The National Museum in Krakow Studies and Research Materials

MUZEUM NARODOWE W KRAKOWIE

The Ottoman Orient in Renaissance Culture

Papers from the International Conference at the National Museum in Krakow June 26–27, 2015

The Ottoman Orient in Renaissance Culture

Conference carried out within the framework of the project

Ottomans & Europeans
Reflecting on Five Centuries of Cultural Relations

Organiser: The National Museum in Krakow

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Edited by
Robert Born and Michał Dziewulski
in collaboration with Kamilla Twardowska

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Table of Contents

Introduction

In the last decade, specialists from a broad range of historical disciplines have focused on new aspects of the Renaissance period. Alongside classical fields of research, such as the rediscovery of Classical Antiquity and its impact on the arts and sciences and the rise of a new sense of self-awareness, which had a long-lasting impact on the development of European culture, the contacts to the realm of the new political and military power that rose in the 14th century in the Middle East, the Ottoman Empire, gained more and more importance.[1] The period between the middle of the 15th and 17th centuries, marked by the crucial events of the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the Peace Treaty of Zsitvatorok, signed in 1606 between the Ottoman and the Habsburg empires, and the break in the long-lasting peace between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ottoman Empire soon after 1620, certainly was shaped by a series of military conflicts and the rapid expansion of the Ottoman Empire in South-Eastern and East-Central Europe. These developments gave rise to the 'Fear of the Turk', a phenomenon that spread across all layers of society.[2] Nearly all of them simultaneously developed a rising interest in the structure of the Ottoman Empire as a new military superpower. The new printing technique facilitated the production of a huge variety of publications. These pictorial and textual representations of the 'Turks' (often meaning 'Muslims' or something 'Islamic'), disseminated through books, single-leaf prints and pamphlets, combined ethnographic information with polemics and propaganda.[3]

Ideas formulated against the background of the confrontation with the expanding Ottoman Empire were a part of discussions in past years that arrived at a definition of European values or the relationship between Christianity and Islam, such as that found in the *Dialogue with a Persian* about Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (1350–1425), which was quoted by Pope Benedict XVI in 2006 in Regensburg,[4] or the *Constantinopolitana clades* of Enea Silvio Piccolomini (1405–1464), the later Pope Pius II. The reference to the common family of values put forward by Piccolomini in his oration at the Imperial Diet in Frankfurt in 1454: *Europa, id est patria, domus propria, sedes nostra* …, as an argument to justify the war against the Ottoman Empire, has been repeatedly taken up in recent

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1 Guthmüller and Kühlmann 2000; Paris, Venice and New York 2006–2007; Contadini and Norton 2013.

2 Delumeau 1978, pp. 262–272; Schulze 1978.

3 Höfert 2003; Bisaha 2004; Meserve 2008; Smith 2014.

4 Martels 2013.

times, especially in debates on Turkey's application to accede to the European Economic Community.[5] On the other hand, stereotypes of the 'Turks' as arch-enemies, a view that developed in the context of direct confrontation with the Ottoman Empire, are revived cyclically and have even been exploited deliberately in recent times.[6] This is also the case for large parts of South-East and East-Central Europe, which were part of the Ottoman Empire or affiliated to the Sublime Porte as tributary states.[7] During the processes of national emancipation, the memories of the Ottoman period were often transformed into narratives of oppression ('Turkish yoke'), which emphasized the antagonism that existed between the respective nations and their Ottoman overlords.[8]

Facing these arguments and imagological constructs, the present volume tries to develop different objectives: the deconstruction of the different stereotypes coined during the Renaissance, on the one hand, and, on the other, the illustration of the strong trade links and significant journeys to the East undertaken by diplomats and artists, links that existed even during periods of conflict between the two sides. In addition to this, it puts special focus on the exchange, interaction and entanglement of the Ottoman Empire and East-Central Europe. This historical region, the core of which was formed by the historical Kingdoms of Hungary, Bohemia and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, had played a key role not only as the theatre of military conflicts with the Ottoman Empire but also as the field of intense cultural contact and entanglement. Due to the fact that the different modes of interchange between the Ottoman Orient and Europe have been analysed for decades mainly with a view of the western part of the continent,[9] East-Central Europe moved into the focus mostly in recent times.[10]

The expansion of the Ottoman Empire proceeded through various phases of power relations between the states and peoples of the invaded lands and the empire itself. By the second half of the 16th century, a more or less stable system of tributary states was formed. The status as an Ottoman tributary state had been treated mainly within the frameworks of national historiographies. It was only in recent times that a comparative perspective was adopted in the context of a re-assessment of the history of the empire itself. The shift of perspective from 'Ottoman yoke' to 'Pax Ottomanica' facilitated a more nuanced understanding of the history of Ottoman-dominated Europe.[11]

The composite state character of the Ottoman Empire and the negotiation between the imperial and domestic perspectives (i.e., of foreign powers) are the focus of the first section of this conference volume—'The Ottoman Empire and its Neighbours. Internal Power Negotiations, Diplomacy and Cross-Cultural Exchanges'.

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5 Helmrath 2007.

6 Feichtinger and Heiss 2013.

7 Kármán and Kunčević 2013.

8 Todorova 1996; Sindbaek and Hartmuth 2011.

9 Paris, Venice and New York 2006–2007; Contadini and Norton 2013; Firges and Dimitriades 2014.

10 İstanbul 1999; Atasoy and Uluç 2012; Ács and Székely 2012; Born and Puth 2014.

11 Ágoston 2003; Kármán and Kunčević 2013.

In his essay, **Radu Păun** (Paris) brings a long-term perspective to the relations between the tributary principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, situated on the northern borders of the Ottoman Empire, and illustrates the different processes of communication and negotiation between the centre and periphery. These processes facilitated the adoption of new political ideas and values and promoted in the long run new frameworks of power within both principalities as well as with a view to the relationship between the tributaries and 'direct' subjects of the Padishah. A new perspective, this time from the centre of power, has been adopted by **Suraiya Faroqhi** (Istanbul) with a view to the political and economic development in Dubrovnik (Ragusa) in 1618. Based on registers from archives in Istanbul, Faroqhi illustrates the Ottoman perspective on the political and economic development in Dubrovnik (Ragusa) on the eve of the Thirty Years' War. This view from the centre of power also sheds light on the Ottoman polities with regard to the Adriatic, and especially to Venice, the powerful rival of Dubrovnik.

The Serenissima was not only one of the most powerful rivals of the Ottoman Empire for domination of the Mediterranean region but also, at the same time, the power in Italy that could look back on the longest tradition of diplomatic links and trading contacts with the Orient. The Ottoman conquest of Constantinople not only gave rise to the 'Fear of the Turk' but also promoted admiration for the new emerging military power. A number of Italian city-states, such as Florence and Ferrara, courted the favour of the sultan, hoping to strengthen their own position in disputes on the Italian peninsula. A new aspect of the contacts between Italy and the Ottoman Empire in the Renaissance is illuminated by **Daniela Sogliani** (Mantua) in her contribution on the contacts between Mantua and the Sublime Porte. By evaluating for the first time a series of documents in the State Archive of Mantua, Sogliani illustrates the development of contacts between the two realms over the course of almost three centuries and introduces a series of new aspects related to the reception of the Ottoman Orient in Renaissance Italy.

Diplomacy, and especially the exchange of gifts, played a key role in this process of cross-cultural exchange. This aspect of the history of diplomacy and foreign policy has earned an increased awareness within the field of historical as well as art-historical research during the last decade. Studies on the performative aspects of the diplomatic ceremonial as well as those on the material culture of diplomacy focused mainly on western initiatives at the Sublime Porte.[12] A reverse perspective on the Ottoman practices of giving diplomatic gifts in the 15th and 16th centuries has been adopted by **Hedda Reindl-Kiel** (Bonn) in her essay. Based on an analysis of the small group of records of these practices, Reindl-Kiel illustrates how the graded strategies of gift exchange in the pre-modern Ottoman Empire as well as in other parts of the Islamic world functioned primarily as indicators of power relations.

Diplomats travelling to non-Christian lands, primarily to the Ottoman Empire, played a key role in the transfer of information about the political structures and religious customs in these realms as well as of the images of the 'Turks' as the 'Other'. Different aspects

12 Burschel 2007; Rudolph 2013; Burschel and Vogel 2014.

of these processes are being addressed in the contribution in the second section of this volume "Cultural Translations and Imagological Constructs. 'Turks' as 'the Others' in the Literatures of East-Central Europe".

Natalia Królikowska (Warsaw) illustrates in her essay the circulation of information on the Ottoman Empire within the realm of western diplomacy as well as the different strategies of construction of the image of the 'Turk' according to the changing political framework, based on first-hand experience of diplomats in Istanbul. Next to the stereotype of the cruel and barbarous 'Turk', there existed another picture based on the experience of diplomats at the Sublime Porte that used positive elements of the Ottoman system as a basis for a critique of the contemporary situation in Western Europe.

The diplomatic contacts with the Sublime Porte also promoted the studies of Turkish and other oriental languages.[13] In the context of this development, the East-Central European states started to develop a network of specialists at a very early stage. The Principality of Transylvania, a tributary of the Ottoman sultan, developed already in the 17th century a system of interpreters and translators.[14] In 1766, King Stanisław II August Poniatowski (r. 1764–1795) founded a Turkish language school in Istanbul to be attended by Polish diplomats.[15] Specialists working in this environment played an important role in the process of 'Translating the Turk' (Peter Burke), i.e., the transfer of concepts and images related to the Ottoman Empire, to the European public.[16] Publications such as translations of popular works like the diary of Constantine of Ostrovica, also called the 'Polish janissary' despite his Serbian origin, and *The present state of the Ottoman Empire* (1668), written by the British Consul Paul Rycaut (1629–1700), enjoyed considerable popularity in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Beside these titles, a series of other Polish publications existed and were even translated into other languages, including Szymon Starowolski's *Dwor Cesarza Tureckiego y Residencya iego w Konstantynopolu* [The Turkish Emperor's Court and his Residence in Constantinople] from 1646.[17] This rich body of publications stands as the focus of the essays of **Ewa Siemieniec-Gołaś** (Krakow) and **Julia Krajcarz** (Krakow), who both devote special attention to terminology of Turkish origin, some of which defined professions and developed a fascinating longevity in the Polish language. In other cases, especially terminology related to political hierarchies or religious rituals and institutions, the Turkish terms prevailed, which can be seen as part of a strategy to mark the different character of the Ottoman Orient.[18] Different strategies of translation and also of adaptation are illustrated by **Pál Ács** (Budapest) with a view of the works of literature from regions on the borders between Hungary, the Habsburg realm and the Ottoman Empire. This area of military conflict not only witnessed the emergence of a 'law of

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13 Babinger 1919

14 Kármán 2014.

15 Majda 1997.

16 Burke 2012.

17 Cf., Kupiszewska 2012.

18 For more on this strategy of 'foreignizing' (i.e. 'exotizing'), see: Burke 2012, pp. 146–147.

the borderland,' with its own ethical code of honour, but also a hybrid form of poetry in which oriental elements were blended with western forms.

The probably richest forms of integration and adaptation of the Ottoman Orient during the Renaissance are discussed in the last section 'Between Churches, Residences and Battlefields. Oriental Artefacts in the Material Culture of East-Central Europe'. **Emese Pásztor** (Budapest) presents the rich treasure of Oriental textiles preserved in the Christian churches of Transylvania and the former Royal Hungary, where the precious fabrics and rugs were used by nearly all religious confessions. The liturgical use of Oriental textiles is also discussed by **Beata Biedrońska-Słota** (Krakow) in her essay illustrating the manifold influences from the Ottoman Orient on artistic production in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the Renaissance as part of the emergence of 'Sarmatism'. This concept characterizing Polish culture during the Early Modern period, which has been under discussion in recent years,[19] forms the basis for **Suat Alp's** (Ankara) analysis of the different processes of reception and adaptation between Poland-Lithuania and the Islamic Orient.

The contributions gathered in this volume were part of the scientific conference 'The Ottoman Orient in Renaissance Culture' organised by the National Museum in Krakow on 26th and 27th June 2015. The event took place within the framework of the multidisciplinary project 'Ottomans & Europeans: Reflecting on Five Centuries of Cultural Relations', which brought together institutions from Belgium, Austria, Poland, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey, and was supported by the European Commission. This ambitious initiative was a journey through five centuries of shared cultural history between Europe and the Ottoman Empire (today, Turkey). By means of exhibitions, conferences and so-called 'blind dates' between artists, the project was an attempt to raise awareness relating to cultural interaction between Europe and the Ottoman World, to stimulate creative encounters between scholars and artists from both sides today and to raise meaningful questions about past as well as current relations in order to move towards a common future.

The central pillars of the project were two exhibitions on the perception of the Ottoman Orient during the Renaissance, which had been on display at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels under the title 'The Sultan's World,' and at the National Museum in Krakow under the title 'Ottomania. The Ottoman Orient in Renaissance Art'. The conference followed the same principles. The geographical scope was limited to those European countries that were in the direct vicinity and were in cultural or military relations with the Ottoman Empire in the period between 1453 and 1620. These were foremost, Venice and Florence, the tributary states of Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania, Hungary, the Holy Roman Empire and Poland-Lithuania, called after 1569 the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Polish-Lithuanian aspects take proportionally much space in this volume. It was also no coincidence that both the exhibition and the conference took place in Krakow, the former capital of the Polish Kingdom and the seat of Polish kings. Being a territorial power at that time, Poland-Lithuania also had a special position in relations with the Ottoman Empire during

19 Długosz and Scholz 2012; Jasienski 2014; Schneiderheinze 2014.

the reign of Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520–1566)[20] with whom an 'eternal' truce was signed, an exceptional legal act in Ottoman policy at that time. Poland-Lithuania was the only state in Europe that enjoyed over 100 years of peace with the empire at that time, which led to fruitful commerce and facilitated an intense cultural exchange between the two neighbours. The conference was also a perfect opportunity to discuss topics that could not be illustrated with the artworks on display at both venues of the exhibition, i.e., mainly politics and literature. *Ipso facto*, the conference volume has become a natural complement to the exhibition catalogue[21] and closing to the scientific part of the 'Ottomans & Europeans' project.

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[20] Süleyman the Lawgiver (1494–1566), called in Europe 'the Magnificent'. Both agnomens are in use in this volume interchangeably.

[21] Brussels–Kraków 2015. Along with the English version, the catalogue is also available in three other languages: in Polish, as *Ottomania. Osmański Orient w sztuce renesansu*; in French, *Le Empire des Sultan*; and, in Dutch, *Het rijk van der sultan*.

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I. The Ottoman Empire and its Neighbours. Internal Power Negotiations, Diplomacy and Cross-Cultural Exchanges

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Conquered by the (S)word: Governing the Tributary Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia (16th–17th Centuries)

Currently, a large body of literature is dealing with what has been called the Renaissance 'image of the Turk', and the topic has not ceased to fascinate both historians and the readership.[1] Yet, against all stereotypes, the Ottoman Empire was not a uniform and static reality, nor was it an exclusively Muslim society, but an uncommonly multifaceted world, gathering together a wide variety of communities, each of them living according to its own rules and traditions. This diversity often confused Western observers and proved to be problematic for today's historians as well, for they were and are generally tempted to overemphasize the unifying discourse produced by the centre. In fact, as recent research shows, legal status was a changing situational construct in which negotiations between imperial and local perspectives and between rules and exceptions played a crucial role.

This essay is devoted to the tributary principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, which most scholars see as 'classic examples' of the Ottoman Empire's tributaries, if a classic situation even exists when speaking of such a complex political system.[2] Situated on the northern borders of the empire, the two countries played the role of buffer states between the Ottoman world and Christian Europe, thereby representing an interesting, even intriguing, case study of how the Ottomans and the locals understood and shaped their mutual relationship.

Wallachia paid for the first time a tribute to the Porte at the end of the 14th century, while Moldavia did it around 1455.[3] In both cases, local princes considered this situation as temporary. Yet, the Ottomans had a different opinion; for them, the Wallachian and Moldavian princes were always tributary, thus every attempt to stop the payment of tribute was seen as an act of betrayal and rebellion.

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1 Among the recent works on this topic, see: Höfert 2003; Bisaha 2004; Pippidi 2012.

2 See: the papers published in Kármán and Kunčević 2013.

3 See: Maxim 1993, pp. 206–240; Panaite 2013/I, pp. 286–297, with full bibliography.

This view is part the reason why Mehmed the Conqueror invaded Wallachia in 1462, defeated the local prince Vlad the Impaler (Rom.: Ţepeş, r. 1456–1462), and replaced him with his own protégé. This scenario repeated itself in 1538, when Süleyman the Lawgiver (r. 1502–1566) attacked Prince Petru Rareş (r. 1527–1538, 1541–1546) of Moldavia and forced him to leave the country. In both cases, the sultans declared the two principalities to be 'conquered territories', but in both cases again, they did not annex them into the empire, as they did with other countries in the region. Admittedly, they replaced the local rulers with their own clients, but the latter belonged to the local dynasties as well and did not change the system of succession. Moreover, in 1541, when his protégé in Moldavia, Ştefan, called 'the Locust' (Rom.: Lăcustă, r. 1538–1541), was assassinated by the nobles, Süleyman did not retaliate but instead—quite surprisingly—granted the throne again to his former enemy, Petru Rareş, who had the courage to appear before the emperor and repent of his former actions. This was the first time that a Moldavian prince received his throne from the hands of the sultan in Istanbul.[4]

The sultan's (s)word

It is generally accepted that Süleyman's victory over Petru Rareş marked a turning point in relations between the empire and the two principalities. The political context fully explains this situation, for Süleyman's military achievements eliminated all the competing powers in the region. As Hungary was defeated and partially annexed (1526 and 1541) to the empire and Poland signed a treaty of 'eternal truce' with the Porte (1533), Moldavian and Wallachian princes had no choice but to accept the sultan's suzerainty.[5]

In this context, Süleyman began to consider the two principalities as 'conquered territories' belonging to his 'well-protected Dominions' (*Memâlik-i mahrûsamız*), while their princes were seen as 'slaves and tribute-payers' (*kûlum ve harâcgüzarımdır*).[6] From then on, this relationship between the two sides would not be regulated by treaties ('*ahdname*s), as was the case before, but on *berât*s (documents of appointment), through which the sultan transferred a part of his prerogatives to a tributary prince and stipulated the latter's duties in respect to the Porte, and through orders (*hüküm*s).

These orders are practically the same as those dispatched to the provincial governors within the empire, which means that legally speaking, Wallachian and Moldavian princes were assimilated to the 'inner' Ottoman office holders.[7] Selim II (r. 1566–1574) emphasized this point, stating that Wallachian and Moldavian princes were 'just like other governors

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4 Rezachevici 2001, pp. 170, 563–567, 581–583. However, revolts against the Porte occurred regularly during the subsequent decades. See: Andreescu 1980 and Andreescu 1989; Păun 2013/I. Conversely, the Ottomans repeatedly threatened princes and local elites that they would transform the two countries into Ottoman provinces governed by Muslim officials; Panaite 2013/I, pp. 368–371.

5 These events are by far more complex than I can present here; see: Panaite 2000; Panaite 2013/I.

6 Panaite 2001, p. 27; Panaite 2013/I, pp. 353–355 and 436–438.

7 Panaite 2003; Panaite 2013/I; Panaite 2013/II.

and other subjects of mine appointed for guarding and defending the provinces, and for ruling and protecting the subjects', so that 'their dismissal and appointment and everything related to their capture or their release, are matters that depend only on ourselves and concerns us [directly and exclusively]'.[8] In other words, the sultan openly declared that he possessed the 'exclusive right to appoint and dismiss at will the princes of the two countries.' As Süleyman the Lawgiver stated: 'When a servant of mine, having been shielded with [my] imperial favour, did not appreciate the fairness and the grace of which he has benefitted, [and he] behaved erratically and sowed disorder and discord within the country and among the subjects my servants […], it is necessary and indispensable for My Sublime Imperial State to reject and eradicate the mischief and the sedition of such a villain; therefore, he was dismissed and another servant of mine has received the grace to replace him.'[9]

The facts and the words matched each other well: of the 13 princes who reigned in Wallachia between 1545 and 1594, 11 were appointed by the sultan. Moreover, almost all of them were dismissed at least once in their career, but only two regained their throne, while the others died either under the executioner's sword or in exile, or they converted to Islam. This is the first sign that the 'rotation principle', a form of political control which was already in use within the empire, had started to apply to the twin tributary principalities as well. Thus, the sultan gradually became the master of time, in the sense that he not only distributed power and favour but also the specific period during which the recipient was entrusted to benefit from them. Logically, 'the state's control over the time in office kept office holders focused on the centre',[10] which means that the main scene of the decision-making process moved to Constantinople, where the competing candidates to the Wallachian and Moldavian thrones spent time and resources trying to gain the sultan's favour. In other words, they started to conform to the Ottoman discourse, thereby acknowledging the sultan's position as supreme dispenser of power. A pool of pretenders gradually formed, employed by the Porte as instruments of pressure and sources of continual provocation against one another. Their life within the empire as candidates or hostages[11] obliged them to interact with the imperial authorities, to learn the Ottoman values and customs, and thereby to become integrated within the Ottoman cultural order.

Relevant research has been accomplished on the development of the juridical and historical framework of the Ottoman-Romanian relationship,[12] but we still know little of the Wallachian and Moldavian pretenders' and princes' life in the imperial capital. Likewise, many questions are to be solved concerning the consequences of the Ottoman suzerainty

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8 Documente turceşti 1976, pp. 99–101 (letter to the Polish king, 15–24 April 1572); Panaite 2013/I, p. 365.

9 Veinstein and Berindei 1987, p. 174 (29–31 January 1545) (my translations from the French version).

10 Barkey 1996, p. 463; Păun 2013/I.

11 Many of them were enrolled in the *müteferrika* corps, more precisely '*müteferikka* of the sovereign' (*hünkâr müteferikkaları*), and they received a salary (*mevâcib*) or a concession of certain revenues (*zeâmet*); Maxim 2012, p. 288.

12 Maxim 1993; Maxim 2008; Panaite 2013/I.

upon the Moldo-Wallachian political system in the long run. All these issues are crucial for a sound understanding of how ideas concerning power, authority, and governance circulated throughout the Ottoman world and of the role they played in the continuous process of shaping and reshaping the political culture of its various components.

This essay deals with only one precise aspect of these processes, namely, the succession to power in Wallachia and Moldavia, a topic that could provide illuminating insight into the dynamics of the relationship between the Porte and its tributaries during the early modern period.

The 'old privileges', or paradise lost

A still widespread idea is that the increasing Ottoman control over the two countries provoked and came along with the usurpation of the 'old privileges' the Porte had granted to them through 'capitulations' (*'ahdname*), which regulated the relations between the two sides. One of the 'natural rights' that Moldavian and Wallachian elites would have held was the election of the ruling princes, a right that the Porte repeatedly infringed, especially during the 17th century, and finally abrogated at the beginning of the 18th century by appointing as prince a 'foreigner'—Nikolaos Mavrokordatos, the former grand dragoman of the empire (1709 in Moldavia and 1716 in Wallachia). According to more than one author, this event opened a new political regime, called 'Phanariot' or 'Turk-Phanariot'. Originating in the writings of Dimitrie Cantemir, Prince of Moldavia (r. 1710–1711),[13] this idea occupied a large place in the memoranda that Moldo-Wallachian elites addressed to the great European powers in the last decades of the 18th century, trying to persuade them—and especially Orthodox Russia—to free their 'Christian brothers' oppressed by the 'unbelievers'.[14]

This interpretation, adopted and developed by Romantic historiography and, in recent times, under the communist regime, is sometimes confirmed by contemporary witnesses. For Antonio Tiepolo (1576): 'è in libertá del Gran Signore mutar loro il vaivoda, con la mantiene del quale vuole il pascia [the Grand Vizier] guadagnar grandemente, anzi basta l'uso che possa mutarsi, perchè colui che governa per fuggir l'esser depresso, sia continuamente pronto al donare'.[15] Venetian diplomats also point out that this auction logic corrupted the old local customs to such an extent that no principle was respected anymore, the two countries 'essendo poste all'incanto e date a chi più offerisce senza alcun rispetto del sangue antiquo de'principi'.[16] Money, in huge amounts, prevailed over the

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13 Cantemir 1973, pp. 124–127 and 140–141; Cantemir 2002, p. 400 (Annotations to Book II, Chap. IV).

14 Georgescu 1970; Panaite 2013/II.

15 Alberi 1844, pp. 133 and 144.

16 *Ibidem*, p. 388 (Lorenzo Bernardo 1592).

legitimacy of pretenders, who thus might easily succeed in providing some fake evidence attesting to their princely origins and thereby receiving the throne.[17]

These opinions are partially confirmed by other sources. The tribute (*harac*) paid by Wallachian princes, for instance, increased from 15,000–20,000 golden coins during the first half of the 16th century up to 104,000 in 1583. Likewise, Moldavia paid around 30,000 golden pieces soon after 1541 and 66,000 in 1583.[18] The value of the gifts (*pișkeș*) increased in an even more accelerated manner. To give an example, while in 1535 Radu Paisie (r. 1535–1545) paid 20,000 golden coins for getting the throne, in 1630 Moise Movilă (r. 1630–1634, with intermissions) spent no less than 800,000 for the same purpose.[19] It should be stressed, however, that in the majority of cases an increase in tribute and gifts was proposed to the sultan by the princes and pretenders themselves, who tried in this way to gain or maintain their power.[20]

Later sources also indicate that the main beneficiaries of these 'abuses' were the Istanbulite 'Greeks', who succeeded in attaining the Wallachian and Moldavian thrones instead of the 'locals'. The first information of the kind comes from 1658, when Venetian reports stated that the Wallachian throne was granted to 'un certo Gentilhuomo greco figliolo del già Raduleo Vaivoda [Radu Mihnea, died in 1629]', and 'allevato in Constantinopoli'.[21] In 1666, the idea was widespread that 'i Principati di Moldavia e di Valachia sono caduti sotto maggior rigore de Turchi, mentre si è tolta la libertà della elletione ai Principati e si spediscono della Porta Greci che tengono case e poderi nella città di Costantinopoli'.[22] In Paul Rycaut's view, Wallachia and Moldavia have 'become not only tributaries, but slaves and subjects to the Turk who having deprived them of the true line of their natural Princes succeeding in a lawful inheritance, place over them 'some Christians of the Greek Church,' without consideration of their conditions or riches, or qualifications; nay rather chuse [*sic*!] to give the Standard (which is the sign of the Grand Signior's confirmation of the Prince) to some inferiour [*sic*!] person, as Taverners, Fishmongers, or other meaner Professions, purposely to disparage the people with the baseness of their Governours, and expose them to the oppressions of men of no worth or dexterity in their Office' [emphasis

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17 '[…] con danari si puo facilmente ottener dichiarazzione d'esser disceso dela medesima stirpe, non cercando loro che i donativi che oltra l'ordinario tributo fanno a quel re ed ai grandi di quella Porta, per 2 e 400,000 zechini all'anno,' Idem 1855, p. 338 (Giovanni Moro 1590). According to Ottaviano Bon (1609), the ruling princes of his time 'realmente non sono descendenti delli principi naturali et antichi di quelle provincie, ma intrusi con male arti et con favore de' altri, che per occasioni delle occupationi dell'Imperio li hanno favoriti, et li veri discendenti hora si attrovano in Constantinopoli, supplicando di esser rimessi, così per termine di giustizia, come per riputatione', Pedani 1996, p. 490.

18 Maxim 1999, p. 185; Panaite 2003/I, pp. 68–69; Papp 2013, pp. 399–401.

19 Maxim 2012, p. 89.

20 Maxim 1999, pp. 57–60 and 186–213; Maxim 2012, pp. 81–98.

21 Hurmuzaki 1886/I, p. 42 (Venetian report, 16 March 1658) and p. 40 (31 January 1658).

22 *Ibidem*, p. 115 (14 November 1666); Hurmuzaki 1886/II, p. 250 (15 May 1666); Hurmuzaki 1897, p. 229 (9 August 1665) and p. 242 (5 September 1666).

added].[23] It is clear that 'Christians of the Greek Church' means here Greek-speaking people from Istanbul.

For now, there are three points from the above sources to keep in mind: first, that from a certain moment onward, succession to the throne of the principalities depended exclusively on the goodwill of the Porte; second, that the Ottomans did not respect any criteria but money in choosing and appointing the princes; third, that foreigners from Istanbul (i.e., Greeks) took hold of thrones against legitimate candidates.

Local ideas and Ottoman practices: from 'accident' to custom

It should be stressed, however, that no juridical document is known that states that the Porte ever acknowledged the two principalities' (meaning local elites) right to elect their princes. On the contrary, from Süleyman the Lawgiver onwards, the sultans clearly claimed their exclusive prerogative to appoint and dismiss them at will.

Yet, a gap always existed between discourse and practice, for the Porte made use of this right only in precise situations and respected the local criteria of succession to power.

In fact, these criteria were extremely vague. The first was religion: princes had to be Orthodox Christians. The second was 'biological', meaning that the candidate had to have 'princely bones', meaning to be a son of a late ruling prince. Therefore, the way to the throne was open to all the heirs of the late ruling princes, whether legitimate or not, real or pretended.[24] In practice, we have a mixed system, in which functioned both hereditary succession and election by the nobles, which often implied complex negotiations between rival factions. It is not surprising then that political instability and foreign interventions backing such and such candidate were common practice.

