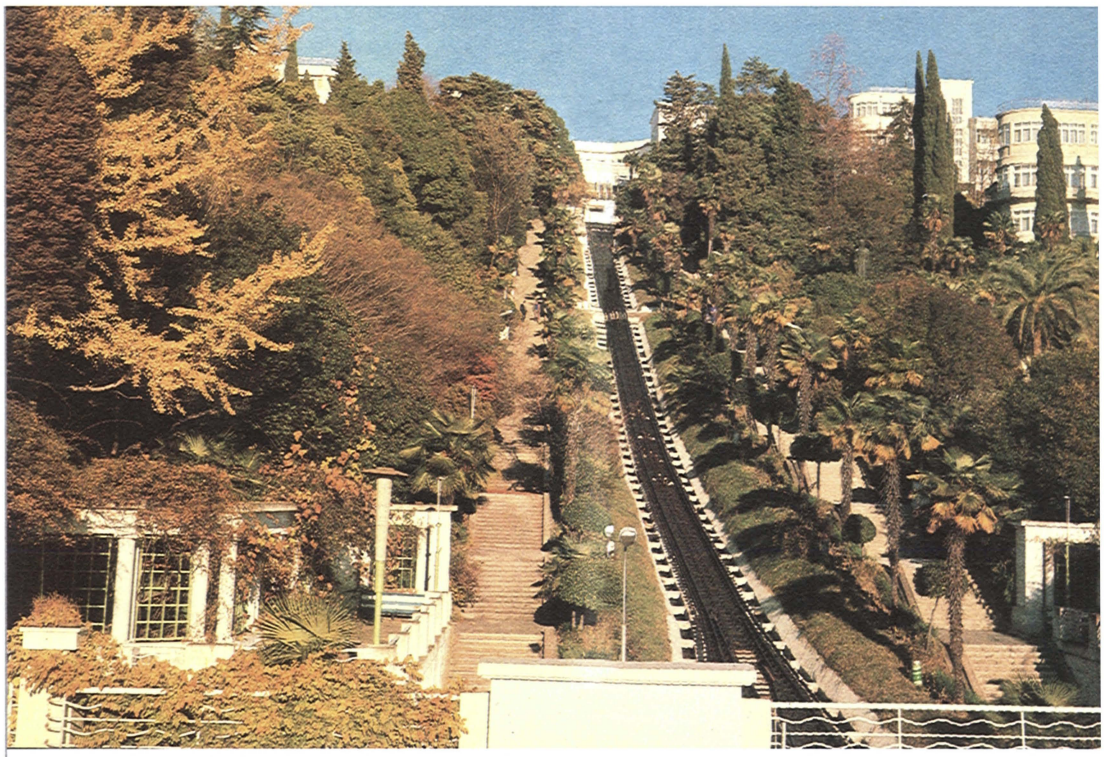


National and regional costumes of the peoples in the Caucasus mountains from the beginning of the twentieth century.

At that time, the ancient inhabitants of this region, the Adyg people, lived in the north-western Caucasus and on the coast of the Black Sea. They were engaged in farming, cattle-breeding, apiculture, and cottage crafts. According to some calculations, these mountaineers practised 32 different cottage industries, including shoemaking, wheel-making, harness-making, joinery, though the most prestigious master craftsmen were armourers, goldsmiths and weavers. Daggers made by Adyg smiths were highly valued. In general, they practised a subsistence economy, but gradually became involved in trade. At the end of the 18th, and in the first half of the 19th century, the Adygs experienced a form of feudal subjection. According to the treaty signed in the Russo-Turkish war of 1828–1829, the Turkish Sultan passed the Adygs over to Russia, but some independent spirited mountaineers chose to emigrate.



Combine harvesters in the Khersson region, Ukraine.



Funicular railway in the Voroshilovo sanatorium, Sochi, Russia.

Russia also took an active part in solving the so-called "Eastern question". Russia ardently supported the separatist struggles of the Christian minorities within the Ottoman Empire, a policy that led to a number of Russo-Turkish wars in the 19th century. Russia also hoped to wrest the Straits of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles from Turkey, locations that were of great strategic and commercial importance. The very possibility that the Russian Fleet might capture these, and appear in the Mediterranean Sea, caused a souring of international relations, not only with the Ottoman Empire, but also with the British and the French colonial empires. As a result of the Crimean war, the Russians were deprived of the right to have their fleet in the Black Sea, and only in 1871, during the French-Prussian war, did they managed to achieve the abolition of this ban.

During the 19th century, the Russians gradually increased the volume of trade passing through the Black Sea. This transit trade was stimulated by the economic development of the territories bordering its coastline. Southern Ukraine and the northern Caucasus became the most important cereal-exporting regions. The richest deposits of such natural resources as coal, metallic ores, and oil, were also actively exported. The construction of railroads to the coast gave a new impulse to the development of the Black Sea trade in the second half of the 19th century. By the beginning of the 20th century, the freight turnover of the Black and Azov Sea ports reached almost 50% of all Russia's marine shipping. The growth of the freight turnover was mainly due to the export of cereals. At the beginning of the 20th century, about 80 million tons, corresponding approximately to 80% of all Russian cereal exports, was shipped by sea (via Odessa, Nikolaev, Novorossiysk, and other Black Sea ports). Manganese (1 million tons via Poti) and Baku oil (about 600,000 tons via Batumi), were also important export commodities, and, to a lesser extent, iron ore (via Nikolaev) and timber.

The First World War (1914–1918), the revolutionary events of 1917, and the Civil War of 1918–1920 in Russia had a negative influence on the economic and cultural development of the northern and eastern coasts of the Black Sea. Ports fell into decay. They lost the major contracts for ships and port constructions.



Sochi, Russia: the Japanese Garden in the arboretum.

The process of reconstruction began in 1921 and ended only ten years later, when the freight turnover of the Black Sea ports reached the pre-war level of 1913. In the 1930s, the government of the USSR paid considerable attention to the development of the Black Sea coastal areas. New port constructions in Novorossiysk and Tuapse were built, powerful tankers, cargo boats, and passenger motor cruisers were put into service; sanatoria and rest houses were created, and pioneer camps begun. This process of economic and cultural development was interrupted by the tragic events of the Second World War. In 1941–1944, the Black Sea and its coasts became the arena of violent battles between the USSR and Germany with its allies.

The destructive effects of the war were overcome by the Soviet Union in a very short period of time. In the 1940s–1980s, the Soviet sections of the Black Sea coast grew into one of the most powerful and dynamic economic regions of the USSR. The Black Sea ports handled a considerable share of maritime shipping, while the coastal towns and regions were the principal providers of export goods. Sanatoria, rest houses and pioneer camps became recreational centres for millions of Soviet citizens and young people. Education, culture, science, and medical services developed rapidly.

The next recession in the development of the Black Sea regions was caused by the break-up of the USSR in 1991. The formation of four new independent states on the northern and eastern coasts of the Black Sea led to the severance of set economic bonds, a cut in production and a diminution of trade. Investments in culture, education, science and medical service were reduced. By the end of the 20th century, Russia overcame the crisis in its economy, and stable economic growth resumed. The



Children doing morning exercises on the beach at Sochi, Russia.

Russian part of the Black Sea coasts, from the Kerch Strait up to the river Psou, a distance of some 400 kilometres, became an active trade zone once more and one of the most popular holiday destinations for many Russian and foreign citizens. Modern Russia maintains economic and cultural relations with all Black Sea countries.

Ukraine in the modern age

After winning a decisive victory in the Russian-Turkish war of 1768–1774, Russia incorporated the Crimea, and most of the northern Black Sea coast, into her imperial lands. In 1784 this region became the Tauric *guberniya* (province) with Simferopol as its administrative centre. The Odessa region was at first annexed to the Novorossiysk province, but was later incorporated into Kherson (1803–1917). New seaports were founded (Mykolayiv, Kherson), and older ones were renamed (Odessa, Yevpatoriya, Sevastopol, Pheodosiya). It was a time of extensive resettlement into the coastal region from other areas, mainly by Ukrainians and Russians, but also by other nationalities.



View of The Black Sea from Crimea, near the city of Yalta.

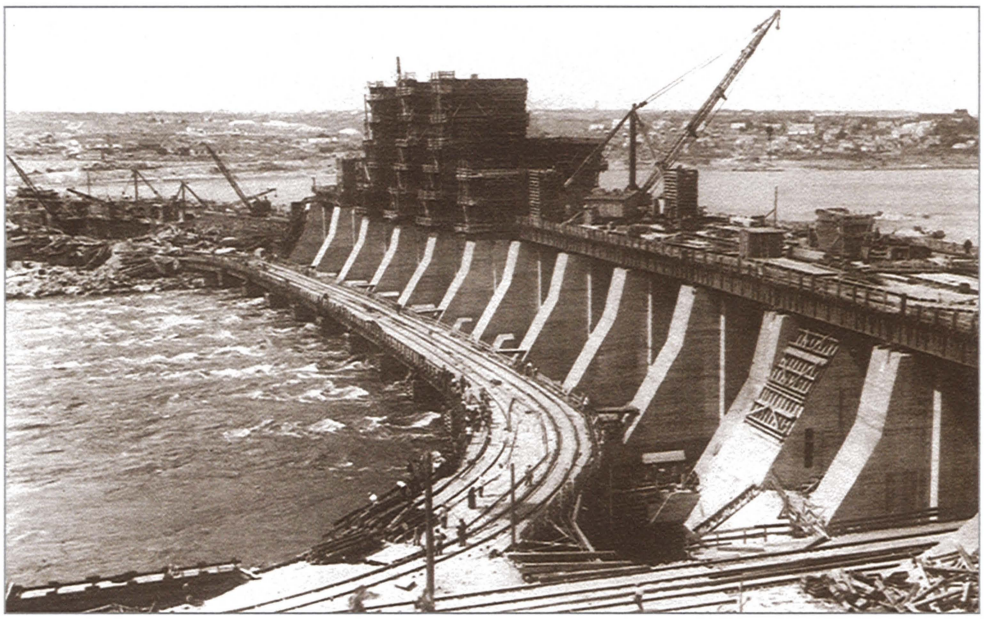
Moldavians, Gagauzians and Bulgarians who had been present in the region for many hundreds of years, settled closer to the Black Sea at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, escaping from religious persecution in the Balkan area. Moldavians founded some new settlements between the Dnieper (Dnipro) and Syniuha rivers, and later, in 19th century, became the second largest nationality after the Ukrainians in the Kherson guberniya. Bulgarians first settled in the valleys of the Vys and Syniuha rivers, and later in Southern Bessarabia, Crimea and around some cities (Bolgrad, Odessa, Mykolayiv). In 1830, groups of Bulgars arrived, together with some Greeks, by sea from Varna. Today most of their descendants are located in Odessa *oblast* (province). There are c.233,000 Bulgarians in Ukraine.

