

**OLD GLORY RETURNS: THE PORT OF VARNA  
AND THE TRADE IN BULGARIAN LANDS DURING THE  
THIRD QUARTER OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

**Ivan Roussev**

**Abstract:** In this article a review and an analysis is made of the movement of goods (import and export) and ships (number, tonnage, crews) through port Varna in the 1850s - 1870s on the basis of the reports of the brothers Adolphe-Salvator and Emmanuel-Marius Tedeschi, who exercised the functions of Austrian, French and Belgian consuls in Varna. In the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the port in Varna turns to a *débouché* of the central and northeastern Bulgarian lands, of one big part of today's Northern and Eastern Bulgaria, which was known to the Europeans from this epoch with the collective name *Bulgaria*. The good recognition of the traffic through port Varna in the 1850s–1870s gives a good and precise idea of the trade in the main part of the Bulgarian lands in general. This period is significant because of the raised trade interests of Europe in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which increased sensibly after the removal of the monopoly on grain and the conclusion of the trade conventions in 1838–1846 between the Ottoman Empire and 13 countries in Europe.

**Key words:** port of Varna, trade, Ottoman Empire, consul, consul report, import, export, goods, ship

**Research objective**

The study of Varna port's role for the growth of trade in the Bulgarian lands during the third quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century is not a local history theme. Or at least not only! The reason is that during the studied period port Varna turns into a tangible *débouché* for the Central and North-eastern Bulgarian lands, of an important part of contemporary Northern and Eastern Bulgaria, known to Europeans then under the general name *Bulgaria*. Therefore, a thorough knowledge of Varna's port commercial traffic between the fifties and the seventies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century will provide a clear and exact picture of the trade in a key part of the Bulgarian lands in general. And this period is significant because of emerging European trade interests in the Ottoman Empire's Balkan provinces, which rose significantly after the fall of the monopoly on grains and the sign-

ing of the trade conventions (agreements) between 1838 and 1846 between the Ottoman Empire and 13 states of the *Old* world.

Contemporary foreign sources provide us with some idea concerning the region which in economic terms covers Varna and port Varna. In the *Almanach de l'Empire Ottoman...* published in the capital Constantinople in French in 1850 there is a list of the trade fairs around the Empire such as the ones in Hadzhioglu (present day Dobrich), Eski-Dzhumaya (present day Targovishte), Varna and Kara-su (Cernavodă in present Rumania) which are all mentioned as being within the Varna region.<sup>1</sup>

The French *Département de l'Agriculture, du Commerce et des Travaux publics* issues a yearbook: *Annales*, and the issue for the same 1850 year pays specific attention to the port of Varna. It is noticed that the port traffic shall have even greater importance should local authorities be able to implement protective policies for regional trade and agriculture. However the author is critical. The publication notes as well: “Une partie de cette importation [de l'échelle de Varna] est destinée à la consommation locale, une autre est livrée à l'intérieur, et le reste passe en transit à destination de la Valachie”.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, great expectations concerning the rising role of Varna and the port Varna for the regional trade growth of have been expressed since the beginning of the forties. In a report dated February 22 1840 by Charles Cunningham, British consul in Galati, it is noted that only within a few years the port Varna will become one of the most significant in the Black sea area.<sup>3</sup> In the 1852 publication of McCulloch's *Dictionary of Commerce* Varna finds its place described as the *capital of Bulgaria* [McCulloch, 1852: 622]. This rapidly growing interest in the port city quickly acquires real dimensions. Just a decade immediately before the Crimean War (1853–1856), some of the leading European states: France, Austria, Belgium, Greece, Sardinia, Russia, and the United Kingdom establish in Varna their consular agencies and vice-consular sections.

Varna's role and significance for the trade in the Bulgarian lands of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (including the Black sea region) during the third quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century is best identified through the annual tracking of ships and goods movement through the port Varna at that time and by subjecting these data to an in-depth analysis. This is the present article's research objective.

### **How was the information that forms the basies of the present study collected?**

As a contemporary researcher of Varna and its port in the 19<sup>th</sup> century my greatest chance is that during the period under consideration the brothers Adolphe-Salvator and Emmanuel-Marius Tedeschi live and work in the city, with whose activities are related, along with whose activities are related not only

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<sup>1</sup> [Almanach de l'Empire Ottoman pour l'année 1850 ..., p. 109–110].

<sup>2</sup> [Annales du commerce extérieur, ... – N : 3. Janvier 1850. Paris, 1850, p. 9–10].