The Ottomans understood the situation well and entered the game. The first Wallachian prince appointed by the sultan in Istanbul was Vlad the Younger (Rom.: cel Tânăr, r. 1510–1512), in 1510.[25] Later on, Moise (r. 1529–1530)[26] acquired the throne in the same way, but he had to face internal opposition precisely because he did not attain power 'according to the custom', which means that the idea of election by the country was still strong. From Mircea the Shepherd (Rom.: Ciobanul, r. 1545–1559, with intermissions) on, the nomination by the Porte became the rule, but 'all his successors were or pretended to be sons of a prince themselves.' On the other hand, hereditary succession and election by the country were not abandoned: it was in this way that Petru the Younger (Rom.: cel Tânăr, r. 1559–1568) succeeded his father Mircea Ciobanul (1559), and Mihnea the Turkified (Rom.: Turcitul, r. 1577–1591, with intermissions) followed Alexandru Mircea (1577).

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23 Rycaut 1668, p. 61.

24 Păun 1998–1999.

25 Rezachevici 2001, p. 140.

26 Maxim 1999, pp. 65–66. Rezachevici 2001, pp. 176–179.

In Moldavia, only two cases are known when ruling princes were appointed by the sultan in Istanbul. The first one is that of Petru Rareș in 1541, as mentioned above. The second comes from 1563, when the former prince Alexandru Lăpușneanu (r. 1552–1568, with intermissions), who lived in exile in Aleppo at that time, was reinvested with his former position in order to pacify the country that was ravaged by internal conflicts.[27] Both princes had already reigned once, and it was on their demand that the sultan reinvested them with this dignity. In both cases, the Ottomans tried to restore order on the frontiers by granting the power to individuals whose qualities were already tested and who could count on a certain local support. On the other hand, these situations show the Porte's intention to apply the 'rotation principle'—which was already in use in Wallachia, as we have already seen—to Moldavian princes as well. Notwithstanding, criteria of ascension to the throne did not change, as indicated by the fact that all the pretenders and/or ruling princes constantly put forward their princely origins. Even the adventurer Jacob Heraclides (known as Despot), who forged several fake genealogies of himself to be presented to the European courts, emphasized his princely ascendance.[28]

A relevant event occurred in 1572, when the sultan appointed as prince Ioan the Terrible (Rom.: cel Cumplit, r. 1572–1574), who was (or pretended to be) a son of the late ruling prince, being accepted as such by both the Ottomans and the local elite. It was the first time that the Porte chose the ruling prince from among the pretenders living within the empire, 'without any consultation with the local elites.' Moreover, the new prince was practically unknown in the country for he had spent his entire life abroad.[29]

Two years later, the sultan replaced Ioan with Petru the Lame (Rom.: Șchiopul, r. 1574–1591, with intermissions), a son of a prince himself, 'but who belonged to the Wallachian dynasty.' This fact pushed historians to consider that the Moldavian dynasty was interrupted by 'the arbitrary attacks of the Turks who trampled down a sacred custom', which stated that the ruling prince had to belong to the Moldavian ruling family.[30] While it is true that Petru was not a 'real' local, he was not a 'complete' foreigner either, for he was related to the Moldavian dynasty through several ties.[31] In fact, this 'innovation' was less an 'arbitrary attack of the Turks' and much more the fruit of the machinations that the Wallachian ruling prince, Alexandru Mircea, Petru's brother, had conducted in Istanbul. It seems fair to presume that he was mainly responsible for this situation, while the Ottomans simply seized the opportunity and took profit of it.

Nonetheless, this 'innovation' turned out to be of crucial importance; first, because the range of competitors for each of the two thrones practically doubled, and second,

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27 Lăpușneanu was the first Moldavian prince to go to Istanbul after being dethroned (in this case by a local revolt) and put himself at the sultan's mercy. In Wallachia, this was a rule that the Porte had imposed as early as the end of the 15th century in order to test the loyalty of deposed princes.

28 Rezachevici 2001, pp. 632–648.

29 *Ibidem*, pp. 702–703.

30 Iorga 1998, p. 147; Cazacu 1995–1996, p. 173. See also Andreescu 1980, pp. 162–173.

31 Cazacu 1995–1996, p. 172; Rezachevici 2001, pp. 703–705.

because it soon turned into custom. In the 1590s, for instance, the sultan granted the Wallachian throne to two Moldavian princes, Ștefan the Deaf (Rom.: Surdul, r. 1591–1592) and Alexandru the Bad (Rom.: cel Rău, r. 1592–1593). Later on, it became normal that princes were transferred from one country to the other, which also inspired some projects of dynastic union. This was the case in 1623, when Moldavia was entrusted to Radu Mihnea (r. 1616–1626, with intermissions) and Wallachia to his son Alexandru the Infant (Rom.: Coconul, r. 1623–1627).[32]

The so-called Long Turkish War (1593–1606) brought some new elements into the picture. After years of troubles, the Wallachian boyars[33] elected Radu Șerban (r. 1602–1611), 'the first prince who was not and did not pretend to be a scion of a ruling prince,' although he was related to the dynasty.[34] Between 1611 and 1632, all the princes were appointed in Istanbul, but all of them were chosen from among the offspring of the late rulers. It also occurred that nominations were decided on the demand of the local nobles, which shows that the old 'constitutional' principles were still taken into account.

The Long Turkish War provoked important changes in Moldavia too. Here, the election (with Polish support) of Ieremia Movilă (r. 1595–1606, with intermissions), who was not a son of a prince himself but a local noble related to the dynasty through the female line, just like Radu Șerban in Wallachia, created a test case for the future princes to come. The Porte confirmed Ieremia on the throne and even acknowledged hereditary succession in his family, on the basis of an agreement they signed with the Poles (1598).[35]

Hereditary succession was thus restored and was to function until 1611. It was only the young age of the heirs of Ieremia and his brother Simion, and the struggles of opposing local noble clans, supported by Polish factions, that pushed the Ottomans to react and install on the Moldavian throne their own man, Ștefan Tomșa II (r. 1611–1623, with intermissions), a person who lived in Istanbul and pretended to be—and this is telling in itself—the son of an ephemeral 16th-century homonymous prince. Ieremia Movilă's election illustrates the Moldavian aristocracy's liking for an elective monarchy, inspired by the Polish Commonwealth. When this was possible, the nobles did not hesitate to put into practice what they believed to be their 'natural right' to choose the ruling prince, and often they did it regardless of the origins of the person. The main goal was to elect someone who could serve their interests and did not have dynastic ambitions.

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32 Andreescu 1989.

33 In Wallachia and Moldavia, 'boyar' was the common denomination for both noble and office-holder.

34 Stoicescu 1971, pp. 94–95.

35 Kołodziejczyk 2000, pp. 313–323 (Ottoman text and English translation); Gorovei 1975. The Polish Grand Chancellor Jan Zamoyski repeatedly maintained the princely origin of his protégé, thereby indicating that this criterion was truly important; see: Bobicescu 2014. Interestingly, the well informed Ottoman chronicler Selaniki quotes a letter that the Tatar Khan would have addressed to the sultan in which it was stated that the Moldavian inhabitants (meaning here the boyars) begged the Porte to appoint as prince Ieremia, 'who is a son of a prince (*beyzade*) and who had ruled over them in the past', Cronici turcești 1966, p. 375. Both assertions are mistaken, but prove that the criteria of princely descent was a crucial argument for pretending to claim the Moldavian throne.

The first case in point was Miron Barnovschi, a childless local boyar, 'whose services were known to the Porte', and who was elected by his peers in 1626.[36] He was the second prince in Moldavian history who was not himself a son of a prince, and his election opened the way to the throne to practically all the local nobles, which actually was to happen many times. An interesting case occurred in 1661, when, after the death of the ruling prince, a delegation of boyars went to Istanbul in order to plead to the sultan to 'give them a prince from the country'. The choice fell on the old Eustratie Dabija (r. 1661–1666), on whom not all the electors agreed, so that 'some people worked for different goals', which means that the disputes for power actually took place on both the local and imperial scenes.[37] According to the Moldavian chronicler Ion Neculce, the grand vizier asked the boyars to come *in corpore* to Istanbul 'and there their choice will be accepted no matter the person they would choose'.[38] Despite a rude competition, the Cantacuzenus and their relatives, the influential Rosettis, managed to acquire the throne for Dabija. Princes Gheorghe Duca (r. 1665–1683, with intermissions, alternatively in Moldavia and Wallachia),[39] Ștefan Petriceicu (r. 1672–1673, 1683–1684),[40] and Constantin Cantemir (r. 1685–1693) obtained power in the same way. In the latter case, as several times before, local nobles chose an old and modest person, but it is worth noting that no one from among the higher families accepted the throne.[41]

These examples indicate that Moldavian elites still had a say in the election or appointment of the ruling prince. A say for sure, but nothing more, since they actually left the final decision to the sultan, limiting themselves to ask for a prince chosen from among the locals. Furthermore, they also had to play on the Ottomans' ground, as they had quite often to elect their prince in Constantinople and not in the country, as had occurred in the past.[42] By summoning the political leaders of the two countries to the imperial capital—just as they commonly did with the princes themselves starting from the end of the 15th century—the Ottoman authorities intended to test their loyalty and show once more who was the real master. This situation changed completely the rules of the game, for Moldo-Wallachian matters became an issue of the Constantinopolitan power affairs and disputes, while the latter had significant consequences on the Moldo-Wallachian level as well. Social actors started then to play in several arenas at the same time and forged networks of influence, which went far beyond political borders and religious or ethnic affiliations.[43]

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36 Costin 1965, p. 70; Gorovei 1998. In Thomas Roe's view, Barnovschi was 'a baron of that prouince [...], not of the bloud and race, contrary to the fundamental laws and continuall practice'; see: Roe 1740, p. 486 (letter to Lord Conway, dated on 21 February 1625, in fact, from 21 February 1626).

37 Costin 1965, p. 213.

38 Neculce 1980, p. 1; Hurmuzaki 1886/I, p. 89 (9 December 1661).

39 Neculce 1980, p. 6. See also: Hurmuzaki 1886/1, p. 108 (Venetian report, 6 December 1665).

40 Neculce 1980, p. 10; Hurmuzaki 1886/I, p. 136 (10 September 1672).

41 Neculce 1980, p. 38.

42 The first prince elected by Moldavian nobles in Constantinople was Moise Movilă in 1632.

43 See: Philliou 2010; Păun 2013/I; Păun 2014.

In Wallachia, the local nobles' right to the throne was established once and for all in 1632, when Matei Basarab (r. 1632–1654) was promoted to prince by his peers and then confirmed by the Porte.[44] Whether elected by local elites in the country or in Constantinople, or appointed by the sultan, all of Matei's successors were either sons of late princes or boyars, meaning here high-ranking officials.

It becomes clear from the examples above that the Porte respected the local criteria of succession to the throne and made use of its 'legal' right to appoint the ruling princes only in specific circumstances. Furthermore, evidence exists that the issue was repeatedly discussed in the imperial capital. In 1578, for instance, the Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed debated with a French resident in Istanbul over the legitimacy of a Wallachian pretender who claimed himself 'von dem Standt vnd gebluet dem Moldawischen Vayuoden beckombt'. His arguments did not convince Sokollu, who thereby decided that he had no right to 'Ius Gubernationis'.[45] It also occurred that true trials were orchestrated in order to verify the pretenders' legitimacy; this was the case in 1577, when the Ottoman authorities summoned witnesses to confirm 'doctor' Rosso's princely origins.[46] Conversely, when speaking of Ioan the Terrible of Moldavia, who just acquired the throne, the sultan emphasized that he was a son of a former prince and had held *dirlik* (income provided by the state for the support of persons in its service) within the empire.[47] There are many cases in which the princely origins of a new ruler were marked in the Ottoman official documents.[48]

On the other hand, it is also true that the Ottoman authorities did not miss any opportunity to put into practice 'innovations' introduced by the locals, insofar as these worked for their interests. Only a few years after Barnovschi's election by the Moldavian nobles, the sultan granted the throne to Vasile Lupu (r. 1634–1653), who in this manner became the first boyar promoted to prince in Constantinople.[49] Thus, while the election of Barnovschi by the Moldavian boyars had created a precedent in the country, the appointment of Lupu by the sultan created another one in Istanbul, which fact expanded even more the number of pretenders, thereby escalating the competition for power.

Soon enough, this innovation was turned against its authors. In fact, if local boyars always had to ask the Porte to validate the choice they had made, then the latter, in turn, was completely free to appoint as prince whomever he desired. A case in point occurred in 1674, after Ștefan Petriceicu had defected on the Polish front. As they felt the danger coming, the boyars abandoned him and rushed to propose to the Porte a new prince of

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44 Matei was indirectly related to the local dynasty. He was backed by the influential Abaza Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Nikopol (Niğbolu /Nicopole), and he was eventually accepted by the Porte, despite the fact that he had fought and driven away Radu Iliaș, a prince appointed by the sultan; Stoicescu 1988, pp. 22–35.

45 Hurmuzaki 1880, p. 23 (10 October 1578) and p. 24 (7 December 1578).

46 Iorga 1897, p. 196.

47 Documente turcești 1976, pp. 99–101 (15–24 April 1572).

48 Maxim 2001, pp. 155–161.

49 Stoicescu 1989, pp. 47–48.

their choice. This time, however, the grand vizier forestalled them and decided to appoint a prince by himself but, as Neculce tells us, 'he could not find any deposed prince or son of a prince […], except for Petriceicu-vodă's *kapukethüda*, Dumitrașcu-vodă [Cantacuzino / Cantacuzenus], who had been before Grigore-vodă's [Ghica] treasurer in Wallachia. And he was a Greek from Constantinople, a descendant of the Christian [Byzantine] emperors and he had [good] knowledge of these countries […]; and the Vizier appointed him as prince in Moldavia' (translation mine).[50]

Neculce's words show that the principle of princely descent was still in use at that time. Indeed, while the old Moldavian dynasty died out with Iliaș Alexandru (r. 1666–1668),[51] some new dynasties appeared, for the sons of the former boyars who had been promoted to princes became *beyzade* (a son of a prince), that is crown princes. Following the tradition, they resided in the imperial capital (as hostages in most cases), adopted the Ottoman style of life, married into Orthodox Christian (mostly Greek-speaking) families there, and waited for the moment to stake claim to their 'ancestors' heritage'.[52]

'Foreigners' versus the 'locals'?

The above story also reveals one more very important fact: when appointed to the Moldavian throne, Dumitrașcu Cantacuzino already had a Moldo-Wallachian career; he was thus 'a local official and thereby had the same right to the throne as the other boyars, his peers,' and this despite his 'Greek' origin. We understand thus that the 'Greeks' succeeded in getting the Wallachian and Moldavian thrones not because the Porte infringed the privileges of the two countries, neither because of the machinations they conducted in Istanbul, although these certainly existed and were employed by the 'locals' and 'foreigners' alike, but because they fit at least one of the criteria for ascending to power. 'In absolutely all the cases known to us' these individuals were either sons of former ruling princes or they already had held offices in at least one of the two principalities. According to Miron Costin, the Albanian-born Gheorghe Ghica had arrived in Moldavia a long time before Prince Vasile Lupu promoted him to high offices and appointed him as *kapukethüda* in

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50 Neculce 1980, p. 16. See also: Cronici turcesti 1974, p. 342. The events took place in the Ottoman camp in Isaccea (Turk.: *İshakçı*) on the Danube. 'Vodă' is the short form of 'voievod' (prince). The kapukethüda was the prince's chargé d'affaires in Istanbul.

51 His son Radu never succeeded to rule.

52 The principle of princely descent continued to be considered by both pretenders to the throne and Ottoman authorities. When writing on the appointment of Antioh Cantemir (r. 1695–1707, with intermissions), the Ottoman chronicler Mehmed Rașid emphasizes that the latter was a son of a ruling prince himself, Cronici turcești 1980, p. 188.

Istanbul.[53] As for his son Grigore Ghica, the Wallachian annals inform us that he attained the Wallachian throne thanks to the Chamberlain Constantin Cantacuzenus, who appreciated that 'he was born in Moldavia and has good knowledge of the country's affairs'.[54] Gheorghe Duca's case is even more telling. Although Western sources called him 'Greco',[55] this was not problematic at all for Neculce, for even though Duca was born in the 'Greek country', he had arrived in Moldavia while still a child, served under several princes, then was promoted to high offices and married Eustratie Dabija's step-daughter; thus, he did become a 'local'.[56] Conversely, in Wallachia, Prince Antonie of Popeşti, although generally considered a 'local', was in fact the son of a Greek merchant.[57]

As these examples show, neither family, country of origin, or language were discriminatory factors in the election or nomination of the ruling princes of the two principalities, as 'political' and 'ethnic'/'linguistic' identities did not always coincide. Western observers, less familiar with the realities in the region, often understood the facts according to their own values. For them, multiple identities were difficult to conceive, so that a Greek-speaking person on the Wallachian or Moldavian throne meant a foreigner who had deprived the two countries 'of the true line of their natural Princes succeeding in a lawful inheritance' with the help of the Turks.[58]

From the Moldo-Wallachian point of view, the fundamental discriminatory factors were religion and social status. In most cases, when foreign origins and the spoken language were invoked against a ruling prince, critics did not touch upon his legitimacy as a prince, but upon his deeds; foreignness in fact was used to mask political animosity. To give an example, Prince Radu Leon (r. 1664–1669) of Wallachia, a descendant of a Moldo-Wallachian ruling family but who had lived in Istanbul, was blamed much more because he left the country to his Levantine entourage than because he was a 'Greek' himself.[59] Conversely, Antonios Rosettis's (Rom.: Antonie Ruset, r. 1675–1678) rule is appreciated by Neculce, 'despite the fact that he was a Greek and a foreigner from Constantinople', meaning here that he did not know the country's traditions.[60]

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53 Costin 1965, p. 185. It is interesting to note that the secretary of the Venetian ambassador in Constantinople called him 'Moldavian': 'il Principato di Moldavia è stato dato al Giorgio Giska Moldavo, quale como Agente si tratteneva alla Porta', Hurmuzaki 1886/1, p. 43 (no 64, 19 March 1658). Cantemir calls him 'Albanus' (Albanian), Cantemir 1973, p. 142.

54 Istoria Țării Românești 1960, p. 145. The Ottoman chronicler Hasan Vegihi calls him 'Rûm', meaning here Orthodox Christian, Cronici turcești 1974, p. 174.

55 Hurmuzaki 1886/I, pp. 110 (25 May 1665) and 108 (6 December 1665). Cantemir calls him 'Graecus', Cantemir 1973, p. 142.

56 Neculce 1980, p. 5–6.

57 Stoicescu 1971, p. 126.

58 Rycaut 1668, p. 61.

59 Istoria Țării Românești 1960, p. 155–160.

60 Neculce 1980, p. 24. See also: Păun 2013/II.

For the Ottomans, the only valid criteria of differentiation were religion and loyal service. In their view, princes were 'non-Muslim' or 'Christian' subjects (*zimmi*),[61] and it surely was not an accident that a non-Orthodox candidate never became prince.[62] In the Ottoman system, people 'were defined by religion, or by their place in the social order' and not by their ethnic identity. If Islam, as a privileged religion, acted as 'a mediating force that did […] create categories transcending ethnicity', the other religions were supposed to act in the same way and ensure, through their more or less institutionalized interfaces (Orthodox and Armenian Patriarchates, the Jewish Chief Rabbi), communication between the centre and the various parts of the system.[63] Also, the language that an individual spoke was not determinant of one's identity, as 'there was only one dominant, bureaucratic, ruling language—Ottoman', which was in fact 'not a normal language but a mandarin language of a bureaucratic class'; it was not even the vernacular for the Turks, most people using several languages without full mastery of them.[64] Be that as it may, it is fair to deem in fact that the 'sense of duty' and utility for the state was what counted most when choosing ruling princes for the two countries.[65] In doing so, the Porte tried to apply to tributary princes the criteria of promotion commonly employed when recruiting 'inner' Ottoman officials, in such a way that differences between the two gradually faded away over time.

By way of conclusion

In the 1530s, a new and imperious Ottoman discourse with respect to the tributary principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia emerged and soon became dominant, as it reflected the balance of power in the region. However, despite the harsh tone of the official declarations, and contrary to received wisdom and to Western sources that had partially fed it, the Ottomans respected the tributaries' political criteria and integrated them into the framework of their own culture. As shown so far, the 'innovations' in the logic of succes-

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61 Cronici turcești 1966, p. 375. In Silahdar Findiklili Mehmed Aga's view, 'Greek (*rum*) unbeliever (*kefir*)' and 'Christian subject' (*zimmi*) are synonymous terms, see: Cronici turcești 1974, pp. 294 (reference to princes Mihnea III and Gheorghe Ghica), pp. 342, 513.

62 The exception is Gaspar Graciani (1619), but he converted to Orthodoxy in the Patriarchal Church in Istanbul.

63 Rodrigue 1995, pp. 81–92; Barkey 2005.

64 Rodrigue 1995, pp. 81–92.

65 Ottoman chroniclers also echoed this fact, see: Cronici turcești 1966, p. 521 (Ibrahim Pecevi on Gaspar Graciani). See also: Cronici turcești 1974, p. 294 (Silahdar Findiklili Mehmed Aga on Grigore Ghica). This idea was shared by pretenders to the throne as well. As an official of the Porte, Gaspar Graciani constantly claimed his right to the Wallachian and Moldavian thrones as a reward for his services; Hurmuzaki 1884, pp. 365 and 376 (Venetian reports, 3 September 1616 and 16 February 1619). Conversely, the Ottoman chronicler Yusuf Nabi considers the deposition of Gheorghe Duca (1672) constituted a well-deserved punishment because the latter did not fulfill his duties towards the sultan, his master, Cronici turcești 1974, p. 283.

sion to the throne were all produced by the locals. This fact provided the Ottomans with new means to control the succession to power in the tributary states without using force or violating local customs, as they did not have anything to do but to adopt local innovations and make use of them when the context proved to be propitious.

Local revolts—which occurred constantly during this period[66]—did not change much the Porte's strategy. It was not so necessary after all, since a good part of the Moldo-Wallachian actors complied with and internalized the Ottoman discourse of authority. By moving and settling in Istanbul in order to gain the sultan's favour, pretenders to the throne and ex-princes of the two countries acknowledged the emperor as the ultimate source of power, which means that they aligned with the sultanal official discourse.

Local nobles did practically the same. Relevant indicators of this attitude are the complaints they submitted to the sultan 'against their own ruling princes'.

In the Ottoman culture, petitioning to the sultan constituted a legitimate form 'of expressing political initiatives, in accordance with the official ideology which represented the Sultan as guarantor of justice and redresser of wrongs'.[67] Justice for all subjects, regardless of religion and social status, and protection of the taxpayers were 'the most important legitimizing principles of the Ottoman rule'.[68]

These principles were also clearly stated in the documents of appointment granted to Wallachian and Moldavian princes and periodically reminded to them in various other ways. A letter by Sultan Süleyman to Wallachian Prince Mircea the Shepherd is relevant in this respect: 'The country of Wallachia is in the same [status] as my other well-defended Territories and its subjects are my tributary servants. You shall show them [the subjects] gentleness and conciliation; you shall be alert and attentive to ensure order and protection of the country, peace and security, prosperity and satisfaction for the subjects. You shall govern with justice and [shall take] appropriate measures, so that my estates find well--being and prosperity, and that my subjects live in peace under my august reign'.[69]

When comparing this kind of document with the Wallachian and Moldavian petitions, we understand that the petitioners' crucial aim was to show that the prince they were complaining about was the perfect opposite of what the sultan ordered him to be. The main points—and even the phrasing—of the petitions reproduced the Ottoman official discourse, with the precise purpose to convince the sultan that the accused prince 'did not appreciate the grace of which he has benefitted', and consequently 'that it is necessary and indispensable to reject and eradicate the mischief and the sedition of such a villain', as Sultan Süleyman stated in a letter presented heretofore. In other words, the petitioners reproached the prince not because he was not a good Christian ruler, 'but because he was not a good Ottoman official'.

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66 Păun 2013/I.

67 Anastasopoulos 2012, p. 6.

68 Gara 2011, p. 93. See also: İnalcık 1993.

69 Veinstein and Berindei 1987, p. 202 (my translations from the French version).

This not only means that the Wallachians and Moldavians knew how the system worked, but also—and very importantly—that they started to see: themselves and act 'as Ottoman subjects', which was not the case in the past.[70] In so doing, they deliberately recognized the sultan's 'direct authority over themselves' and also minimized that of the local princes, who thereby were relegated to a secondary position. In the long run, a direct link between the Moldo-Wallachian nobles and the emperor gradually took shape,[71] which blurred the boundaries between tributaries and 'direct' subjects of the sultan, on the one hand, and between tributary princes and Ottoman provincial governors, on the other.

We see: thus that communication and negotiation always functioned between centre and periphery, as both of them tried to adopt the political ideas and values of the other and to use them for their own profit. For the tributaries, however, this proved to be a risky affair. Admittedly, this could work pretty well in the short term, but in the long run the more closely they followed the Ottoman principles, the narrower their own room for manoeuvre became, as the disproportion of forces between them and the Porte increased steadily. In practice, each and every 'innovation' was seen as a test case and gradually turned into custom, according to the logic of the Ottoman governance culture. This was, in fact, one of the pillars of the *interpretatio Ottomanica* of local ideas and practices and a key point for a good understanding of the Ottoman system as a 'flexible empire'.[72]

[70] The first cases we know came from 1510 and 1512 (Wallachia); see: Rezachevici 2001, pp. 140–145. I am preparing a special paper on this topic.

[71] Gerber 1994, p. 154–173. On the petitioning process within the empire, see: Faroqhi 1992; Darling 1996, 246–307; Gara, Neumann and Kabadayi 2011.

[72] Ágoston 2003.

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In the Year 1618: The City State of Dubrovnik through Ottoman Eyes

In the present paper we will use the events of the year 1618, especially well documented in Istanbul's archival records, as a means of discussing Dubrovnik,[1] its political problems and the activities of its traders, highlighting the Ottoman point of view. We will thus focus on the manner in which the need to protect Dubrovnik's commerce impacted the political stance taken by its governing elite, as well as the role of the Ottoman central government in shaping the complicated relations between the different polities bordering the Adriatic of the early seventeenth century. While the political and economic history of Dubrovnik has been well studied, the Ottoman perspective has not attracted much attention; and more emphasis on the viewpoint of sultans and viziers is surely overdue.[2] Inevitably, the present enterprise will also involve Venice, Dubrovnik's powerful rival; and in discussing the triangular relationship between these polities, we will once again foreground the Ottoman perspective.[3]

The political context

1618 was a momentous year in many respects. In Central Europe, it marked the beginning of the Thirty Years War, in which Venetians and Ottomans did not participate—and neither did Dubrovnik. While the Bohemian estates at the beginning of the conflict did solicit the Ottoman aid, presumably the defeat of the Protestant alliance by the troops of the Habsburg emperor in 1620 convinced the sultan's government that there was little to

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1 In Italian sources, Dubrovnik is sometimes called Ragusa; and in this paper the two names will be used interchangeably.

2 For a recent study of the Ottoman aspect of 'Adriatic Sea politics', see: Bostan 2009.

3 On the Ottoman-Venetian relations cf. Pedani Fabris 1994; Turkish translation: *Osmanlı Padişahının Adına: İstanbul'un Fethinden Girit Savaşı'na Venedik'e Gönderilen Osmanlılar*, tr. by Elis Yıldırım (Ankara 2011); Pedani 2008.

be gained from a new war. However, the Calvinist prince of Transylvania Gabriel Bethlen (Hung.: Bethlen Gábor, r. 1622–1629), whose suzerain was the Ottoman sultan, did attempt to drive the Habsburgs out of Hungary during the early stages of the Thirty Years War.[4]

Thus, Central-European conflicts indirectly impacted the situation in the Adriatic; but they do explain certain political and military moves on the part of the Venetian government, which as we will see, were crucial in determining the attitudes both of the Dubrovnik patricians and the Ottoman elite.

A local problem with wider repercussions was the piracy of the *Uskoks*.[5] These were freebooters established on the Dalmatian coast, with their headquarters in the fortress of Senj (It.: Segna, today in Croatia). At least officially, they were refugees from the lands conquered by the Ottomans that had joined the Habsburg border defences; in reality, however, the *Uskoks* came from a variety of places not necessarily under the sultans' rule.[6] As long as they merely preyed on Ottoman shipping, including boats belonging to the sultan's Christian subjects, the Venetian government did not react very effectively, although by the peace of 1573, responsibility for protecting merchant shipping in the Adriatic lay with the *Serenissima*.[7] Ottoman merchants often complained that when attacked by the *Uskoks*, Venetian seamen did not fight back. Apparently, the reason was that these sailors were mere wage-earners, who hoped that the *Uskoks* would not enslave them if they did not of-

4 For a brief biography of Gabriel Bethlen, see: http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/63455/Gabor-Bethlen (accessed on 30 March 2015).

5 Bracewell 1992; Bostan 2009.

6 Bracewell 1992, pp. 51–58.

7 Bostan 2009, pp. 106–107, 111.

fer any resistance. On the other hand, these pirates tended to avoid ships which—or whose cargoes—were partly owned by the sailors concerned; for there was likely to be serious fighting when people defended their own meagre property.[8]

With time, the *Uskoks* began to attack Venetian possessions as well, justifying their predations by claiming that anybody who traded with the Ottomans, including Venice, was a legitimate target. For the Venetian government it was also a major concern that the Ottomans might make good their threat to send a naval detachment into the Adriatic; for such a gesture would have shown Venice to be 'weak' and would encourage the Spanish governors of Naples and Milan to occupy Venetian territories. After all, the duchy of Milan was situated only a few kilometres from the *Serenissima's* lands in northern Italy, the so-called *terraferma*; and the viceroys of Milan and Naples were not known for strict obedience to their suzerain the king of Spain.