Balkan Christians of Orthodox persuasion, known as Gagauzians, migrated to southern Bessarabia from northern-eastern Bulgaria and Dobrudja. There are about 30,000 of them in the region today. During the first half of the 19th century, the Russian state encouraged colonization by German farmers in return for certain privileges. At the end of the century there were about 330,000 of them. At the same time, Czech settlements (Tabor, Bohemka, Tzarevich) appeared in Crimea, as a consequence of the abolition of serfdom in Russia (1861). The Russians promoted industrial development (mostly in the Odessa area), and agricultural production (sheep breeding, gardening, vine growing and wine making) of the region as well as road building there. Meanwhile, the Crimean Tatars found themselves disadvantaged in relation to the new German and Slav-speaking colonists in Crimea. Large-scale expropriation of the Tatars encouraged many to emigrate to Ottoman Turkey. It is estimated that some 1,800,000 Crimean Tatars had left the peninsula by the end of the 19th century.

The Crimean region lacked the necessary infrastructure for industrial development. In 1826 a road was laid over the pass from Simferopol to Yalta, and a highway was built to connect Yalta with Alushta. The Crimean War (1854–1855) revealed the disadvantages of an inadequate level of railway provision in the region. The construction



Sochi, Russia: the "Mauritanian" pavilion in the arboretum.



Dneprogress hydro-electric power station, named after V.I. Lenin (photo dated 1929).

of a railroad from Kharkov to Simferopol was therefore a matter of considerable strategic importance, and this was completed in 1874. Once the rail network was extended by two further stretches, from Canköy to Pheodosiya (1892) and from Pheodosiya to Kerch (1900), the new link gave rise to the modern seaport in Pheodosiya. The principal commercial port at Sevastopol has moved, but Odessa remained the main seaport in the region.

After World War I, the port of Akerman (present day Bilgorod-Dnistrovsky) passed from Ottoman hands to Romania (1918–1940). In 1918 Crimea became a part of the Ukrainian People's Republic. In 1920 the region was occupied by Bolsheviks, and in 1921 Crimean autonomy was established. A new wave of popular migration was connected with World War II. During this period, Crimea became a giant clearing-house, and the location of savage battles between the Soviets and the Germans. In 1944, after being unjustly accused of collaborating with the Germans, and following Stalin's specific orders, the Crimean Tatars were deported from the peninsula. The opportunity to return has only become a possibility in recent years.

During the last quarter of the 19th century, a national movement emerged among the Crimean Tatars. The Tatar leader and reformer Ismail Bey Gaspirali aimed to enlarge this movement to include Turkic Muslims from other parts of the Russian Empire. But the revolutionary movements in Russia brought no independence for the Crimean Tatars. Instead, there were massacres of Tatar nationalists: in 1917,1920, and 1937–8. The famine of 1920–21 was particularly severe in Crimea, while during the German occupation and after the Soviet reconquest in 1944, Tatars became victims of all the belligerents. This was followed by mass expulsion of the remaining Tatar population to central Asia. A determined attempt was made by the Soviet authorities to wipe out all traces of Tatar language and culture from Crimea.

In 1954, Crimea was incorporated into the Ukrainian SSR and in 1991 it became a part of an independent Ukraine. During the 20th century various economic, social and commercial changes took place in the region. It has become the site of highly developed construction, chemical, electronics, and food industries. Kerch and Mykolayiv became the biggest centres of ship-building in the Black Sea region.

The great seaports of the northern Black Sea coast (Odessa, Pheodosiya, Kerch) are now renewing their former status on the crossroads of world trade. The transit role of Kerch has increased with the opening of the rail and ferry crossing between



Bratsk monastery and Kyivo-Mogilyanska Academy (photo 1900).

the Taman and Kerch peninsulas. The construction of a permanent bridge between the two peninsulas, a modern project initiated by the Russian Federation, would enhance international links still further. Ukraine prides itself on its commercial traditions. The "Great Silk Road" festival-market takes place in Sudak every summer.

Nowadays the region has a long-standing reputation as a balneological (therapeutic) resort. Of particular renown are the mud baths of the Saky resort, founded more than 150 years ago. Besides mud baths, the local thermal and mineral waters are widely used. But the main therapeutic remedies, of course, are the natural environment, air, sun and sea. That is why millions of people from all directions come to visit the coastal regions of Ukraine every year for treatment, rest and relaxation.

Odessa plays a special role in the region. It is the diplomatic capital of the area, with consulates and trade commissions from many countries. The city regularly hosts exhibitions, symposia and conferences.

Culture and science, customs

Orthodox Christianity underwent a renewal in the region. After its incorporation by Russia, an active church building programme was begun there. Churches were mostly built in the Classical style. Greco-Sophiyska (St. Sofia's Greek) Church (1780) and Katerynsky (St. Katherine's) Cathedral (1787) in Kherson, Troyitska (Holy Trinity) Church (1808) in Odessa and Sviato-Mykolayivska (St. Nicholas') Church (1813) in Mykolayiv have been preserved there for nowadays. Simultaneously the Russian Empire promoted a development of mass education in the region. In Simferopol alone there were, in 1850, 16 educational institutions. The most famous among them was the Provincial Crown Gymnasium for boys.

The region began to develop as a health resort from the second half of the 19th century. At Livadiya a palace complex grew up as a summer residence for the Emperor and his family. It was located on the coast, on Mt. Mohabi and consisted of 60 buildings. The Great Palace (1910–1911) was built in the Italian Renaissance style, with elements of Byzantine, Gothic and Arabic architecture. The Yalta Conference of February 4–11, 1945, during which Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin negotiated to bring about an end to World War II, was held here.



Portrait of the Ukrainian poet, Taras Shevchenko.

In the 19th century private noblemen also began to build palaces in the Crimea. The Vorontsovs' Palace and Landscape Park in Alupka (1828–1848) are the finest examples in Ukraine. They were constructed for Count M. Vorontsov (governor-general of Novorosiysk guberniya) from the design of the British architect Edward Blore in the Late English Gothic style with Moorish motifs. Perhaps the best known palace of the period is "Lastivchyne Hnizdo" (Swallow's Nest) (1911–1912). It was designed by architect A. Sherwood as a medieval castle beside the ruins of an ancient Roman fortress of the 1st–3rd centuries (Charax) in Gaspra above Aurora's Cliff. This unique masterpiece of modern architecture has now become a universally recognised symbol of Crimea.

Many outstanding scientists, artists, musicians, poets and writers are connected with the region in one way or another. Among them are L. Ukrayinka, A. Mickiewicz, A. Chekhov, S. Rudansky, M. Voloshyn, G. Oldridge, I. Aivazovsky, A. Grin, F. Chaliapin, N. Pyrogov, D. Mendeleyev, I. Kurchatov, G. Simenon, M. Twain, and W. Saroyan. During the twentieth century the region has been transformed into a large scale resort with modern scientific infrastructure. The Siechenov Scientific-Research Institute of Physical Therapeutic Methods and Medical Climatology is located in Yalta. The Crimean Astrophysical Observatory affiliated to the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences is known everywhere for its achievements and links with colleagues abroad. The first astronomical observatory in Ukraine was founded in Mykolayiv in 1827. It's meridian is recorded in international astronomical atlases.

Many nature reserves have been created in the region. One of them, Askaniya Nova Reserve (founded in 1828) contains a zoo, a botanical park and a virgin steppe reserve, the only one of its kind in Europe. The other one, Chernomorsky (Black Sea) Nature Reserve (1927) is also situated in the Kherson area and extends from the Dnieper (Dnipro)-Bug estuary in the west to Karkinytsky Bay in the east. The shallow bays of the rivers, estuaries and islets in the Black Sea are the home of many seasonal migrating birds.

A unique scientific research center is located on the southern coast of the Crimea. It is the Nikitskiy Botanical Garden (1812), a man-made museum of nature in which



"The Swallow's Nest", a private house built at the end of the 19th century.



The staircase leading from the town down to the harbour of Odessa, immortalised in Sergei Eisenstein's film, Battleship Potemkin.

28,000 species, forms and varieties have been collected, representing a large part of the world's flora. It has more than 2,000 varieties of roses. Nearby in a picturesque location at the foot of Mt. Ayu-Dag (Bear Mountain), lies Artek camp. Formerly a well known Pioneers' camp, it has been reorganized as an International Children's and Youth Centre. The Karst Caves, Bin-Bash Koba (Cave of One Thousand Heads), and Suu-Koba (Gold), are under protection, as is the beautiful mountain canyon, known as The Grand Canyon of Crimea. From Ay-Petri Plateau (1,000 metres above sea level) there opens up a breath-taking panorama of the sea and the natural landscape of the south coast.

Demographic processes between the Danube and Dniester during the 19th century

The natural growth of the region's population during the 19th century mirrors a similar growth in other parts of Europe at the time. But there was also a change in the relevant components of different ethnic groups, as a result of Russian territorial expansion after 1812, when the armies of Napoleon I retreated before Russia's imperial troops. In statistical terms, the population of Bessarabia at the time of annexation numbered about 400,000 people. Romanian speakers constituted about 86% of that number, and were spread throughout the territory of Bessarabia. The remaining 14% were Ruthenians, Lipoveni, Jews, Armenians, Bulgarians, and Gãgãuzi. Over the course of the century, this population grew considerably; from 400,000 in 1812 to 950,000 in the 1850s, reaching 2,642,000 in 1918. Migration and colonisation played as significant a role in this expansion as natural growth. Factors that favoured migration were, first of all, the policy of colonisation promoted by the Russian Government, the lack of obligatory military service till 1874, the lack of *Şerbiei* and the tolerant character of the native population. Alongside the programme of colonisation sanctioned by the central authorities, unofficial migration also took place from Russian and Ukrainian territories. There was also a parallel process of migration in



A portrait of the Metropolitan Bishop G. Bănulescu-Bodoni.

the opposite direction, with native Moldovans leaving the countryside to settle in other regions. The native peasant population lacked the financial incentives offered to the new settlers, and owned relatively small parcels of land, which kept standards of living rather low. The Bessarabian Moldovans continued to represent the largest single ethnic component in the region, which was 64% in 1918.

Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Mitripoly (1746–1821)

One of the significant figures in the cultural life of Bessarabia at this time was Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni. He was born in 1746, in Bistriţa, a city of Transylvania, into a family of impoverished noblemen (răzeşi), who had sought refuge from Moldavia. He attended primary school in Bistriţa. He continued his studies at the University of Budapest, in other cities of the Austrian Empire, at Kyiv Academy, and in Greece. In 1776 he returned to Transylvania, where he taught in the school he had attended in Semigrad. Later, as a schoolmaster in Iaşi, he met abbot Nichifor Feodori, who would later become archbishop of Poltava and Astrakhan, a distinguished teacher of Greek and Philosophy, and who played an influential role in the life of G. Bănulescu-Bodoni. Feodori supported Bodoni's desire to become a monk (călugăr) in Istanbul.