<sup>3</sup> “Report on the present capabilities of the Province of Bulgaria to export articles of production”, Charles Cunningham, British Vice-Consul in Galatz, to Bidwell, Consular Service in London, On February 22, 1840. PRO, Foreign Office (FO), 78/409. See: [Todorova, 1973: 82].

numerous archival documents concerning significant matters of local history importance, reports about the actual extent of commercial traffic through the city port. The Tedeschi brothers are French Jews, born in Marseille who relocate to Varna in 1837. The older brother Adolphe-Salvator is an Austrian citizen and Austrian vice-consul in Varna, appointed on March 17 1849 as temporary French vice-consul in the city<sup>4</sup>, this temporary appointment enduring for some 30 years until 1879 when a French diplomat of the career is appointed.<sup>5</sup> Since the mid-fifties and to the seventies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the younger brother Emmanuel-Marius Tedeschi is acting as Belgian consul in Varna.<sup>6</sup>

Even before taking on diplomatic and other related representative activities (Emmanuel-Marius takes over the operation of the French post in the region), the Tedeschi brothers engage actively in trade and probably this is the reason why they do strictly monitor and report to their superiors the city's and region's commercial conditions. They have both penned tens of accounts and tables, annual reports with very detailed data for a long-term period of time – from the end of the 1840s to end of the 1870s. Part of this precious information is preserved today in the French diplomatic archive (*Quai d'Orsay*), another part is available in the above mentioned yearbooks published during the same period – such as in the French *Annales du commerce extérieur...* (on Adolphe-Salvator reports) and in the Belgian *Recueil consulaire...* (on Emmanuel-Marius reports).<sup>7</sup> Their activities in collecting and transmitting information are as follows: Adolphe-Salvator collects data either directly from the customs offices in Varna<sup>8</sup>, or from his colleagues – consuls in the city<sup>9</sup>, and then compiles an annual report and table (usually of about ten but sometimes even more pages), then dispatches the report to the French embassy in Constantinople, or to the Consulate general in Rustchuk (present day Ruse, as during the seventies), or

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<sup>4</sup> Archives diplomatiques du Ministère des Affaires étrangères (AMAE), Centre des Archives diplomatiques à Nantes (CADN), Vice-consulat à Varna, art. 14, N: 10/72.

<sup>5</sup> The last documented letter signed by Adolphe-Salvator Tedeschi in his quality of French vice-consul in Varna dates April 23, 1879 (N° 42), while the first one of his heir on the post Emile Boysset dates April 29, 1879 (N° 1) : AMAE, CADN, Série Constantinople – D – Varna, art. 3 – Correspondance avec le poste de Varna (4 janvier-31 décembre 1879) ; AMAE, Personnel, 2<sup>e</sup> série, N° 249 – Emile Boysset.

<sup>6</sup> Further on the brothers Tedeschi see: [**Papadopoulo-Vretos, 1856: 222; Petrova, 1988; Tonev, 1995: 27–28**].

<sup>7</sup> See: [**Annales du commerce extérieur, ... – N : 27. Janvier 1870. Paris, 1870, p. 66–67 ; Royaume de Belgique... Bruxelles, 1858, p. 549–557. Rapport consulaire, Varna, Turquie, le 9 août 1858, E. Tedeschi**]. Part of these reports are relatively accessible to Bulgarian readers as these are reissued in our country and included in Nikola Michoff collection, although itself a bibliographic rarity today: [**Michoff, 1941; Michoff, 1950**].

<sup>8</sup> The report concerning the ships movement in port Varna in 1866 mentions expressly that data are collected from the local customs office: [**Annales du commerce extérieur, ... – N : 26. Septembre 1868. Paris, 1868, p. 18**].

<sup>9</sup> In a letter dated March 17, 1870 to the foreign consuls in Varna Adolphe-Salvator Tedeschi provides information concerning the movement of French ships in port Varna and asks for data concerning the ships sailing under flags of other nations: AMAE, CADN, Vice-consulat à Varna, art. 16 – Correspondance avec le poste de Roustchouk, les consulats français et étrangers, les autorités bulgares, et les particuliers – 15 janvier 1870–25 octobre 1873, N: 5.

even directly to the Ministry in Paris. Then the reports are handed over to the *Département de l'Agriculture, du Commerce et des Travaux publics* which in turn publishes them in the *Annales*. However not all of the reports make their way to publishing – in fact most of them remain in the offices without being published. Quite similar, or even more direct, is the Emmanuel-Marius connection with Brussels. Probably either the younger brother is more active or the Belgians are more *eager* for the information concerned because in the Belgian *Recueil consulaire...* are published the reports for twenty years, while in the French *Annales* – only for five.<sup>10</sup>

As already mentioned the other foreign consuls at that time also collected data concerning the movement of ships and goods through port Varna and these data should naturally be taken into account but the critical comparison signifies the much greater importance of the Tedeschi brothers' reports. There are at least two reasons for that – on one hand the brothers participate actively in local trade, and on the other – their almost uninterrupted forty years consular service which warrants experience and routine in fulfilling consular duties. In addition, discrepancies with data from various consular reports are by no means significant.<sup>11</sup>

### **Data concerning ships and goods movement through the port of Varna during the 19<sup>th</sup> century's third quarter**