To end this situation, the Venetians attacked the Habsburg archduke responsible for the *Uskok* section of the Ottoman-Habsburg frontier in the so-called War of Gradisca (1615). As neither the Spanish king nor the emperor in Vienna wished to become involved, this conflict remained local; it ended in 1617 with a treaty that mandated the removal of the *Uskoks* to inland locations. After that date, their piracy became less dangerous, although it did not immediately disappear.[9] But during those same years, the Spanish viceroy of Naples planned to eliminate the Venetian control of the Adriatic, and in this undertaking, some Ragusan subjects joined him. In 1617, the Spanish fleet captured two merchant galleys travelling between Venice and Split (today Croatia, It.: Spalato), a route which the *Serenissima* was committed to protect; for the latter, with the help of the Jewish merchant Daniele Rodriga, previously had instituted the Split–Venice connection, with the evident intention of drawing away traders from Dubrovnik.[10] Surely, this context at least partly explains why certain subjects of Ragusa were so ready to cooperate with the Spanish viceroy.[11]

However, in 1618, Venice considerably enlarged its fleet by newly constructed vessels and others hired from Dutch and English ship-owners. As the king of Spain apparently was unwilling to embark on full-scale war in the Adriatic, the Spanish fleet withdrew; and in 1618 and 1619, Venice once again sent out naval detachments to reassert the *Serenissima*'s dominance.[12]

Thus in 1618, the relations between Spain and Venice were at an all-time low; in the early summer of that year, the Venetian government—on perhaps doubtful evidence—claimed to have discovered a conspiracy among French mercenaries in the *Serenissima*'s

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8 *Ibidem*, p. 105; Lane 1973, p. 387.

9 For a comprehensive discussion from the Venetian perspective, *ibidem*, pp. 398–400.

10 *Ibidem*, p. 387.

11 On the demands of the Ottoman merchants who had sustained losses in these attacks and the political and juridical complications involved, see Tommaso Stefini's MA thesis: Stefini 2013, pp. 90–138, now available at https://yale.academia.edu/tommasostefini (accessed on 1 April 2015).

12 Lane 1973, p. 399.

service, aiming to overthrow the doge and senate. As a result, the Spanish ambassador in Venice, Alfonso, marquis of Bedmar (Alfonso de la Cueva-Benavides y Mendoza-Carrillo, marqués de Bedmar, 1572–1655), who had been very active in expanding the power of the king of Spain in Italy, was declared a persona non grata.[13] The Venetian government did not claim that Bedmar was involved; but observers must have suspected that there was a connection.

In Dubrovnik, tensions between two rival patrician factions complicated the formulation of policy: while the majority was of the opinion that the Ottoman protectorate was in the best interests of their town, there was a minority that favoured a resolutely anti-Ottoman course and therefore a Spanish alliance. According to the hopes of the minority, Dubrovnik was to become the bridgehead for a future war against the Ottomans.[14] In 1611–1612, a conjuration to overthrow the government of Dubrovnik with the aid of Vincenzo Gonzaga, duke of Mantua (r. 1587–1612), the so-called 'Great Conspiracy', had been aborted at the last minute; in part this was due to the fact that the observers working for the Dubrovnik government spotted the duke's ship with its load of armaments in good time, so that the rector-and-council could inform both the Ottoman governor of Bosnia and the *Serenissima*. From the latter's point of view, it seemed that in the early 1610s the ruling majority of the Dubrovnik council wanted to keep their polity in the Ottoman realm and maintain good relations with Venice as well; this combination would have looked quite unrealistic only a few years later. Be that as it may, when in 1617 the Spanish fleet was cruising in the Adriatic, the pro-Spanish faction in Dubrovnik gave the commander a hero's welcome. However, a sharp warning from the grand vizier caused the pro-Ottoman majority to hurriedly disassociate their town from further entanglements with Spain.[15]

In the Ottoman world the years around 1600 in general, and 1618 in particular, also were marked by considerable instability. Apart from the troubles generated by long wars against the Habsburgs (1593–1606) and the Safavids—the latter began in 1603 and ended with an Ottoman defeat in 1618—there were major harvest crises due to the droughts occasioned by the Little Ice Age, to say nothing of the military rebellions known as the Jelali (Tur.: Celalî) uprisings (1595–1610).[16] In comparison, the deaths of sultans and the enthronements of their successors may seem a minor issue. But given the pivotal position of the sultan in the Ottoman polity, these rapid changes of monarch were of some significance: Mehmed III came to the throne in 1595 and died in 1603, and his son Ahmed I was not yet thirty years

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13 Villari 2007, pp. 293–297; Lane 1973, p. 399 believes that the conspiracy was real and members of Bedmar's household knew about it, although the involvement of the ambassador remains unproven. Zlatar 1992, p. 101 does not mention Bedmar, but believes that Don Pedro de Ossuña, Spanish viceroy of Naples, was fomenting a coup d'état in Venice. As it is unlikely that there were two simultaneous Spanish conspiracies, presumably he refers to the events discussed by Lane. I cannot judge who is correct; and even less can I tell whether there was any contact between Bedmar and Ossuña.

14 Zlatar 1992, pp. 98–103.

15 *Ibidem*, p. 101. The author does not state where he found the letter from the grand vizier, presumably in the archives of Dubrovnik.

16 Akdağ 1975; White 2011.

old when he, in turn, met his death in 1617. While up to this time, sons had always succeeded their fathers on the Ottoman throne, Mustafa I (r. 1617–1618) was his predecessor's brother; and this deviation from tradition indicated tensions within the governing elite. It has been suggested that Mustafa's succession, justified by the youth of the sons of Ahmed I, was due to the growing strength of the bureaucracy vis à vis the sultan, who by now was not nearly as absolute as his titles suggested.[17] Moreover, after only a few months on the throne, Mustafa I was considered by high-level officials as unfit to rule and replaced with the eldest son of Sultan Ahmed, who now became Osman II (r. 1618–1622); the latter was not yet eighteen when he was murdered in May 1622.[18] The second reign of Mustafa I was also cut short; and in 1623 another son of Ahmed I came to the throne: Murad IV, who was to rule until 1640. Thus, in the twenty-eight years between 1595 and 1623, there were six changes of sultan; and in the single year 1618, the Ottoman elite and its subjects experienced two such events. What were the repercussions of these rapid changes in Dubrovnik?

A polyglot patrician mini-republic, autonomous yet surrounded by Ottoman lands

Ever since the early 1900s, this town (today in Croatia) has attracted scholarly interest because of its well-preserved archives, which contain documents in Latin, Slavonic, Greek, Italian and Ottoman Turkish. This multiplicity is the result of a series of changes in the town's historical circumstances, and particularly in its relations with its neighbours: Dubrovnik remained under the Venetian over-lordship between 1205 and 1358, when the town became part of the kingdom of Hungary.[19]

In the middle ages and early modern period, the patrician elite spoke both Italian and the southern Slav language typical of the area. As Catholics, the merchants and officials of Dubrovnik enjoyed access to Counterreformation Italy, and were able to collect information that they might choose to record in either one of these languages. Latin documents were quite frequent too, as during the later medieval and Renaissance periods much official business was conducted in this language. Moreover, Latin enjoyed special favour among the Hungarian aristocracy; and the Dubrovnik elite maintained ties to the latter as well.

Documents in Ottoman Turkish were frequent too; for once the sultans had become the dominant power in the Balkans, annual tribute payments to Istanbul, 12,500 gold pieces in the early seventeenth century, occasioned a great deal of correspondence; and so did the travels of the envoys in charge of delivering the money. Furthermore, the trade of Dubrovnik merchants and the activities of Catholic men of religion in the Balkans were topics

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17 Tezcan 2010, pp. 74–76.

18 *Ibidem*, pp. 108–114, 192.

19 Lane 1973, p. 68 and elsewhere considers that the Venetians held on to Ragusa as a 'subordinate base' for their Mediterranean shipping.

of frequent correspondence for the *beğler ve knezler* (lords and princes) of Dubrovnik, as the Ottoman chancery chose to call the government of this aristocratic and commercial republic. The term *knez* denoted the city's rector, who remained in office only for a single month at a time and thus was rarely known by name to outside observers.[20] The *knez* and his council must have employed competent translators, as after about 1520, the sultans' chancery wrote letters in Ottoman Turkish and not in Greek or Slavonic, as had been common enough in the 1400s.[21]

In spite of the superior power of Venice, Hungary, and the Ottoman sultans, Dubrovnik's small size and its limited manpower, the latter managed to preserve its autonomy over the centuries. When attempting an explanation, a 1950's study of ancient empires, famous in its day, is quite helpful: for it postulates that throughout ancient history, traders often did better when operating outside the imperial confines of the day.[22] After all, a close supervision by the agents of a powerful central state quite often drove away the merchants. At the same time, a nearby empire might benefit more by collecting tribute from a commercial port city, either formally independent or at least autonomous, than by incorporating the settlement and levying taxes directly. This observation runs counter to a claim axiomatic at the time of writing, namely that centralization is a prime condition for efficiency in government.

Yet the autonomous status of a port is advantageous to a powerful empire only as long as the port city's government is able and willing to pay its tribute on time. Once the money coming in is no longer sufficient in quantity and regularity, the empire may decide to take over. This is what happened, for instance, once the tribute from the island of Chios, for long a Genoese possession, was no longer attractive enough for the Ottoman central power to maintain the special status of the island. After all, Chios is surrounded by the Aegean Sea, which by the late 1400s had turned into an Ottoman lake. The final takeover occurred in 1566.[23]

Admittedly, there were port cities on the sultans' own territory, not enjoying any special status in law, but which the government in Istanbul supervised only from afar. Thus Izmir, which in the seventeenth century became the major port of Anatolia and a terminus of the caravan routes supplying raw silk from Iran, at this time, despite its size and commercial importance, was of low administrative rank. Foreign merchants thus dealt only with an Islamic judge (*qadi*) and a variety of tax farmers, rather than with the full complement of officials serving a provincial governor.[24] As a result, non-Ottoman traders in Izmir could adopt a 'free and easy' lifestyle, which would not have been permissible in the presence of the sultans' higher-ranking administrators.

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20 Redhouse 1921 translates the Slavonic term *knez* as 'prince'.

21 Bojović 1998.

22 Revere 1957, pp. 38–63, see pp. 52–55.

23 Argenti 1941; Goffman 1990, pp. 61–64.

24 Goffman 1990, pp. 26–29 discusses the activities of Ottoman administrators, all of them low-level.

As noted, Izmir and its foreign merchants never possessed any formal autonomy. But Daniel Goffman has rightly stressed that Izmir could become a large city only because during the empire's domestic difficulties in the early 1600s, the control of the Ottoman central administration over the Aegean seaboard weakened substantially; the authorities in Istanbul thus could no longer reserve the resources of this area for the needs of the capital.[25] Put differently, it was the relative withdrawal of the Ottoman bureaucratic apparatus—presumably compensated for by a larger intake in sales taxes and customs duties—which allowed Izmir to grow from a mini-town-cum-landing-stage of a few thousand inhabitants into one of the commercial metropolises of the Ottoman realm.

Differently from Izmir, Dubrovnik's autonomy enjoyed official recognition by the sultans' government; and differently from Chios, the town remained an autonomous enclave over the centuries. Apparently, the Ottoman administration found this situation useful; and when in 1808 the republic came to an end, it was not due to an Ottoman initiative. Rather, it was the Napoleonic conquests that completely changed the political map of Europe; they terminated both the Venetian statehood (1797) and Dubrovnik's special status.[26]

Thus, this town flourished for hundreds of years by being part of an empire yet retaining its separate government as an aristocratic republic.[27] The ruling group consisted of a closed circle of local patrician families, a style of government modelled upon that of Venice. This political system did not change when after 1458 Dubrovnik *nolens volens* entered the Ottoman orbit. Here, the decisive actor was Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1451–1481), engaged in a struggle for the control of the Adriatic with Ferrante, king of Naples (r. 1458–1494). At one point the sultan had threatened to occupy Dubrovnik, which had shown hostility toward his rule by upon occasion receiving the rebel Albanian leader George Kastrioti, known as Skanderbeg (Alb.: Gjergj Kastrioti, Turk.: Iskender Bey, 1405–1468), to whom the rector-and-council also sent subsidies, albeit minor ones.[28] Given the increasing Ottoman predominance, Dubrovnik's allegiance to the sultan stabilized during the thirty-year-long reign of Sultan Mehmed II. By his death in 1481, the latter had increased the hitherto moderate annual tribute payable to the Ottoman exchequer from 1,500 to 12,500 ducats; and after the defeat and death of the Hungarian and Bohemian king Louis II (Hung.: II. Lajos; Pol.: Ludwik II Jagiellończyk, 1506–1526) in the battle of Mohács (1526), all connection to Hungary came to an end.

Due to the 'Venetian threat'—the Dubrovnik patricians always suspected the *Signoria* of wishing to regain its former possession, lost in 1358—most members of the ruling

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25 *Ibidem*, pp. 36–49.

26 Biegman 1967, p. 45. Murad III actually acceded to the throne on 15 December 1574.

27 http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/95_(accessed in March 2015) contains the World Heritage List concerning this town, which includes a relatively detailed description. However, the anonymous author(s) say almost nothing about the fact that until 1808, Dubrovnik was a tributary subject of the Ottoman sultan. Between 1808 and 1918, the town was part of the Habsburg Empire; compare the article 'Raghūsa' in Babinger and Bosworth 2015. Unfortunately, this detailed article, written by Franz Babinger (1891–1967), has never been updated. For recent work, see: Kunčević 2013 and Miović 2013.

28 Schmitt 2009, pp. 278–279.

group, at least from about 1500 onward, favoured the Ottoman protectorate. After all, a tributary status also brought Dubrovnik major commercial opportunities.[29] Even so, the town's formidable walls remained in place and Ottoman collectors of customs duties were not supposed to pass through the gates, receiving payment just outside the fortifications. Viewed from the perspective of a mainstream Dubrovnik patrician, policy-making involved maintaining good relations with both the Ottoman sultans and the king of Spain, who since the sixteenth century controlled a large part of Italy, in order to pre-empt a possible Venetian takeover.

The *Ecnebi Defterleri*: an under-exploited source

To date, both Ottoman and non-Ottoman researchers studying Dubrovnik have concentrated on documents preserved locally. Yet the Ottoman archives of the Prime Minister in Istanbul (*Başbakanlık Arşivi Osmanlı Arşivi*, henceforward: BAO) also contain relevant materials in significant numbers. Of particular importance are the texts collected in special registers, known as the *Düvel-i Ecnebiye Defterleri* or registers of [the affairs of] foreign states (henceforward: *Ecnebi Defterleri*).[30] Perhaps the latter have not garnered much interest because, at least in some cases, documents concerning Venice—and occasionally even Poland—as well as their counterparts referring to Dubrovnik have all been combined in the same register. At least in part, this confusing practice must have been due to the manner in which Ottoman officials spelt the names of Venice and Dubrovnik: Venedik as opposed to Dobra-venedik; as most short vowels do not appear in the Arabic script, to the reader of Ottoman Turkish the two names resemble one another.[31] It is less clear why a few texts relating to merchants from Poland also have found their way into at least one register concerning Venedik and Dobra-venedik; perhaps these traders had used the mediation of the Dubrovnik council or else of the Venetian *bailo*.

As the *Ecnebi Defterleri* do not have tables of content or indexes, sifting out the texts relevant to Dubrovnik can require quite a bit of work. But at least the documents are normally dated and more or less organized by date; in addition, the beginning lines of each section of the register feature the name of the current chief scribe (*reisülküttab*). As these dignitaries' names and years of office are on record elsewhere, the work of low-level

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29 Zlatar 1992, pp. 1–25.

30 For a list of the surviving *Ecnebi Defterleri*, see: Aktaş et al. 2000, pp. 34–37. Goffman 1990, pp. 147–154 has included an excellent discussion of the source value of these records, in this context referring to the registers ED 14/2, 15/3 and Hadariye 2, which all concern Dubrovnik (pp. 173–174). Since the time of Goffman's research, the archives have been reorganized and the registers given new call numbers. In this paper, I will use the call numbers found in the catalogue which the archives have published in the year 2000.

31 Thus the early 17th-century register BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d on pp. 147–148 contains texts relevant to Dubrovnik, while a sultanic command on p. 150 discusses Venetian problems. However, 'in principle', the section concerning Dubrovnik begins on p. 140, with No. 671.

scribes—and latter-day historians—trying to keep track of the texts in the *Ecnebi Defterleri* becomes somewhat less arduous. Other volumes of the same series do however concentrate principally on Dubrovnik.

Similarly to the Venetian *Ecnebi Defterleri*, the earliest surviving volumes of the Ragusa series date only to the beginning of the seventeenth century.[32] We do not know whether the older volumes are permanently lost, whether they still slumber among the un--catalogued sections of the BAO, or whether the series was a new creation of the early 1600s.

As for the documents copied into the *Ecnebi Defterleri*, they have always been issued by the Ottoman central administration in response to a petition or letter from the Dubrovnik authorities. Put differently, the original requests are known only because the sultans' scribes normally summarized the documents to which they responded, often in considerable detail. Since the registers must have served as an *aide-mémoire* to the scribes responsible for the sultan's correspondence, the latter do not include the polite formulas that would normally introduce the rescripts sent to the *beğler* of Dubrovnik, or to governors and other power-holders in the Balkan provinces.[33]

Guarantees in times of instability

At the centre of the preoccupation of Dubrovnik's governing elite were the charters or *ahidname*s, known as 'capitulations' in European parlance, which had been issued to the *knezler* and *beğler* of their town by a long line of sultans. However, given the scholarly focus on fully-fledged states as recipients of capitulations, it is worth reminding that *ahidname*s could be issued to non-state groups as well. Thus, an early seventeenth-century register concerning Dubrovnik begins, rather surprisingly, with the copy of a short document dated Muharrem 883 (April 1478) and issued by Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror. As the recipients, the heading names the *Bosna ruhbanları* or Bosnian monks; presumably the sultan's scribes were referring to the Bosnian Franciscans but did not name a specific convent or personage.[34]

Apparently, this text served as a model for the privilege granted in *Cemâziyelevvel* 1033 (February 1624), when the juvenile sultan Murad IV (r. 1623–1640) had recently ascended the throne; the later text is similar in content but much more elaborate.[35] In the fifteenth-century version, the friars were simply called 'Bosnian monks', while the later one recorded them as the *kefere-i latin ruhbanları* or 'Latin unbelieving monks' from Bosnia. Presumably, Ottoman officials recorded this grant of privilege to a non-state group—

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32 Faroqhi 1987; Faroqhi 2008, pp. 249–266.

33 When compiling the well-known chancery registers (*Mühimme Defterleri*), the scribes followed the same convention.

34 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d, p. 1, No. 1 and 2.

35 In both documents, the ruler swears to uphold his grant; in a different context, it would be interesting to compare the form of these two oaths.

without a chief recognized by Istanbul—in the Dubrovnik register because this town did have a recognized governing council and, moreover, was a close-by, Catholic and yet a tribute-paying subject of the empire. Both in 1478 and in 1624, the friars received the assurance that they might freely move around in the sultan's territories and that people who had fled because of recent insecurity would be permitted to return. The text also promised the friars that they would retain their churches.

Zdenko Zlatar has suggested that although Dubrovnik had no direct interest in the affairs of the Franciscans, the council repeatedly intervened in their favour because of the need to remain on reasonably good terms with the papacy.[36] Thus, the Franciscans sometimes received permission from the council of Dubrovnik to send a sultan's edict that needed renewing with the Ragusan ambassadors who travelled to Istanbul in any case, as they needed to hand over the annual tribute. Presumably, this type of cooperation caused the two privileges issued to the Franciscans to appear in the Dubrovnik register. Moreover, in the early 1600s, maintaining friendly relations with Rome was of particular importance, for at that time Dubrovnik's old enemy Venice and the papacy were in open conflict. As noted, the rector-and-council always worried about a possible Venetian attempt to take over their town; thus it made sense to cultivate the enemies of the *Serenissima*.

Obtaining confirmations of the edicts of a deceased sultan was an essential concern, as the orders of an Ottoman ruler lost all validity once this person died or lost his throne. Therefore, both subjects of the sultan and foreigners holding a rescript from the previous monarch—now deceased—needed to apply to the central administration to get their grants renewed. In principle, the new ruler could abrogate or modify the orders issued by his predecessor, although, as the case of the Bosnian Franciscans shows, in practice these privileges often retained validity over long periods of time.

Dubrovnik's special status was recorded at length in its charter (*ahidname*), put differently the set of privileges and regulations emitted by the Ottoman sultan. Compared to other *ahidnames*, the charter conceded Dubrovnik was notable for the many commercial and/or financial clauses that it contained.[37] Thus, an Ottoman institution due to receive money out of a fund financed by Dubrovnik's payments to the sultan could not send a messenger to the town so as to collect its due directly, but had to wait for the money to be assigned by the central treasury in Istanbul. This arrangement must have been of advantage to the financial administration because of the controls which it facilitated; but it also favoured the Dubrovnik rector-and-council, as it prevented the latter's involvement in costly and politically problematic court cases before *qadis* in provincial towns.

A further regulation determined that a Dubrovnik merchant could not be sued or his goods taken if another trader from this town had debts to an Ottoman subject. Thus, in this respect, the merchants were regarded as individuals and not as members of a group presumed to stand surety for one another, an arrangement common enough in Ottoman towns, especially in times of crisis. Another privilege involved the inheritances of traders who died

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[36] Zlatar 1992, pp. 153–154.

[37] For an English translation, see: Biegman 1967, pp. 56–58.

while doing business in the sultan's lands. Their goods were to be handed over to associates of the dead man, who were to convey them to the heirs back home; therefore, the men who had farmed the office of collecting heirless property on behalf of the Ottoman treasury (*beytülmal emini, beytülmalcı*) had no right to intervene. As merchants and other travellers quite often had a lot of trouble when trying to retrieve the possessions of a dead relative or associate once the *beytülmal emini* had got hold of them, this regulation was of particular significance.[38]

Moreover, some privileges not recorded in the original *ahidname* had been added later on; of recent date, they were supplementary grants from a given sultan, which his successors had chosen to confirm. Thus, Mehmed III had permitted the rector and his council to purchase 300 *kantar* of saltpetre in Egypt; and in early *Cemâziyelevvel* 1027 (April–May 1618), Osman II had this grant confirmed.[39] As saltpetre is the basis for gunpowder, the government of Dubrovnik thus obtained the sultan's sanction for maintaining firearms, which at this juncture the administration was anxious to keep out of the hands of the subject population.[40]

Since it was the existence of an *ahidname* issued by the current ruler that permitted foreigners, and especially non-Muslim foreigners, to move around in the empire's territories, we find the government of Dubrovnik hurrying to obtain a new set of privileges whenever there was a change of sultans. Apart from the political and sometimes personal upheavals, to which a change of ruler so often gave rise, the enthronement of a sultan was also a source of significant expenditure.[41] While the Ottoman exchequer needed to pay an accession bonus to the janissaries, the taxpayers of Dubrovnik also felt the repercussions: for their rector-and-council not only had to send embassies to Istanbul, but also procure the gifts without which the ambassadors would not have been welcome at the sultan's court.

From this situation results a particular value of the *Ecnebi Defterleri* introduced here. In all probability, the sultan's commands that the governing councils sent to Istanbul for confirmation between 1617 and 1623 were those that remained of practical importance. While it is not possible in a short article to discuss all the Ottoman edicts to which this consideration applied, even a selection of some particularly significant texts will give us a picture of the main concerns of the Dubrovnik traders—for differently from Venice, whose patricians in the early 1600s were abandoning direct involvement in trade and favouring investments in rural properties located in the *terraferma*, the governing council of Dubrovnik directly represented commercial interests. At the same time, the interventions of the sultans indicate the value which the latter placed upon the trade of this town.

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38 For a detailed complaint about a *beytülmal emini* cf.: Simeon 1964, pp. 84–85. Simeon recorded that when he fell seriously ill in Aydın-Güzelhisar, the *beytülmalcı* collected his property as if he had already been dead. However, Polonyalı Simeon did not have too much difficulty in obtaining its return once he had recovered. On the other hand, he did get into deep trouble when a partner of his died and Simeon tried to retrieve his own share: the local *beytülmalcı* had him imprisoned, under conditions so dire that he suffered a serious relapse.

39 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d 013/1, p. 158, No. 739.

40 İnalcık 1975, pp. 195–207.

41 Vatin and Veinstein 2003.

Trade goods

From the official Ottoman perspective, the Dubrovnik merchants were politically 'harmless' and at the same time reliable producers of customs and tribute revenue. Presumably, this situation was the background for a rescript dated to *Rebîulevvel* 1027 (February–March 1618), during the tense weeks when Mustafa I was forced to abdicate in favour of his nephew Osman II.[42] We cannot thus be totally certain whether the 'father' of the issuing sultan referred to in this rescript was Mustafa's father Mehmed III or Osman's father Ahmed I; but the latter alternative is more likely, as Sultan Mustafa was deposed already on 1 *Rebîulevvel*. In either case, it is remarkable that the chancery went out of its way to issue a document protecting the Dubrovnik traders at what must have been the time of a widespread upheaval, a gesture presumably justified by the need to keep trade going and revenues flowing in.

For the question treated in the rescript of February–March 1618 concerned the right of Dubrovnik traders to purchase a variety of leathers: the text mentions products from ox- and buffalo-hides, sheepskin as well as Morocco leather. The Dubrovnik merchants had been accustomed to procure all these items from the town of Sofia, where—presumably—skins and hides had been tanned.[43] It is of particular interest that the merchants possessed the right to take these goods wherever they pleased; put differently, they were not obliged to carry them to Istanbul and offer the leather to the naval arsenal or the janissaries.

In fact, there was a mechanism in place that served to positively discourage Dubrovnik traders from visiting the Ottoman capital and its earlier avatars Edirne and Bursa. For the *ahidname* specified that in most Balkan towns the payments made by the Dubrovnik government exempted its subjects from customs duties; but this privilege was not valid for the three major cities. Therefore, Dubrovnik merchants occasionally used the Thracian port of Rodosçuk (today: Tekirdağ), which they called Rodosto—and which as the crow flies is almost equidistant from Istanbul, Edirne and Bursa. In this town, skins could be collected from all over Thrace and thence conveyed to Dubrovnik.[44] For the merchants buying in Rodosçuk, the trade in skins produced a tidy but not exorbitant profit, about 20 percent being the norm.[45] Presumably, the traders carried the skins to their home town and exported them from there, for the most part to Italy.

However, the permission to export leather was a special favour granted to the subjects of a useful, revenue-producing place: for in the sixteenth century, the exportation of leather had repeatedly been prohibited because it was a semi-finished material from which artisans could make all manner of useful goods.[46] Furthermore, as a potential war mate-

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42 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d, 013/1, p. 147, No. 705.

43 This area was also a source of honey, a by-product of the exportation of wax, another important line of business for Ragusa's traders.

44 Carter 1972, p. 363.

45 *Ibidem,* p. 385.

46 Biegman 1967, pp. 153–154; Arıkan 1991.

rial, it fell into the category of *memnu' meta'* (forbidden goods), which actual and potential enemies should not be able to obtain. Yet, while the prohibition to export leather—and also cotton—was seriously enforced in the later sixteenth century, the central administration of the 1600s was much more willing to grant special permissions, which at first were exceptional and later became routine. To date no document has surfaced explaining this change of attitude; but probably the government's need for funds was a major factor: smuggled goods paid no customs duties, and the need to provide local producers of skins and hides with an outlet for their goods may have been a consideration, too. Although their concerns are not on record, Sofia traders must have preferred to sell to their Dubrovnik colleagues, who probably paid better prices than the purchasing agents of the Ottoman administration.

Of even greater significance were the sultan's edicts permitting the merchants of Dubrovnik to import a certain quantity of grain for the use of the townsmen. After all, Ragusa's hinterland was so limited that local production could only feed the urban population for a few months of every year; in addition, the town also occasionally imported grain from southern Italy. Until the mid-sixteenth century, in peacetime the sultans had permitted some export of Ottoman grain to the Italian peninsula.[47] But after that time the population increase in the sultan's domains heightened the local demand, especially in times of war. Therefore, grain became principal among the 'prohibited goods' and at the same time, as the population increase was an all-Mediterranean phenomenon, external demand remained high and smuggling was frequent.

In fact, even trading grain within the Ottoman domains was subject to major restrictions. In principle, every district (*kaza*) was to supply the central town which it probably possessed out of its own resources; and what was left over after the need for seed-grain and auto-consumption had been more or less satisfied, was to supply the Ottoman centre. The latter's demands were heavy, as consumers included not only the army, the navy, and the sultan's court, but also the inhabitants of the capital, a large city of some three to four hundred thousand persons. Private traders took care of the purchasing and transportation to the Istanbul harbour, but official controls were so stringent that these men might well be regarded as temporary servants of the sultan, whose work was paid for by the profit that, in spite of everything, they had managed to obtain.

Thus, the official permission to purchase a limited quantity of wheat and millet from Ottoman sources was an extraordinary privilege. The relevant command had originally been issued in the name of Sultan Süleyman; and the text in the *Ecnebi Defterleri* dutifully enumerated all the sultans that had occupied the Ottoman throne from Süleyman's time to 1618; for this chain was the proof that the privilege continued to be valid.[48] As for the addressees, they included all the provincial governors, local administrators and *qadis* of the localities where surplus grain might be available: Larissa (Turk.: Yenişehir-i Fener) and Trikala (Turk.: Tırhala) in Thessaly, but also Herzegovina (Turk.: Hersek) and Lepanto

47 Güçer 1949–1950; Güçer 1951–1952; Aymard 1966.

48 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d (013/1), p. 156, no. 732 and 733.

(Turk.: İnebahtı, today Nafpaktos, Greece) on the Adriatic shore.[49] Often, the grain came from the lands assigned to the sultan and members of the high elite (*has*) who could profit from the transactions thus permitted. In addition, officeholders stationed at the Ottoman landing stage of Gabela near Dubrovnik were also among the addressees; for presumably they might object to grain-ships entering the port, claiming that the wares these vessels carried were among the 'prohibited goods'.