Bănulescu Bodoni became a professor of Greek in Iaşi in 1781 and was promoted to the status of abbot. In 1788 he became Rector of the Theological Seminary of Poltava. During the Russian-Turkish war of 1787–1791 he was promoted to the rank of bishop of Bender and Akerman. After the war he became Metropolitan of Moldova, the highest-ranking Orthodox cleric in the region; in 1793 Metropolitan of Novgorod, and in 1799, Metropolitan of Kyiv.

One of the most important achievements of Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni was the foundation of the Theological Seminary of Chişinau. He promoted the "national Moldavian language" – Romanian. He also founded an ecclesiastical printing-press in Chişinau (1814), which made it possible to print many religious books. Bodoni also played a notable social role, negotiating with local boyars who sought to protect Bessarabian autonomy within the Russian Empire.

Monument commemorating St. Stephen the Great in the centre of Chişinau.



Chişinau – capital of Republic of Moldova

After the annexation of Bessarabia to the Russian Empire (1812), Chişinau, previously an insignificant village, became one of the major cities of the region. In 1818 a special law proclaimed Chişinau the centre of the Bessarabian province. The city began its territorial expansion. There was a good deal of building activity in the first decades of the 19th century. In 1834 the Russian government adopted a general plan for the city's development. Between 1830 and 1836, the main Cathedral was built. In 1829–1830, the "Fountain" (a special water source) was created, allowing water to be transported to suburban areas. Chişinau was, at that time, a small town, its inhabitants were mostly agricultural workers. However, crafts and the industrial activity were constantly developing. Thus, in 1813 there were six "guilds" (industrial corporations), whereas by 1861 their number had increased to over 40 (approx. 4200 craftsmen). These corporations included: wool-washing enterprises, textile mills, and brick-making plants. Chişinau also became an important trade centre (the number of



Chişinau Cathedral.

merchants increased from 7,000 in 1812 to 24,000 in 1861). The ethnic structure of the population was quite varied, a fact reflected in the names of some streets ("Bulgarian Street", "Greek", "Serbian Street"). The majority of the inhabitants were of Jewish and Russian origin.

Cultural life also flourished. In 1813 the Theological Seminary was instituted, followed by a regional secondary school (1833). In 1813 the first printing works was opened, and in 1832 the City Library. Two hospitals were created during the first half of the 19th century, the first in 1817, and a larger one in 1828. A very important event in Chişinau's development was the inauguration of the first railway line in 1867. By 1901 there were 12 squares, 5 gardens and parks, and 142 streets in the city. It became an industrial centre, though over 10% of the inhabitants were still agricultural workers. There were 8,410 houses, including two-storey (15%) and three-storey houses (4%). Only one third of the streets had been paved in 1910. In the late 1880s a tramline was built, but it was a "horse-tram" variant. This was modernised only in 1913. A city power station appeared in 1909.

In the 19th century the architecture of the city was enriched with two new churches: St. Michael's Church (1825) and the church dedicated to St. Theodore Tyron (1858). At the beginning of the 20th century, there were several important hotels in Chişinau: "London", "Petersburg", "National", "Belle Vue", "Swiss Hotel", "French Hotel". The cultural life of the city was centred on the theatres, the most important being the "Pushkin" theatre. In 1897 the cinema appeared in Chişinau, and had a great impact on the public. The number of cinemas shows the huge popularity of this new art form, the most important being: the "Olympus", "Orpheus", "Odeon".

After World War I, which had a great impact on the fate of the region, Chişinau became a very important economic centre. There were, nevertheless, problems concerning the financial situation of city dwellers. The population statistics show that the population of the city was of 117,016 inhabitants, Chişinau being the second largest city in Romania after Bucharest (631,288 inhabitants). The ethnic structure of the population included: 48,456 Moldovans, 41,065 Jews, 19,631 Russians, and 1,436 Poles. Although the economic situation was unstable, cultural progress continued. Among the newly opened educational institutions one can mention: the Theological Faculty (a section of the Iaşi University – 1927), three Conservatories, and a section of the Iaşi Agricultural Academy. Secondary education was also important, the most significant schools being "B. P. Haşdeu", "M. Eminescu" (for boys) and "Queen Mary", "Princess Dadiani" (for girls). The public life and the cultural sphere were rather active in Chişinau at the time. There were several fashionable cafes and restaurants ("Corso", "Savoy"). The cultural activity of the city was centred on theatres and cinemas, the most important being: "Express", "Colosseum". The economic crisis hampered the development of the city (thus, in 1933–1939 only 30 buildings were constructed in Chişinau, mostly official ones). The "emblems" of civilization - automobiles – ceased to be an item of luxury. The expansion of the radio put the city in contact with the great events of the world. Radio Chişinau was one of the most successful and modern radio stations of the region.



Giurgiuleşti oil terminal at Vulcăneşti, Moldova.

In 1940 Chişinau became the capital of RSSM and later – of the Republic of Moldova. Its population grew from 215,000 in 1959 to 503,000



Prince Mavrogheni riding in a carriage drawn by deer; a late 18th century aquatint in the Cabinet of Prints, Romanian Academy.

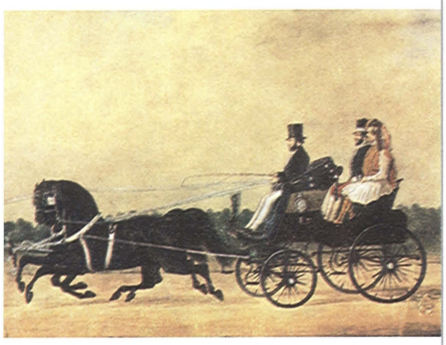
inhabitants in 1972. Over 40% of the population were of Russian origin (in 1989). For over 40 years, Chişinau remained a "closed" city, unavailable for foreign tourists. Today Chişinau is the political, economic, scientific and cultural centre of the Republic of Moldova. The industry is represented by: power plants, tractors and agricultural machines, TV sets, washing machines, refrigerators, electric pumps, a developed food industry, and textiles. Chişinau is the main communications knot of the country. The scientific institutions of the city include: The Academy of Sciences (f. 1961) with 25 affiliated institutions; three universities (State University of Moldova, f. 1946, with over 10,000 students, the Technical University f. 1964, and the Agrarian University, f. 1932). There are also three other higher institutions: the Medical University, the School of Fine Arts and the Music Academy. Chişinau has 10 theatres and over 100 libraries. During the last few decades the city has expanded considerably. Among the main cultural monuments (besides those listed above) are the following: the Armenian Apostolic Church (1804), the Holy Trinity Church (1869), the building of the Town Hall (1817), the Arch of Victory (1840), the monument of Stephen the Great (1928), the sculptures of some outstanding personalities (the "Classics Alley"). Today Chişinau has a surface of 321km^2 and a population of almost 800,000 people, being one of the major cities of the region.

Anachronistic and Modern Aspects of the Danubian Principalities (1829–1834)

The period between 1829–1834, from the Peace of Adrianople to the beginning of the reglementar reigns, corresponds to the Russian occupation of the two Danubian principalities, Moldavia and Wallachia. The changes, some of which were radical, which occurred in the political life of the principalities as a direct consequence of the

occupation, had an important influence upon both societies of the time. Among the most important moments of this period was the Peace of Adrianople, concluded at the end of the Russo-Turkish war, in September 1829. It proved to be a critical moment in the evolution of the Principalities. The recognition of the Principalities' administrative autonomy, their territorial reunification accomplished through the acquisition of the *raials* on the left bank of the Danube river (i.e. Turnu, Giurgiu and Brăila), as well as the free trade license have constituted important provisions of the political and economic development of Moldavia and Wallachia. These decisions strengthened Russia's influence in the Principalities, notwithstanding the role of the Ottoman Empire. At the same time these provisions constituted the starting point in the modernising process of both societies. Undoubtedly, an important part was played by the introduction of the Constitutional Regulations, a fundamental law of an aristocratic nature. There were two of these statutes, one for each principality. Altruistic interests did not guide the Russian authorities when they proposed these so called "constitutions", as they aimed at the establishment of order and efficiency in the Principalities. Nevertheless, due to their contradictory nature, not altogether anachronistic, but equally not yet modern, the Regulations introduced a series of innovations of major importance for the population of Moldavia and Wallachia.

Grigore Ghica, 1845



Anachronistic provisions

a The boyars pay no taxes
b They are the only social class with legislative power
c They hold the superior ranks in the army

Modern provisions

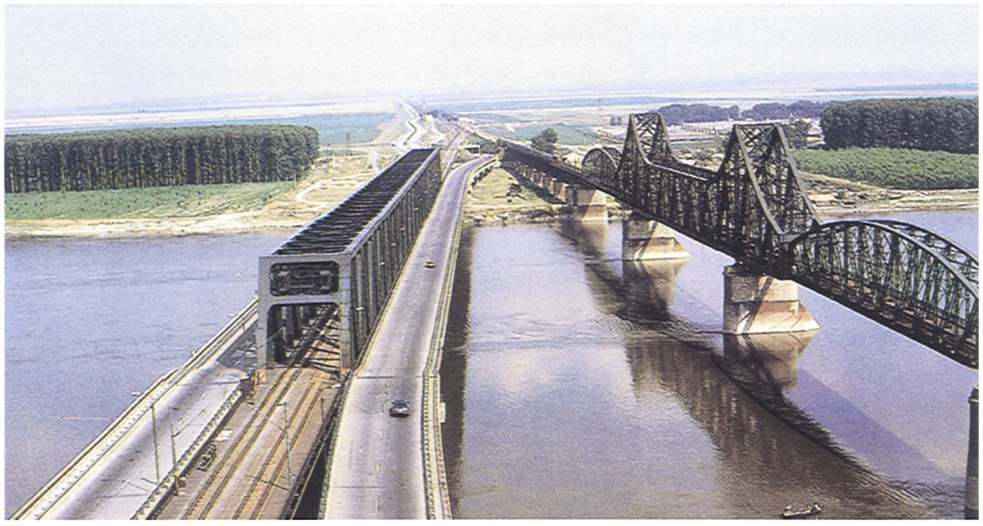
a The state's powers separated
b The restriction of princely powers
c A new administrative organization

Society, Economy and Culture in Early 20th Century Romania

The year 1878 created a particular challenge to Romania's national development. This was the year in which Romania's independent status, ratified internally during the previous year, was recognised by the international community. It was also a juncture when two courses of action became equally imperative. The first required the preservation of indigenous traditions, at that time predominantly agricultural, with traditional social structures and cultural values; the second one was inspired by western Europe (notably France and Germany), and involved industrialisation and urbanisation-processes that would radically change Romanian society, its mentalities and its culture. The economic reforms at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th Century (the laws for Encouragement of Industry – 1887 and 1912), the educational reform (Spiru Haret's laws) or those affecting other aspects of society (the army, the police, and health services), determined a substantial level of progress in Romanian society. On the other hand, all these reforms led to the creation and consolidation of state institutions, such as the National Bank (1880) and the Stock Exchange (1881). But they also led to deep changes within social structures, and to the affirmation of an original culture. A democratic state emerged, based on political pluralism, with a parliament and a free press, and with a monarch who acted as an arbiter of political life. Romania became a distinctive state in south-eastern and



(above) The Danube bridge from Cernavoda; from a late 19th century postcard.