The earliest reliable data date from end of 1840s and although not compiled as annual reports the information contained is likely to be sent by the Tedeschi brothers.<sup>12</sup> During 1847 in port Varna are discharged 110 ships with a total tonnage of 23 704 tons, while 7 ships with tonnage of 1 018 tons are loaded. Given these indicators the traffic through port Varna is significantly lower than in Constantinople, Braila, and Galati, but more intense compared to Beirut and Smyrna.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Some reports for Quai d'Orsay are compiled by Emmanuel-Marius who replaced his brother when on leave: AMAE, CADN, Série Constantinople – D – Varna, art. 2: Tableau de la Navigation française et étrangère dans le port de Varna pendant l'année 1856, Varna, le 31 Décembre 1856, Pour le Gérant du Vice-consulat de France en congé E. Tedeschi.

<sup>11</sup> The comparison with the British consular reports for the years 1860, 1863, 1865, 1866, 1870 and 1871 concerning data on number of ships passing through port Varna indicates completely identical numbers with those in Tedeschi brothers' reports, while for the remaining years the gaps are between one to five vessels. See: FO 195/1006 Copy of Report to F.O. on past and present conditions of British trade, & matters affecting British Commercial Interests, Rustchuk, December 29 1872, R.A.O. Dalyell.

<sup>12</sup> The French vice-consular office starts keeping register for ships sailing through port Varna in 1848–1854, though only data for 1854 (from June onward) are regularly described by months. Most probably many of the ships are military cargo and supplies to the Allied armies during the Crimean War (1853–1856). Therefore these data cannot be used in follow-up only for ships and goods movement through port Varna with commercial purposes. See the registers in: AMAE, CADN, Vice-consulat à Varna, Art. 39.

<sup>13</sup> [*Annales du commerce extérieur*, ... – N : 3. Janvier 1850. Paris, 1850, p. 32].

In 1848 imports in Varna consist of 14,540 packages containing variety of goods: coffee, cotton yarn, draper fabrics, sugar, black pepper, and other.<sup>14</sup> For 1857 the imported and exported goods profile remains the same though data are presented in a better visual way in form of the above mentioned reports. During that first post-war year the imports in Varna raise and reach 7 099 000 French francs, while the export amounts to 7 764 000 French francs. Imports involve textiles, coffee, sugar, iron, copper, salt, and more, while exports include wheat, barley, corn, tallow, wool, butter, cheese, firewood, poultry, flour, and more. Of all exported grain about ¼ is delivered to Marseille (40 000–45 000 cargo mostly wheat). French vessels participate rather rarely in that trade – they represent only about 1/9<sup>th</sup> of the entire navigation in port Varna. During the same year in the imports dominate vessels under Ottoman flag, followed by those under Austrian, Wallachian, French, etc. Vessels under Ottoman flag dominate exports too, followed by Austrian, Greek, Wallachian, Swedish, and more.<sup>15</sup>

The data published in the *Annales* are rather diverse in nature though among them may be identified such ones having paramount significance for analysis and summaries: import and export of goods and cash (*groups, parcels*), number of vessels, their crews and tonnages. These data are presented in summary tables below (**Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4**):

**Table 1**

Amount of the imports to and the exports from Varna during the years 1857–1859 according to the data published in “*Annales du commerce extérieur...*”<sup>16</sup>:

Year	Imports (in Fr. francs)	Exports (in Fr. francs)
1857	7 099 000	7 764 000
1858	7 509 769	6 837 119
1859	6 459 867	8 712 880

**Table 2**

Amount of the import to and the export from Varna during the years 1866–1872 according to the data published in “*Annales du commerce extérieur...*”<sup>17</sup>:

Year	Import of goods (fr.)	Money import (fr.)	Export of goods (fr.)	Money export (fr.)	Imports (number of ships)	Imports (tonnage)	Exports (number of ships)	Exports (tannage)
1866	13 232 000	16 563 536	18 373 000	3 446 087	690	197 625	693	198 101
1867	19 595 000	19 883 544	21 031 000	3 245 700	753	207 719	749	206 350

<sup>14</sup> [*Annales du commerce extérieur*, ... – N : 3. Janvier 1850. Paris, 1850, p. 9–10].

<sup>15</sup> [*Annales du commerce extérieur*, ... – N : 12. Septembre 1858. Paris, 1858, p. 5].

<sup>16</sup> [*Annales du commerce extérieur*, ... – N : 17. Mai 1862. Paris, 1862, p. 9].

<sup>17</sup> [*Annales du commerce extérieur*, ... – N : 26. Septembre 1868. Paris, 1868, p. 17–20 ; *Annales du commerce extérieur*, ... – N : 27. Janvier 1870. Paris, 1870, p. 66–67 ; *Annales du commerce extérieur*, ... – N : 28. Mai 1870. Paris, 1870, p. 47–48 ; *Annales du commerce extérieur*, ... – N : 30. Avril 1872. Paris, 1872, p. 142–143 ; *Annales du commerce extérieur*, ... – N : 31. Juillet 1875. Paris, 1875, p. 176–177].