To prevent the Dubrovnik traders from purchasing more than their quota, the sultan's command was very specific: the permitted quantities amounted to 3000 Istanbul *keyl* or *kile* both of wheat and of millet; in the case of wheat the Istanbul *kile*, a reasonably widespread unit of measurement, was defined as equivalent to 25 *okka/kıyye/vukiyye*s. Today's internet sites give varying equivalents for the *okka*, but the differences are too small to be relevant in our case. If we take 1 *okka/kıyye* as equal to 1.28 kg, we arrive at the following result: 25 *okka* = 31 kg, 3000 *okka* = 93,000 kg or 93 metric tons.[50] As the *keyl/kile* is a measure of volume and not of weight, the amount of millet expressed in tons which the traders of Dubrovnik could purchase would have been slightly different.

On the other hand, Ragusa's traders were co-responsible for supplying the Ottoman Balkans with salt, a crucial trade good as sheep and cattle breeders required large quantities of this mineral.[51] Dubrovnik's role in the salt trade declined during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, partly because of the competition from Bosnian 'home traders', who with the support of local Ottoman governors attempted with some success to trade all over the Mediterranean, thereby eliminating the Dubrovnik middlemen.[52] Before the Ottoman conquest, Ragusa's rector-and-council had used its influence with local dynasts to have those merchants imprisoned who showed such wider ambitions. But since many Bosnians converted to Islam soon after the arrival of the Ottomans, the Bosnian 'home traders' probably seemed more worthy of support to the governors of Bosnia and Herzegovina than the infidels of Dubrovnik.

Be that as it may, in the seventeenth century the salt trade of the town still was of sufficient importance to elicit complaints. The price of salt was set by the Ottoman administration; but around 1600, there had been laments that it was far too high, so that merchants were no longer interested. For the administration, this lack of demand meant a severe decline in customs revenues. Mehmed III had therefore decreed that the price should be 50 *akçe* per *mudd*, with one third collected by the Ottoman exchequer and the other two

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[49] This was the site of the 1571 sea-battle between the Ottomans and the coalition encompassing Venice, the Habsburg Empire and the pope. It is not totally clear why Mora (Morea) also appears on the list of addressees, as its saleable grain surpluses were probably limited. But as the peninsula has a long coastline, the locals may have sought and found buyers for even small quantities of grain.

[50] On the Ottoman units of measurement *Okka* and *Dirhems*, which were in use between 1500 and 1550 see: Kürkman 2003, pp. 233–235.

[51] Güçer 1963; Demirtaş 2004.

[52] Carter 1972, pp. 354–357.

thirds going to the merchant; and Osman II confirmed the ruling.[53] Evidently, this edict was to ensure that the traders from Dubrovnik brought in significant quantities of salt, sometimes from fairly distant places. We do not know whether some fifteen years after the death of Mehmed III, the traders still found the price satisfactory.

For the Ottoman side, the salt imported by the Dubrovnik merchants was significant enough to assign these traders a stretch of coast in which only they and nobody else were permitted to sell salt.[54] Apparently, this did not sit well with some competitors whose names and origins unfortunately are not on record; for these men showed up in the port of Gabela stating that they had brought salt which they were planning to sell in the interior of the Balkans. But seemingly this claim was just a pretext for surreptitious sales, which obviously did not pay any sales taxes. In all likelihood, this loss was the motive for the Ottoman administration to threaten traders infringing the Dubrovnik monopoly with confiscation of their salt. Probably, upon the urging of the rector-and-council, the edict became quite specific: no outsiders could bring salt into the stretch of the coastland assigned to the Dubrovnik merchants. If anybody disregarded the order and the salt could be located, it was to be confiscated by the Ottoman authorities. If the sellers had already completed the sale and the buyer had left the area, it was the money that the authorities were to confiscate; and the same thing was to happen if the owner had managed to conceal the salt. Although the sultan's command does not say anything about enforcement problems, it does not take much imagination to envisage the complicated disputes that might arise from these regulations: how was anybody to estimate the monetary equivalent of salt which had left the area some time ago, or even the value of salt which had never been found? Perhaps a literal enforcement was not the main aim; rather, the authorities wanted to scare away potential competitors from the strip of coast that they had assigned to the merchants of Dubrovnik.

Dressed for the road

By the nature of their trade, the Ragusa merchants had to move around; and therefore the protection of travellers was a major issue. Two documents dealt with this problem; they were dated to the last days of *Ramazan* 1025 (October 1616) and were thus slightly older than the other texts treated here. Readers were told that in order to protect their persons and goods against robbers, Dubrovnik traders on their travels were in the habit of putting on a green headgear (*kalpak*), a caftan with a collar and wide pants (*çağşır*); this set

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53 BAO, A. DVN.DVE.d 013/1, p. 158, No. 738 (*Cemâziyelevvel* 1027/April–May 1618). The text does not specify which *mudd* is intended: unfortunately, this unit of volume varied considerably even within a single province. If the 'regular' Ottoman *mudd* was at issue, it was equivalent to 20 *kile*; but the *kile* in turn varied from one place to the next. Compare Arıkan 1996, p. 10. http://www.isam.org.tr/documents/_dosyalar/_pdfler/osmanli_arastirmalari_dergisi/osmanl%C4%B1_sy16/1996_16_ARIKANZ.pdf (accessed on 3 April 2015).

54 BAO, A. DVN.DVE.d 013/1, p. 159, No. 742 (Rebîulâhir 1027/March–April 1618).

of garments (at least in the Balkans) apparently characterized the wearer as a Muslim.[55] While the traders did not wear turbans, the use of green was noteworthy; for at least certain shades of this colour were the privilege of the Muslims. According to the two documents, the men from Dubrovnik were entitled to wear such garments; after all, appearing in the Muslim clothing indirectly provided some protection to a traveller, as only a man in such garb could bear arms and ride horses.[56]

Among the accoutrements thus permitted, the sultan's rescript specifically mentioned swords (*kılıç*), bows and arrows, as well as spurs. While riding horses was a necessity given the state of the Balkan roads, it was also a sign of prestige, which at least in cities was the privilege of the Muslims—and in Egypt, of military men exclusively. However, the edict did not mention firearms, which as noted the Ottoman administration was trying to keep out of the hands of its subjects and thus presumably did not permit to private persons resident in Dubrovnik either.[57]

Seemingly, many local administrators had reacted to what they considered usurpations of Muslim prerogatives on the part of unbelievers, by confiscating the horses of Dubrovnik merchants for the use of official messengers (*ulak*). In the two edicts discussed here, this practice was prohibited; the exemption from service to the *ulak* was a valuable privilege, as a merchant left without means of transportation was likely to incur heavy losses.

The sultans had granted exemptions from clothing rules to other foreigners as well.[58] Still, the two texts at issue here are remarkable because they refer to the ambiguities inherent in the status of Dubrovnik subjects. For the reader learns that the men of this town were not ordinary non-Muslim subjects to whom 'honourable' (*fahir*) garments including turbans (*tülbend*) were forbidden. Rather, the men at issue were in a special position as 'actual Dubrovnik merchants'. Therefore, the local administrators who had faulted the travellers for their use of arms and Muslim garments had committed an injustice, which judges all over the Ottoman Balkans were now to redress.

Between the sultan and the *knez*

Not all dangers that traders might encounter on the road could be avoided by wearing garments normally used by the Muslims and going about armed. Niko, a trader from Dubrovnik doing business in the region of Silistre, complained about soldiers, sometimes cavalrymen and sometimes janissaries, who were unwilling to recognize the privileges

55 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d 013/1, p. 142, No. 676 and 677. The contents of these texts are almost identical.

56 Elliot 2004.

57 İnalcık 1975.

58 Elliot 2004, p. 106.

granted the Ragusa merchants by their *ahidname*s.[59] Perhaps in retaliation for accusations remaining unspecified, the soldiers made the merchants, presumably experienced travellers, serve as guides, or else they used the places in which the traders normally lived as temporary housing for military men passing through the area.

This text indicates that in the Ottoman Balkans, Dubrovnik's merchants had residences at their disposal, either rented or purchased. Presumably, such arrangements were most common in those Balkan towns where the traders had founded organizations that they called 'colonies'.[60] These were organized groups of varying size, all subject to the *beğler ve knez* and engaged in commerce. Similar groupings also existed in places where the Venetians traded in substantial numbers; in the French context, the equivalent term was 'nation'. The Ottoman authorities did not take cognizance of these groups; whenever necessary, they relied on complaints from and information given by the Dubrovnik envoys that annually appeared in the Ottoman capital. Along with matters that we might consider 'political', the latter also might forward the concerns of individual merchants, especially when debts were at issue. Thus in late *Receb* 1027 (June–July 1618), the *qadi* of Şumen received an order to deal with a local Christian who refused to pay his debt to a Dubrovnik merchant, pleading a lack of means.[61] Still, the plaintiff claimed that the debtor did possess gardens, vineyards, fields and other real estate; the *qadi* now had the unpleasant task of finding out whether this statement was indeed true, and if so, make sure that the debt was discharged.

Other cases involving debts and, submitted to the Ottoman administration, dealt with more general concerns; thus an order originally issued by Mehmed III and confirmed by Ahmed I had specified that Dubrovnik subjects that fled to the Ottoman Empire because they had committed a crime at home, or else because they had not paid their debts, would be returned to their town of origin.[62] Apparently, the rector- and-council had first brought this issue to the attention of the Istanbul authorities because certain local administrators in the Balkan provinces had refused to hand over fugitives of this type. The reasons of the Ottoman dignitaries were not specified, but probably at times money had changed hands; or else the culprit had found a way of entering the household of one or another among the local power-holders, who were often in need of armed men. The text does not discuss the case of people who converted to Islam after their flight: while such people could not be sent back to Dubrovnik, in principle their conversion did not extinguish their debts; but what happened in practice remains unknown.

Conversely, the rector-and-council of Dubrovnik complained that certain Christian subjects of the sultan had settled in their town and committed crimes, attempting to escape punishment by stating: 'we are not of your people', in other words claiming extra--territorial privileges.[63] Already Selim II (r. 1566–1574) had issued a command deeming

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59 BAO, A. DVN.DVE.d 013/1, p. 146, No. 699 (early Safer 1027/January–February 1618).

60 Zlatar 1992, pp. 14–16.

61 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d, 013/1, p. 181, No. 824.

62 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d, 013/1, pp. 157–158, No. 736 (Cemâziyelevvel 1027/April–May 1618).

63 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d, 013/1, p. 158, No. 740 (Cemâziyelevvel 1027/April–May 1618).

this excuse invalid, which was now confirmed by an edict addressed to the governor of Herzegovina and the *qadi* of Nova. While the text does not spell out what the *knez* and his council were to do in such cases, presumably, they were to expel these people and hand them over to the Ottoman authorities for punishment.

The Dubrovnik merchants not only had debtors, they also might find themselves confronted with people who, with or without justification, claimed to be their creditors. Quite apart from the 'ordinary' difficulties inherent in credit relations, an additional problem was due to the fact that, as non-Muslims, the merchants of Dubrovnik could not be witnesses against any Muslim litigants. However, an edict first issued by Mehmed III and confirmed by Osman II during the first months of his brief reign gave the Ragusan traders considerable protection: for claims against them could only be enforced if the contract had previously been entered into the *qadi*'s registers, put differently, if the matter had been 'notarized' in the *qadi*'s court.[64] As any scribe in the service of the judge could testify that such an entry was in fact present, the Dubrovnik merchant did not face any problems in finding a Muslim witness to support him. As an alternative, one of the partners—or both of them in conjunction—might have a properly witnessed document (*hüccet*) set up which recorded the rights and obligations of both sides. In the absence of such written proof, the claimants were not to receive any official support.

What were the implications of this order? As no *qadi* officiated in Dubrovnik or its immediate environment, an Ottoman subject who wanted his claims to be guaranteed would have had to address himself to the court of his home town, or else to nearby Nova. Thus, a peasant who had—for instance—sold hides or skins and not been paid in full would have needed to confront the unfamiliar setting of a *qadi*'s court. As most villagers did not do so very often, a transaction with a Dubrovnik trader might well be a rather special occasion. Even if the villager decided that a witnessed *hüccet* would do just as well, he would still need to find a scribe familiar enough with the court protocol to produce a document that would pass muster. As for the Dubrovnik traders, they also might turn to the Islamic court if they felt that such a move gave them better guarantees; in cases where the contract had been concluded among fellow townsmen, they would have brought their case to the attention of the Dubrovnik authorities.[65]

Other texts discussed the ups and downs of trade: in a document dated to mid-Muharrem 1027 (January 1618), during the brief first rule of Mustafa I, the Ottoman chancery responded to the Dubrovnik envoys' complaint that in the past, there had been thirty com-

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64 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d, 013/1, p. 160, No. 743 (Cemâziyelevvel 1027/April–May 1618).

65 Ortaylı 1996 has located a couple of cases involving Dubrovnik merchants on record in the *sicill* of Tekirdağ/Rodosçuk/Rodosto, a medium-sized town not far from Istanbul. More recently, Hacer Ateş in her dissertation 'Kuzey Marmara Sahilleri ve Art Alanında Şehirleşmenin Tarihi Süreci: XVI.–XVII. Yüzyıllarda Tekirdağ ve Yöresi,' [The Historical Process of Urbanization on the Northern Marmara Coast and its Hinterland: Tekirdağ and its Environs in the 16th-17th Centuries], unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Istanbul University, 2009, pp. 234–235 has found yet more evidence concerning Dubrovnik traders buying skins in Rodosçuk. I am most grateful to the author for sending me a copy of her dissertation.

mercial houses (*ev*) in the town of Sofia.[66] But now the number had dwindled to three or four; and the envoys blamed this decline on unspecified aggressions to which the traders had been subjected. By severely admonishing the local *qadi* to end this situation, the central government fulfilled the wishes of the tribute-bearing patricians.

However, in this case there probably also existed commercial reasons for the difficulties suffered by Dubrovnik's traders.[67] For at least in the later 1600s, the republic of Dubrovnik encountered sharp competition from traders domiciled in Ancona and Venice and also from the Jewish merchants who may have lived in the Ottoman realm or else in the Venetian orbit. During the Cyprus War (1570–1573), the ambiguous status of many Jews, who moved between the Ottoman lands and Italy, made them into formidable competitors. As for the Venetian traders, they entered the Sofia skin trade after the peace of 1573, using Istanbul and Rodosçuk as collection points. Apparently, they also operated out of Varna, on the Black Sea coast in today's Bulgaria; but as the Venetian traders, being foreigners, normally had no access to the Black Sea, they must have used the services of local shippers, whose identity remains unknown.[68] It is hard to say to what extent this competition affected Dubrovnik's trade already in 1618, but the possibility cannot be ruled out.

The sultan as an umpire between Dubrovnik and Venice

Dubrovnik needed the Ottoman support at least in part because of possible Venetian ambitions to re-conquer the town. Even if that aim turned out to be illusory, the *Serenissima* might induce as many Balkan merchants as possible to bypass Ragusa and trade directly with Venice. In this context, Osman II in mid-Zilhicce 1027 (December 1618), put differently, but a few months after his accession, was asked to help out the republic of Dubrovnik.[69] As the document put it, both the rector-and-council of Dubrovnik and the doge of Venice had shown obedience and submission (*itaat ve inkiyad*) to the sultan, the expression used being the same in both instances. However, only in the case of Dubrovnik was there any mention of tribute, as the payments owed by Venice for its possession of Cyprus must have lapsed with the Ottoman conquest of the island.

But peace between the sultan and the doge, in addition to Dubrovnik's submission to the Ottomans, did not mean that the population of the town and its hinterland had a peaceful life, far from it. For the doge had sent a naval detachment that had ravaged the area, raped women, carried off prisoners, and cut down fruit trees. While the document examined here did not name the commander at issue, a text studied and published by İdris Bostan gave his name as Lorenzo

66 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d, 013/1, p. 144, No. 692.

67 Carter 1972, p. 363.

68 İnalcık 1979.

69 BAO, A.DVN.DVE.d 013/1, P. 192, No. 852.

Venier.[70] As a result of this upheaval, trade came to a standstill; and the rector-and-council of Dubrovnik worried about the great expense of recruiting armed men to defend their territory. In response to earlier pleas, the sultan had sent an envoy named Mustafa Çavuş, who assessed the damages caused by the Venetian attack as equivalent to 30,000 gold pieces, or over twice Dubrovnik's annual tribute. By the end of 1618, the Venetians had still not paid, although the *bailo* in Istanbul had been admonished to have his government remedy the situation. Supposedly, the issue was now on the verge of solution, as in the name of the doge, the *bailo* had promised to return the booty and pay over the 30,000 gold coins. As for the governors of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the *qadis* of the region, to whom the edict was addressed, they were to ensure that the Venetians stood by their promises.

A document, issued in the name of Mustafa I and dated to late Zilkade 1027 (November 1618), is of similar content but provides further information on the attitude of the Ottoman court.[71] Surviving in the Venetian archives, it was addressed to the doge Giovanni Bembo. In this text, the advisors of Mustafa I complained about the misdeeds of a certain *cendral*, whose name the text did not mention. In a rather drastic language, the sultan pointed out that if the *cendral* had acted with Bembo's knowledge and consent, it was a more than astonishing situation given the fact that the two polities were at peace. But it was just as strange if the aggression had taken place without the consent of the doge, the implication being that in such a case, the latter evidently was unable to control the actions of his subordinates. Moreover, the Venetians had alleged that the attacks were in retaliation for the actions of the republic of Dubrovnik, whose government had supposedly been passing on information to the Spaniards. Given the involvement of some Ragusans with the Spanish fleet, an issue discussed above, it made sense from the Venetian viewpoint to claim that the government of Dubrovnik had committed treason against the sultan.

However, this claim did not cut any ice with the central administration in Istanbul. After all, so the letter to the doge continued, the long-standing peace between the Ottoman Empire and Venice would have obliged the doge to instruct the *bailo* to bring the matter to the attention of the authorities in Istanbul. If necessary, the latter would then have taken the appropriate measures; and certainly, the Venetian side had overreacted in a most imprudent manner. But in the present situation, it was urgent that Venice satisfy the republic of Dubrovnik; and for this purpose Mustafa Cavuş, the envoy that we have already encountered, had been sent out. The text did not refer to the 30,000 gold coins, perhaps because the envoy had not as yet had the chance to assess the damages. After all Dubrovnik was an Ottoman dependency—the text even went so far as to pose the rhetorical question whether it was so strange for a tiny polity to use a certain amount of dissimulation.

For in case the Venetians remained obdurate, the sultan's advisors threatened 'informal retaliation', in other words attacks of the kind that the Venetians had just committed toward Dubrovnik. As the text 'diplomatically' put it, certain stupid people (*ukûl-ı kāsıra ashâbı*) might easily get the mistaken idea that the sultan and Venice were at war; and the author(s) of the let-

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70 Bostan 2009, p. 62.

71 See the document published by Bostan 2009, pp. 209–212 and Bostan's comments on pp. 61–62, 73.

ter highlighted the various garrison soldiers and especially the Albanian fighting men with their well-known rebellious dispositions as possible attackers of the Venetian lands.[72]

Thus, the text was principally what diplomats of a later age would call a note of protest against the Venetian high-handedness; but at the same time, the authors referred to certain features that the two governments should have shared or actually did share. First of all, this was a concern for the maintenance of peace: where Venice was concerned, at the time when tensions with Spain were quite serious, there was no reason to begin an avoidable war with the Ottoman sultan. Similar considerations must have motivated the Ottoman side: given difficulties over the sultans' succession, and an on-going conflict with the Safavids and with the Celali rebellions being far from over, a war with Venice was not desirable.

Secondly, there was a sense that both the sultan and the doge represented polities that friend and foe would take 'seriously' and who shared a common fund of information about political realities, as opposed to the tiny powerless polity of Dubrovnik or the border garrisons and Albanian soldiers with their notable lack of knowledge concerning the 'international situation'. It is unfortunate that at present, we do not know whether the Venetians ever paid the compensation assessed by Mustafa Çavuş.

In conclusion

The documents studied here have taken us through the routine and not so routine matters that Dubrovnik's merchants and the city government might encounter in a year of significant political tension, both in the Adriatic and in Central Europe. At the same time, these often rather mundane documents reflect the attitude of the sultans' government at the time when a domestic upheaval and a foreign war made it necessary to diplomatically manage conflicts in an area which—temporarily—was far from the theatres of war.

To be more precise, the documents in the *Ecnebi Defterleri* provide a bird's eye view of those cases that the Dubrovnik patricians considered worth submitting to the sultan. There must have been others that were never forwarded to Istanbul; it is thus quite probable that the complaints recorded in the *Ecnebi Defterleri* were those of people with contacts with the local patricians, while complainants without such backgrounds had to fend for themselves.

Moreover, from this pre-selection, the sultan's bureaucrats made a further choice, entering into their registers only those cases that they regarded as having some merit; for Ottoman officials did not often write out formal documents when refusing a request. Seemingly, when intending to give a negative reply, they said nothing at all; and when no answer arrived within a few weeks or months, petitioners apparently were supposed to draw their own conclusions. Like any other source, the register studied here thus relays a very partial image of 'reality', as viewed from the perspective of the powerful, both in Istanbul and in Dubrovnik.

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72 Faroqhi 2002.

Selections were also conditioned by the fact that the commands of a deceased sultan only remained valid if the new monarch confirmed them. Therefore, some of the texts encountered here did not concern the issues that had come up during recent weeks or months, but dealt with those concerns of previous decades that the council-and-rector of Dubrovnik had 'inherited' and considered to be of possible importance in the future.

But in spite of the selections undertaken by both parties, the documents in the *Ecnebi Defterleri* remain valuable because, due to their large numbers, they reflect everyday, frequently small-scale conflicts about which otherwise the archives do not have much to say. Yet the image that the elite of Dubrovnik formed of its relationships with the Ottomans and the Venetians must have been conditioned by this sequence of everyday encounters. Similarly, Ottoman viziers and their scribes must have judged the sincerity of the Dubrovnik patricians' often proclaimed loyalty, by the manner in which the latter solved small-scale problems in the Ottoman interest. Or else the sultans' officials might consider a lack of cooperation as an indicator of potential disloyalty.

To view these documents from yet a different angle: in the seventeenth century, the Ottoman officials on active service were not much inclined to write down what we might call political commentary; and therefore the opinions that some of them expressed concerning Dubrovnik and Venice should be examined with care. In spite of the problems discussed here, in 1618, the Ottoman-Venetian relations were peaceful; and the war over Crete (1645–1669) was as yet almost thirty years in the future. Therefore the sultans' letters often dwelt on the long allegiance of Venice to the Ottoman throne, avoiding all comment on the numerous wars that had all but eliminated the *Serenissima*'s seaborne empire. As for Dubrovnik: certainly it was a small place, whose government might even be pardoned for acting with a degree of dissimulation—at least as long as the Ottoman power-holders were not the victims.

Yet, as the tribute-paying subjects (*reaya*) of the sultan, the council-and-rector of Dubrovnik could count on the sultan's support when pressured by Venice; and when Ottoman officials demanded that the Dubrovnik property owners be compensated for damages that the Venetians had inflicted on them, the respect due to the Ottoman sultan as the suzerain of the town was surely a motivation. Ragusa's customs duties and tribute that entered the central treasury every year must have been an additional reason for giving the tiny republic an official support. At the same time, the people of Dubrovnik were 'subjects with a difference', distinguished from the ordinary non-Muslims living in the empire by their right to acquire grain and gunpowder, bear arms, ride horses and wear clothing that characterized them as honourable people. In 1618, those patricians who had aborted the 'Great Conspiracy' and opted for a continued Ottoman protectorate had good reason to be satisfied with their choice.[73]

[73] Zlatar 1992, pp. 95–103.

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The Gonzaga and the Ottomans between the 15th and the 17th Centuries in the Documents of the State Archive of Mantua

The State Archive of Mantua holds the documents of the Gonzaga family, who governed the city and its lands from 1328 to 1707. For almost four centuries, the Gonzaga dominated this small duchy in Northern Italy, located between the Duchy of Milan and the Republic of Venice, and they accumulated wealth through successful marriages with important families or from the military campaigns they conducted for European sovereigns. There is ample testimony of their dealings with the Ottomans (motivated initially by their search for horses) in letters, court correspondence, dowry contracts and the notarial inventories held at the State Archive in the city.[1]

Until now, there has been no in-depth analysis of the relationship between the Gonzaga and the Ottomans, for various reasons: first, the difficulty of reading the documents in the original language, but above all because of the vast number of references to the Ottomans in many documents that have never been studied in a chronological sequence. The presence of the Ottomans is evident in the rich collection of art that the Gonzaga kept at the Ducal Palace in Mantua, including paintings, sculptures, weapons, maiolica, bronzes and jewellery, a collection that was unfortunately dispersed when it was partly sold in 1626–1627 to the English King Charles I (r. 1625–1649), and later when the city was sacked by *Landsknechts* in the service of the Habsburgs in 1630. As a result, these

[1] The following abbreviations are used to refer to archival materials: ASMn (Archivio di Stato di Mantova), ASVe (Archivio di Stato di Venezia), AG (Archivio Gonzaga), b. (busta/envelope), f. (fascicolo/folder), c. (carta/page), cc. (carte/pages) and c. n. n. (carta non numerata/unnumbered page).

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documents remain the most important testimony to the close relations between the two different cultures.[2]

The connections between Mantua and Jerusalem are mentioned from the mid-13th century onwards due to the presence of the Templars.[3] After the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, Pope Pius II (r. 1458–1464) convoked a Congress in Mantua, in 1459, to organize a crusade of the Christian states against the sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444–1446 and 1451–1481), an initiative that failed to mature due to lack of support by the European powers.[4] On this occasion Ludovico II Gonzaga (1412–1478), known as *Il Turco*, hosted various representatives of the Italian courts at his palace, giving rise to a period of great artistic splendour of the city: Andrea Mantegna (1431–1506) was called upon to fresco the *Camera degli Sposi* (the bridal chamber) in the castle of San Giorgio while in 1472 Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472) drew up the plans for the basilica of Sant'Andrea—which, according to legend, is home to the relic of the Most Precious Blood of Christ. The veneration of this relic, which came to the city from the Holy Land, is also celebrated in a fresco completed between 1430 and 1440 by Pisanello (1395–1455) in the Ducal Palace, where the artist depicted the legend of the quest for the Holy Grail of the knights of King Arthur (Ill. 1).

Various inventories of the Mantuan Ducal family document their search not only for Turkish horses, but also for objects and works of art produced in the Levant: Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga (1444–1483) possessed objects of Moorish design,[5] and the Marchioness Isabella d'Este (1474–1539), who came to Mantua from Ferrara at the age of only sixteen (Ill. 2), displayed in her famous Grotta porcelain vases, silk rugs and small cabinets from the Orient.[6] At court, Isabella kept several *morette* (moorish serving girls), who were considered exotic curiosities,[7] and she also bred Turkish horses. In 1493, she decided to travel to Ferrara with her chargers, which she had named *Metus* (the stallion) and *Spes* (the mare)[8].

Her husband, the Marquis Francesco II Gonzaga (1466–1519), who was the first in Mantua to make direct contact with the Sublime Porte in order to find horses, also forged diplomatic relations between 1491 and 1498 with Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512). Francesco II sent his ambassador Alessio Beccaguto to Constantinople on a mission to procure Arabian horses for the Gonzagas' stables. Buying thoroughbred horses in the Ottoman realm was a complicated undertaking because horses were regarded as strategic goods, which should not be sold to potential enemies.[9] Sultan Bayezid II lavished many gifts upon the marquis because he wished to establish close ties with Italy, where Cem (1459–1495),

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2 The first documents of the State Archive of Mantua that connect the Gonzaga with the Ottomans are published in Ferrato 1876 and Luzio 1993. See also Sogliani 2003.

3 Tacchella 1999.

4 Babinger 1968.

5 Chambers 1992.

6 Ferrari 2003, nn. 7186, 7187, 7214, 7240, 7269, 7307, 7311, 7312, 7313, 7341.

7 Ricci 2002, pp. 49–51 and Kaplan 2005.

8 Cockram 2013, n. 73.

9 Reindl-Kiel 2009, p. 43.

Ill. 1. Antonio Pisano known as il Pisanello, *Tournament-Battle of Louvezerp* (fresco). Ducal Palace, Mantua ☙

his younger half-brother and main rival for the Ottoman throne, lived as well-treated captive under the custody of Pope Innocent VIII (r. 1484–1492). Among these gifts sent by Bayezid II were jewels (chains of gold and bracelets), clothing and fabrics, crossbows and paintings—among them, a portrait of the sultan's half-brother, which had been handed over to Andrea Mantegna, and a portrait of the ambassador of the Mamluk sultan.[10] The artist, who later met Cem in Rome, probably used the picture of the sultan's half-brother as a kind of model for the image of Balthasar in the painting of the *Adoration of the Magi* (c. 1495), which is today in the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles.[11]

In 1492, the Ottoman sultan sent him a turban as a gift, which was brought to Mantua by the envoy Kasım (Kasım Çavuş), along with the horses, a relic of the shirt of Christ, which, unfortunately, has been lost.[12] The Ottoman envoy was welcomed at the court in Mantua with great celebrations.[13]

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10 Kissling 1967, p. 35. Also see the contribution of Hedda Reindl-Kiel in this volume.