(above, right) The old and new Danube bridges from Cernavoda, Romania.

central Europe. More than ever, both the national minorities and other foreigners from countries around the Black Sea contributed, either out of personal interests, or as a result of matrimonial alliances, to the development of their adoptive country.

Bulgaria in the 18th–19th centuries

Despite attempts at modernisation during the 18th century, the crisis in the Ottoman Empire intensified. Russian expansion in the direction of south-eastern Europe, which had started under Peter the Great, was of particular significance for the Balkan peoples, and had lasting psychological effects on the Bulgarian community. The Russo-Turkish treaty of 1774 recognised the Russian Empire as the protector of the Eastern Orthodox Christians, thus marking the beginning of the notorious "Eastern Question". From the 18th century onwards, Bulgarian society started the transition from a traditional, inward looking way of life, to the modern age of economic enterprise, cultural changes, national struggles and political liberation.

This transformation was highly influenced by ideas coming from the west. The 18th century witnessed a strong economic upsurge among the Bulgarians. Their share in the export of grain from Turkey to western Europe increased. In the towns of the Ottoman empire, communities were slowly undergoing a process of transformation, as urban industrial forms began to emerge, and the number of Bulgarian independent producer-craftsmen was increasing. A new social stratum, a middle class, was formed, which became the motor of this transformation in society. Bulgarian merchants were becoming increasingly more active as trade developed. They travelled westward to Austria, as well as eastward to Russia, Wallachia and Moldavia. The opening of the Black Sea to international commerce, and the start of regular shipping along the Lower Danube, encouraged trade. The second railway in the Ottoman Empire was built between Rousse and Varna, as a part of the great expansion of railway construction in the 1860s.

Just as the modern societies of Christian Europe were founded on nation states, so the national idea formed the nucleus of Bulgarian modernisation. The concept was articulated for the first time in the work of the Bulgarian monk Paisiy of Hilendar, from the Hilendar Monastery (on Mount Athos), the author of a *Slav-Bulgarian History* (1762). Bulgarian national consciousness emerged and developed in two mass social movements in the course of the 19th century – the campaign for a new Bulgarian secular school system, and the movement for a Bulgarian church indepen-



Drawing room in the house of a well-to-do merchant in Svishtov, lower Danube, Bulgaria, second half of the nineteenth century. The interiors of wealthy commercial establishments gradually changed during the course of the century. The oriental taste for furnishing principal rooms with low benches covered with traditional woven fabrics and cushions was gradually replaced by wooden furniture of central and western European designs. (House Museum of Aleko Konstantinov, writer, Svishtov).

dent of the Constantinople Patriarchate. The many people who emigrated to Wallachia and Moldavia in the 19th century greatly contributed to the vigorous growth of Bulgarian education. The first Bulgarian textbooks were issued in 1824 in Braşov by Dr. Petar Beron. The first Bulgarian secondary school was opened in Bolgrad (Moldavia) in 1859. The graduates of this school became teachers, medical doctors, engineers, lawyers, scholars, and army officers. Many young Bulgarians studied in Bucharest.

In the 1830s–1850s, Russian influence grew stronger among the Bulgarians. Although politically motivated it had extremely positive results for the Bulgarian community in Turkey. The Russian government provided grants and scholarships, textbooks and other means of financial support for the Bulgarian educational system. Due to the Bulgarian Board of Trustees of Odessa, and the Moscow Slavic Committee, young Bulgarians studied at secondary schools and universities in Moscow, St Petersburg, Kyiv, Odessa, Charkov, and elsewhere. One of the first Bulgarian professional historians, Prof. Marin Drinov worked for many years at Charkov State University.

Wallachia was the centre of the Bulgarian emigré press. Revolutionary newspapers, new poetry and fiction, were issued in Bucharest, Braila and other Romanian cities. The greatest Bulgarian writers of the 19th century, Lyuben Karavelov, Ivan Vazov, Hristo Botev, lived and published their works in the Romanian capital and in other towns of the Kingdom. The main initiatives of the Bulgarian national revolution were also connected with Romania. In 1869 the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committee was set up in Bucharest, followed by the establishment of a revolutionary organisation inside the country, led by Vassil Levsky. In 1876 an armed detachment of the great Bulgarian patriot and revolutionary Hristo Botev made its way from Giurgiu to Bulgaria. In the spring of 1877, a 7500-strong Bulgarian voluntary military unit was organized in Chişinau, which fought under Russian command during the Russo-Turkish War of Liberation in 1877–1878. A new Balkan state, Bulgaria, was established by the Congress of the Great Powers held in Berlin in 1878.

Bulgaria in the Twentieth Century

In the renascent state, economic development intensified. Through the newly constructed railways and ports on the Black Sea, the region began to develop a more integrated national economic system. The capital of the state, Sofia, was connected by a direct railway with Varna, while another railway from Yambol to Bourgas connected southern Bulgaria with the Black Sea. The ports of Varna and Bourgas opened in the beginning of the 20th century (1903–1906). Sea transport was maintained by foreign companies and by the Bulgarian Shipping Society. Foreign trade was directed predominantly toward western European countries and Turkey. About one fifth of agricultural produce was exported. Turkey and Russia were among the country's major importers.

In the late 19th–early 20th centuries, Bulgarian governments followed a common cultural strategy, whose objective was to create modern cultural institutions in the field of education, literature, theatre, museums, music. Professionally organized archaeological excavations started in the north east, near the old Bulgarian capitals of Pliska and Preslav. At this time the Varna Historical and Archaeological Museum was created, which ranks among the largest national museums in the country. The unique golden treasure from the 4th millennium BCE, found by archaeologists near Varna in the 1970s, is housed there. In the 1930s a drama theatre and an opera theatre opened in the city. Under the Communist regime, Varna was one of the biggest economic, cultural and tourist centres in Bulgaria. The city also had heavy industry; construction machinery and power plants were produced in the city. The port of Varna became extremely important after the ferry line between Varna and Ilichovsk began to operate in 1878. Varna was the most significant centre of culture and tourism on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. Large holiday resorts, aimed at an international market ("Zlatni Pyasaci" /Golden Sands/, "Sts. Constantin and Elena", "Albena", "Rousalka") were built around the city in the 1960s and 1970s.

In the second half of the 20th century, Bourgas also benefited from livelier economic development. As a result of the common economic strategy in the Comecon countries, the Neftochim oil refinery was built near the city with Soviet assistance. Bourgas became a city of key economic importance in Bulgaria and, to a certain



The Sport Palace in Varna, Bulgaria, built in 1956.



The façade of St. Kliment Ohridski State University, Sofia, the first Bulgarian university, founded in 1888. The building was completed in 1934 and combines elements of different international styles.

extent, for the whole Eastern Bloc. The beaches at Bourgas, combined with a rich agricultural hinterland, and a mild climate, provide excellent conditions for tourism. The resorts of "Slunchev Bryag" /Sunny Beach/, and "Elenite" holiday village, attract thousands of visitors annually. The ancient towns of Nessebar and Sozopol are situated not far from Bourgas. The unique architecture and attractive environment make these first-class resorts favoured by German and Russian tourists. At the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, tourism on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast is a flourishing branch of the national economy, and guarantees sustainable economic development within the region. It is an appropriate place for contacts between people from all over Europe, the Ukraine, Russia and the other Black Sea countries.

Varna and Burgas are also university centres for students of economics, engineering, political science, and tourism. International cultural events on the Bulgarian Black Sea, such as the music festival "Varnensko lyato /Summer in Varn", the Varna Ballet Competition, the popular music festival "Golden Orpheus", have, for decades, attracted performers from all over the world.

Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, contacts between Bulgaria, the Ukraine, Rumania, Moldavia, and Georgia have strengthened. Bulgaria has excellent economic relations with the Republic of Turkey. The Black Sea countries share the common prospect of European integration.





(above) "Golden Sands" – a holiday resort north of Varna, built largely in the 1970s.

(above, right) "Sunny Beach" – a holiday resort in Nesebur Bay, near Burgas. The first constructions date from the 1960s, since when the facilities have developed and expanded considerably. More than 200,000 tourists can be accommodated in hotels and chalets, attractively situated in a landscape of light forest and sand dunes.

Turkey between the 18th and 20th Centuries

The 18th century brought a gradual decline of the Ottoman Empire. Territorial expansion, which reached its zenith under Suleyman the Magnificent, was thereafter reversed. A prime concern of Ottoman rulers became the consolidation of their power in the conquered territories. The military and technological challenges emanating from Europe, and the economic and social burdens engendered by war on several fronts, contributed to the loss of Ottoman power. The Treaty of Carlowitz, signed in 1699 by the Ottomans on one side, the Habsburg Empire, Venice, and Poland on the other, signalled the beginning of Ottoman retreat from Europe.

The Sultans were aware of the need to modernise the political and social structures of their Empire, but were opposed by the privileged elements of Ottoman society. Attempts by a succession of rulers (particularly Osman II, 1618–22 and Selim III, 1789–1807) to reform the army and introduce more up to date fighting methods were unsuccessful. Landowners with very large estates, who constituted the *āyān*, the highest social order, enjoyed a large degree of financial independence. A group from among these landowners successfully ousted Sultan Ahmed III in 1730. Mahmud II (1808–39) nevertheless succeeded in re-establishing a more centralised control of the Empire's administration over the *āyāns*, or local provincial administrators. His rule coincided, however, with the first of a series of nationalist independence movements within the Empire, imbued by the ideas of the French Revolution.

In the 19th century, Turkey became increasingly drawn into the negotiations of the "Concert of Europe", a term used to describe the international diplomatic gatherings that began after the defeat of Napoleon I. Tsar Nicholas I dubbed the Ottoman Empire "the sick man of Europe". The European powers attempted to intervene in Ottoman affairs because of the so-called "Eastern Question", namely the status and future of Christian communities in Ottoman territorial control. A series of edicts was promulgated by Ottoman statesmen with a view to calming the growing revolutionary temper, particularly in the Balkans: "Reformation" (*Tanzimat*), and "Improvement" (*Islahat*) were issued in 1839 and 1856 respectively. The improvement in the conditions of an expanding bourgeoisie in the subject provinces, and the acceleration of trade that ensued as a result of these reforms, only served to stoke the fires of national independence movements.



Mustafa Kemal Atatürk with his wife. The photo was taken in 1923.