<b>1868</b>	17 092 000	–	18 498 000	–	679	450 900	681	451 446
<b>1871</b>	9 254 000	–	11 652 000	–	–	–	–	–
<b>1872</b>	10 216 000	–	12 407 000	–	848	221 213	846	220 562

**Table 3**

Amount of the imports to and the exports from Varna during the years 1850–1873 according to data from the Archives diplomatiques du Ministère des Affaires étrangères de la République Française<sup>18</sup>:

<b>Year</b>	Number of ships (import/export)	Tonnage (import/export)	Crew numbers (import/export)	Imports (Fr. francs)	Exports (Fr. francs)
<b>1850</b>	295	31 161	1 618	24 740	919 634
<b>1851</b>	356	41 196	2 256	6 787 915	5 181 947
<b>1852</b>	434	87 340	6 531	6 687 375	5 749 407
<b>1853</b>	366	79 840	6 279	6 731 855	7 610 125
<b>1856</b>	519	84 920	7 056	–	–
<b>1858</b>	681	239 345	15 577	7 502 769	6 837 119
<b>1859</b>	640	187 811	12 719	6 259 867	8 712 880
<b>1860</b>	720	209 657	15 493	8 243 098	6 405 311
<b>1861</b>	705	172 177	13 532	11 093 476	12 377 753
<b>1863</b>	519	147 021	11 314	11 927 000	15 130 625
<b>1864</b>	621	169 913	11 771	12 420 000	17 530 000
<b>1865</b>	653	197 194	13 570	12 110 000	18 733 600
<b>1866</b>	690	197 615	13 086	13 232 000	18 373 000
<b>1868</b>				17 100 000 (goods)/ 11 040 000 (money in parcels)	18 500 000 (goods)/ 1 610 000 (money in parcels)
<b>1869</b>	575/ 679	161 693/ 184 839	9 904/ 11 349	10 287 175 (goods)/ 3 712 957,5 (money in parcels)	9 332 650 (goods)/ 1 536 925 (money in parcels)
<b>1870</b>	556/ 551	200 995/ 199 928	12 185/ 12 148	7 650 225	7 012 202 (goods)/ 1 650 282, 5 (money in parcels)
<b>1872</b>	848/ 846	221 213/ 220 562	13 119/ 13 093	10 215 510 (goods)/5 897 862 (money in parcels)	12 407 275 (goods)/7 540 119 (money in parcels)
<b>1873</b>	659/ 655	216 963/ 216 303	12 002/ 11 973	–	–

<sup>18</sup> AMAE, CADN, Série Constantinople – D – Varna, art. 2, art. 3; AMAE, CADN, Vice-consulat à Varna, art. 14, art. 16.

**Table 4**

Amount of the imports to and the exports from Varna during the years 1853–1878 according to the data published in the Belgian “Recueil consulaire”<sup>19</sup>:

Year	Exports (Fr. francs)	Imports (Fr. francs)	Number of ships Import/Export	Tonnage Import/Export
1853	7 610 125	6 574 300	–	–
1857	7 763 715	7 098 755	515	161 617
1858	6 837 119	7 502 769	681	239 345
1859	8 712 880	6 459 867	640	187 811
1860	6 405 311	8 243 098	720	209 637
1861	12 377 753	11 093 476	705/708	172 177/ 173 447
1862	14 488 000 (goods) + 986 742 (money in parcels)	10 098 000 (goods) + 4 817 351 (money in parcels)	490	106 970
1863	15 130 625 (goods) + 1 838 665 (money in parcels)	11 927 000 (goods) + 8 721 000 (money in parcels)	519	147 021
1864	17 530 000 (goods) + 3 170 000 (money in parcels)	12 420 000 (goods) + 10 775 000 (money in parcels)	621/ 620	169 913/ 169 676
1865	18 733 600 (goods) + 3 430 180 (money in parcels)	12 110 000 (goods) + 15 086 000 (money in parcels)	653/ 651	197 194/ 196 689
1866	18 273 000 (goods) + 3 446 087 (mon- ey in parcels)	13 232 000 (goods) + 16 563 536 (money in parcels)	690/ 693	197 625/ 198 101
1867	21 031 000 (goods) + 3 245 700 (mon- ey in parcels)	19 595 000 (goods) + 19 883 544 (money in parcels)	753/ 749	207 719/ 206 350
1869	6 497 175 (goods) + 3 712 957,5 (mon- ey in parcels)	8 332 650 (goods) + 1 536 925 (money in parcels)	535/ 538	161 593/ 162 654
1870	7 012 202 (goods) + 1 650 282,5 (mon- ey in parcels)	8 250 339,5 (goods) + 7 650 225 (money in parcels)	556	200 995

<sup>19</sup> [Royaume de Belgique... Bruxelles, 1858, p. 549–557. Rapport consulaire, Varna, Turquie, le 9 août 1858, E. Tedeschi]. See: [Michoff, 1941: 3–43; 46–49; 55–60; 63–65; 74–79; 82–84; 87–94].

