within these two economic sectors grew in tandem. British interest, at about the same time—late 18th and early 19th centuries—in the potential of the Egyptian economy to export high quality cotton for the British textile sector equally increased, continuing strong thereafter. Following the annexation of Egypt in 1882, British and Greeks became even more active in the London-Alexandria-Cairo-Istanbul spheres of operations and contacts. Whilst not being a main axis in these contacts Izmir was nevertheless able to benefit from them. These were formed in parallel ‘internal’ networks, within the Greeks or the British; however these networks also went across ethno-linguistic boundaries, although among businessmen of a similar socio-economic level. Both groups used networks of friendship to establish and maintain such contacts. It was almost expected for interrelationships amongst ‘friends’ to continue, even going from one generation to another, as the Reynolds and Rodocanachi long-established partnership illustrates. Networks thus constructed were too valuable not to be maintained and if need be resuscitated.

Networks of business and kinship: the families of Barff and Rees

The Barff family business was initially based in markets in Britain and Greece before coming to Izmir, in this case the second generation, where they established interlocking kinship networks and an active participation in Izmir’s businesses, too. The founder of the family business was Samuel Barff, a merchant banker from Wakefield in N. England, active in marine insurance too, who went to Zante in 1816—a year after the end of the Napoleonic Wars and a year before the merchant house of Ralli Brothers, who had already agencies in a number of markets in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, went themselves to London, where they established their headquarters. Upon arrival to Zante Samuel Barff established the headquarters of a growing currents export business going on to establish agencies in London, Liverpool as well as in other Greek markets. By 1846 he was one of the most important currents exporters to Britain trading as Barff, Hancock & Co. with agencies in Patras and Cephalonia. In Zante he married

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18 The National Archives: United Kingdom, Kew Gardens, BT 31/17852 (89976), Rodocanachi Reynolds & Co. Ltd. Hereafter these archives will be referred to as TNA.