The Ottoman sultans were on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, only strong central control could ensure the successful continuation of the Empire. On the other, centralisation caused disillusionment among Muslim intellectuals. Thus, Abdülhamid II (1876–1909), hailed by the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck as a "diplomatic genius" for his reforms, was nevertheless despised as a despot for his suppression of the Turkish parliament, the *Meclis-i Mebusân*. The "Young Turks" were a group of politicians who succeeded in dethroning him, and obliging the Sultan to introduce a constitutional monarchy in 1908. The Committee of Union and Progress took power.

During the First World War, the three Pashas in power (Enver, Cemal, and Talat) sided with Germany, in the hope of regaining territories in the Caucasus. Not only did the Ottoman leaders fail to extend their possessions, but in May 1919 western Anatolia itself was invaded by a Greek force, with United States, French, and British support. A national movement was launched in May 19th, 1919, spearheaded by Mustafa Kemal Pasha, one of the outstanding Turkish commanders of the Gallipoli campaign, to oppose external invading forces. Following the Treaty of Lausanne, the Republic of Turkey was officially declared, with Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) elected as President (October 29th 1923).

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938)

Mustafa Kemal was born in Thessaloniki (then Turkish Selânik) in 1881, the son of a customs official, who died when Mustafa was still a boy. He was brought up by his mother, Zübeyde, a devout Muslim. In 1905, Mustafa graduated from the Military Academy in Istanbul (having acquired the sobriquet Kemal (perfection) for his mathematical abilities). He distinguished himself during the abortive Gallipoli landings of the western allies in 1915, and was promoted to general in 1916. Having served in eastern Anatolia, in Palestine and Aleppo, he began a national war of independence against the Sultan in 1919. In 1920 he was elected Chairman of the Grand National Assembly, which replaced the Ottoman parliament. He went on to become Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish armies, successfully re-occupying the mainland of Anatolia, signing an armistice with the European powers, and abolishing the Ottoman dynasty. Ankara, the location of the first Grand National Assembly, also became the capital city of the new Turkish state.

Georgia in the modern age

At the very beginning of the 19th century, Georgia put itself under the protection of the Russian Empire. The Russian alliance brought safety and demographic stability, after a period of instability and uncertainty, as well as economic integration and the restoration of some sovereign territories. Georgia has always been a multinational country, facing a permanent challenge of integrating newcomers. Being, at that time, the chief industrial power of the Caucasus, this land attracted many people. As a result, Georgia was a multi-faith society, with some distinct bilingual communities, such as those of Russians, Armenians, Jews, (Roman Catholic) Poles, and (Protestant) Germans. A new wave of Muslim Kurds reached the country in 1918–20, moving out from the former Ottoman Empire.



Tbilisi in the 19th century, with traditional architecture, and tram lines laid on cobbled streets.



Ilia Chavchavadze (1837–1907), a distinguished Georgian writer and liberal politician.

Trade; communication; education and culture

Cooperation among East European nations led to economic advance. The Black Sea was the traditional anvil of economic activity, with the Georgian ports of Batumi and Photi at the fore. Notwithstanding the modest pace of economic development, in comparison with the speed of industrial expansion and infrastructure in western Europe and the United States, the beginnings of an industrial base were established, as was an educated labour force, one of the fundamental prerequisites to industrial progress. As the economic standard of the population was enhanced, so the demands for social improvements grew. In 1864, Tsar Alexander II emancipated Georgian serfs. The level of general educational attainment spread with the construction of new primary schools. Towards the end of the century, machines began to replace hand tools, and steam power replaced manual labour. The factory system emerged with the arrival of a steam-powered railway network.

Political power was still restricted to the land-owning classes of Georgian society. The factory owners, and their workers, did not have the vote. As education spread within the population at large, the demand for a more equitable form of representation became more insistent. Radical thinkers wanted to overthrow existing political institutions with socialism. One of the agitators for change was the Social Democrat, Noe Jordania. The various national minorities also had a stake in wider political participation. Unrest and riots within the country were matched by the serious defeats of Russia in the First World War.

Most Georgian socialists wanted to create a welfare state, and were not particularly concerned with the overthrow of capitalism. But political changes in Russia, where the abdication of the Tsar, Nicholas II, was succeeded by civil war, and the emergence of a radical new regime under V.I. Lenin, brought about a re-orientation of political structures in Georgia, which became a member of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, after about three years of independence (1918-1922). The kind of state socialism promoted under Joseph Jugashvili (Stalin) engendered comprehensive



Noe Jordania (centre), leader of the Georgian Social Democrats.



Tbilisi: the centre of the city at the beginning of the 20th century.

changes to the whole fabric of Georgian society, as well as nationalising industrial activity, and subjecting it to a uniform planning system. Nevertheless, the system did enforce certain basic norms. Eight years of education were made a universal right for all citizens. Men and women were treated equally.

In the 19th century, Georgians were educated at universities in Russia. One of the most important cultural nuclei was the Faculty of Georgian languages and literature attached to the Oriental Department of St. Petersburg University, which was founded in 1854. Some of the finest Georgian scholars of the age worked there, men such as Nico Marr (linguistics), Ivane Javakishvili (history), Akaki Shanidze (philology). Gradually the idea of a native Georgian institution ripened, and was realised in 1918, with the foundation of Tbilisi University. Ivane Javakishvili introduced new methods into Georgian historical thinking. The new university had faculties of science, as well as in the humanities. Chemistry was taught by Petre Melikishvili and Vasil Petriashvili, mathematics by Ilia Vekua, psychology by Dimitri Uznadze. More than 30,000 students attend lectures there now. In the same period, Georgia's literary romantics, Alexander Chavchavadze, Grigol (Gregory) Orbeliani, Nicholoz Baratashvili, glorified the Middle Ages as a heroic period in the country's history. They reflected the spirit of romantic nationalism that accompanied aspirations to political representation and autonomy in many parts of Europe. After the demise of the revolution of 1848, which dashed the hopes of many of the more romantic revolutionaries, realism became a more dominant literary trend, and Georgia also had its realist writers, such as Grigori Eristavi and Ilia Chavchavadze. Such authors examined the social problems of the age, rather than looking backwards into the past. In the early years of the 20th century, some writers experimented with new styles and forms, such as those emerging in other parts of Europe. This interest in novel forms re-emerged again after the demise of socialist realism, the dominant tendency in all the arts during the Communist era. Georgian theatre and cinema have been stamped with the same contrasting styles and ideologies (modernism and socialist realism) that affected other cultural media. The Georgian opera "Daisi", by Zakaria Phaliashvili, draws on a variety of native traditions.

Sources

Antiquity



Strabo, the Greek geographer (64 BC–24 CE), about Colchis

"The great fame that this country had in early times is disclosed in myths, which refer in an obscure way to the expedition of Jason as having proceeded even as far as Media, and also, before that time, to that of Phrixus. After this, when kings succeeded to power, the country being divided into *"sceptuchies"*, they were only moderately prosperous, but when *Mithridates Eupator* grew powerful, the country fell into his hands, and he would always send one of his friends as sub-governor or administrator of the country."
(Strabo, *Geography*, 11. 2. 18)

sceptuchies: dukedoms (of sceptre bearers).
Mithridates Eupator: king of Pontus (a region in northern Turkey), 120–63 BC.

Strabo about Colchis

"Dioscurias (near modern Sukhumi) ... occupies the most easterly point of the whole sea, it is called not only the recess of the Euxine (Black Sea), but also the "furthermost" voyage ... The same Dioscurias is the beginning of the isthmus between the Caspian Sea and the Euxine, and also the common *emporium* of the tribes who are situated above it and in its vicinity; at any rate, seventy tribes come together in it, though others, who care nothing for the facts, actually say three hundred. All speak different languages because of the fact that, by reason of their obstinacy and ferocity, they live in scattered groups and without intercourse with one another. The greater part of them are Sarmatae, but they are all Caucasii. So much, then, for the region of Dioscurias.

Further, the greater part of the remainder of Colchis is on the sea. Through it flows the Phasis ... It is navigated as far as Sarapanis, a fortress capable of admitting the population even of a city. From here people go by land to the *Cyrus* in four days by a wagon-road. On the Phasis is situated a city bearing the same name, an emporium of the Colchi, which is protected on one side by a lake, and on another by the sea ... Above the rivers in the Moschian country lies the temple of Leucothea, founded by Phrixus, and the oracle of Phrixus, where a ram is never sacrificed; it was once rich, but it was robbed in our time by *Pharnaces*, and a little later by Mithridates of Pergamum."
(Strabo, *Geography*, 11. 2. 16–17)

emporium: trading-place
Cyrus: Mtkvari
Pharnaces: king of Bosporus

Strabo about Iberia (eastern Georgia)

"There are four castes among the inhabitants of Iberia. One of these, and the foremost of all, is that from which they appoint their kings, the appointee being both the next of kin to his predecessor and the eldest, whereas the second in line administers justice and commands the army. The second caste is that of the priests, who among other things attend to all matters of controversy among the neighbouring people. The third is that of the soldiers and the farmers. And the fourth is that of the common people, who are slaves of the king and perform all services that pertain to human livelihood. Their possessions are held in common by them according to clans, although the eldest is ruler and steward. Such are the Iberians and their country."
(Strabo, *Geography*, 11. 3. 6)

"The greater part of Iberia has quite a concentration cities and farmsteads, so much so that their roofs are all tiled, and their houses as well as their market-places and other buildings are constructed with architectural skill."
(Strabo, *Geography*, 11. 3. 1)

Dio Cassius describes the Dacian wars

Dio Cassius, a Roman historian, describes the wars between the Dacians and the Romans in his principal work *Roman Histories:*
"But Trajan fought with the Dacians, watched the wounded soldiers, and killed many of his enemies ...Then, he decided to erect there [at Tropaeum Traiani] a shrine, and each year he venerated those who died ...

The Byzantine Commonwealth



Extracts from the Georgian Chronicle about political structures

Tamar who was anointed by God, reigned supreme, fair as Aphrodite, bountiful as the sun-like Apollo. People swooned at the sight of her, and those who attempted to look on her were distraught. Limpid as a fine jewel, divinely created, her face captivated men's hearts ...After the death of the Katholikos of Kartli, the *Chkqondideli* Mikael, son of Mirian, and the Commander-in-Chief Gamrekeli Toreli, she made appointments to replace them. With the support and agreement of the nobles ...she appointed as Chief Vizier and Chqondideli Antoni, a man of high intelligence and experience, loyal and wise, who had been brought up by her own father; and as *amirspasalar* Sargis Mkhargrdzeli, of noble birth, an experienced soldier and distinguished knight, and granted him the governorship of *Lore* and *Somkhiti*. She showed favour to his son Zakaria, and graciously invested his younger son Ivane with office in the palace. She appointed Chiaberi *mandaturt-ukhutsesi*, and placed a gold staff of office in his hands. They robed her in cloth of gold and set her on a gilded throne, some standing to the right, some to the left of her ...