<b>1871</b>	11 652 135	9 254 197	805/ 808	215 839/ 217 530
<b>1872</b>	12 407 275	10 215 510	848/ 846	221 213/ 220 562
<b>1873</b>	13 426 850	11 179 272	659/ 655	216 963/ 216 303
<b>1874</b>	14 985 891	11 025 857	658/ 663	167 925/ 169 022
<b>1875</b>	12 702 366 (goods) + 4 366 769 (mon- ey in parcels)	10 222 657 (goods) + 5 215 262 (money in parcels)	641/ 642	187 593/ 187 896
<b>1878</b>	9 076 325	16 949 065	638	178 062 (crew num- bers: 8 141)

### Data and consular report analysis

The data in the tables provide grounds for some important deductions and conclusions.

Import and export fluctuations during the 1950s may be explained with the Crimean War (1853–1856) which affected directly the region and upset its normal economic life cycles. During the second half of the decade as the situation stabilizes the data witness slight upturn trend causing import growth to 7 509 769 Fr. francs in 1858, while the export increaset to 8 712 880 Fr. francs during the next 1859. Still, these years provide the lowest values of both imports which vary between 6 and 8 million Fr. francs, and export: nearly 5 200 000 Fr. francs in 1851 and just over 6 400 000 Fr. francs in 1860.

The import and especially export decline in the beginning of sixties is due to port Varna's competitor Köstence (present Constanța in Romania) which is very successful especially following 4 Oct. 1860 when the railway Cernavodă – Köstence is commissioned, the first one in the entire region. The railway considerably shortens the distance between the great bend of Danube (and the ports located there) and the Black Sea coast. The British company responsible for the railway construction undertakes the task to make Köstence a better port.<sup>20</sup> The completed works improve significantly the existing port facilities, especially those serving for grain export from Dobrudzha to the European markets. During the following years Varna regained its leading position helped by the second regional railway connecting since 1866 the Black Sea port with Rustchuk and the port Rustchuk on the Danube. Along with familiar goods from previous periods in 1866 through port Varna are imported significant quantities of materials for the construction of Varna – Rustchuk railway (from Belgium), including the rails (imported from Norway). The highest levels of imports are reported in 1867 when these reach almost 19 600 000 Fr. francs as well as the highest numbers in exports – for 21 031 000 Fr. francs.

<sup>20</sup> [Annales du commerce extérieur, ... – N : 16. Juin 1861. Paris, 1861, p. 8].

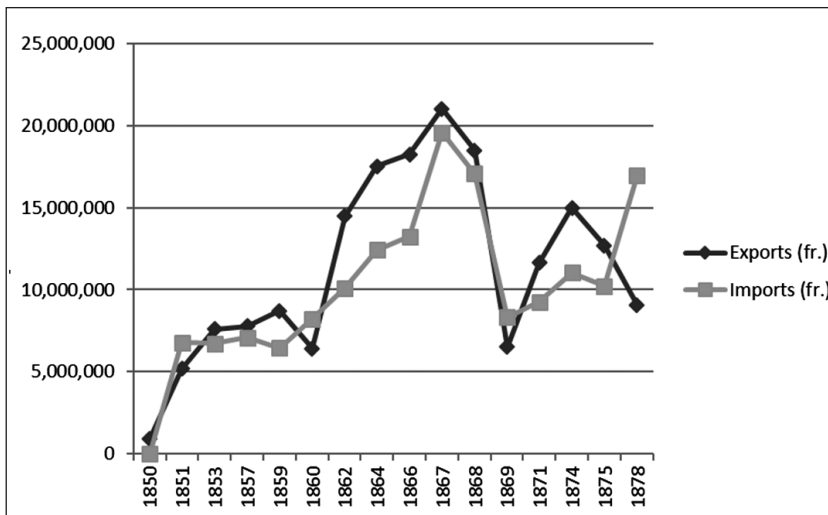
The poor harvest of 1868 causes sharp decline in the second half of the sixties. A special note inserted in the report that year states that the harvest is very poor. "Tous les produits, excepté le maïs, ont souffert de l'humidité. La plus grande partie des quantités exportées provient des réserves de la récolte de 1867".<sup>21</sup> The 1868 poor harvest impact is felt more significantly in 1869 and 1870, when both imports and exports fell down to 6–8 million Fr. francs each.

Traffic fluctuations during the seventies may be explained with the competition of cheap American wheat which makes already its way to the European market. Negative impact is also brought by the political upheavals on the Balkans during the Eastern Crisis of 1875–1878. This is the reason why during the *military* 1878 exports amount only to 9 million Fr. francs.