11 Berksoy 2005, p. 60.

12 Interest in relics from the Holy Land was not sated in Mantua by the presence of the Blood of Christ. In 1482 father Paolo Arrivabene of Canneto sull'Oglio promised Federico I Gonzaga a group of important relics: a fragment of the 'stone of the anointing', one from the column of the Flagellation, one from Mount Calvary, and a splinter of wood from the Cross, a few slivers which were already held in Mantua since 1392. The 'stone of the anointing', in particular, appears in several Italian paintings from the end of the 15th century, and especially in Andrea Mantegna's *Cristo morto* today in the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milano, one of the artist's masterpieces, known in Mantua through replicas in the collection of the artist's son. For this reason some have hypothesized that the 'stone of the anointing' really did make it to Mantua (Zeri 1987, p. 13).

13 Recently Bourne 2011 returned to this topic, also pondering on the etimology of the word *turban*.

Ill. 2. Tiziano Vecellio called Titian, *Portrait of Isabella d'Este* (c. 1534–1536). Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. GG 83 ☙

Ill. 3. *Fresco with a view of Jerusalem* (removed using the *strappo* or Calicot method). Ducal Palace, Mantua ☙

Francesco II Gonzaga's interest in the Ottomans was also evident in the themes he chose for the decoration of his palaces: in the *Palazzo del Capitano* in Mantua, there is a *Camera dei Turchi*[14] (The Turkish Room); in the palace built at Gonzaga, a *Camera delle città* (Room of the Cities) with a view of Constantinople[15]; and in the palace at Marmirolo, there were two rooms—the *Camera Greca* (The Greek Room) and the *Camera del Mappamondo* (The Globe Room)—with portraits of the aforementioned envoy Kasım, depicted as a young man at the baths and as a figure in a mosque.[16] Finally, in the palace at San Sebastiano, the building that best represents the personality of Francesco II Gonzaga, there was the *Camera del mappamondo e del Caiero* (Room of the Globe and of Cairo), for which the Venetian painter Vittore Carpaccio (c. 1465–1525/26) had suggested a view

14 Braghirolli 1878, p. 23.

15 Bourne 2008, pp. 145–146, 229–240.

16 *Ibidem*, pp. 124–125, 241–244.

of Jerusalem.[17] Unfortunately, these paintings are lost, but in the Ducal Palace of Mantua there is a fresco removed from a private residence titled *Veduta di Gerusalemme* (The View of Jerusalem) dating from the early 16th century (Ill. 3). Perhaps it commemorates a journey to the Holy Land, but the minarets are transformed into bell towers, the spires into domes and the mosques into Christian churches.[18]

The son of Isabella d'Este, the marquis and subsequent duke Federico II Gonzaga (1500–1540) also sought out Turkish horses and collected Ottoman artefacts, as documented by the Stivini inventory (1540–1542), which lists a number of objects from the Levant.[19] Over the years, many books on these subjects were added to the superb family library in Mantua. In 1520, the Archdeacon Alessandro Gabbioneta[20] sent Federico a manuscript version of the history of the Ottomans by Teodoro Spandugino Cantacuzeno, *Delle historie, & origine de Principi de Turchi, ordine della corte, loro rito & costume* (On the History and Origin of the Turkish Princes, Order of the Court, their Rituals and Customs), and on February 8th 1530 the humanist Paolo Giovio (1483–1552) sent a text on the 'success of the Ottomans in Vienna', which, given the date, could be an early version of the *Commentario de le cose de' turchi* (Commentary of the affairs of the Turks).[21]

In 1525, Federico II Gonzaga sent his ambassador Antiacomo Marcelli Anconitano to the Sublime Porte. After a long journey, the envoy arrived in Constantinople on March 6th 1526, where he paid homage to Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566), presenting many gifts. The sultan handed over a letter to the duke, which is now held at the State Archive of Mantua, recalling the friendship between their peoples (Ill. 4).[22]

Federico II Gonzaga's interest in the Ottomans was also evident in later years. When Emperor Charles V (1500–1558), accompanied by Ferrante Gonzaga (1507–1557), conquered

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17 On August 15th 1511, Vittore Carpaccio wrote a letter to Marquis Francesco II Gonzaga in which he claimed to have met the painter Lorenzo Leombruno, who wanted to acquire a painting illustrating the city of Jerusalem (ASMn, Autografi, b. 7, c. 31). Carpaccio's *Gerusalemme* measured 5 1/2 × 25 feet, corresponding to roughly 190 × 850 cm, the proportions recalling those of the *Civitas Ierusalem*, designed by Erhard Reuwich of Utrecht (c. 1450–after1505) and published in Bernhard von Breydenbachs, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Mainz 1486), which was almost certainly used by Carpaccio as an iconographic source in his *Storie di Santo Stefano* (1511–1520). It is unclear whether the work requested by the Marquis Gonzaga ever reached Mantua, but a view of Jerusalem is present in the ducal collections before their sale to the king of England in 1626–1627 (Brown 1984; Ferrari 2015).

18 L'Occaso 2011, pp. 129–130, n. 78

19 Ferrari 2003, nn. 6551, 6553, 6677, 6684.

20 ASMn, AG, b. 864, f. XXI, c. 670.

21 *Commentario de le cose de' Turchi, … a Carlo Quinto imperadore augusto*, Romae, apud Antonium Bladum Asulanum, 1532; in-4°. — *Delle cose de' Turchi. Libri tre. Delle quali si descrive nel primo viaggio da Venetia a Costantinopoli, con gli nomi de' luoghi antichi e moderni. Nel secondo la Porta, cioè la corte del soltan Soleyman, signor de' Turchi. Nel terzo e ultimo il modo del reggere il stato e imperio suo*, Venezia, Bernardino Bindoni, 1541. Giovio's letter is held at the State Archive of Mantua (ASMn, AG, b. 1153, c. 357).

22 Römer 1992. In his translation of the text of the letter, Kissling suggests that Silvestro da Luca, who promised to compile some basics of Turkish for Francesco II Gonzaga (ASMn, AG, b. 2443), might have also served as the marquis' interpreter (Kissling 1967, p. 35).

Ill. 4. Letter of Süleyman the Magnificent (fragment). State Archives, Mantua

Ill. 5. Venetian, after Tiziano Vecellio, known as Titian, *Portrait of Süleyman the Magnificent,* after 1543. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. GG 2429

the city of Tunis in 1535, the news was immediately relayed to Mantua.[23] Over the years the duke of Mantua maintained close relations with Süleyman the Magnificent, and in 1537 asked Titian (c. 1488/90–1576) to paint a portrait of the sultan, of which at least two versions attributable to the artist's workshop are known: the first, at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (Ill. 5),[24] recalls the portrait of the sultan at the age of 43 in the collection of Paolo Giovio,[25] while the second is derived from a medal by Alfonso Lombardi and is held in a private collection in London.[26]

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23 Coniglio 1959.

24 Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. GG 2429; Mantua 2002, entry no. 66, p. 217 (Daniela Sogliani); Brussels–Kraków 2015, cat. 89, pp. 182–183 (Wencke Deiters).

25 Now in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence, inv. no. 1890/3051

26 Donati 1956, pp. 220–222; Klinger 2007, II, pp. 182–184, n. 340; Raby 2007, fig. p. 106 and entry no. 18. Reference is made to this portrait in a letter held at the State Archive of Mantua, written by Benedetto Agnelli (August 23rd 1538), in which the ambassador to Venice writes that Titian had painted a portrait of 'signor Turco' based on a medal (ASMn, AG, b. 1472, c. 307r). It may be recalled that Titian also portrayed the Ottoman in the *Ecce Homo* at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, signed and dated 1543 (Gentili 2012, pp. 166–170).

The Mantuan court's interest in Süleyman the Magnificent seems to have continued, because Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga (1505–1563), who chaired the Council of Trent (1545–1563), commissioned another portrait by Titian in 1561, this time of the Sultan on horseback. The documents held in Mantua mention that a 'small painting portraying the Turk' was completed in 1562 and sent to Mantua by Ippolito Capilupi (1511–1580), Bishop of Fano and the papal nunzio in Venice.[27] All traces of that work, however, as well as of the older painting commissioned by Federico II Gonzaga, have been lost.

The Ottomans also featured in the spectacles organized by the Mantuan court, which held feasts and staged mock sea-battles with pyrotechnic displays that mimicked the military campaigns between East and West. On October 22th 1549, the city welcomed Catherine of Austria (1533–1572), wife of Francesco III Gonzaga, who would die only four months after their nuptials, with a *naumachia*, a choreographed assault on a castle made of wood and defended by men 'dressed like the Turks' a feat of stagecraft that nearly ended in disaster because of the smoke and dust it raised.[28]

In the following years, when Mantua was governed by the Duke Guglielmo Gonzaga (r. 1563–1587), the family's fascination with the Ottomans—sometimes one of attraction, at others revulsion—continued to be evident.[29] This contradictory and ambivalent relationship highlights the differences and the affinities between the two states, both of which certainly shared a passion for horses in common. This polarity of opinion is evident in the identification of the 'other' as an infidel and cruel enemy when war was on the horizon, and as a faithful friend and ally in times of peace, when the Gonzagas were more interested in Ottoman art, traditions, customs, technical innovations and military strategy.[30]

News from the Levant arrived in Mantua via the letters of many envoys of the Italian and European courts, but the most important filter was certainly the Republic of Venice,

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27 D'Arco 1857, vol. 2, doc. 179; Meroni 1983, p. 34.

28 *Così procedendo sua Altezza nel sopradetto modo, et di già passato il borgo di porto, et cominciando ad entrar su la diritta via, che si conduce al ponte de molini, ecco da sette navi acconcie a modo di Fuste, et di Bergantini nel lago dalla destra parte si scopersero, nelle quali erano huomini da combattere, le quali andandosene alla volta d'un picciolo castello fabricato di legname, sopra d'uno a modo di scoglio dalla natura fatto che produce giunchi et canne, alla guardia del quale erano da dodeci huomini vestiti alla turchesca, che lo deffidendeano, li quali smontati a terra, cominciorno con grande impeto a dargli la battaglia. Ma contrarii effetti fecero, che breve fu tal spettacolo, percioché nel primiero assalto, sforzandosi la parte di fuori d'entrar dentro, et per l'opposito quelli di dentro di ributtargli, avenne che scaricandosi dall'una, et l'altra parte di molti archibugi, che 'l fuoco s'accese nella polvere di quelli di dentro, di maniera che rompendosi l'ordine de la bataglia, et ardendosi a chi le vestimenta, et altri la faccia, et le mani, furono sforzati uscirsene, et gettarsi ne l'onde, et con questo per molti infelice successo, fu terminata tal impresa* (Ruffinelli 1549 transcribed in Fabbri 1974, pp. 29–30).

29 Many documents are published in: Piccinelli 2000, Furlotti 2000, Sogliani 2002, Venturini 2002 and Sermidi 2003; the transcriptions can be consulted online through the portal Banche dati Gonzaga in the database Collezionismo gonzaghesco 1563–1630 by the Centro Internazionale d'Arte e di Cultura di palazzo Te (Mantua) (http://banchedatigonzaga.centropalazzote.it/portale), a research project financed by the Fondazione Cariverona and the Fondazione di Comunità di Mantova. The documents without bibliographic references are unpublished.

30 For this view of the Ottomans, cf. Formica 2008; Formica 2010; Formica 2012.

which maintained solid diplomatic relations with the Sublime Porte for centuries, in order to avoid harming its commercial dealings. In 1537, when the city on the lagoon decided to limit knowledge of foreign communications to its citizens, it excluded 'Turkish affairs', which were made available to a selected group of ambassadors, among them the representative of the Mantuan court.[31] On May 23rd 1570, Guglielmo Gonzaga wrote to Alessandro Capilupi, his envoy in Venice: *…we remind you of your orders… in particular regarding affairs in Constantinople…*[32] and later *…while it is true that the lords have forbidden by law that their dealings with the Levant be communicated to anyone, take no notice and ensure that we are informed…*[33]

In 1565, the Ottomans attacked the island of Malta, but the Knights of the Order repelled the siege and obtained an important victory. Drawings of their defence systems were sent from Rome to Mantua.[34]

On September 6th 1566, Süleyman the Magnificent died during the siege of Szigetvár in Hungary. The Ottoman Empire was entrusted to his son Selim II (r. 1566–1574), a lover of literature, art and music, but also of wine. In 1567, Selim II sent his ambassador İbrahim to Venice. This was an event of some importance, and a message was immediately sent to Mantua, from which we learn that İbrahim, although he spoke Italian, communicated through an interpreter, the *dragoman*, a figure intended to emphasise the cultural, political and military superiority of the Ottomans.[35]

Diplomatic mediation between the Ottomans and the European states was made possible thanks to gifts. Many Mantuan documents describe meetings between Ottoman representatives and court envoys, during which camels, sighthounds, rugs, leather tables and field tents were exchanged.[36]

On September 3rd 1569, the Arsenal in Venice was destroyed by a fire; the Ottomans decided to take advantage of the situation, believing the enemy fleet to be decisivly weakend. In March 1570, Sultan Selim II attacked Cyprus, occupying the island despite the intervention of the Venetians, who were supported by troops from the Gonzagas.[37] With the fall of Nicosia and Famagusta, the Venetian Republic prepared for war, and on May 20th 1571 joined Spain and the Papal States in the Holy League initiated by Pope Pius V

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31 Luzio 1993, p. 162, n. 1.

32 *…vi raccomendiamo de gli avisi dati… massimamente delle cose di Costantinopoli…* (ASMn, AG, b. 2143, f. III, cc. 167–168).

33 *…se è vero che l'istessa signoria habbia proibito per legge che gli avisi suoi di Levante non siano communicati a qual si voglia persona, non fate più instanza perché siano communicati a noi…* (ASMn, AG, b. 2149, f. III, c. 233).

34 ASMn, AG, b. 895, f. I/5, c. 102–107 and cc. 127–130 (The drawings themselves unfortunately have not been found yet in the Archive).

35 ASMn, AG, b. 1499, f. I, cc. 23–25 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 39). For the symbolism in the Ottomans' actions, cf. Pedani 2006; Perocco 2010; Pedani 2010, pp. 99–112.

36 ASMn, AG, b. 1500, f. I, cc. 235–236 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 62).

37 The Gonzaga sent about one thousand infantry soldiers to Cyprus (Donesmondi 1612, part I, p. 231).

Ill. 6. Map of the region of Morea or Mystras. State Archives, Mantua ☙

(r. 1566–1572). The Gonzagas asked for drawings of the occupied territory and the Morea (Mystras) region[38] (Ill. 6) to be sent to Mantua, and in June of the same year plans of the city of Algiers were also sent to the duke.[39]

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38 ASMn, AG, b. 1502, f. II, c. 332.

39 ASMn, AG, b. 1503, cc. 101–102, 103–104, 109–110 and ASMn, AG, b. 1504, f. II, cc. 572–573 (Sogliani 2002, docc. 137, 138, 139, 140). Bertolotti 1977, p. 45 has identified the name of the engraver Gerolamo Liotto.

While the official and political dispatches emphasise the distance between the Christian West and the Islamic East, in other documents that describe daily life in Venice, the *commedia dell'arte* often features maidens kidnapped by the Ottomans and rescued, warriors returning from battles that never took place, or affable sultans conversing in the *campielli* with bystanders.[40] During this period in Italy, many characters were created who entertained similarly implausible relations with the Ottomans, the best-known example being in the masque *Capitan Spaventa da Valle Inferna*, the invention of the comedian Francesco Andreini (c. 1548–1624), who was at the service of the Mantuan court.[41]

The Gonzagas' interest in the Ottomans intensified during the conflict that culminated in the Battle of Lepanto. On July 3rd 1571, the Mantuan court received a description of the celebrations of the Holy League,[42] which included Mantuans such as Ottavio Gonzaga (1543–1583) (Ill. 7). Ottavio had fought in the defence of Malta, and he would also fight at the Battle of Lepanto.[43] Every allied state had sent its fleet: Sebastiano Venier (c. 1496–1578) commanded the galleons of the *Serenissima*, alongside the Admiral Agostino Barbarigo (1516–1571), while Don Juan de Austria (1547–1571), the illegitimate son of Charles V and brother of Philip II of Spain (r. 1556–1598), led the Spanish fleet and Marcantonio Colonna (1535–1584) headed the papal vessels (Ill. 8).

On October 7th 1571, the allies attained a crushing victory at Lepanto thanks in part to the Republic of Venice, which brought to the fray a large number of men and above all the experience of its fleet.[44] The myth of Ottoman invincibility was destroyed, and from that moment on the Sublime Porte abandoned its plans for dominion of the seas to concentrate on the control of its land possessions. Throughout the 17th century Ottoman incursions continued throughout the Adriatic Sea, carried out by pirates who ransacked ships for ransom.[45]

News of the victory arrived in Mantua via a letter from the Doge Alvise I Mocenigo (1507–1577)[46] who also sent drawings of the battle, which unfortunately are not held at the State Archive.[47] All the main Ottoman protagonists are mentioned in the documents: the commander of the fleet Müezzinzade Alì Pascià (Turk .: Müezzinzade Ali Paşa, d. 1571), Pertev Mehmed Pasha, Uluç Ali Reis, known as Occhialì (1519–1587), and the corsairs Kara Hoca, known as Caracossa, and Şuluk Mehmed Pasha, known as Scirocco (1525–1571). Many documents reached Mantua describing the festivities organized in various Italian cities: in Venice a great festival was held at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, with parades, tapes-

40 Regarding the relation between the *commedia dell'arte* and the Ottomans cf. Savarese 1992.

41 Andreini 1987.

42 ASMn, AG, b. 1504, f. II, cc. 634–636 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 142).

43 Bertini 2007.

44 The bibliography on the Battle of Lepanto is abundant. For this research the following texts were consulted: Barbero 2010; Capponi 2010; Gibellini 2008; Petacco 2005; Sbalchiero 2004.

45 ASMn, AG, b. 1549, f. II, c. 113 (22 July 1617).

46 ASMn, AG, b. 1428, f. XI, c. 64 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 159)

47 ASMn, AG, b. 1504, f. I, cc. 35–36 e cc. 162–163 (Sogliani 2002, docc. 162 and 191).

Ill. 7. Anonymous, *Portrait of Ottavio Gonzaga*. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. GG 5102 ☙

tries, fireworks, music, dancing and lights at the windows, a luminous carousel and Turkish masks,[48] while the drapers of Rialto decorated the bridge and their shops with tapestries, colourful banners and hung the enemy's weapons in their windows.[49] Reports of the victorious entrance of Marcantonio Colonna into Rome[50] and of the triumphant return of Gian Andrea Doria (1539–1606)[51] to his homeland of Genoa were also sent to Mantua.

The battle was commemorated by many artists in paintings, sculptures, medals and engravings.[52] The Venetian Republic commissioned two renowned artists to portray the victory in

48 ASMn, AG, b. 1504, f. I, cc. 39–40 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 163).

49 ASMn, AG, b. 1504, f. I, cc. 49–50 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 166).

50 ASMn, AG, b. 906, f. I, c. 192–193 e ASMn, AG, b. 906, f. II, c. 346–351.

51 ASMn, AG, b. 763, f. III, c. 640, 664–665 e b. 764, f. I, cc. 36–39.

52 Strunck 2011.

Ill. 8. Anonymous Florentine artist, *The Victors of the Battle of Lepanto – Don Juan of Austria, Marcantonio Colonna and Sebastiano Venier,* c. 1575. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. GG 8270

the halls of the Ducal Palace: Jacopo Tintoretto (1518–1594), who completed his work in December 1572,[53] and Paolo Veronese (1528–1588), who executed a large painting between 1578 and 1581.[54] Only the second work has been preserved; Tintoretto's painting was destroyed by a fire in 1577, replaced by a canvas by Andrea Vicentino (c. 1542–1618) on the same subject.

Duke Guglielmo Gonzaga also ordered a depiction of the famous battle for his art collection, and he too probably turned to Jacopo Tintoretto, since the inventory of Gonzaga property from 1626–1627 mentions two naval battles and one refers specifically to the Venetian artist.[55]

It's worth remembering that in 1571, the rooms of the Corte Vecchia contained a canvas by a Flemish painter who depicted Süleyman the Magnificent's siege upon the city of Vienna in 1529.[56] This bit of information comes to us from Jacopo Strada (1515–1588),[57]

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53 Mason Rinaldi 1986; Wolters 1987, p. 213.

54 Regarding the work by Paolo Veronese at the Ducal Palace cf. Tagliaferro 2014. The artist returned to this subject, in a drawing preserved today in the British Museum, London and in the *Allegoria della battaglia di Lepanto* now at the Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia (inv. 212).

55 Sogliani 2002, pp. 50–51.

56 Venturini 2002, p. 28, docc. 70 and 71.

57 Jansen 2012.

an antiquarian, artist, and collector, who from Vienna asked for the work in order to be able to copy it. The painting, already in poor condition according to the documents, was not preserved and cannot be found in the Gonzagas' inventories.

One particular document clarifies the thoughts of Guglielmo Gonzaga with regard to the 'Turkish' question. On November 8th 1572, he visited pope Gregory XIII (r. 1572–1585) in Rome and met representatives of the Ottoman court: during the meeting he removed his hat as a sign of respect and friendship, and urged the governor of Eğriboz (known as Negroponte in Italian) to treat the Christian prisoners humanely.[58] It is thus evident that the Gonzagas, like the rulers of all the European states, wished to re-establish peaceful relations with the Ottomans after Lepanto. Venice was the first to reach a separate agreement,[59] an act considered improper by Gregory XIII, who threatened to excommunicate the Republic.[60]

Numerous documents written by Christian prisoners of war who sought their liberation by appealing to the Gonzagas are held at the State Archive of Mantua. In 1573, the Mantuan Tiberio Cerruto, who survived the Ottoman massacre of Christians at Famagusta (1570–1571) and was imprisoned for many months in the Dungeons of the Seven Towers (*Yedikule*) in Constantinople, wrote several moving letters to duke Guglielmo and sent a detailed drawing depicting the place in which he was detained (Ill. 9).[61]

In May 1574, news reached the duke of Mantua of an imminent Ottoman attack on Tunis.[62] In the same year, Selim II died and was replaced by the new sultan Murad III (r. 1574–1595), who was described in a letter to the Mantuan court as follows: *The Turk […] is twenty-eight years old, tall rather than short, and cheerful and with a wonderful complexion; he studies the sciences and particularly philosophy, he is an observer of justice particularly in ensuring that everyone receives it; he is an enemy of idleness and of the delights and particularly of those who drink wine. He especially hates Christians and Jews, wishing to surpass all his ancestors*.[63]

There is evidence of close contact between the Mantuan court and the Ottomans in 1575: the *sancakbey* (governor of a sub-province) Mustafà sent duke Gonzaga some remedies against poison, sleeping draughts, painkillers, and medicinal earths,[64] to which

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58 ASMn, AG, b. 908, f. IX, c. 344–347.

59 The peace treaties of the *bailo* Marcantonio Barbaro with the sultan involved the payment by the Republic of 300,000 ducats, the handover of the castle of Sopoto, a tribute for Zante of 1,500 ducats per year and the liberation of the captured merchants. (Pedani Fabris 1994, p. 207, b. 6, n. 818).

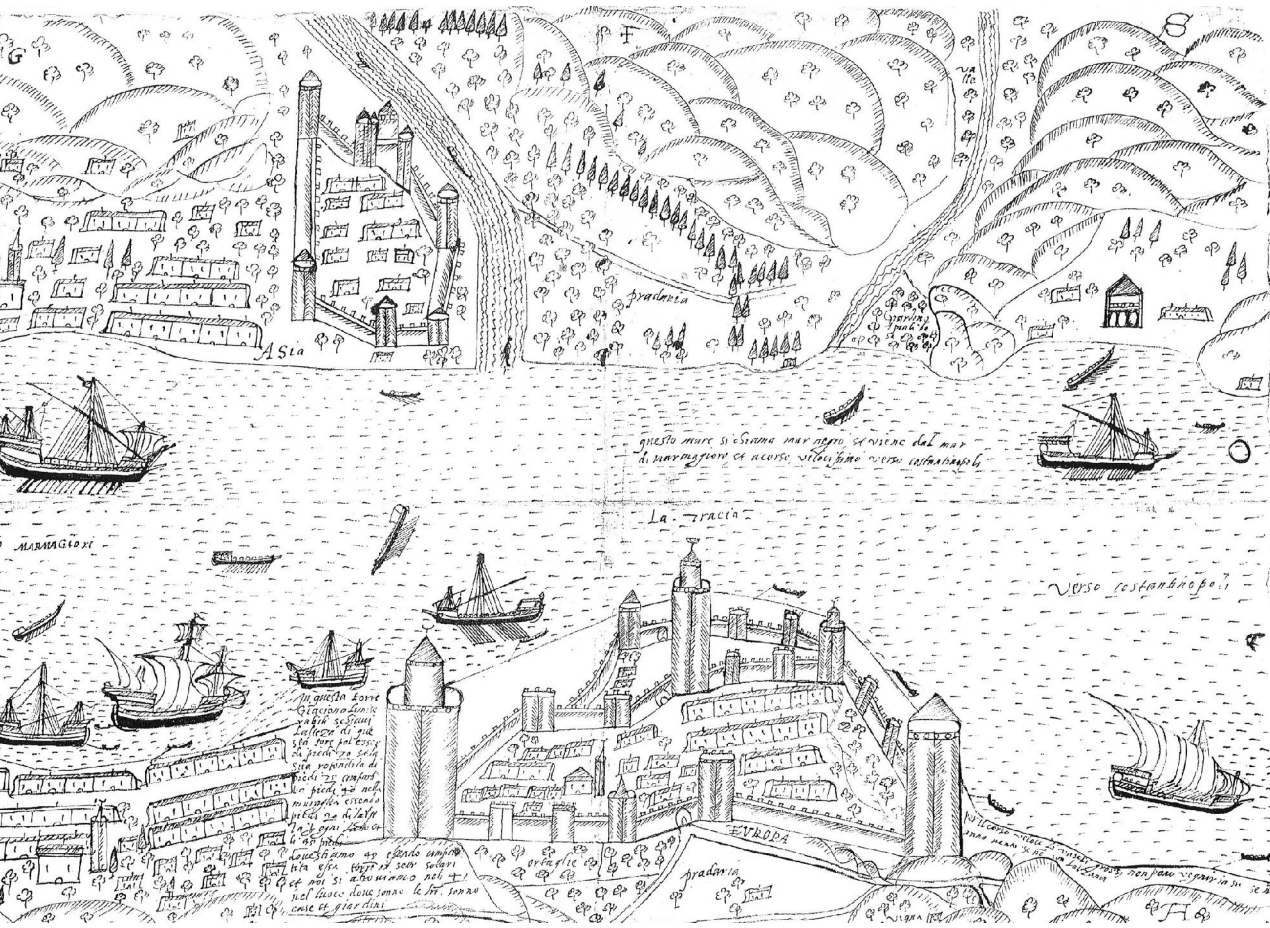
60 ASMn, AG, b. 1506, f. II, cc. 189–190 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 206).

61 ASMn, AG, b. 795, cc. 213, 214, 216 (ASMn, *Corrispondenza da Levante e Porta ottomana*).

62 ASMn, AG, b. 912, f. I/1, c. 17–23.

63 *…il Turco…è d'età di anni XXVIII, di statura più tosto grande che piccolo et allegro et di bellissima ciera; di professione poi studioso delle scienze et particolarmente della filosofia, osservator della iustitia particolarmente in far ch'ognuno habbi il suo; nimico dell'otio et delle delitie et particolarmente di chi beve vino. A christiani et hebrei porta singolar odio, desideroso d'avanzar ogni suo avo…* (ASMn, AG, b. 1509, f. I, c. 19; Sogliani 2002, doc. 311).

64 ASMn, AG, b. 795, cc. 220–221.



Ill. 9. Drawing by Tiberio Cerruto. State Archives, Mantua

the court reciprocated with a 'very rich present' of which nothing is known.[65] In 1576, the counsellor to the sultan sent two brocade garments to Mantua and offered to receive an ambassador from the Gonzagas in Constantinople, warning them that when passing through Ottoman territory, it was necessary to bring many gifts for the governors of the provinces.[66]

The court's interest in Ottoman culture is also evident in its continual search for works of art and texts. In 1577, the court sought a text by an Ottoman author who, having con-

65 ASMn, AG, b. 1509, f. II, cc. 309–310 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 332).

66 ASMn, AG, b. 795, cc. 226–227.

verted to Christianity, had written a volume 'against Mohammedan superstition and the Quran',[67] and in 1581 a canvas[68] reached Mantua portraying perhaps the sultan Selim II, as evidenced by the Gonzaga inventory of 1626–1627.[69]

On October 12th 1583, Gabriele Calzoni, living in Venice at the behest of the Gonzagas, wrote an account of a journey to the city on the lagoon by Vincenzo (1562–1612), the heir to the duchy of Mantua. The young man was welcomed at the palace of the senator Giacomo Soranzo, previously the Serenissima's ambassador to Constantinople, who in 1576 had undertaken an important mission to the Sublime Porte and written a report read in the Senate.[70] Senator Soranzo accompanied Vicenzo Gonzaga through the rooms of his palace on the Canal Grande and looked out of a window where sailors were rowing hard in four galleys, as slaves do. Soranzo, who belonged to a conservative and 'papalist' faction, wanted to lead a new crusade against the Ottomans, and proposed it to Vincenzo, but the young man rejected the invitation both because of his age and because of the difficulties involved in reaching an agreement among the most important European courts.[71]

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67 ASMn, AG, b. 918, cc. 208–209. It should be recalled that the first printed version of the Quran had been published in Venice in 1536 (Bobzin 1995, p. 134).

68 *…mando le qui inchiuse havute da Costantinopoli con un ritratto…* (Paolo Moro alla corte, ASMn, AG, b. 1512, f. I, c. 78, 10 ottobre 1581; Sogliani, 2002, doc. 511).