At the same time the Queen made abundant donations to bishoprics and cathedrals and freed the clergy from imposts and land tax; she turned tillers of the soil into *aznaurs*, aznaurs into *didebulis*, and raised the didebulis of her kingdom to royal rank ...With the serenity of David and the wisdom of Solomon, the vigour and forethought never lacking in Alexander, she held the territory from the Black Sea to the Caspian, from Speri to *Darubandi*, and all the Caucasus both east and west as far as *Khazareti* and *Scythia*.

Chkqondideli: bishop of Chkondidi.
Amirspasalar: Commander-in-Chief.
Lore: town and fortress in Kartli
Somkhiti: region in Georgia
Mandaturt-ukhutsesi : police minister
Aznauri: feudal lord
Didebuli: noble, higher order of feudal aristocracy
Darubandi: pass between the Caspian Sea and the Caucasian mountains
Khazareti: former habitat of Khazars (Turkic-speaking people) in North Caucasus.
Scythia: general term denoting the territories occupied by North Caucasian tribes.

Procopius of Caesarea, Byzantine historian, about the Iberians

The Iberians, who live in Asia, are settled in the immediate neighbourhood of the Caspian Gates, which lie to the north of them. Adjoining them on the left towards the west is Lazica, and on the right towards the east are the Persian peoples. This nation is Christian and they guard the rites of this faith more closely than any other men known to us ...And just then *Cabades* was desirous of forcing them to adopt the rites of his own religion. And he enjoined upon their king, Gourgenes, to do all things as the Persians are accustomed to do them, and in particular not under any circumstances to hide their dead in the earth, but to throw them all to the birds and dogs. For this reason, then, Gourgenes wished to go over to the Emperor *Justinus*, and he asked that he might receive pledges that the Romans would never abandon the Iberians to the Persians ...And the emperor sent Peter as general with some Huns to Lazica to fight with all their strength for Gourgenes and the Iberians. Meanwhile Cabades sent a very considerable army against Gourgenes and the Iberians ...Then it was seen that Gourgenes was too weak to withstand the attack of the Persians, for the help from the Romans was insufficient, and with all the notables of the Iberians he fled to Lazica, taking with him his wife and children and also his brothers, of whom Peranius was the eldest ...

Cabades: Shahanshah of Persia (498–531)
Justinus: Emperor of Byzantium (518–527)

Procopius about the Georgians in the imperial service

Thereafter the Iberians presented themselves at Byzantium ....

[In 535 the Emperor sent] *Belisarius* by sea with four thousand soldiers from the regular troops and foederati (auxiliaries) and about three thousand of the Isaurians. The commanders were men of note: Constantinus and Bessas from the land of Thrace, and Peranius from Iberia which is hard by *Media*, a man who was by birth a member of a royal family of the Iberians but had before this time come as a deserter to the Romans through enmity toward the Persians ...

[In 537] Peranius led some of the Romans through the Gate on the Via Salaria (Rome) against the enemy, the Goths, who, indeed, fled as hard as they could ...



[In 539] Belisarius sent Peranius with a numerous army to Urviventus (in Italy) with instructions to besiege it ...

[Soon] Belisarius led his army against Urviventus. For Peranius kept urging him to do so, since he had heard from the deserters that the Goths in that city had a scarcity of provisions ...



[By 543 Peranius is already on the Oriental battle-front] ... And Justus, the emperor's nephew, and Peranius, and John, the son of Nicetus, together with Domentiolus and John, called the Glutton, made camp near the place called Phison, which is close by the boundaries of Martyropolis ...

The Forces of Justus and Peranius invaded the country about Taraunon, and after gathering some little plunder, immediately returned.

[In 544 Peranius was in the Byzantine army guarding the city of Edessa, besieged by the Persians] and *Chosroes* declared that he would not depart from there until the Romans should deliver to him Peter and Peranius, seeing that, being his hereditary slaves, they had dared to array themselves against him ...[In 542] the Emperor sent a fleet of ships with Maximinus [against the Goths], manning them with Thracian and Armenian soldiers. The leader of the Thracians was Herodian, and of the Armenians Phazas the Iberian, nephew of Peranius ...

[In 547, when] Belisarius was making haste to go straight to Tarentum ....[He] ordered all the horsemen to go ahead and make camp at the passes leading into the country, placing in command of them Phazas the Iberian ...



...Totila, upon hearing everything, selected three thousand horsemen from his whole army and went against the enemy. And falling upon them unexpectedly .... he threw them all into consternation and complete disorder. At this moment Phazas, who happened to be camping near by, encountered the enemy and made a display of valorous deeds, and he died, indeed, thus making possible the escape of a few men, but he himself perished together with all his men. This misfortune fell heavily upon the Romans, because they all pinned their hope on this detachment as an unusually efficient fighting force ...

[Pacurius, the son of Peranius was also engaged in war with the Goths. In winter of 552 he was besieging city of Tarentum in Italy] ... he ... immediately marched against the enemy ...*Ragnaris* ...led forth the Goths from Tarentum to encounter his enemy. And when they engaged with each other, the Goths were defeated.

Belisarius: Byzantine general
Media: Persia
Chosroes: Shahanshah of Persia (531–579)
Ragnaris: head of a garrison in Tarentum.

Procopius about Lazica

"All the villages of the Lazi are beyond the river Phasis (Rioni), and towns have been built there from the old, among which are Archaeopolis, a very strong place, and Sebastopolis, and the fortress of Pityus, and Scanda and Sarapanis, over against the boundary of Iberia. Moreover there are two cities of the greatest importance in that region, Rhodopolis and Mocheresis ....

[The Lazi] were always engaged in commerce by sea with the Romans who live on the Black Sea ...by furnishing skins and hides and slaves they secured the supplies which they needed.

The Emperor *Justinian* sent different officers to Lazica, among them John ..... who persuaded the Emperor to build a city on the sea in Lazica, Petra by name; and there he sat as in a citadel and plundered the property of the Lazi. For the salt and all other cargoes which were considered necessary for the Lazi, it was no longer possible for the merchants to bring into the land of Colchis, nor could they purchase them elsewhere by

sending for them, but he sat up in Petra the so-called "monopoly,"and himself became a retail dealer and overseer of all the handling of these things, buying everything and selling it to the Colchians, not at the customary rates, but as dearly as possible."

Justinian: the emperor of Byzantium (527–565)

Marco Polo, the Venetian, about Georgia

The king is always called David-Melik in Georgia, that means king David, and he obeys the Mongols. They say that he has a small mark of the cross on his shoulder. The Georgians are handsome, brave, excellent archers and warriors. They are Christians of the Greek faith and wear their hear cropped close like the clergy.

There are many cities and settlements in this land; there is plenty of silk, as they produce silk and gold embroidered textiles, more beautiful than from any other source. The best gyrfalcons live here. Everything can be found in abundance in this land. People are engaged in trade and crafts. There are numerous mountains, gorges and fortresses here, and the Mongols could not succeed in conquering the whole country ...

The most beautiful city of Tiflis is situated in this land, encircled by a prominent number of the castles and villages.

The Bravery of the Bulgarians

"This is the people who, before you did, possessed anything it wanted. A people that has assumed titles, has bought its nobility with the blood of its enemies. A people for whom it is battle that brings fame to the clan, because, the more blood-stained a man's arms have been in a fight, the more noble he is. This is a people which, before the battle with you (Theodoric, king of the Goths), has never met an adversary to resist them ... They have not been hampered ... either by mountains or by lack of food ..."

From *Eulogy for king Theodoric* by Enodius, a Byzantine author, 6th century.

The Slavs Settle in Byzantium

"In the third year following the death of the emperor Justinian, and the accession of Tiberius Triumphator, to the throne (581 AD), the accursed Slav people appeared and conquered the whole of Hellas, the area around Thessalonica and the whole of Thrace. They captured many towns and fortresses, plundered and set them on fire, took prisoners and became lords of the land ... and lorded it there as freely as in their own country ... They have become rich – they have gold and silver, herds of horses and numerous weapons, and they have learned to wage war better than the Byzantines."

From *Church History* by John of Ephesus, a Byzantine chronicler, 6th century.

The Establishment of Danubian Bulgaria

"And Constantine (the Byzantine Emperor Constantine IV), having learned that the people who had settled at the Istros river (Danube) had invaded the neighbouring Byzantine territories, set about destroying them ... Then some rumours spread that the Emperor was fleeing. The Byzantines ... were running away fast, while no one was chasing them. When the Bulgars saw this, they fell upon them in a vigorous attack and all the soldiers who were captured they killed, and many more were injured. They crossed the Istros (Danube) river towards the town called Varna ... and seeing that the place was suitable ...they settled there. The Emperor watched all this, and was forced to conclude an agreement with them, [which would bring peace] on condition that the Emperor would pay a tax."

From *Brief Chronicle* by Patriarch Nicephoros, a Byzantine author, 9th century.

The Bulgarians adopt Christianity

"And so, the ruler of the Bulgarians acceded to peace, although he had been impertinent before that. Besides, his people were starving. That is why they easily agreed to be baptised, and their ruler adopted the name of the Emperor, Michael. Distinguished priests and bishops were sent there to consolidate the Christian faith."

Joseph Genesius, a Byzantine author, 10th century.



A Description of Simeon's Palace in the Capital of Preslav

"When a poor foreigner comes from afar to the anteroom of the Tsar's Court, and sees it, he is amazed ... And when he enters the palace and sees the high rooms and churches, ornate with stone,

wood, and colours; and the interior with marble and copper, silver and gold – so rich that he does not know what to compare them with. If he is lucky enough to see the Tsar himself, sitting in his mantle embroidered with pearls, with a golden necklace round his neck, and bracelets on his hands, belted with a crimson girdle, and a sword hanging at his thigh. And boyars with golden necklaces, girdles and bracelets standing either side of him.."

From *Six Days*, by John the Exarch, a Bulgarian writer, 9th–10th centuries.

The Disciples Saints Cyril and Methodius in Bulgaria

"The confessors of Christ, ... longed for Bulgaria. For Bulgaria, they thought and hoped, was ready to offer them calm. (...) Kliment, accompanied by Naum and Angelariy, took the road leading to the Danube ... They reached Belgrade ... and presented themselves to the *boritarkan* (the governor) ... They told him all that had happened to them. When he learned this, and understood that they were great men devoted to God, he decided to send them to the Bulgarian prince Boris, ... because he knew that Boris was yearning for such men. Therefore he let them recover from the long journey, then sent them to the prince as a precious gift, and informed him that these men were exactly the ones he was eagerly looking for."

From A Comprehensive Life Story of St. Kliment Ochridski by a Byzantine author, 13th century.



The Italian City Republics



A Charter Given by Tsar Ivan Alexander to the Merchants of Venice

"My Kingdom, give this decree to my friends, the Venetians, and swear that ...all merchants of Venice are free to come and go with their ships and goods all over our kingdom ... They may also build houses ... wherever they like in this land; and may no-one oppose this decree. He who would dare to oppose it will be considered a traitor ... to my kingdom."