In order to present better the available data the best practice is to arrange it in graphic (see **Fig. 1, 2 and 3**).

Special place in the reports is devoted to the export and import of cash consignments generally known as *groups* (parcels). This practice emerges for the first time in 1852. It should be noted that the cash imports are equal and even higher as compared to imports of goods (for example for 1866 and 1867), while in exports the cash amounts (*groups*) are in folds less than the value of goods. It is very likely that the imported amounts, or at least a significant part of them, are intended for payments of goods bought in the region.

Some important conclusions can be deducted about the number of vessels and their tonnages. In the tables they are grouped by country of flag and by type – sailing ships and steamers. In general among the vessels passing through port Varna prevail those under Ottoman and Austrian flags, followed by the Greek, English, French, Egyptian, and more. The vessels passing through the port number more than ten different flags. During the fifties most vessels are



**Fig. 1.** Fluctuations of the imports to and the exports from the port of Varna (1850–1878)

<sup>21</sup> [Annales du commerce extérieur, ... – N : 30. Avril 1872. Paris, 1872, p. 143].

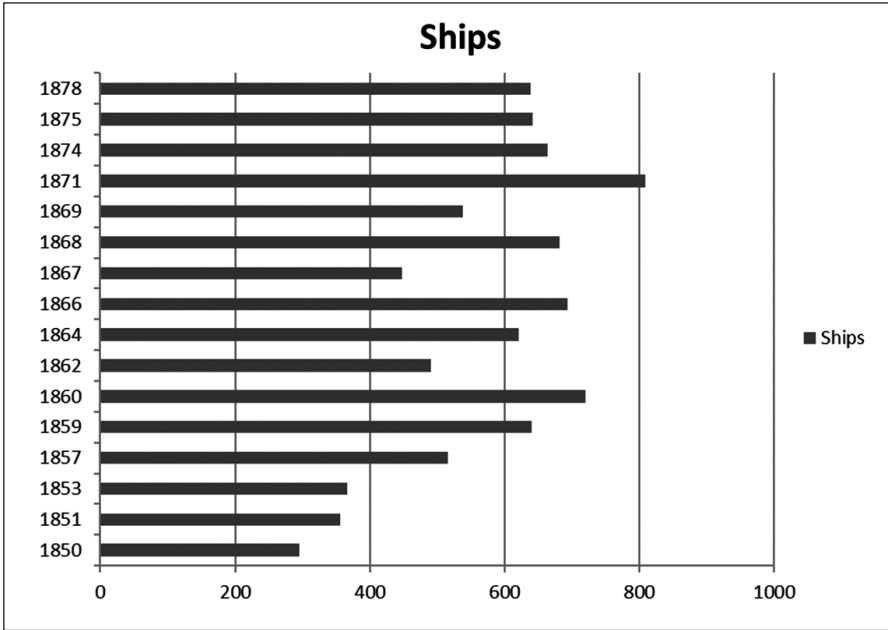


Fig. 2. Number of ships passed through the port of Varna (1850–1878)

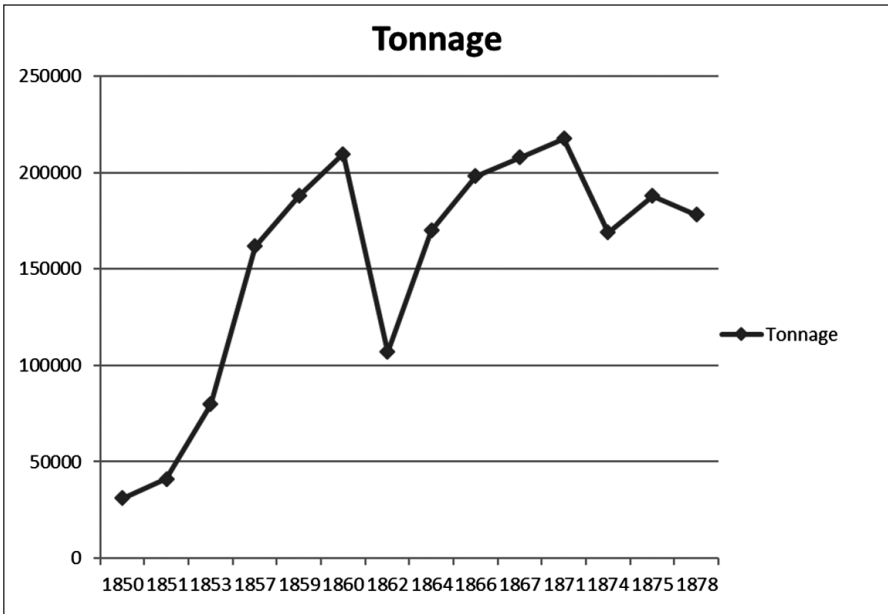


Fig. 3. Tonnage of the ships passed through the port of Varna (1850–1878)

Ottoman sailing ships, but later grew in numbers and gradually took preponderance the steamers (mostly Austrian, English, and French) – not so much in numbers, but in tonnage. The largest tonnage and the larger crew specified in the tables may be indicators that the number of the steamers passing through the port of Varna might have increased during the respective year.