69 *Un quadro dipintovi sopra il ritratto di Selim, re de' Turchi, con cornice bianca, lire 30 V* (Morselli 2002, n. 1401). Guy Le Thiec argues that the Gonzagan inventory refers to a portrait of the sultan Selim I (1470–1520), which would have been presented as a gift to the first Duke of Mantua (Le Thiec 2013, pp. 356–360). Since, however, Federico II Gonzaga had a very short window of opportunity to become acquainted with him (his government of the city dates to March of 1519, and the sultan died on September 22th 1520), I believe it might be possible that Paolo Moro's letter to the court, dated 1581, refers to a portrait of Selim II (1524–1574), the sultan defeated at Lepanto, whose visage spread across the courts of Europe and probably also found its way into the Gonzagas' collection. Another document of March 19th 1573 from Ercole Udine, the Mantuan ambassador to the imperial court, informed the duke Guglielmo that the emperor had been sent another portrait of the 'Great Turk', Selim II, on horseback (Venturini 2002, doc. 112).

70 Alberi 1844, pp. 193–207.

71 *…con quei termini umanissimi et honorevolissimi simili forse a quelli che usò al Gran Signore in Costantinopoli… il signor principe rispose parole convenienti per le quali mostrò che si era mosso a far questo atto di cortesia per le molte ricevute da sua serenità illustrissima [il doge Nicolò da Ponte] et che però si offeriva desideroso di farle in ogni momento servigio et mentre andavano cerimoniando, il signor Giacomo, facendo passar l'altezza sua per sale et camare…incominciò a trattenirla con alti ragionamenti delle cose del mondo, massimamente di quelle di Levante…il signor Giacomo si ridusse col signor principe ad una finestra che signoreggia Canal Grande, la Zecca et San Giorgio Maggiore, onde in quel punto si videro quattro galere che andavano remeggiando come sogliono fare per provar i schiavi che sopra esse vistanno, da che pigliando occasione il Soranzo, come quello che è anco stato general di mare, disse al signor principe che meravigliosa cosa era il vedere una bella et potente armata et che numerosa et potentissima sarebbe hora quella de' principi christiani quando s'unissero insieme per far la più stupenda et maggior cruciata che sia mai stata al mondo, la qual otterrebbe intiera perfettione qualhora fosse et governata da principe tale qual era l'altezza sua et che teneva per fermo che salirebbe ancora a simili alti gradi degni appunto di lei, anzi che gloriosa la vederebbe triunfare di preciosi et felicissimi trofei. A questo brevemente rispose il signor principe che la christianità si trovava hora talmente disunita che non occorreva pensar a simil pratiche et che quando pur piacesse a Dio di stabilir cruciata, conosceva se stesso poco atto per la sua giovanile età a tanto carico, che nondimeno in ogni occasione sarebbe sempre pronto a farsi conoscere principe degno di nascimento suo…* (ASMn, AG, b. 1513, f. VI, cc. 400–406; Sogliani 2002, doc. 576).

In 1585, news arrived in Mantua that the Ottomans had asked Venice for a large quantity of jewellery and precious stones; Murad III demanded three hundred thousand *zecchini*, seventy ingots of gold worth six million sequins and 'twenty hundredweight of pearls, which perhaps cannot be found in the entire world'.[72] Despite the wealth of the Venetian merchants and the best efforts of the Mint, the *Serenissima* was unable to meet the request.[73] In 1587, the corsair Occhialì also insisted upon further tribute, and the city was forced to send a crystal casket of precious stones.[74]

News of the Ottomans also reached Rome, and in 1587 we learn that pope Sixtus V (r. 1585–1590) wished to purchase the sepulchre of Christ from the sultan, an enterprise that certainly met with the approval of the deeply religious duke Guglielmo Gonzaga; he died on August 14th of that same year, however, without ever knowing the outcome of this initiative.[75]

His heir Vincenzo I Gonzaga (1562–1612) was less interested in religious matters and seems to have had a more disinterested attitude towards the Ottomans, being more passionate about the luxury and the splendour of Eastern goods purchased in Venice. The new duke managed to procure Levantine musk, amber, flowers,[76] Turkish weapons (daggers and swords),[77] exotic foods (sherbets and pistachios)[78] and exotic animals.[79] Vincenzo I also purchased copies of the Quran[80] and in 1597 he was offered an interpreter who spoke the Turkish language, 'a Syrian who owns some wonderful texts… ancient Asian books, Chaldean and Arabic… he speaks and writes well in Arabic, Persian, Chaldean and Turkish'.[81]

The duke played an active role during the 'Long Turkish War' (1593–1606) and seemed to have planned to become the governor of the Principality of Transylvania and Upper Hungary.[82] Vincenzo I, with the Hapsburg Emperor Rudolf II (r. 1576–1612), organized expeditions in Hungary, which the chronicles recall more for the festivities and the receptions organized than for any true military merits. After conquering the town of Esztergom, the Gonzaga duke

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72 ASMn, AG, b. 1515, f. I, cc. 43–44 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 686).

73 ASMn, AG, b. 1515, f. I, cc. 49–50 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 687).

74 ASMn, AG, b. 1518, f. I, cc. 142–143 (Sogliani 2002, doc. 902).

75 ASMn, AG, b. 947, f. I1, cc. 94–95 (Furlotti 2002, doc. 9).

76 ASMn, AG, b. 1521, f. I, c. 159 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 44); ASMn, AG, b. 1521, f. I, c. 217 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 49); ASMn, AG, b. 1523, f. IV, cc. 677–678 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 122); ASMn, AG, b. 1534, f. III, cc. 682–683 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 573).

77 ASMn, AG, b. 1539, f. III, c. 214 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 832).

78 ASMn, AG, b. 1540, f. II, c. 263 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 912); ASMn, AG, b. 1541, f. II, c. 268 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 944).

79 ASMn, AG, b. 1540, f. II, c. 398 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 929); ASMn, AG, b. 1540, f. II, c. 434 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 933); ASMn, AG, b. 1544, f. II, c. 468 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 1089).

80 ASMn, AG, b. 1531, f. I, cc. 94–95 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 415); ASMn, AG, b. 1529, f. VIII, cc. 528–529 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 339).

81 ASMn, AG, b. 1529, f. VIII, cc. 475–476 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 335).

82 Kruppa 2014, pp. 93–94.

Ill. 10. Frans Pourbus the Younger, *Portrait of Vincenzo I Gonzaga,* and the detail, 1600. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. GG 3314

played a role in the conquest of the fortress of Visegrád, which surrendered to his troops under the stipulation that it was delivered to the *bassà (pasha) di Mantova*.[83]

At the State Archive of Mantua there is a report on the first journey that Vincenzo I made to Hungary (July 11th 1601), written by Fortunato Cardi, in which he describes the duke's stay with the Habsburgs and his movements on the battlefield.[84] The document also contains a report on the ceremony for the departure of the troops, with the arquebusiers in tunics embroidered with the Ottoman crescent, and the motto SIC, an idea devised especially for the crusade whose meaning is still undeciphered (Ill. 10).[85] The Gonzaga duke suffered a crushing defeat at Kanizsa, where he lost the majority of his men.[86] His

83 Malacarne 2007, pp. 21–219. On the third expedition against the Ottomans cf. Errante 1915.

84 ASMn, AG, b. 388, cc. 321–341 (Bertelli 2006; Malacarne 2007, doc. III, pp. 339–343).

85 There are various interpretations of this *impresa*, which appears not only in portraits of the duke, but also on medals, in the decorations of the *Grotta* at the Palazzo Te and on a tombstone in *botticino* marble in the civic collections of the Museo del Palazzo di San Sebastiano in Mantua. The three most plausible proposals are: *sic* (*illustrior crescam*) so they become more illustrious; *as it is in heaven*, a passage from the Lord's Prayer in Latin [*s(elene) i(side) c(inzia)*]; the three ancient names of the moon (Signorini 1996, pp. 37–179. For an interpretation of the SIC enterprise, see in particular pp. 128–129. Regarding this motto see the portrait from 1600 attributed to Frans Pourbus the Younger at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, inv. no. GG 3314 (Ill. 10).

86 The chronicle of the defeat, written by Filippo Pigafetta, is held in the State Archive of Mantua (ASMn, AG, b. 975, cc. 495–506, December 21st 1601 cf. Malacarne 2007, doc. IV, pp. 343–346).

Ill. 11. The ceiling of the *Sala del Labirinto*, with the painted maze. Ducal Palace. Mantua

adventures are recalled in a phrase written in gold on the ceiling of the *Labirinto* in the Ducal Palace of Mantua (Ill. 11).[87]

After this event Duke Vincenzo assigned Federico Follini, the official chronicler of court ceremonies and feasts, creator of comedies and planner of quintains (jousting) and tourne-

87 On the ceiling there is a maze and within it are the words of a love song by Marchetto Cara datable to the late 15th century (*Forse che sì, forse che no* [perhaps yes, perhaps no]). This made it possible to discover the provenance of the ceiling of the palace of San Sebastiano itself. The palace belonged to the Marquis Francesco II Gonzaga, husband of Isabella d'Este; around the labyrinth is the phrase that recalls the Duke Vincenzo I's enterprises at Kanizsa against the Ottomans: 'VINC[ENTIUS] GONZ[AGA] MANT[UAE] IIII ET MONT[IS] FERR[ATI] II DUX DUM SUB ARCAE CANISIAE CONTRA TURCOS PUGN[ABAT]' [Vincenzo Gonzaga, IV Duke of Mantua and II of Monferrato, fought against the Turks under the fortress of Kanizsa] cf. Berzaghi 1990.

Ill. 12. Anonymous, *Portrait of Ferdinando Gonzaga*. Private collection ☙

ments, the task of coming up with a spectacle for Carnevale in 1602, in which the Christian armies would finally succeed in defeating the Ottomans in mock battle. The work, conceived in five acts but never performed, called for the clearing out of the fortress of Kanisza by imperial forces alongside the armies of the Gonzagas, and the celebration of this glorious Feast on the field of battle with song and dance.[88]

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[88] *In virtù della prima lettera scrittami da vostra altezza serenissima in materia dell'opera da rappresentarsi questo Carnevale, haveva io già così da me cominicato a pensare, quello che si havesse potuto fare…si muterà la scena et comparirà nel mezo la città di Canisia…vedendosi la fortezza di fuori da una parte, et anco il Campanile o altra fabbrica alta che fosse dentro…si vedranno poi sorti fuori di Canisia molti Turchi et venir alla via della fascinata o gabbioni, et ivi con i soldati far una scaramuzza. Fra tanto si darà nel Campo all'arma et i Turchi si ritireranno dentro in tempo ch'una compagnia d'altri soldati condurrà inanti alli Capitani il luogotenente del Bassà di Carinsia…da mezo il campo si vedrà sorgere la Fama la quale a poco a poco levandosi, andarà sino a toccar le nuvole con la testa, tenendo però i piedi in terra…questo è quanto questa notte ho inventato* (ASMn, AG, b. 2684, f. 11, doc. 8 transcribed in Errante 1915, pp. 107–110, Fabbri 1974, pp. 100–103, Burattelli 1992, pp. 144–146).

Mantuan documents supply further information on the Ottomans in the following years, such as the delivery of a drawing of the Holy Land, which arrived in 1603 from Padova.[89] Vincenzo I Gonzaga died on February 18th 1612, and his first-born son Francesco IV also died the same year. His second son, Ferdinando Gonzaga (1587–1626) (Ill. 12), was therefore forced to renounce his role as cardinal and govern the duchy in 1616.

Like his forebears, Ferdinando collected oriental objects, as evidenced by a letter dated 1606 sent by his ambassador to Pisa: *I gave* [him] *a Turkish buckler* [a small round metal shield held in the fist, from the French bouclier] *adapted, however by me to our customs, so as to be used day and night, so that* [he] *may present it in my name to his serene highness, who, I know, much appreciates such arms and every other gracious item that comes from the Levant*.[90]

Within a few years the crisis of the Mantuan state, caused by war, plague and a lack of funds, became evident throughout Europe. On April 6th 1615, Antonio Maria Vincenti, the Venetian ambassador to Mantua, wrote to the doge that a Knight Hospitaller had come to the Gonzagas to ask for military support against the ongoing attacks by the Ottoman army upon the island of Malta. Ferdinando Gonzaga had refused the request due to the dilapidation of his finances.[91] It is thus clear that at the beginning of the 17th century political and economic difficulties no longer allowed the Mantuan family to attend to Ottoman affairs, considered a distant threat compared to the struggles underway throughout Europe.

The inventory of the family property drawn up in 1626 upon the death of duke Ferdinando allows us to identify the items present in the Ducal Palace prior to the sale of the collections to King Charles I and the plundering of the city in 1630. The most exotic Turkish artefacts were mainly held in two rooms, the *Libraria* and the *Sala di Troia*, while other items were scattered throughout the palace.[92] The Ottoman harnesses were kept in the armoury and the stables, while the exotic plants were in the gardens.[93] They were all purchases or had come to Mantua as gifts during at least two centuries, enriching the collections of a family that had now reached the end of its splendour. Following the sale of the renowned collections to the English king, the Mantuan ambassador to Venice wrote to the court that it was now no longer necessary to purchase goods arriving from the Levant, since they were too expensive, due to the decline in commercial exchange with the Ottoman Empire.[94]

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89 ASMn, AG, b. 1535, f. III, cc. 470–471 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 637); ASMn, AG, b. 1535, f. III, cc. 492–493 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 641); ASMn, AG, b. 1535, f. III, cc. 502–503 (Sermidi 2003, doc. 647).

90 *…ho dato un brocchiere turchesco, accomodato però da me alla nostra usanza, per servirsene di giorno e di notte, affinché lo presenti a mio nome a vostra altezza serenissima, la quale intendo che si diletta molto di tali arme et di ogni altra cosa gratiosa che venga di Levante…* (ASMn, AG, b. 1125, f. IV, c. 53; Piccinelli 2000, doc. 408).

91 ASVe, Senato, Dispatches to the ambassadors and residents, Mantua, filza 7, dispaccio 9, c. 43.

92 Morselli 2000, nn. 1854–1869.

93 See Franchini et al. 1979.

94 ASMn, AG, b. 1558, f. I/2, cc. 220–222.

It is very difficult to identify the Ottoman works and objects that originally belonged to the Gonzagas, because in many cases there is no definitive information about their provenance, nor can it be excluded that these artefacts were, in fact, Venetian products with 'Moorish' or 'Damascene' decorations. However, their existence, as documented in the family's inventories, testifies to the continuity of the Gonzaga's interest in Ottoman art throughout the centuries, art deemed worthy of one of the most important collections in Europe.

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Ottoman Diplomatic Gifts to the Christian West

In October 1531, the Venetian vice-*bailo* (permanent diplomatic representative of the *Serenissima* in Constantinople) Pietro Zen[1] reported to his government that he had visited the grand vizier (Makbul) İbrahim Pasha (c. 1495–1536). In the context of the gift the *bailo* presented, İbrahim told him an anecdote of Alexander the Great, who received many precious gifts of gold and gemstones after his victory over Darius. A shepherd, who had nothing else, filled half a gourd with the water of a bright fountain and offered it to the king. Thereupon Alexander stated that this gift of water was as dear to him as those of the other donators, because the shepherd had given him all he could with full heart, which the others had not done. İbrahim then took the cup of rock crystal that Zen had presented to him before and declared himself to be the shepherd and the cup to be the gourd. From a golden flask he poured water into the cup, praising the Venetian's gift.[2] We shall see in the following what relevance this little story has for the Ottoman way of giving diplomatic gifts to other early-modern monarchs.

Unfortunately, only very few records highlighting Ottoman gift practices to the West in the 15th and 16th centuries seem to have survived the hardships of time. The otherwise so rich Ottoman archives of the Turkish Prime Ministry in Istanbul disappointingly did not yield relevant material. A register of daily expenditures (*ruznamçe*), labelled as 'register of benefactions' (*in'amat defteri*), covering the years 1503–1512 (Muharrem 909—Zilhicce 917 AH), extant in the Atatürk Library in Istanbul,[3] contains some scattered information, without being exhaustive, though. Later Ottoman registers of this type do not comprise the data on state gifts handed out; the information must have been kept in separate records, which are either not preserved or belong to the vast corpus of materials in the Ottoman archives that has not been catalogued yet.

The Venetian chronicler Marino Sanuto (1466–1536), with a virtually insatiable curiosity, collected in his 'diaries' (*diarii*) news, letters, reports of diplomats, and everything that he could find

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1 On Pietro Zen see: Coco and Manzonetto 1985, pp. 31–34.

2 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. LV (1900), c. 231–232.

3 Atatürk Kitaplığı, Istanbul, Muallim Cevdet 71.

relevant to Venetian politics for the years 1496–1533.[4] The work has been edited in 58 folio volumes (Venice 1879–1902). As Venice was a major player on the Ottoman diplomatic stage of that time, a cursory examination of Sanuto's diaries generated a few results. It seems, however, that the scarcity of sources for our topic is not totally accidental, as we shall see later.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, in the Ottoman Empire and its Muslim neighbour states, the tradition of preparing diplomatic gifts suitable for Islamic states was already well established, and was based on older practices. A good example of a full set of items for an approximately equal ruler were the gifts sent by the Mamluk sultan Kansuh al-Gawri (r. 1501–1516) to Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512) in January 1510: a tent, slaves, horses, horse trappings and equipment, camels, precious weapons, an armour and shields, a silk carpet, textiles, pieces of ermine fur, scents and incense, sweetmeats and porcelain.[5] Scents, sweetmeats and porcelain were specialties of Egypt, where sugarcane had been cultivated since antiquity, incense a commodity shipped from south Arabia, and porcelain from China. In the Islamic realm, such a gift programme could be extended by including the Quranic or other (mainly religious) books, Islamic rosaries (*tesbih*), prayer rugs, and from time to time, if available, by adding exotic animals.[6] The Ottoman reservation in sending exotic species, especially wild cats to Europe, can be traced back to the end of the 17th century.[7] The opulence of Kansuh al-Gawri's offerings was certainly connected with the Ottoman prince Şehzade Korkut's (one of Bayezid II's sons) seeking refuge in Cairo in those days, thus forcing the Mamluk sultan into a balancing act on the diplomatic stage.[8]

Diplomatic gift parcels to Western rulers required adaptation, since slaves and often also arms and armour were considered inappropriate for a Christian ruler, who, according to the Islamic juridical theory, was an enemy with whom only a temporary armistice was possible. Furthermore, the sale of weapons and military equipment to foreign countries was in the Ottoman Empire forbidden by law.[9] Out of question were also books or items containing Islamic religious connotation. In the 15th–17th centuries, Ottoman slaves (with the exception of black eunuchs) were more often than not of Christian origin and therefore they were objects of negotiation and redemption.[10]

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4 On his life, career and works, see: Neerfeld 2001, pp. 27–43.

5 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. IX (1883), c. 547. A tent, beautifully adorned; two black eunuch slaves; six horses, one with a saddle and a golden cover, one with horse armour and four with silken caparisons; three racing camels; three golden scimitars; two saddle bags; three armours with gilded plates; four targes in Damascene labour; one extremely beautiful steel helmet; several lance heads; a very fine silk carpet; many silken kerchiefs; several panels of ermine and some worked with silk (with no great value); some boxes with incense; several pots of sweetmeats; and ten large trays of porcelain.

6 In 1497, the Meccan noble descendants (*seyyid*) of the Prophet brought a giraffe to Bayezid II. Kreutel 1978, p. 81.

7 Reindl-Kiel 2013, p. 275. When in 1568 the envoy of the emperor asked for a giraffe in the name of his lord, the Ottoman side politely denied this wish, Hammer 1828, vol. III, p. 516.

8 Cf. Muslu 2014, pp. 168–171.

9 Akgündüz 1991, p. 376.

10 Cf. Kissling 1965, p. 101.

The Ottoman protocol of the 15th and 16th centuries could (and perhaps did) draw to a certain extent on older customs in the choice of objects to be sent to the West. The French chronicler Michel Pintoin (c. 1349/50–1421) reports that in 1397 one of Bayezid I's (r. 1389–1403) highest commanders sent an envoy (sire de Vergy, a Burgundian nobleman) with gifts to the French king Charles VI (r. 1380–1422). The background was the Turkish victory against the crusaders in the Battle of Nicopolis in 1396, the appeal for help to Charles VI by the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (r. 1391–1425) in October 1397,[11] and the threatening danger emanating from Timur ('Tamerlane'). The gifts, although not precious, were rarities and therefore intriguing: a mace, a horse with slit nostrils which enabled it to run longer distances, ten small woollen covers (*coopertoria*), a drum, and six Turkish arches with bow-strings made of human skin.[12] While the Ottoman court in later days would at least take into consideration luxurious weapons (albeit in homeopathic doses) as gifts to Western monarchs, the addition of a drum (a favoured symbol of sovereignty in the Turkic world[13]) must have gone out of fashion at the latest in the mid-15th century, when Mehmed II's conquest of Constantinople required a less 'tribal' ideology.

Tents, which in later times (especially in the 18th century) used to be favourite items to be offered to European rulers, were probably rather rare gifts from the Ottoman court to Christian potentates in the 15th and 16th centuries. Royal tents were, indeed, fairly expensive,[14] and their production was rather time consuming. Hence, the actual range of items to be considered for Western courts as gifts was relatively limited. The first choice consisted therefore mostly of horses, horse equipment, carpets, textiles (primarily fabrics) and hunting weapons.

In 1479, Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1444–1446 and 1451–1481) sent an envoy to Venice to ratify the peace after the long Ottoman-Venetian war (1463–1479). The gifts for this occasion comprised a golden bowl and a textile belt, which, allegedly, had been worn by the sultan himself.[15] Hammer records that the belt was diamond-studded.[16] This sounds, however, rather unlikely. At that time diamonds came mainly from India, and the gemstone trade was

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11 [Pintoin] 1840, pp. 558–563.

12 Cristea, note 21. I would like to thank cordially my colleague Radu G. Păun for sharing with me this passage of an unpublished article. [Pintoin] 1840, pp. 562–565.

13 Cf. Bozkurt 1994, pp. 53–54.

14 The prices of three tents (without interior equipment) that were bought for Prince Süleyman (later a sultan called the Magnificent) in the years 1511–1513 can be estimated between 1,900 and 3,000 *akçe*. Even a decorated canopy cost 1,500 *akçe* in 1514/15; Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi [Ottoman Archives of the Turkish Prime Ministry] (henceforth BOA), Kâmil Kepeci 7412, pp. 23 and 19. *Akçe* was the Ottoman silver coin; although it lost its practical value in the course of the 17th century, it was a unit of calculation until the 19th century. In İstanbul, an unskilled workman in those years could earn approximately 4.5–5 *akçe* per day, Cf. Pamuk 2000, p. 69.

15 Babinger 1959, p. 409.

16 Hammer 1828, vol. II, p. 170.

largely conducted in Cairo[17] and Venice, where in the early years of Süleyman the Magnificent's reign (r. 1520–1566) the Ottoman court and other officials used to buy costly stones.[18] Although the idea that diplomatic gifts should represent one's own country's craftsmanship and artistic capacity is a modern one, the Ottoman court avoided sending objects that were no real rarity at their place of destination. The belt had high symbolic meaning; coming from the sultan's wardrobe, it carried his charisma and *baraka* (blessing).[19] The belief that garments contained the aura of the owner was evident during the 16th and 17th centuries as reflected in the custom of putting the dress of the deceased on his grave.[20] Furthermore, belts stood for bonds and commitment, and were therefore frequent gifts of Ottoman grandees to their household members. Not to leave any doubts about the belt's symbolic meaning, the Ottoman envoy asked the doge to wear it 'loving his lord', and made wine to be served from the golden bowl to the head of state and the members of the senate.[21]

After the conquest of Constantinople, a wide range of Christian relics had entered into Mehmed II's possession. He hesitantly used a small part of them as diplomatic presents or vending objects,[22] while his son Bayezid II dispatched several items (among them a piece of the Holy Lance) as gifts in his diplomatic struggles[23] around his half-brother Cem (1459–1495).[24] In 1482, after he had lost the fight for the Ottoman throne, Cem fled to Rhodes. From there he was soon brought to France. He was kept first in the custody of the Knights of St John, then as a prisoner of the Pope and later, during his last days, of the French king Charles VIII (r. 1483–1498). As a small tool in the diplomatic tug-of-war, the relic of the right forearm of John the Baptist was sent by Bayezid II to the Knights of Rhodes in 1484 to guarantee that they keep his brother captive. The Hospitallers of Rhodes kept the relic in St John's church.[25] After the Eastern Mediterranean became Ottoman, the relic returned to the treasury of the Topkapı Palace, where it can be seen to this very day. The reason for dealing as such with relics was the Ottoman awareness of the European craving for sacred objects of Christianity, the clear symbolism of the items, and the advantage to have at one's command costly gifts that would not strain the sultan's purse.

For Bayezid the sheer existence of his brother Cem was a nightmare, since the prince might be used as a puppet in a European crusade against the Ottomans. The years of Cem Sultan's captivity were thus a time of very intense Ottoman diplomacy dealing with high

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17 Cf. Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XXXIX (1894), c. 338.

18 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XXXVI (1893), c. 420; vol. XLV (1896), c. 272; vol. L (1898), c. 581.

19 Cf. Baker 1995, p. 15.

20 See, for example, the woodcut in Schweigger 1608, p. 108.

21 Babinger 1963, p. 409.

22 The body of St John Eleemosynarius, for example, was sent to King Matthias Corvinus in Buda; Babinger 1956, p. 8.

23 *Ibidem*, pp. 25–28.

24 For more about his life, see: Vatin 1997.

25 Zinkeisen 1854, p. 483.

sums of money ('boarding costs') and precious gifts, such as, in 1490, 120,000 gold ducats, pearls and gems offered to the Pope.[26]

Bayezid II's diplomatic flirt with Francesco II Gonzaga (1466–1519), the Marquess (It.: *Marchese*) of Mantua, started in 1491, when Gonzaga, a passionate horse enthusiast, eager to procure Ottoman noble horses, entered into contact with the court in Istanbul. The cross-frontier horse trade with the Ottoman Empire was a difficult issue: the export of thoroughbreds was prohibited.[27] But the days were auspicious for Francesco's intentions. Bayezid himself was very much interested in information and contacts from Italy, where his half-brother Cem lived in custody. In 1493, the sultan sent to his new ally a fairly conventional collection of fabrics: 16 pieces (meant as dress-lengths) of diverse sorts of brocade *alla Turchesca*, broadcloth (*drappi*) and camlet (*Zambellotti*).[28] More remarkable were the margrave's counter gifts, since their choice was so 'oriental' that Kissling mistook them as presents from the sultan,[29] although the list of items had been clearly identified in the accompanying letter as inventory of gifts from the *marchese*.[30] Franceso II's enthusiasm for his relations with the Ottoman ruler incited him not only to select objects the court at Istanbul would find fitting presents but also to send robes in Turkish style. Yet, the addition of two paintings (of Cem and of the Ottoman envoy Kasım Çavuş) were certainly a gaffe, given Bayezid II's hostility to images.[31] Moreover, the Ottoman side must have found it particularly outlandish to receive a likeness of a subordinate, such as a *çavuş*, who was by no means a high-ranking diplomat, but only a messenger.

For the sultan, friendly relations with Mantua were desirable, because from there neitherterritorial frictions, nor requests for larger trade privileges were to be expected; furthermore, the margrave might be a useful tool in the Cem affair. Of course, Francesco Gonzaga's relatively small power base might have played a role, because this would never make him a dangerous enemy for the Ottomans. In this context, the address 'brother' of Bayezid II's envoy *Kapıcıbaşı* (head of the palace doorkeepers) Mustafa for the margrave[32]

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26 Babinger 1963, p. 144.

27 Reindl-Kiel 2009, p. 43.

28 Ferrato 1876, p. 11; Kissling 1965, p. 22.

29 Kissling 1965, p. 22 f.

30 Bourne 2011, p. 6, n. 14. I am very grateful to my colleague Dr. Daniela Sogliani who provided me with a copy of this article. Ferrato 1876, p. 12 f. The inventory lists: a golden chain worth 500 ducats, a belt worth 50 ducats, a crimson gold-brocaded dress lined with green satin, a silver-brocaded dress lined with crimson damask, a dress of crimson velvet with a shimmering lining, three more robes of silk in various colours, made in Turkish style with a shimmering lining, three extremely beautiful crossbows, one chain-mail, an armour, a painting of 'the Turk who is at Rome' (Cem Sultan) and a picture of the ambassador of the sultan (*soldano*). The use of the term *soldano* in this context is strange, because in contemporary Italian parlance this usually denoted the Mamluk sultan in Cairo. The Ottoman sultan would normally be named *gran signor*.

31 Francesco II had dispatched a portrait of himself to the sultan a year earlier; Necipoğlu 1991, p. 98. Bourne 2011, p. 6, n. 14.

32 Kissling 1965, p. 15.

is telling. In the Ottoman tradition, not only were titles common forms of expressing status but also degrees of relationship within the family, where a strict sense of seniority prevailed. Thus, the Ottoman protocol apparently regarded Gonzaga's rank as slightly lower than that of a *sancakbey* (governor of a sub-province), a post to which Mustafa was promoted in 1494.[33]

In the context of arms and armour it is interesting to note that the *sancakbey* of Vlorë, Mustafa Bey (non-identical to Kapıcıbaşı Mustafa), utilised his connection to Francesco Gonzaga to order weapons and military equipment from the West,[34] and the governor of Shkodër (in today's Albania), Firuz Bey, hypocritically asked Gonzaga for an arms and armour dealer, claiming that he was not able to obtain them at his place.[35] Apparently, for Ottoman officials, the grass was much greener on the other side of the fence.