From The Commercial Treaty of Tsar Ivan Alexander with Venice (1347)

A Description of the Capital of Turnovo from the 13 th –14th Centuries

"The barbarian king (Bayazid) ... had heard that it was big, beautiful and fortified with walls; that due to its situation it was difficult to capture, because not only did it have walls, but it was also well protected by nature. Besides, it had riches, and a numerous population, and it was famous both for its churches and for the royal (buildings)."

From *Eulogy for Patriarch Evtimiy* by Grigoriy Tsamblak, a Bulgarian author from the 14th century.



Bulgaria's Riches in the Early 14th Century in the Eyes of a Foreigner

"Bulgaria is a big kingdom in itself ... Its land is vast, rich and beautiful, watered by ten navigable rivers; it is covered with picturesque woods and groves, and is rich in wheat, meat, fish, silver, gold, and many other goods, wax and silk most of all. Hence, there are many silver mines there, and all the rivers carry sand mixed with gold from whence gold is constantly extracted and produced under the Tsar's orders."

From *Description of Eastern Europe* (by an unknown western monk, 1308)

The Riches of the Bulgarian Tsars (The Marriage Portion of Princess Maria, Tsar Boril's Daughter) – Early 13th Century

"Boril ordered that his daughter should be prepared as a rich and noble young woman, together with a large suite to accompany her. Thus he sent her to the Latin Emperor, and ordered that she should be given 60 mules loaded with wealth, gold, silver, silk clothes and luxurious jewels; no mule was left without a red cloth, which was so long that it was trailing seven or eight feet behind each animal."

(note from Robert de Clary, 13th century)



The Ottoman Empire



The Crusade of Władysław III Jagiełło in 1444

"You, who have captured the fortresses of Shumen, Mahorach (Madara), Varna, Kavarna, Galata and other fortresses in the province of Thrace (i.e. north east Bulgaria), and hold in slavery Christians – Greeks and Bulgarians – ..., we advise you and order you, to restore the freedom of the Christians for whose liberation we have come here, all the way from our beautiful Poland and Hungary, and guided by God. We shall proceed even further, so that all the fortresses mentioned above shall surrender to our soldiers ... and you should withdraw to Gallipoli and Asia, in your ancient settlement of Anatolia."

From *Note of Władysław III Jagiełło to the Turkish garrisons in the northern Bulgarian lands*, 1444.

Description of the western Black Sea coast on a map of 1559

"There are ten miles from Kestric to Kavarna. Kaliakra is a town, and from Grosea to the north it is 80 miles. On this itinerary you can find Seluda, Mangalia, Constanţa and Zavarna."

A codicil concerning trade published on the orders of Sultan Bayazed II (before 1512)

" ...the Christians will pay for each piece of silk [sold], 4%, Muslims 2% [tax]; for fruits, 1 *asper* per hundred .... For fish, merchants should pay at the Customs house 4 *aspers*.."

(injunction for the *schelele* Varna, Balcik, Kaliakra, Constanţa, and Mangalia)

asper: Silvercoins of Trapezus/Trabzon, 13th–15th centuries.



The Bulgarians and Trade within the Empire

" ... Once a year, in the season of the cherries, hundreds of thousands of people from Roumelia, the Arab countries, Persia, India, Samarkand, Balkh, Bukhara, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and from all over Europe ... gather together in this area, so that the market held there looks like a military camp, as if the army of Alexander the Great had assembled ... The whole valley fills with thousands of people. Large amounts of goods are sold here – there is everything one can possibly want."

From *A Book of Travels* by Evliya Çelebi, an Ottoman official who travelled across Bulgarian Lands in 1640–1676.

The Clothes of the Bulgarians

"The above mentioned Bulgarians are Christians of the Orthodox Church. An attractive, humble people, who speak a Slavic language ... Men wear almost the same costumes as the Hungarians. All their clothes are tight. Women's costume is almost the same as the costumes of the Polish peasant women. They wear pleated petticoats and cover their heads with white kerchiefs, leaving one part of their hair loose on the back, down to the waist ... The sleeves of their chemises are studded with motley embroideries along their whole length. On the breast below the neck they wear silver or golden pfennigs (coins).

From the *Diary of Martin Grueneweg*, a German traveller, 1582.

Chevalier Jean Chardin (the 17th c.) about West Georgia

"The Mingrelians are of decent origin – well built men and beautiful women. Ladies from the upper classes have some particular features and fascinating tenderness. I have met women of impressive appearance, with beautiful faces and bodies. Besides, they have affectionate and attractive glances, inviting one to adore and love them. Less beautiful and older ones overdo their cosmetics, covering the whole face, eyebrows, cheeks, forehead, nose and chin. Some only blacken their eyebrows. They adorn themselves with jewellery to look their best. Their clothes resemble those of the Persian women, but they prefer to do their hair and wear curls like the European ladies ....

[The Mingrelian ladies] are courteous, well brought up, aristocratic and kind, but they can be proud, arrogant, vicious, ruthless and stubborn at the same time.

Every year twelve sailers from Constantinople and Caffa and more than sixty boats from Gonio, Iris, and Trapezus, sail to Samegrelo. They are loaded here, apart from slaves, with silk, flax, linen and linseed, hides of bull, beaver and marten, wax and honey ...White honey from Samegrelo is excellent (sugar could not be sweeter), and of delicious taste ... Besides, wild honey is collected from the trees and in the canyons. Ships from Caffa take cargoes of such honey to the Turkish markets, where this wild honey is mixed with cereals to produce an extremely strong beverage. Turks trade at a good profit, selling for 4 ecus what they have purchased for 1 in Samegrelo. Nevertheless, the most profitable business is still the slave trade ... Piastres, Dutch ecus and abazi, the latter struck in East Georgia according to the Persian pattern, are in circulation."



The Bulgarians in the Eyes of a Western Traveller from the 18th century

"Bulgaria is a deserted country today, because it has often been devastated by wars ... The Turks live in the towns ... while the Bulgarians ... are scattered in the villages ... They leave the towns, where the Turks repress them, and settle in the villages where they breed numerous herds and develop agriculture. Their industry and neatness distinguish them from the other inhabitants of the country ... this is the best race who live in Turkey [the Ottoman Empire], or at least the most diligent and the most enduring one."

From *Military Travels* by Louis-August Felix Beaujour, a French author of the late 18th century.

The Monasteries – Centres of Spiritual and Literary Life

"The monks of this monastery (the Bachkovo Monastery) have a fine library. I saw many manuscripts there, but it is impossible to acquire any of them. Only to mention their purchase arouses the indignation of the monks."

From *French Travel Notes on the Balkans*, by P. Lucas, a French author from the 18th century.

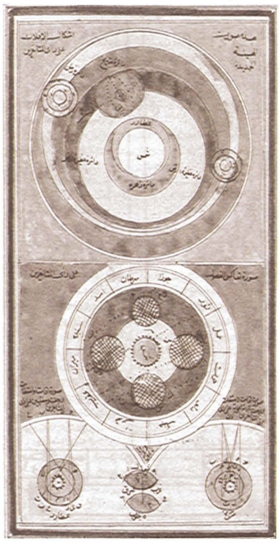
Injunctions for the foundation of the holy monastery of All Saints (1713–1716)

"There is no better thing in front of God than the good works that are to be done to the poor and the holy churches [...]

But I will that this holy monastery, which I have erected and embellished at my expense, should be free, making laws for itself and subject to no one but to God, and to all the saints, to whom I have dedicated [this church]. [It shall] not be under princely supervision, nor under the rule of the first-sitting [of the Church] of the country, not under the rule of a boyar, or another monastery, be it large, or small [...]

I have left many books in our library, Greek as well as Romanian, as are written down in the church catalogue. I curse anyone who tries to remove one of them, with the intention of taking it away [...]

On Mondays [a mass shall be said] for all my professors and teachers, and 40 pennies shall be given for the poor. On Tuesdays [a mass shall be said] for all the confessors to whom I confessed during my life. And 40 pennies shall be given to the poor. On Wednesdays [a mass shall be hold] for all those who were my acquaintances in this world, and for all my friends and benefactors. And 40 pennies shall be given to the poor [...]."





Russia Gains the Right to Protect Christians in the Ottoman Empire

"Art. 7. The Sublime Porte promises to protect constantly the Christian faith and its churches ...

Art. 8. All subjects of the Russian Empire, clergymen and laymen, will be allowed to visit freely the Holy town of Jerusalem and the other places of worship ..."

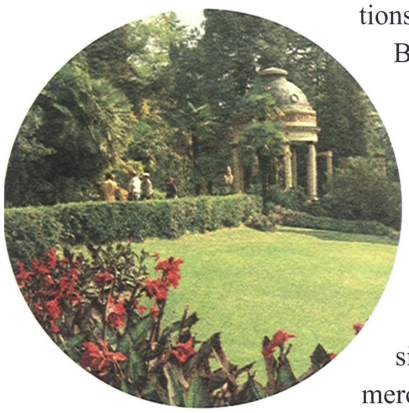
From the Peace Treaty between Russia and Turkey, 1774

A Description of Burgas and Varna in the 18th Century

"Burgas is one of the main Bulgarian ports for the Black Sea trade. All goods from Tataria [the Crimea], and other coastal regions, exported for Roumelia and the Balkan Peninsula, arrive there ... The port is very good; its bed is sandy, and all kinds of vessels can take shelter there in winter. Whilst the transit trade is very essential in Bourgas, the inhabitants are also involved in import and export. Many of the goods brought into the town are to satisfy the needs of its inhabitants. Such imported commodities include rice, coffee, French berets, scarves, black olives, soap from Smyrna, grey linen cloth, towels from Cairo, gun powder, saw-dust, some wood for painting, cotton, wool, Anatolian fabrics, salt from Crimea, cotton or silk fabrics from Bursa and Tsarigrad (Constantinople), as well as textiles from Chios. (...) The region of Burgas produces nothing but cereals, of which Tsarigrad is supplied with 30 or 40 tovars [an old measure of weight equal to approximately 128 kg] and some cheese. Varna is the biggest Bulgarian port. This is the transit point for all Bulgarian and Wallachian goods exported for Tsarigrad, and for those transported from the capital to both provinces. The town is small, but well populated. It numbers 16,000 inhabitants. It has five mosques, one public market and about 200 shops. (...) All kinds of vessels can enter and winter there in complete safety."

From the *Investigation* of Charles de Peillsonel, a French author from the second half of the 18th century.

The Modern Period



"We believe that the theatre of operations presented by the Black Sea Basin favours, more than others, considerations that go beyond regional problems and have impacted on the field of universal history. It is impossible to approach its study without referring first to the expansion of Mediterranean commerce to the extreme North and East, to the movement of the invasions that threw the nomads in the plains of Central Asia over Europe, to the rivalry of the maritime powers that fought for the control of the Straights, to the law that seems to determine the march of Southern empires to the space offered by the Bosphorus, on the borders of Thrace and Asia Minor."