Let's take as example 1869. During the same year the greatest number of vessels passing through port Varna are Austrian (11 sailing ships and 256 steamers), followed by Ottoman (195 sailing ships and 27 steamers), the Greek (44), the English (1 sailing ship and 30 steamers) and many more.

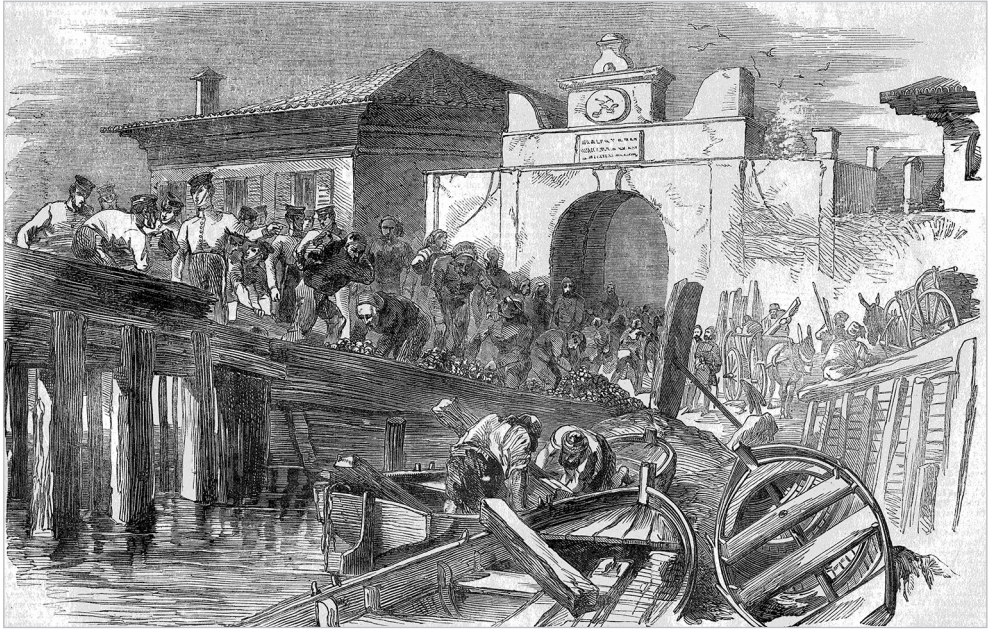
The smallest number of registered vessels is of 1857 – just 515, while for the entire decade the tonnage is just over 200 000 tons/year. The peak of vessels in terms of numbers is reached in 1872 – 848, while in terms of tonnage – in 1868 (451 446 tons, mostly from steamers).

The reports compiled by the Tedeschi brothers are critical but their impartial tone should also be noted. The accounts contain assessments which should be taken into consideration as expressed by businessmen participating directly in local trade. And if in communications with local authorities the consuls would most probably spare many of their critics, in the reports to their superiors in Rustchuk, Constantinople, Paris, and Brussels<sup>22</sup>, they feel bound to expose the truth about the real situation in the province subject to their reports in order to be useful for the European trade. The reports contain critical comments on behalf of local authorities who do not respect the property rights and even recur to coercion; there is no legal framework and functioning fair justice, the Courts are ill formed lacking in competent judges and even more – in widely accessible communications. One should keep in mind that the conditions in two of the main regional communications – the port Varna and the newly commissioned railway Varna – Rustchuk, are of priority in consular reports which often contain specific proposals for improvements. The Tedeschi brothers are convinced that there is a chance to expand the railway usefulness by making it not only main communication and transport road for North-East Bulgaria but as well for the entire Lower Danube region, though under condition that its fees be reduced to the fees of water transport and Varna, as last station is built up as a modern port. The 1870 report reads the following: “Il serait pourtant fort nécessaire pour activer le trafic de la voie ferrée, et économiser au commerce les frais énormes du transport de la station au magasin et de ce dernier à bord des bâtiments. Une économie dans les frais et une diminution sur le prix du trafic permettraient au commerce de faire transporter à Varna tous les produits des environs du chemin de fer, ceux de la Valachie et du haut Danube. Ce projet devrait donc être pris en sérieuse considération”.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Although having similar structure and content the Tedeschi brothers' reports differ in the fact that those addressed to the French diplomatic offices contain in their conclusions much more critical notes, analyses, and viable proposals for improving the situation in the region serviced by the consular section in Varna, than those addressed to the Belgian departments.

<sup>23</sup> AMAE, CADN, Vice-consulat à Varna, art. 16 – Correspondance avec le poste de Roustchouk, les consulats français et étrangers, les autorités bulgares, et les particuliers – 15 janvier 1870–25 octobre 1873, Varna, le 31 décembre 1870.