Things are slightly different with another branch of Ottoman gifting: horses, which Francesco Gonzaga was so eager to obtain. In a second embassy, 40 noble (in all likelihood Arabian) horses and a chiton of Jesus Christ were delivered to Mantua.[36] While the horses must have left their offspring in the Marquess's horse breeding, there are no traces of Jesus Christ's robe today. Maybe one of the horses depicted in the *Sala dei Cavalli* of the Palazzo Te in Mantua portrays the progenies of Bayezid II's horse gifts. Yet, as the Ottoman breeding of thoroughbreds was given up in the 19th century in favour of British imports, the old breeds died out and we do not have sound reference material to come to any positive conclusion.

The intensity of diplomatic traffic between the Ottoman capital and Mantua decreased considerably after Cem's death in February 1495. In November of the same year, Francesco Gonzaga received from the sultan only a horse and robes of honour.[37] But the contacts between the court of Mantua and the Ottoman government did go on, if on a lower level.[38] Still in 1529, Süleyman's grand vizier, İbrahim Pasha, obtained gold-brocaded garments (*panni d'oro*) from Mantua.[39]

Thoroughbred horses, their trappings and equipment were generally favoured gifts in the Ottoman Empire[40] and beyond. They were presented so frequently that one is tempted to call them the small change of the Ottoman gift system, even if they usu-

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33 For more about his career, see: Reindl 1983, pp. 302–318.

34 Kissling 1965, p. 38.

35 *Ibidem*, p. 63.

36 In a letter to his wife Isabella d'Este (dated 23 April 1494), Francesco II mentioned *la camisa de Christo nostro Signore et quaranta boni cavalli,* Kissling 1965, p. 33. It is doubtful whether this garment is identical to the Seamless Robe of Jesus (*tunica inconsutilis*), which Mehmed II allegedly wore during the Bosnian campaign in 1463; *ibidem*, note 67. On the Seamless Robe in Mehmed II's and Bayezid II's possession see Babinger 1958.

37 Kissling 1965, p. 55.

38 See the article by Daniela Sogliani in this volume.

39 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XLIX (1897), c. 442.

40 A typical document is a list of horses (dated 1559), which came as gifts from various officials to the royal court and were subsequently distributed among the *aghas* of the sultan's household; Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi, D. 10084.

ally were no bargain. In 1522, for example, the Bosnian governor sent two horses to the Venetian *Signoria*.[41] When, in 1526, the Venetian *bailo* Pietro Zen brought a clock for the second vizier Mustafa Pasha, the return gift consisted of two extremely well-laboured saddles.[42]

The Ottoman governors of border provinces, who, in accordance with the guidelines of the Porte, conducted their own foreign policy on a limited scale, sometimes gladdened their Christian neighbours with offerings of this kind. In 1496, for example, an Ottoman envoy presented four horses to the Duke of Milan, Ludovico Sforza 'il Moro' (1452–1508). As Marino Sanuto informs us, they were bartered for dogs, which were sent to the *sancakbey* of Bosnia, Mustafa Bey, a son-in-law of Bayezid II.[43] Dogs are considered to be impure in Islam, hence as a 'return gift' to a Muslim official they appear somewhat odd at first glance. Nevertheless, hunting dogs (especially huge animals such as mastiffs) were much sought after by the Ottoman elite. In 1496, the *sancakbey* of Shkodër, Firuz Bey, asked Francesco Gonzaga to send him a pair of sized dogs (*chani grossi*).[44] They were especially needed for hunting wild boars. In 1499, Firuz Bey sent a messenger to Venice, who presented a small carpet and ornate bridle reins.[45]

When in 1531 the border between Dalmatia and Bosnia had to be settled anew, the governor of Bosnia, Hüsrev Bey (1480–1541), son of a Bosnian nobleman and an Ottoman princess, did his best to keep the Venetian partners happy. One of the political actors in those negotiations, Daniele de' Lodovici, the secretary of the Republic, received a horse with a saddle and trappings, two used[46] carpets, one war-mace (*bozdoğan*) and a leathern water-flask. The captain (*capitanio*) of Zadar, Vicenzo Zantani, was gladdened by the official with similar gifts: a horse, a tack, a bow with arrows, and a carpet.[47]

Already in 1525, Hüsrev Bey, the governor of Bosnia, had sent a messenger to the Venetian Council of Ten, with a 'barbarian or Turkish horse' (*cavallo barbaro overo turco*) equipped with a beautiful caparison, three carpets and four extremely beautiful pieces of mohair (*zambelotto*, camlet), two bridle reins and two beautifully worked leather boxes serving as horse feeders. The envoy himself had added a carpet, two pieces of mohair

41 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XXXIII (1892), c. 439.

42 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XLIII (1895), c. 725.

43 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. I (1879), c. 371.

44 Kissling 1965, p. 62. Sometimes Ottoman women were pampered with lapdogs, for example, in 1528 the wife of the second vizier, Mustafa Pasha; Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XLI. (1894), c. 534.

45 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. II (1879), c. 506. The carpet was supposed to be given to the *Procuratia* of San Marco, but it was kept by the doge; the bridle was retained to be given to someone else.

46 In Ottoman culture of the 16th century, objects to be offered as presents did not have to be new. Even the Ottoman court would sometimes send used items as gifts to other monarchs. A register of expenses for imperial tents from 1509–1511 lists, for example, the repair of a tent which was 'sent to the sultan of Egypt'; BOA, Kâmil Kepeci 7412, p. 15.

47 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. LIV (1900), c. 525. On 9 October 1531, a messenger of Hüsrev Beğ brought again an equipped horse to Venice; a day later, the animal was taken to the courtyard of the Palazzo Ducale, but without the saddle; Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. LV (1900), c. 34 and 36.

and a bow as a personal gift.[48] In October 1528, an emissary of Hüsrev Bey presented the doge with a silver cassette bearing the emblem of the Medici pope, Clement VII (pont. 1523–1534), and containing a piece of the Holy Cross wood.[49] The *Signoria* thereupon decided to invest 500 ducats in diamonds to delight their neighbour in Bosnia.[50] The background of this story remains unclear. A silver box with the papal crest can hardly have fallen into the Ottoman hands by way of a legal transaction.

Evidently, when new governors of border provinces took office, they would send gifts to all of their neighbours, also beyond the frontier. In December 1527, an envoy of the new governor of Hercegovina presented to the *Signoria* two (not too expensively) equipped horses, two goshawks, two bows, two iron maces, two pieces of mohair, four new Turkish carpets of a smaller and one of a larger size.[51]

Although carpets do not figure prominently in internal Ottoman gift traffic, they were at all times a frequent component in diplomatic gifts distributed to the West. The Ottoman court was of course perfectly aware of the Western fascination with rugs. It seems that flat-weaves and carpets used by the Ottoman elite came mainly from Western Anatolia, especially from Uşak, the area where the bulk of exported pieces originated. The vicinity of the harbours at Ayasoluk[52] and later Kuşadası and İzmir was certainly decisive for the preference of products from this region for export. The facilities enabling exports on a considerable scale made it possible, as well, to produce carpets of the quality satisfying the Ottoman ruling elite over the centuries. Even if Venice was not the only Western exporter—Florence was as eager for carpets as the city at the lagoon, and from the 16th century onwards also Dutch merchants showed a keen interest[53]—it was a major reselling point for carpets and other Middle Eastern objects. Hence, among its merchants and patrician citizens there must have been a larger group of connoisseurs. When Marino Sanuto registers a carpet gift,[54] he sometimes adds the market price, disclosing his own or his informant's familiarity with the matter. But, unfortunately, he neither mentions the provenance nor gives a description of the piece.

The Ottoman Empire cultivated extensive contacts with Venice and dispatched messengers, envoys and ambassadors to the *Serenissima* on and on. One would expect therefore regular lavish gifts to be transmitted. But the reality seems to have been different. In the years 1496–1533, the Ottoman court sent gifts only twice, although in summer of 1516 an envoy of Selim the Grim arrived in Venice and was by no means empty-handed. But

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48 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XXXIX (1894), c. 467. The return gift for Hüsrev Beğ was worth 600 ducats, while the messenger was vested at 100 ducats; *ibidem*, c. 480.

49 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XLIX (1897), c. 73.

50 *Ibidem*, c. 125.

51 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XLVI (1897), c. 414.

52 Spallanzani 2007, p. 11. The population and garrison of Ayasoluk were transferred to Kuşadası in the early 17th century because of malaria and the harbour's silting up, Cf. Kiel 2004, pp. 403–415.

53 Contadini 2006–2007, p. 315.

54 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. III (1880), c. 1555 ('*uno tapedo val ducati do ½*').

what he brought was not so much a gift as a threat. Selim, anxious to be safe of disturbances from the West during his campaign against the Mamluks, sent the messenger who transmitted the news of the sultan's victory over the Safavids at Koçhisar near Mardin, and presented the severed head, filled with straw, of a Safavid commander, whose name ('Gasbin') was revealed in the accompanying letter.[55] Interestingly, Sanuto reports this story without any indication of being irritated or shocked by the macabre 'gift'.

Real gifts came in 1504, at the ratification of the peace contract that Andrea Gritti (1455–1538) and Hersekzade Ahmed Pasha (1459–1517) had negotiated the year before. The preliminary peace proposal of April 1503 had been accompanied by several silken garments *a la turchescha* (of low value, as Sanuto remarks) for the doge. They were given to the administration (*procuratoria*) of San Marco to make altar cloths and chasubles for the church out of them.[56] In Istanbul, 'Andrea [Gritti], the ambassador of the lords of Venice', received 'honorary presents' on 29 September 1503. In this case we have his own report[57] and the Ottoman record as well, saying that the presents consisted of: 5,000 *akçe* in cash, a coat or *sur*-kaftan (*çuka-ı eğin*) of red Italian velvet, heavily worked with gold (*müzehheb*; in the Italian text: *vesta d'oro*), a *mirahori*-dress[58] of red voided velvet (*çatma*) from Bursa with brocade. Additionally, his men, his secretary,[59] his interpreter and the captain of the ship with whom he came, were endowed with dresses.[60] This kind of offering constituted a standard of honouring an envoy from a non-Muslim country and the same treatment was given on 14 June 1504 to the next envoy.[61] On 10 October 1503, in exchange for his offerings (*be-cihet-i 'ivaz-ı pişkeş-i hod*), the following items were given to Andrea Gritti: one dress of voided velvet from Bursa, two tankards, a silver tray, two large [silver] wine goblets (*kadeh-i deve tabanı*), one dress-length of voided velvet from Bursa and one dress-length of dotted Bursa-velvet,[62] two bales of embossed Bursa-

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55 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. XXII (1887), c. 460 and 462.

56 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. V (1881), c. 27.

57 *Ibidem*, c. 452.

58 Rogers 1987, p.45, suggests *mirahori* to be an adoption of a Mamluk robe of honour. But records from the year 1542 point to *mirahori* as a category superior to that of a *hil'at* (robe of honour), D.BRZ 20 614, p. 12.

59 'The man of the Lords of Venice' in the Ottoman text. He received 2,000 *akçe* and a dotted robe (called *vesta d'oro* in the Italian text). For more about the garment's pattern, see note 62.

60 Barkan 1979, p. 313. The register published, *ibidem*, pp. 296–380, is a transcription of the text concerning the year 909 AH (26 June 1503–13 June 1504) of the 'Register of Benefactions' (*in'amat defteri*) in the Atatürk Kitaplığı, İstanbul, Muallim Cevdet 71, fols. 1b–32a.

61 Muallim Cevdet 71, fol. 32b. The range of robes and money remained approximately the same at the audience on 22 April 1511, *ibidem*, fol. 222b.

62 The Ottoman term for the design is *benek*, which is usually associated with a pattern of dots or spots, Atasoy et al. 2001, p. 341. In this sense, one should assume the triple-spot motif of the *çintamani* design. Rogers 1987, p. 46, suggests on the basis of the scarce evidence of this motif in the early 16th century to understand *benek* as a medallion textile.

-*kemha,*[63] and four dress-lengths of camlet-mohair.[64] The choice of gifts was in harmony with the usual practice of dealing with a representative of a less important ruler comparable, for example, to Alaeddevle, the prince of the small buffer state of Dulkadir, situated between the Ottomans and the Mamluks.[65] In 1504, the Ottoman ambassador in Venice delivered five bridle reins of gold brocade (*brochà d'oro*) from Bursa, one silken kerchief to be held over the head of a person to be perfumed with incense, and five pieces of *sof* (*zambeloto*, camlet), the expensive mohair cloth,[66] which was used by pious Muslims as a replacement for silk, but was also highly estimated in the West. This gift package is mentioned only in Sanuto's diary; it is not recorded in the register of benefactions. The Venetians were clearly disappointed and Marino Sanuto noted in his diary 'all these robes and gifts are of low value and were sent to the administrators (*Procuratori*) of San Marco'.[67] The lacking splendour of the gifts was, of course, an intentional measure of the Ottoman protocol: to remind the recipients how low their place in the Porte's ranking was.

On 23 July 1504, at the Ottoman court, when 'the envoy of the king of the province of Hungary, bringing gifts and a letter' came to an audience before the sultan, the expenditure of robes was distinctly small. The amount of money (5,000 *akçe*) was the same as in the case of the Venetian representative, but the total collection of robes was diminished: the Hungarian legate received only a *sur*-kaftan of brocaded voided velvet (*çatma*) from Bursa and a *mirahori*-robe of dotted Bursa velvet. His treasurer and the *çavuş*, the Ottoman officer accompanying him, are mentioned as recipients of 1,250 *akçe*[68] (their counterparts escorting the Venetian ambassador had 2,810 *akçe*). On 1 April 1505, an envoy of the Polish king was also honoured with a rather limited range of robes, yet he had a gratuity of 7,000 *akçe*.[69] But on 24 June 1509, 'Pan Andrea'[70] (Sir Jędrzej from Radziejowice), the ambassador of the Polish king, was graced with a real treat: 12,000 *akçe* in cash,

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63 *Kemha* is a heavy, multicoloured silk weaving in a lampas structure; the uppermost weft is reinforced with silver or gold-wrapped thread and the surface is brocaded; Atasoy et al. 2001, p. 341; Tezcan 1993, p. 32.

64 Barkan 1979, p. 314. The gifts are listed also in Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. V (1881), c. 452.

65 Muallim Cevdet 71, fols. 104b, 105a, 108a, 114b, 115a, 116b.

66 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. V (1881), c. 993. For the production and finishing process of mohair, see Faroqhi 2013, pp. 237–340.

67 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. V (1881), c. 993.

68 Muallim Cevdet 71, fol. 34b. But on 26 March 1505, the robes were more sumptuous than those of the Venetians, *ibidem*, fol. 52b.

69 Muallim Cevdet 71, fol. 53a. The welcome for the Polish ambassador (17 May 1506) was similar but he received only 5,000 *akçe*; *ibidem*, fol. 87b. On 23 July 1510, probably at the farewell audience of the Polish envoy Andrea, the protocol did not differ from that of the audience of 1505; *ibidem*, fol. 201b.

70 The entry is written in *siyakat* script, which was mainly used for the financial administration. The first word does not have diacritical points; it looks like the Turkish name Bali, but could be read as *pani* (Lady) as well, which, however, does not make sense. Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, to whom I would like to express my sincere gratitude, convinced me that the word has to be read as *pana* (genitive or accusative of the Polish *pan*, 'Sir'), in analogy to the word *kal'e* (fortress) in the same text, where the end-*he* is written like a *ya*. Thus, the reading *pana* is plausible.

the unavoidable *sur*-kaftan of red Italian velvet, heavily worked with gold, a robe of voided velvet from Bursa, two tankards, two silver trays, six goblets from Laristan (*akdah-ı Lârî*), two dress-lengths of dotted brocaded velvet from Bursa, two dress-lengths of striped velvet from Bursa, two dress-lengths of uncut velvet from Bursa, four dress-lengths of red *kemha* for a *dolama*-coat, four dress-lengths of *puri*, probably an Indian cotton weave. Another Polish official, labelled as 'the king's man' (perhaps the secretary of the embassy), received a robe of embroidered or patterned (*münakkaş*) fabric from Bursa, and his interpreter 2,000 *akçe*, a robe of dotted fabric from Bursa, two dress-lengths of uncut velvet and two dress-lengths of *puri*. The members of the ambassador's retinue were dressed with ten robes of *puri*, the treasurer was endowed with 4,180 *akçe*, and the accompanying *çavuş* with 915 akçe.[71] An almost similar set of presents was prepared for an audience of the Polish ambassador on 6 January 1512.[72] The document does not mention any gifts sent to the Polish king or any other Christian monarch, but only to the Mamluk sultan and Shah Ismail of Iran. [73]

Yet, the envoys of the Hungarian king several times received, along with 19,000 *akçe*, also the full range of robes and fabrics—all types of velvet, mohair, *Bayramî*,[74] an Indian cotton weave, and *puri*—and additionally a 'fish tooth' (*dendan-ı mahî*),[75] a whale tooth, which must have been a rather rare item in the Ottoman lands. Yet, a look at the list of Polish state gifts sent to Bayezid II around the year 1501 reveals that four *dentes piscis* ('fish teeth') were part of the package.[76] Hence, obviously we are dealing here with a 'recycled gift'. The list of presents for the shah of Iran, Ismail, contains a further indication for such an approach: among the silver goblets offered to him in 1510, we find two from Hungary and four from Dubrovnik.[77] Redistributing gifts was a normal attitude among pre-modern Middle Eastern societies, and the Ottomans were no exception.

If we compare the range of presents sent to Iran and Egypt with those for Western monarchs, the difference in quantity and quality is striking. The Egyptian sultan and several of the Mamluk grandees would receive slaves (the sultan no fewer than 30 men), the whole range of fabrics, especially Italian velvets in different colours, and furs—sable, lynx, ermine.[78] Shah Ismail, as a Shiite, being representative of a different denomination of Islam did not receive slaves, but would get a full range of Italian, Ottoman and Indian fabrics, several sets of drinking vessels (tankards, trays, long-neck bottles, goblets), bows, whale

71 Muallim Cevdet 71, fol. 165a.

72 Muallim Cevdet 71, fol. 251a.

73 Muallim Cevdet 71, fols. 107b, 207a.

74 Cf. İnalcık 1993, p. 292.

75 Muallim Cevdet 71, fols. 117a, 201b, 218b, 235a.

76 Ünal and Stępniak 2014, p. 12. In 1620, the Prince of Moldavia Gaspar Graziani (Pol. Kaspar Gratiani, c. 1575/1580–1620) submitted next to costly furs five fish teeth; Reindl-Kiel 2005, p. 229, n. 122.

77 Muallim Cevdet 71, fol. 207a.

78 Muallim Cevdet 71, fol. 107b.

teeth and furs.[79] Hence, the disappointment of the Venetians about the Ottoman presents is understandable. Sanuto's frequent complaints about the modest value of the Ottoman gifts to the *Signoria* reflect certainly the self-assessment of Venice as a world power, an overestimate of Venetian investments into offerings to the sultan, and the fear that the balance of gifts between the Porte and the *Signoria* might incline too much on the Venetian side.

The Ottoman self-perception, on the other hand, was not less biased. İbrahim Pasha, Süleyman the Magnificent's favourite, insisted regularly on the sultan's rank as the ruler of the world,[80] and this perspective shaped the Ottoman imagery of their neighbour states. This meant that Western monarchs in the Ottoman eyes occupied a rank at best equal to an Ottoman vizier, but more often than not slightly lower. In this context, we have to consider (on both sides) the fairly expensive rivalry between Süleyman the Magnificent and Emperor Charles V (r. 1530–1556). The emperor perhaps sent a large silken gold brocaded tapestry depicting him as the ruler of the world to his arch-rival Süleyman. This weave showed the emperor sitting on the throne, while the aristocrats of the empire paid him homage. More than a hundred years later, Tavernier would see the piece in the treasury of the royal palace in Istanbul.[81] Unfortunately, the story of the tapestry remains largely in the dark, for neither Ottoman nor Western archival data that could shed some light on the matter have been discovered as yet. There is a vague possibility, though, that this tapestry was not a gift of the emperor, but an advertising specialty brought by Pieter Coecke van Aelst. In 1533, urged by some merchants and tapestry-makers from Brussels, he travelled to Istanbul to explore options for a business in tapestries with the Ottoman court. Yet, this commission never materialised and the only result was Coecke's famous *Moeurs et fachons de fair de Turcz* (Customs and Fashions of the Turks), published in 1553, three years after his death, by his widow Mayken Verhulst.[82] Given the fact that the contemporary sources about Coecke van Aelst do not mention a large tapestry presented to the sultan, it seems more likely that the piece was indeed a gift of Charles V. In this case, it must be evaluated in the context of Sultan Süleyman's precious crown-helmet, which in 1532 was acquired by his grand vizier İbrahim Pasha in Venice,[83] possibly together with a lavishly illustrated panegyric manuscript focusing on a majestic, magnificent and lenient sultan Süleyman, the eternal friend of Venice.[84] Both the crown-helmet and manuscript were directed to a Western public. Charles V's gift used the same language as the Ottomans to determine the status of the recipient.

Franz Babinger was the first to draw attention to the early diplomatic contacts between the Ottoman and the Holy Roman Empire at the close of the 15th century.[85] Marino

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79 Muallim Cevdet 71, fol. 207a.

80 Cf. Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. LIII, c. 8.

81 Tavernier 1675, p. 142.

82 Orenstein 2014, pp 176–182.

83 See: Necipoğlu 1989.

84 Polido-Rull 2015.

85 Babinger 1962, pp. 254–269.

Sanuto's diaries suggest indeed that Bayezid II regularly sent embassies to the imperial diets in Germany.[86] The emperor's embassy of 1504 to the sultan can be traced in an Ottoman archival document. In an entry dated 16 December 1504, it mentions robes of honour that were given to the 'envoys of the ruler of the province of the Emperor (*Cesar*), who had brought gifts (*pişkeş*)'.[87] Those envoys, Hans Freiherr von Königsegg and Conte Galeazzo di Malzo, were sent by Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519).[88] Unfortunately, the register does not disclose whether any gifts were offered in return.

During the reign of Selim I (r. 1512–1520), the Holy Roman Empire seems to have enjoyed little regard from the Ottoman side, as the sultan's focus was directed towards the Safavids and Mamluks. But after the incorporation of the Mamluk territories into the Ottoman Empire and the pacification of Egypt, the Ottomans turned their eyes to Hungary, which for almost the next 200 years would remain an apple of discord between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs. This situation did not create an atmosphere in which the Ottoman side would find lavish gifts sent to Vienna particularly useful.[89] Thus, in 1562, the embassy of İbrahim Bey is the first one known to have delivered gifts from the Ottoman court.[90] İbrahim, of noble Polish origin, born as Joachim Strasz (d. 1571), had become a chief interpreter of the Porte in 1551.[91] In 1562, he came to Vienna to ratify the peace agreement negotiated by Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq (1522–1592) and the Ottoman authorities. Yet, as Emperor Ferdinand I (r. 1558–1564) was on his way from Prague to Frankfurt, the Ottoman delegation proceeded thither, too.

Unfortunately, we do not have the official list of the gifts presented, which makes it difficult to identify some of the objects. The emperor was graced with a palfrey with gilded trappings and a gold-worked caparison (perhaps from *seraser*[92]), two jewelled crystal bowls[93] and four beautifully equipped camels.[94] The *Cronica* of Frankfurt, although printed in 1706 but based on earlier sources, lists—next to the obligatory horse equipped with trappings and caparison—only two camels and 'a beautiful Turkish dog', a Turkish bow with a quiver and arrows, two small blue Venetian jugs, two jewelled silver bowls,

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86 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. II (1879), c. 780, 834 (June 1499); vol. III (1880), c. 454, 470 (July 1500, Innsbruck), c. 1534 (March 1501, Nürnberg).

87 Muallim Cevdet 71, fol. 43b.

88 For more about this mission, see Babinger 1962, pp. 266–268.

89 For the mutual relations between the two powers, see Schaendlinger 1984.

90 See: Rudolph 2005.

91 For more about him, see Matuz 1975, pp. 46–48.

92 This was the most regal of all Ottoman fabrics. Its warp and weft are of silk, the weft has an additional thread made of an amalgam of silver and gold; Tezcan 1993, p. 34; Atasoy et al. 2001, p. 222. To my knowledge *seraser* is first mentioned in 1542, D.BRZ d. 20614, p. 12.

93 Rudolph 2005, p. 302, lists '*zwei Kristall- oder Alabastergeschirre*'; we can exclude, however, that alabaster vessels were among the objects because alabaster was completely outside the Ottoman gift canon. Moreover, vessels of this material do not appear in the material settings of the Ottoman ruling elite.

94 *Ibidem*, p. 302.

a beautiful Turkish carpet and cushions. The text lists additionally two small blue Venetian jugs, of a different fashion, another beautiful carpet and a cushion made of noble stuff, 21 camels all in all, and, finally, four beautiful Turkish lances, two painted red and two green.[95] The items recorded twice are in all likelihood the result of two lists having been—rather unskilfully—compiled together. The depiction of the Turkish delegation bringing the gifts to Frankfurt might be taken as an indication: only six camels are portrayed there. While the caparisoned palfrey, jewelled bowls (be it of silver or of crystal), bow, quiver, arrows, carpet, cushions and jugs fit rather well into the pattern of Ottoman gifting, the dog is, seemingly, somewhat odd. Dogs, especially mastiffs, were, as we have seen before, highly appreciated presents for Ottoman officials. In Ottoman offerings to the Westerners we do not find them commonly before the 18th century. In the 18th century, especially sighthounds (*tazı*) could be occasionally given to foreign diplomats.[96] Possibly, the dog for the emperor belonged to the latter breed. Much less odd was the gift of camels. They would carry the load of gifts to their destination and it made more sense to include them in the offerings than to have them transported back. We must not forget that the transport of animals over long distances was in general a rather arduous enterprise.

The reserve concerning the opulence of offerings to the emperor was certainly no singular incidence. It is even more prominently visible in the gifts that Hürrem Sultan (Roxelana, 1500–1558), the beloved consort of Süleyman the Magnificent, sent with a cordial letter to the Polish king Sigismund II Augustus (1520–1572) in 1548: two sets of underwear, six kerchiefs (*destmal*) and a napkin (*el yüz makramesi*).[97] The choice of items underscored the cordiality of the letter, as underwear to someone symbolised a deeply felt friendship in Ottoman culture. The gift would express the concern of the donor with the bodily wellbeing of the recipient; sexual connotations as in modern times were obviously not linked with such a present.

Approximately a century later, in 1650, the range of gifts to the German emperor was distinctly larger: 14 horses, two sets of costly horse trappings, a whole range of carpets, scents, an enormous quantity of muslin, a tent with awnings, a gemmed horn, bezoar stones—and five robes of honour.[98] Of course, the changed political constellation played a role. The Peace of Zsitvatorok, which in 1606 had ended the 'Long War' between the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy, laid down the equal status of sultan and emperor in terms of protocol. Yet, the robes of honour indicated the Ottoman displeasure with this provision. Such robes were, in fact, never bestowed among equals, but always given in a downward movement. Furthermore, a robe of honour symbolised allegiance of the recipient to the donor.

Changes in the balance of power were in all likelihood not the only reason for the new quality and quantity of Ottoman diplomatic gifts. While during the 16th century virtually

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95 Florian and Lersner 1706, vol. I, p. 181.

96 Reindl-Kiel 2005, p. 220.

97 Ünal and Stępniak 2014, p. 36–37.

98 BOA, Kâmil Kepeci 668, p. 22. For a detailed discussion, see: Reindl-Kiel 2013, pp. 267–272.

all members of the ruling elite had emerged from the royal palace, after years of internal crisis, in the first half of the 17th century, a new social group came to power. Many officials in this new leading class were not trained anymore at the royal court, but in the households of one of the powerful pashas of the empire.[99] Furthermore, the ruling dynasty underwent considerable changes. After centuries of repeated struggles of princes for the throne during (and after) the lifetime of their fathers, the order of succession was transformed into an agnatic seniority in 1603, when Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617), still a child, ascended the Ottoman throne. He was the first of several sultans who started their reign while being minors, a situation bringing their mothers (or grandmothers) to administer the state and thus shifting the power relations within the royal court. All these components had evidently an influence on the scope and assortment of gifts meant for Western monarchs.

As we have seen, the Ottoman protocol provided every foreign ambassador or envoy with a robe of honour when he was granted an audience in front of the sultan. This peculiarity led in Italy to analogous practices. In Venice, for example, every time an envoy of the Porte was announced, the council decided how and at what costs the man had to be robed, and what the amount of his 'expenses' (*spexe*) would be (usually 500 ducats).[100] The Ottoman investment with a robe of honour had, of course, a spiritual component: the foreigner would be symbolically incorporated into the Ottoman domain and was supposed to give allegiance to the sultan. But these garments had a monetary value as well, and Theodore Spandounes (It.: Teodore Spandugino), a Byzantine aristocrat whose family had settled in Venice, claims that after the audience before the sultan someone would approach the honoured diplomat and offer to buy the garment.[101] For Venetian legates, such a deal obviously did not function, because their tradition was different. Ottoman robes of honour were habitually donated either to the parish church of the diplomat or to San Marco to make altar cloths or liturgical vestments out of them. In 1530, it was decided that in the future all robes of honour received from the Ottoman sultan should be donated to the church of San Marco.[102] This method recognised the original spiritual meaning and the re-dedication of the robes to the church deprived them of their bond with the sultan. Moreover, the transformation of Turkish (meaning 'Muslim' in contemporary parlance) garments into ecclesial textiles made them common public goods of Christianity. This new quality in the long run might have contributed, if in a limited way, to a shared taste in fabric fashions and designs between the Ottomans and the Venetians.

The similarity of the 15th and 16th-century Venetian and Ottoman fabrics led in the past to frequent misidentifications.[103] Italian silks were produced for the Ottoman market in relatively high quantities, and this meant of course adaptations to the Ottoman taste.

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99 Abou-El-Haj 1972.

100 For example, Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. II (1879), c. 780, vol. V, c. 36; vol. XXXIII (1892), c. 291, 277; vol. XXXIX (1894), c. 39.