Gh. Bratianu, *Marea Neagra*

Centres of Bulgarian Book-printing in the 19th century outside Bulgaria

"If the Sublime Porte orders that Bulgarian books should be printed within the country alone, this will stop the import of books printed in Odessa, Bucharest, Athens, and other places, the consequences of which are very regrettable."

From the *Statement of Neofit Bozveli*, a Bulgarian intellectual, to the Sublime Porte, 1840s.

The rise in standards of living; patronage

"So I will that my fortune in possessions and money should be divided, after my death, as follows: to the Holy Bishop of Plovdiv for the funeral service – 500 (groshes); to the Bulgarian school in Plovdiv I leave one shop ... to the Greek school – 1000; to the hospital – 1000; to the church of St. Petka, 1500; to the church of St. Nedelya, 1000 ... to my nephew ... 1000; to the other six churches, St. *Bogoroditsa* (Holy Mother of God), St.Dimitar, St. Konstantin, St. Marina, and the Karshiyaka Church – 200 groshes each, 1200 in total. To my son Yanko I leave 40 000 groshes ..."

From *the Will of Peyou Georgiev*, grand master and furrier, Plovdiv, 1870.

An Appeal for Education and National Awareness by Father Paisiy, the First Bulgarian Enlightener

"And so I wrote and arranged for you what is known of your origins and language. Read and be aware of it so that other people should not ridicule and reproach you ... I came to love too much my Bulgarian people and Fatherland, and worked hard collecting data from different books and histories, until I compiled the history of the Bulgarian people in this little book to be of use to you."

From "Preface" to "Slav-Bulgarian History" by Paisiy Hilendarski.

The Population of Large Towns in the 18th –19th Centuries

"Philippopolis ... is one of the most prosperous towns ... It numbers about 25,000 houses and 90–100,000 households – a mixture of Bulgarians, Moslems, and some Greeks, and, in addition, a certain number of Armenians and Jews ...

There are mosques as well as Christian churches."

From *Collection of Itineraries from European Turkey* by Ami Boue, French author (1794–1881).

Changes in dress

"The urban life in this town is fairly well developed. Soirées (night parties) with balls are organised here. At these parties you can see ladies and gentlemen dressed in the latest fashion, and in brilliant luxury, dancing the polka and mazurka."

From a report from the town of Pazardjik, southern Bulgaria, 1870.





The Penetration of Liberal Ideas

"We yearn for full freedom, people's freedom, personal freedom, human freedom ... In order to be free a man ought to wish that the others should be free as well. And so, my brothers, Bulgarians, Serbs, Rumanians, Greeks, hold out your hands to each other, forget your small hostilities, love everyone who searches for freedom ..."

"We wish to live in harmony with all our neighbours, and especially with the Serbs and the Rumanians, who partly sympathise with our endeavours, and we wish to establish with them a "South-Slav" or "Danubian Federation of Free Lands"."

From texts written by Lyuben Karavelov, a prominent Bulgarian politician,writer and journalist, 1869–1870.

Article 5, Romanian Constitution, 1923

"Romanians, without exceptions due to ethnic origin, language, or religion, enjoy the freedom of religion, of education, of the press, of free association, of meetings, and of all the liberties and rights referred to in the laws."

The Encyclopedia of Romania, 1938

" ... we have an industry with capital dominated by foreign investment, with a technical, commercial and administrative leadership, where Romanians are almost a minority as a whole, and industrial workers in their vast majority in the Old Kingdom (Romania before 1918), Romanians by birth, and in the new territories (Transylvania, Bukovina, Bessarabia, united with Romania in 1918) belonging largely to the national minorities."





Tasks for pupils

Prehistory

1 What does the word "Palaeolithic" mean?
2 Why were stones used as tools in Palaeolithic times?
3 How should we imagine the every day life of someone living in the Palaeolithic period along the Black Sea coast?
4 The mental and intellectual development of the seaside settlers of the Middle Stone Age may be seen in the paintings they left on cave walls. The representations of wild animals (in Shan-Koba and Tash-Air) show great skill in observing how animals live and behave. What else can we learn from these pictures?
5 List the innovations brought about by the "Neolithic revolution".
6 During the New Stone Age (Neolithic Age), a new discovery changed human lives forever. People learned to plant seeds in order to grow food, thus beginning to practise farming. They also began to keep herds of animals, such as cattle and sheep, to use for meat. What was the importance of these changes for people's daily lives, and for future human progress?
7 Consider the finds from the Chalcolithic (Copper Age) cemetery at Varna.
   a When do they date from?
   b List the items found in the richest burial; what materials were they made from?
   c Guess what social position the man buried here had?
8 What does "megalithic" mean? What kinds of monuments can be described by this term?
9 Match the archaeological cultures with the proper chronology:

a Kuro-Araxian culture	a 2nd millennium B.C.
b Neolithic culture	b 3rd millennium B.C.
c Trialeti culture	c 7th millennium B.C.

10 Why were military chiefs at the top of the social structure in Bronze Age Georgia?

Antiquity

1 Name three new coastal cities that grew up around the Black Sea in Antiquity.
2 Which ancient writers provide information about this region?
3 a Name the main rivers flowing across the territory of Georgia
   b How do these rivers affect the people?
4 Which well-known Greek mythological characters are associated with Colchis?
5 Why did port cities become centres of mutual exchange between natives from around the Black Sea and Greeks?
6 According to one ancient legend, once upon a time the Scythians received the "sacred golden gifts", which have fallen from Heaven. These were a plough, a yoke, an axe and a jug. What can we learn from this legend about the Scythian way of life and beliefs?
7 How can we detect the influence of the Roman Empire on the modern coast of the Black Sea?
8 Describe the social organisation of Colchis and Iberia (Kartli) from the information provided by Strabo.
9 Identify the transit route that ran from China and crossed the territory of Georgia. What sorts of commodities travelled along this route?
10 Look to the photo of the monument called the "Tropaeum Traiani" (Trajan's monument) and describe it briefly.
11 To what extent does the Georgian pagan pantheon represent an example of cultural diffusion?

Byzantium

1 Name the Black Sea countries that have predominantly Orthodox populations. Why do you think that so many people in these countries have adopted Orthodox Christianity?
2 The route along the Middle and Lower Dnipro was once called, according to the *Chronicle of the Ipatov Monastery Manuscript*, the Greek road, and two more roads are mentioned at the same time – the Salt and the Iron roads. Can you explain the origin of these names?
3 What is the meaning of the legend "The Magic Arrow"?
4 What route did ancient merchants choose on the way "from the Varangians to the Greeks"?
5 Characterise the Slavs and the Bulgars (Proto-Bulgarians) according to their:
a land of origin
b route of migration towards the Black Sea region
c deities and religious practices
d way of life
6 Can you identify any examples of peaceful religious co-existence during the Byzantine epoch?
7 Describe the economic, spiritual and cultural significance of trade connections between Bulgaria, Byzantium, and other Black Sea countries.

8 Describe the political relations of Colchis (Lazica) with the Byzantine Empire using information preserved in the work of Procopius. Assess the level of dependence of Lazica (Colchis) upon the Empire.
9 How did Bulgarian literature of the 9th–10th centuries help the development of other Greek Orthodox cultures of the Black Sea region?
10 Compare imperial titles of the Georgian kings with those borne by other leaders of the Orthodox world of the Black Sea region. What do they have in common?
11 What was the role of the Orthodox Christian religion in the development of the national cultures around the Black Sea?
12 Using the information provided by historical sources, list the officials of government of feudal Georgia.

The Italian City Republics

1 What was the role of merchants from Genoa and Venice in Black Sea trade?
2 How were silk and spices supplied to Europe under the domination of the Italian republics?
3 What do you know about the origin of the modern name for the Crimean peninsula?
4 What have you learned about traditions of Kozak navigation?
5 Did trade routes change on the northern shore of the Black Sea after the formation of the Mongol Empire?
6 How do stories about the origins of Georgian cities reveal an Oriental flavour?

15th–18th Centuries

1 Indicate the main changes in traditional trade routes in the Black Sea area during the period of the Ottoman Empire.
2 The increased Turkish presence in the northern Black Sea region led to the strengthening of Muslim civilization. The Christian churches in Sudag(Sudak), Inkerman and Kerch were transformed into Muslim mosques. Kefe(present-day Pheodosiya) was fundamentally rebuilt and decorated with graceful minarets, vaulted mosques and the elegant buildings of the Eastern Bath. What do you know about the spread of Oriental culture in the Black Sea area?
3 Vocabulary exercise: match the terms with the proper definition:

1 Imereti	a sultan's guard
2 Janissary	b West Georgia
3 Kartl-Kakheti	c guild of artisans
4 Amkari	d East Georgia

4 How did the military exploits of Mehmet II and great voyages of exploration cause a loss of interest in the Black Sea transit route?
5 In which areas of social life did interaction between people of different cultures and religions (Christian, Moslem, Jewish) take place in the Ottoman Empire?

The Modern Period

1 What social changes came about in the Danubian region (Moldavia and Wallachia) during the 19th century?
2 Describe the positive changes that took place in Bulgarian society in the 18th and the early 19th centuries, in the context of modernizing processes in the Ottoman Empire.
3 What was the role of the northern and eastern shores of the Black Sea in the Soviet period?
4 What were the principal migrations and population movements in the Black Sea area during the 19th and 20th centuries?
5 What modern nature reserves are there in the Black Sea area?
6 Why did Georgian kings seek shelter within the Russian Empire?
7 What were the main signs of cultural renewal in Varna and Bourgas in the 20th century?

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© Council of Europe 2004
First published 2004

Printed in Norway by PDC Tangen 2004
ISBN 82-05-31194-3

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The Teaching Pack on the History of the Black Sea provides information for schools which will help teachers and pupils to find out more about the history of their neighbouring countries as well as about the Black Sea region itself. It is the first time that specialists from Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine under the auspices of the Council of Europe have tried to create a historical picture of the Black Sea.

The Teaching Pack covers a wide period starting from Pre-history and until almost today. Throughout its history the geo-political architecture of the region changed, but the most important issues of its existence are reflected in the main themes of the Teaching Pack.

The Council of Europe has always supported the view that diversity and intercultural dialogue are enriching factors in the building of mutual understanding in the present-day world. One of the main ideas when preparing the teaching pack was to show new approaches in teaching history in its full complexity on the basis of multiperspectivity and comparative studies.

The Council of Europe has forty-five member states, covering virtually the entire continent of Europe. It seeks to develop common democratic and legal principles based on the European Convention on Human Rights and other reference texts on the protection of individuals. Ever since it was founded in 1949, in the aftermath of the second world war, the Council of Europe has symbolised reconciliation.

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