**Fig. 4.** The port Varna during the Crimean War. Lithography published in *The Illustrated London News* ( № 689, June 24, 1854)

The Tedeschi brothers do never miss to praise when necessary. The 1869 report contains flattering statements about Varna's former mayor – Riffaat Effendi, promoted to *Pacha et Mutessarif de Larisse*, who “...a dotée la ville d’une excellente chaussée qui conduit jusqu’à Pazargik (present day Dobrich) dans l’intérieur à 10 h. d’ici ; et d’une autre conduisant jusqu’à la station du chemin de fer, chose indispensable et de laquelle ses prédécesseurs n’avaient pas pris le moindre soin. Le départ de Riffaat Effendi a été justement regretté, car il est hors de doute, que sous son intelligence et son activité, la ville aurait pris une toute autre tournure”.<sup>24</sup>

### **What do comparisons indicate? Port Varna in regional trade during the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.**

In conclusion it should be noted that the information provided in the consular reports from Varna is exceptionally valuable and that its analysis certainly improves our perception about trade and economic processes in a major part of the Bulgarian lands during the third quarter the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For a period without official economic statistics the Tedeschi brothers reports fulfil to a certain level the void, thus turning into a first class source.

<sup>24</sup> AMAE, CADN, N: 15/70 – A M. Podhayski, Gérant le Consulat de France à Roustchouk, le 13 mai 1870.



**Fig. 5.** Adolphe-Salvator Tedeschi



**Fig. 6.** Emmanuel-Marius Tedeschi

There is no doubt that Varna establishes itself as one of the largest and main ports in Northeastern Bulgaria, Dobrudzha, and the West Black Sea coast during the period under consideration. It is indicated clearly when comparing it with the remaining regional ports. For example, from 1864 to 1871 port Varna is visited in average by 680 vessels while during the same period in port K ostence (present-day Constan a in Romania) the average annual berth is for 416 vessels.<sup>25</sup> In most of the compared years, however, the vessels anchored in K ostence have greater tonnage than those in Varna bay. Yet the advantage of Varna lies in the fact that the city is greater and more important trade centre at that time and in this capacity attracts larger inflow of goods and passengers which increases significantly after the commissioning of Varna – Rustchuk railway. For the growing importance of port Varna testifies the fact that the steamers of the Austrian company Lloyd, serving the line Varna – Constantinople, since 1870 begin three weekly visits to the port.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> My calculations based on data in Rustchuk English consul Sir Robert Alexander Osborne Dalzell of the Binns: FO 195/1006 Copy of Report to F.O. on past and present conditions of British trade, & matters affecting British Commercial Interests, Rustchuk, December 29 1872, R.A.O. Dalzell.

<sup>26</sup> AMAE, CADN, Vice-consulat   Varna, art. 16 – Correspondance avec le poste de Roustchouk, les consulats fran ais et  trangers, les autorit s bulgares, et les particuliers – 15 janvier 1870–25 octobre 1873, Varna, le 31 d cembre 1870.

There is another Black sea port where mostly grains from Dobrudzha are loaded – the one in Balchik but being with significantly smaller capacity than the ports in Varna and K stence it lacks any regularly collected detailed information in the consular reports. As far as the Lower Danube ports – Braila, Galati, Sulina, are concerned, their traffic through is greater even in the previous period (1930s – 1950s) but as these ports serve the traffic for the lands North of the Danube – Wallachia, Moldova, and the South Russian territories, they are not competing with the West Black Sea ports traffic.<sup>27</sup>

The Italian documents from the 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> centuries mention Varna as the *port of Zagora* („*porto del Zagora*”). The political meaning of *Zagora* is associated with medieval Bulgaria, while the geographical – with the lands between Danube, the Balkan Mountains, and the Danube river gorge *Iron Gate* [Gyuzelev, 1981: 162]. To some extent this Old Glory returns during the 19<sup>th</sup> century when port Varna gains back its importance and turns into major port for the Bulgarian lands’ export and import trade in the Black sea region and in direction to the Mediterranean and Western Europe.

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<sup>27</sup> For example the average number of ships visiting the port Sulina for the period 1864–1871 is 2 570, and most of them serve the traffic from the Danube to Odessa and back: FO 195/1006 Copy of Report to F.O. on past and present conditions of British trade, & matters affecting British Commercial Interests, Rustchuk, December 29 1872, R.A.O. Dalzell. In the period 1843–1852 the average annual number of ships visiting port Galati is 523, of port Braila – 894, and of port Odessa – 1 058. See: [Ardeleanu, 2014: 271].

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Correspondence address:

**Ivan Roussev** – Professor, Dr.Sc.  
University of economics, Department  
of Social Sciences and Humanities  
77, Kniaz Boris I Blvd.  
9002 Varna  
Tel.: (+ 359) 886 86 6175  
E-mail: ivroussev@yahoo.com