101 Spandounes 1997, p. 130.

102 Sanuto 1879–1902, vol. LIV (1899), c. 131.

103 Atasoy et al. 2001, p. 189.

Designs were sometimes ordered directly by Ottoman customers, sometimes copied from Turkish textiles, but mostly it was the Italian manufacturers who adapted Ottoman motifs for their purposes.[104] This did not mean, however, that weaving techniques were borrowed as well. Hence, a contemporary technical analysis enables us, in the majority of cases, to tell apart the Ottoman copies of Italian fabrics from the Italian adaption of Ottoman weaves, but still on some occasions a considerable amount of uncertainty remains.[105] The Ottomanising designs on Italian fabrics were not restricted to export merchandise; hybrid forms could be found on products for domestic consumption as well.[106] The qualitative superiority of Italian silks, including brocades and velvets, made them the first choice for the Ottoman court. As we have seen in the case of Andrea Gritti, the Ottoman protocol would prefer Italian weaves even for the first-class robes of honour for foreign diplomats. Yet, a considerably lower price for Ottoman silk fabrics made them competitive on the Italian market. Hence, the export of fabrics was not a one-way road and Ottoman luxury textiles were traded in Italy as well.[107]

We do not know how rich the collection once was of Ottoman textiles in the treasury of San Marco in Venice. After 1797, the demand for gold and silver that could be found interwoven into the textiles led eventually to their destruction.[108] The decision of 1530 to submit to the *procuratoria* all future Ottoman robes of honour bestowed on Venetian diplomats must have resulted in a sumptuous collection, given the frequency of diplomatic encounters. But with regard to the intensive trade contacts it is questionable whether those liturgical textiles really had an influence on the fashion of fabrics in Italy.

It is virtually impossible to identify extant carpets with pieces once offered as diplomatic gifts, as neither the Ottoman nor the European side would give descriptions in the relevant inventories. The European enthusiasm for Turkish carpets did not result in Western production worth mentioning. They were a commodity of a sophisticated lifestyle of the upper classes and as such depicted as status symbols in a large number of paintings.[109] All in all only a limited number of rugs were added to gift sets sent to the West. These few carpets were probably put to private use by the recipients. Donations to churches seem not to have been the rule, at least if we leave Transylvania out of focus. There, the donations came from merchants and wealthy townsmen, and were acquired on the trade market.

In the field of arms, armour and horse equipment, Ottoman influences can also be sensed. In this context, one of the few Turkish loan words in English is telling: shabrack,[110] from Turkish *çaprak*, or caparison. As weapons, armour and horses in the Ottoman Empire did not belong to the list of goods that could be traded freely, as their significance

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104 *Ibidem*, pp. 184, 188–189.

105 Contadini 2013, p. 48.

106 See for example: *ibidem*, pp. 46–47 and plates 14–16.

107 *Ibidem*, pp. 46–48.

108 Faroqhi 2013, p. 235.

109 Cf. Spallanzani 2007.

110 Hungarian: *csábrák*; German: *Schabracke*; French: *chabraque*; Polish: *czaprak.*

in diplomatic gift sets is clearly larger than that of textiles. But were weapons, armour, horses and their equipment really sent frequently enough as gifts to Christian countries to make an impact on style and fashion there? Is not again Heraclitus' saying valid, calling war the 'father of all things'?

To sum up: Based on the material discussed here it seems rather doubtful whether Ottoman gifts had any impact on local art in the West. Distinct influences of Ottoman arts and crafts are clearly identifiable in the lands under the Ottoman suzerainty (Walachia, Transylvania, Moldavia) or direct rule (parts of Hungary), and in countries such as Italy, Poland-Lithuania and Russia with strong trade ties to the Ottoman Empire.

Famous gifts from the Middle East, such as the rich collection of Harun ar-Rashid to Charlemagne, have shaped the image that modern researchers share of Oriental diplomatic gifts to the West. This view seems to be corroborated by the sumptuous Ottoman offerings of the 18th century.[111] Yet, as we have seen, in the 15th and 16th centuries, the Ottoman reality was different. In the perception of the Sublime Porte, Christian rulers of the West were for the greater part potential vassals (or potential enemies), who had to be disciplined like naughty children, treated with rigour and by no means pampered. This constellation had to be reflected in slightly austere diplomatic 'gifts'.

This brings us back to the little anecdote quoted at the beginning: it sheds light upon the Ottoman approach to the official gift exchange in the 16th century. The weak were supposed to present the powerful with everything they possessed while the return gift did not have to be anything more than clear water, albeit poured from a golden vessel. In real life, this meant that someone holding a stronger position would graciously accept presents from less fortunate individuals and reward them with a mere symbolic token. If the powerful was, however, in need of a favour (or an equivalent) of the outwardly powerless, the balance of power could incline the powerful to take the opposite direction. Hence, gift exchange in the pre-modern Ottoman Empire and in large parts of the Islamic world was more than a mere give and take, it was a visible and touchable indication of the relevant power relations. As diplomatic gift exchange was conceived in a personal manner, from monarch to monarch, it remained largely in accordance with this approach. In this context we should underscore that up to the late 17th century, Ottoman records dealing with gifts from Western monarchs generally used the Persian word *pişkeş*, the term denoting a gift by an underling presented to a superior.

Although the Ottoman ruling elite of the 15th and 16th centuries had a clear vision concerning how much grandiosity, luxury and splendour were needed to indicate status, any wastefulness shown in favour of subordinates was not regarded as appropriate behaviour. One of the most important maxims in social coexistence was *kendü halinde olmak* (lit. 'to be in one's own state'), denoting the conduct proper to one's social status, comprising also the dealings with material culture. The somewhat unpretentious gift parcels to the West were thus a logical approach. For the ruler of the world, it was definitely enough to pour clear water from a golden jug into a simple vessel of the future vassal who resembled an uneducated junior.

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111 Cf. Reindl-Kiel 2005, pp. 246–249.

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II. Cultural Translations and Imagological Constructs. 'Turks' as 'the Others' in the Literatures of East-Central Europe

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Between Fear, Contempt and Fascination—the Ottoman Empire in Polish Renaissance Writing

In mid-November 1571, the Papal nuncio in Poland, Vincenzo dal Portico (1520–1590), wrote a special letter to Rome in order to deliver a part of an astrological prediction made by a Polish doctor of medicine, Gaspar Goski (Pol: Kacper Goski, d. 1576). The nuncio copied the parts of the prediction for the years 1571 and 1572, which concerned the Turks and the Tatars. The forecast for the year 1571 was as follows:

'*Prophecy for the year 1571 by Gaspar Goski, doctor of medicine, printed in Poznań in August 1570.* Turks and Perekop Tatars are vigilant and great raiders. In various ways they will make raids in spring. Their attack will be stronger, because Mars, which is taking care of them, will increase their power, their courage and will add to their good spirit. For this reason, the holy concord is in great need. It is the most important virtue since the discord leads to heavy weakness. The sad fate of many a monarchy has proved it. But, if this could be prevented, many of them [Turks] will die in the skirmishes. Moreover, if they have a naval force on the sea in this period, neither the Caesar [Sultan] nor the Pashas will see it again, since the naval force will be defeated and it will perish. In the autumn, certain inconstancy in their movements will be seen, because of the inconstant rotation of the Moon. They could achieve something in winter.'[1]

The prediction noted a great naval victory of the Christians over the Ottomans, which was interpreted as the battle of Lepanto. The battle took place on 7 October 1571. The Christians and Ottomans fought in the strait between the gulfs of Pátrai and Corinth. The fleet of the Holy League commanded by John of Austria (Don Juan de Austria, 1547–1578) opposed the Ottoman fleet under Uluç Ali Pasha (1519–1587). The fleet of the Christian allies consisted mainly of Spanish, Venetian, and papal ships and of vessels sent by a number of Italian states. It was manned by c. 30,000 fighting men and was about evenly matched with the Ottoman fleet. It happened that the Dominicans organized a procession with the famous painting of *Madonna of the Rosary* in the intention of the Christian victory on the day of the battle in Rome. Because of that, the victory of the Christian side was called a miracle. The Ottomans lost their naval force, except 40 galleys with which Uluç Ali escaped. The consequences were

[1] Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Segretario di Stato, Polonia, Polonia dal 1567 al 72, vol. 1, f. 269–270. All translations made by Natalia Królikowska, unless indicated otherwise.

limited, since the Ottomans rebuilt their naval power within a few months and conquered Cyprus from Venice in 1573 and Tunis from the Spaniards, leaving much of the African coast under Ottoman control.[2] That, however, did not prevent immediate and long-lasting celebrations of the event. All the arts paid tribute, not only the famous painting by Paolo Veronese. Numerous works of arts, a large number of books, papers and engravings spread the happy news and commemorated the 'Christian victory' as an unexpected miracle.[3]

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the Papal nuncio in Poland, writing to Rome in mid-November 1571, decided to send Goski's prediction on the Turks and the Tatars for the years 1571 and 1572. The prophecy for the year 1571 brought great fame to Goski, who was praised as far as Venice and Rome. The *Serenissima* awarded him the title of 'well--merited to the Senate and the Venetian people', a yearly pension of 300 ducats and placed a copper statue of him at the University of Padua, where he received his academic degree.[4]

The prediction by Goski and the European reaction to its accuracy, visible in the decisions of the Venetian Senate and in the letter from the nuncio, who copied only a part of Goski's prophecy for the years 1571 and 1572, clearly demonstrate the importance of the Ottoman issue in 16th-century Poland and Europe.

This paper studies the divergent ways in which the Turks were described in Polish Renaissance writing. It is based on a few well-chosen examples, namely four letters written by envoys to the Porte in the years 1530–1543 as well as texts authoured by two famous Polish political writers, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski (1503–1572) and Stanisław Orzechowski (1513–1566). Before exploring the reasons for constructing different images of the Ottomans by various authours, I shall describe the background of Polish-Ottoman relations, which formed the context for the Polish authours. For the purpose of this study, we shall consider the term Renaissance as standing for the period beginning at the close of the 15th century and ending in the late 16th century.

Polish-Ottoman Political Relations in the Renaissance

At the end of the 15th century, the relationship between Poland-Lithuania and the Ottoman Empire was marked by tensions caused by conflicts over Polish claims to access to the Black Sea, which culminated in an unsuccessful Polish military expedition in Moldavia in 1497. Turkish and Tatar raids on the Ruthenian territories also added to the mutual

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[2] Cf., the illuminating remarks of Maria Pia Pedani on the battle of Lepanto. She maintains that Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha, who tried to avoid war with Venice, had a hand in the Ottoman defeat by sending a fleet commanded by two inexperienced leaders. He was to use the Ottoman loss to destroy his political enemies from the war party; Pedani 2005.

[3] Brummett 2013, pp. 66–67; Veinstein 2013, pp. 166–167.

[4] Barycz 1959–1960, pp. 349–350. For more information on the image of the Turks in prophetic texts circulating in Poland-Lithuania, see: Tafiłowski 2013, pp. 219–224; and for prophecies in Renaissance Italy, see: Niccoli 1990 and Pierozzi 1994.

hostility. They were followed by attempts to use diplomacy to heal the political climate between the two states. It should be emphasized that the 16th century witnessed numerous diplomatic missions between Poland and the Sublime Porte. This period was also characterized by the absence of Polish-Ottoman military conflicts, except for minor frontier skirmishes. A momentous incident took place in 1524 when Poland supported Louis II from the Jagiellonian dynasty, king of Hungary and Bohemia (Hung.: II. Lajos; Pol.: Ludwik II Jagiellończyk, 1506–1526), in his fight against the Ottomans. Yet, only a year later, Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566) granted a three-year truce to the Polish envoy.[5] Prevailing anti-war sentiment among the nobility, combined with the fear of an alliance between the Ottomans, the Crimean Tatars and Muscovy, made Poland-Lithuania stand idly by and watch Louis II be defeated and killed in the Battle of Mohács. Consequently, Ferdinand Habsburg (married to the sister of Louis II) laid claim to the Hungarian succession. During the next few decades, the Hungarian question played an important role in Polish-Ottoman relations. In the rivalry between Ferdinand I of Habsburg (1503–1564) and John Zápolya (Hung.: Szápolyai János, 1487–1540) over the Hungarian heritage, both the Ottoman Empire and Poland-Lithuania pursued an anti-Habsburg policy. Sigismund I (Pol.: Zygmunt I Stary, r. 1507–1548) even gave his daughter Isabella (Pol.: Izabela Jagiellonka, 1519–1559) in marriage to John Zápolya. Having a common enemy resulted in a friendly relationship between the states.[6] A visible sign of this was the first 'eternal' truce, which was to be observed till the death of one of its signers and was granted by Süleyman to the Polish king in 1533. As Dariusz Kołodziejczyk pointed out, this 'eternal' truce in place of a short-lived one, could be seen as proof of the doctrinal independence of both sides. The Ottoman sultan broke the Quranic prescription that limited peace with infidels to a maximum of 10 years. The Polish king, on the other hand, concluded a perpetual peace with a Muslim ruler whose advance into Europe posed a great threat to the existence of the Christian states in south-eastern Europe.[7] It needs to be emphasized that the Polish-Ottoman relations depended upon each state's relationship with other regional powers, namely the Habsburgs and Muscovy. The fear of an alliance between these two states made Sigismund I and his successors remain officially neutral in the Ottoman-Habsburg conflict. It should be stressed that Sigismund I was not the only Christian monarch who enjoyed a friendly relationship with the Ottomans. As Christine Isom-Verhaaren argues, 'the new configuration of power in Europe that resulted from Emperor Charles V inheriting vast territories, which fuelled his ambition to be recognized as the foremost ruler of this period, affected his policies in regards to his principal rivals, François in Christian Europe and Süleyman on a more global

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5 Kołodziejczyk 2000, pp. 111–116.

6 Numerous letters exchanged between Poland-Lithuania and the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (1520–1566) pay witness to cordial and friendly relations between the two sides. Some of them written in Polish or translated into Polish were published by Rymut 1998. Their recent Ottoman-Turkish language edition prepared by Arslantürk and Topaktaş 2014 is criticized for too many mistakes; cf., the review by Işıksel 2015.

7 Kołodziejczyk 2000, pp. 117–118.

stage. François and Süleyman responded to the threat that Emperor Charles V posed to their own dominance […] and consequently they chose to unite against him.'[8] Verhaaren also shows that already in the first half of the 16th century, 'the Ottomans were not outsiders, but an integral part' of the European system of alliances.[9]

Sigismund I died in 1548 and was succeeded by Sigismund II Augustus (Pol.: Zygmunt II August, r. 1530–1572), who, despite initial difficulties, continued his father's policy of maintaining friendly relations with the Sublime Porte. In 1553, the king obtained a new 'eternal' peace from Süleyman the Magnificent, and his successor Selim II (r. 1566–1574). The latter, after his enthronement, confirmed the peace to the Polish envoy Piotr Zborowski (d. 1580) in 1568. During his mission, Zborowski had to deal with issues that afterwards reappeared in Polish-Ottoman relations until the end of the 17th century and which provoked repeated disputes. Raids by Cossacks constituted a vital sore point in the mutual relations. In a letter sent to Sigismund II Augustus in as early as 1570, Selim II complained that 'some *kazak*s, originating from Poland, would come, year after year, in summer as well as in winter, and they would never stop plundering and taking away women, boys, and cattle from the Tatars'.[10] The second issue concerned Polish-Crimean Tatar relations. The Polish-Ottoman treaty of 1553 included the Crimean Khanate. Sultan Süleyman stipulated that the khan was to keep the peace in return for 'customary payments'. Dariusz Kołodziejczyk underlines that the Ottomans tended to look at 'gifts' sent by Poland-Lithuania as an obligatory tribute to be paid every year, while the Polish-Lithuanian side perceived them as a stipend or payment for Tatar auxiliary forces.[11] The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's relations with Moldavia constituted the third issue. The Polish envoy was obliged to demand that the Moldavian *hospodars* should be appointed by the Polish kings. In 1568, this unrealistic demand was denied,[12] yet the Polish claims to Moldavia were repeated as late as the mid-17th century. To sum up, the negotiations preceding the last treaty between Sigismund II Augustus and the Sublime Porte made visible the sources of conflict in the mutual relations. Yet, notwithstanding these sore points, the peace, needed by both states, was concluded.

In the 1560s and early 1570s, actually up to 1586, Poland-Lithuania needed peace with the Ottomans in order to pursue war for domination of the Baltic Sea, the so-called Livonian War (1558–1583), while the Ottomans planned the Astrakhan campaign in order to recapture the Kazan Khanate and the Astrakhan Khanate lost in the 1550s. For Poland-Lithuania, Muscovy was the most important rival in Livonia; for the Ottomans, Muscovy was the main enemy on the Northern Steppe. In 1569, the Ottomans and the Crimean Tatars conducted a military campaign against Muscovy in order to recapture the Khanate

8 Isom-Verhaaren 2011, p. 180.

9 *Ibidem*, pp. 4, 32–33, the role of the Ottoman Empire within this system has been previously emphasized by Gräf 2005 and Strohmeyer 2005.

10 Veinstein 1999, p. 37.

11 Kołodziejczyk 2011, see, for example, pp. 42, 93, 114, 126.

12 Pajewski 1936.

of Astrakhan. Sigismund II Augustus decided not to take part in the campaign, which for a variety of reasons proved unsuccessful.[13] Yet, only two years later, when the Ottoman forces were withdrawn from the Northern Steppe, Khan Devlet Giray (r. 1551–1577) led a huge Tatar army deep into the Muscovite territories and set fire to the suburbs of Moscow. While Devlet Giray was engaged in the campaign against Muscovy, the Ottomans turned their attention to the Mediterranean to face the Holy League established in 1571 between the Papal State, Venice and the Spaniards. It should not be ignored that both Sigismund II Augustus and Emperor Maximilian II (r. 1564–1576) were not to be found among the members of this anti-Ottoman coalition. Both Central-European rulers had not the slightest intention of disrupting their peaceful relations with the Ottoman Empire. The emperor enjoyed the eight-year truce granted to him by the sultan.[14] Moreover, in the year 1570, the emperor and Poland-Lithuania reached an agreement in reference to Transylvania that was acceptable to the Ottomans. Both states confirmed that John Sigismund Zápolya (Hung**.** Szapolyai János Zsigmond, 1540–1571), who was a grandson of Sigismund I and a nephew of Sigismund II Augustus, and his male descendants were to become the hereditary rulers of Transylvania. In case they lost principality, they were to obtain compensation in Silesia from the emperor.[15] In the late 1560s and at the beginning of the 1570s, the dominant powers in Central Europe seemed to be working for peace and order in the region.

When Sigismund II Augustus died in 1572, the Polish-Lithuanian noblemen elected as a new ruler Henri Valois (1551–1589), whose candidacy was backed by France and the Sublime Porte.[16] After his short reign (1573–1574), the nobles chose Stephen Báthory (Hung. Báthory István, 1533–1566), who as the Prince of Transylvania was an Ottoman vassal. The Ottoman support played a key role in his success in the election in December 1575.[17] Many a researcher on Polish diplomacy has wondered to what extent Báthory remained a loyal vassal of the sultan. During his ten-year reign, he received numerous offers from the Pope, the emperor and Venice to take part in an anti-Ottoman crusade. Jerzy Besala, for example, believes that Báthory, who had a very pragmatic and realistic approach to these projects, had never seriously considered taking an active role in an anti-Ottoman crusade.[18]

After Báthory's death, the nobles elected as a new king Sigismund III Vasa (Pol.: Zygmunt III Waza, 1566–1632), the heir to the Swedish throne and grandson of Sigismund I. His candidacy was also supported by the Ottoman Empire. The initial good relations between both states worsened due to the pro-Habsburg and pro-Catholic policy con-

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13 This Ottoman-Crimean Tatar campaign was described by the Polish envoy, cf. Taranowski 1860, pp. 56–61.

14 Dziubiński 2005, p. 249.

15 Biskup 1980, pp.691–692.

16 Dziubiński 2005.

17 Besala 1992, pp. 94–112.

18 *Ibidem*, pp. 415–470.

ducted by the new Polish king.[19] The end of the 16th century in Polish-Ottoman relations is marked by military interventions by Polish magnates in Moldavia and an increasing number of Cossacks raids on Ottoman territories. For all these reasons, the diplomatic relations between both states became strained. Yet not until 1620, and only after Polish soldiers recruited by the emperor had fought against Gabriel Bethlen (Hung.: Bethlen Gábor, r. 1613–1629), an Ottoman vassal and the prince of Transylvania, did open war break out between Poland-Lithuania and the Sublime Porte. This conflict marks the end to the mutually friendly relations that characterized the Renaissance period. The two key battles of Ţuţora (Pol.: Cecora, 1620) and Khotyn (Pol.: Chocim, 1621) played a crucial role in constructing the image of Poland-Lithuania as a bulwark of Christendom.[20]

Letters written by Polish envoys to the Sublime Porte (1530–1543)

An important channel of information about the Ottomans was offered by diplomats travelling to the Sublime Porte. Here, I briefly discuss four letters sent by Polish envoys in the period marked by Ottoman expansion in Hungary and a local civil war caused by a conflict between the two elected rulers of Hungary.[21] Soon after the Battle of Mohács in 1526 and the First Siege of Vienna in 1529, Wasyl Wrona and Jan Ludwigowski were dispatched to Süleyman the Magnificent. Their letter of 20 September 1530, sent from Adrianople (Turk.: Edirne) to the Polish Crown Chancellor, records that the Turks were preparing themselves for a huge military campaign against the 'Christians'. The envoys assured the chancellor that they were working hard to maintain friendly relations with the militant sultan. The latter left Constantinople for hunting in the vicinity of Bursa. To please Süleyman, the envoys carried for him hunting accessories, a Muscovite drum, a hunter and a few hunting birds. One of them, a gyrfalcon, died during the travel to the empire. The envoys decided to take with them the bird's cadaver to prove that the Polish side had prepared precious gifts for the sultan.[22] Clearly, the letter testifies to fear of the Ottomans and a belief that Süleyman was a chivalric ruler of a well-organized state who could find time for hunting while his subordinates took care of preparing his next military campaign. Three other letters written by Stanisław Grabkowski in 1539,[23] Jakub Wilamowski in 1540,[24] and Jan Ocieski in 1543[25] echo the comments of Wrona and Ludwigowski on the Turks being a warlike people. Re-

19 Kołodziejczyk 2000, p. 125.

20 On the situation in Poland in the 16th and 17th centuries, see: Srodecki 2015.

21 For more on the Hungarian civil war in the 1530s and the Ottoman expansion in Hungary in this period, see: Pálffy 2000, pp. 16–22.

22 Małłek 2009, pp. 32–45.

23 Rymut 1998, p. 132.

24 *Ibidem*, pp. 161–166.

25 *Ibidem*, pp. 305–310.

ports of the Ottomans' past and present campaigns and warnings on future ones were constant themes. What emerged from these writings was a picture of the sultan as a dangerous, even invincible enemy. It caused alarm and even panic, which is so clearly visible in the letter written by Ocieski. Yet, at least one of the envoys observed that something had already started to change for the worse in the Ottoman system of administration. Jakub Wilamowski reported that 'there is an important change in their customs. Earlier, there were only three pashas, now there are six of them, and two *kadiaskers alias* bishops. And they do not trust each other, they would gladly catch the others red-handed and gain advantage [over their rivals]'.[26] Wilamowski added that it is a general belief that the rivalry between the viziers would bring the downfall of the empire.

Stanisław Orzechowski

Three years later, Stanisław Orzechowski (1513–1566), in his first oration against the Turks (1543), also predicted the coming fall of the Ottoman state. Already an outspoken advocate of an anti-Turkish crusade and a beginning political writer, Orzechowski published this oration to convince Polish nobles to join the war against the Ottomans. A year later, in 1544, he continued the anti-Turkish propaganda in *Turcica Secunda* (1544). In both writings, he addressed the issue of the peace concluded between Sigismund I and Süleyman the Magnificent. He claimed that the Polish side should break it at the earliest convenience, because the Ottomans signed the treaty for one reason only: to gain time to prepare themselves properly for the prospective war against Poland. Unearthing the true intentions of the Ottomans allowed the author to declare that the Ottomans concluded the treaty with Poland to conduct a hidden, arduous war. Therefore, the king's decision to keep his word is nothing but 'a false holiness'.[27] He should act pragmatically and not hesitate to break the truce in favourable circumstances. Moreover, he expected the king to share his view on the Christian defeat in the Battle of Varna (1444). Orzechowski claimed that it had been caused by the youthful idealism of Ladislaus (Hung.: I. Ulászló; Pol.: Władysław III Warneńczyk), the king of Hungary (r. 1440–1444) and simultaneously the king of Poland (r. 1434–1444) rather than by breaking the truce with Murad II (r. 1421–1451).[28] Orzechowski believed that the nobles were not to fear an open military conflict with the Ottomans since it would be extremely difficult for them to prevail

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[26] *Ibidem*, p. 166.

[27] Koehler 2004, pp. 89–90. There is vast literature on Stanisław Orzechowski, see: *ibidem*, pp. 545–559; Tafiłowski 2013, pp. 160–168.

[28] The decision of Ladislaus III to break the truce with the Ottoman Empire in 1444 was assessed differently by a variety of Renaissance authors active in Poland. Filippo Buonacorsi, for example, criticized it and put the blame on Guliano Cesarini, see: Lichońska and Kowalewski 1961, pp. 173–207. For more on Buonacorsi, see: Ulewicz 1988, pp. 222–226.

over the Poles.[29] The author juxtaposed the barbarous background and slave mentality of the sultan's subjects to the ancient laws and freedom of the Polish nobles. He contrasted the benevolent attitude of the Polish monarch towards the nobles and the cruel behaviour of the Ottoman ruler. Consequently, the author claimed that the nobles would fight arduously to defend their privileges and to avoid the sorrowful fate of the sultan's slaves. To sum up, these two orations were written by Orzechowski to persuade the nobles and the king to take part in an anti-Turkish war. Therefore, he constructed a repulsive picture of the sultan as a tyrant whose subjects were deprived of freedom, and who held over them the right of life and death. The enslavement, Orzechowski declared, had led to intense sadness and weakened the Ottoman soldiers to the extent that they were no longer dangerous enemies for the Poles. [30]

Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski

A different image of the Turks emerges from a fundamental work of Polish political thought from the Renaissance, namely the *Commentariorum de Republica emendanda libri quinque*, authored by Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski (1503–1572).[31] As Waldemar Voisé stated, Modrzewski 'composed his works with a defined purpose in mind. All his books, and primarily his work concerning the reform or *amendment* of the state were directed towards the modernization of two institutions closely connected with man's life: the State and the Church (…). While virtually accepting the existing state of affairs, he postulated a well-advanced democratization of many institutions. (…) *De Republica emendanda* also contained a maximum program—a vision of an ideal State'.[32] It was based on observation of the then political systems, including the Ottomans'. Like many Renaissance writers,[33] he was impressed by Ottoman military discipline. Another positive feature of the Ottoman warfare on which he commented was their intelligence-gathering on their enemies, and differentiation of their strategy in order to gain advantage in the given conditions. According to Modrzewski, it was the crucial factor in the Ottoman victories in Europe.[34] The author remarks that Ottoman warfare should be discussed against the background of his understanding of the relations between Christian and non-Christian states. Modrzewski's attitude had its roots in the medieval Polish doctrine of the law of nations.[35] As Waldemar Voisé pointed out, Modrzewski developed this theory by devoting much more space to advice on how to prevent

29 Koehler 2004, pp. 73–93.

30 *Ibidem*, pp. 85–87.

31 Voisé 1988, pp. 174–188.

32 *Ibidem*, pp. 174–175.

33 Malcolm 2013, pp. 197–217.

34 Modrzewski 1953, p. 206.

35 Wielgus 1998.

war and by giving not only theological but also rationalistic arguments.[36] He emphasized the need to always solve problems by peaceful means. He stressed that 'agreements of this kind are permissible not only with nations professing the same faith but also with those of different religions. One should strive for peace with all people.'[37] Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy in the 16th century seemed to be conducted in agreement with these ideas rather than the thoughts expressed by Orzechowski.

Meritocracy, a pillar of Ottoman administration, was praised by several authors of the Renaissance, to name only the famous description by Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522–1592) dated from the mid-16th century.[38] Although Modrzewski did not openly refer to this idea, he praised the Ottomans for the practical education given to every child, be it of noble descend or low-born. His description indicates that young people had equal access to education, and perhaps, more equal opportunities in their adult life. Consequently, the sultan's subjects learned a trade that would enable them to earn their own livelihood. Modrzewski contrasted this attitude with the behaviour of Polish courtiers who neither learnt a trade nor studied arts and sciences. Instead, they used to waste their time on gambling, carousal and lewdness.[39] In this short note, Modrzewski attributed faults to the Christian side, and praised virtues of the Turkish one. Perhaps, as an advocate of the state control over education,[40] he aimed to embarrass his readers with an idea that even the Ottomans were better educated than the Poles.

Likewise, he praised the purity and decency of Ottoman women, who used to cover their faces when leaving their houses. Modrzewski contrasted their modest behaviour with the customs of Polish married women, who used to take part in all sorts of banquets and feasts. In may come as a surprise that Modrzewski, who is generally considered to have been ahead of his time, was convinced that a woman's place was at home.[41]

Conclusion

The writings discussed above echoed many of the negative and positive comments at that time on the Ottoman Empire. The Polish Renaissance saw a transformation in thinking about the Ottomans. Next to the image of the cruel and barbarous 'Turk', there existed another picture based on information provided by eyewitnesses who praised the Ottoman military and state organization, meritocracy and even modesty of local women.

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36 Voisé 1988, p. 181.

37 *Ibidem*, p. 184.

38 Busbecq 1595, pp. 72–73.

39 Modrzewski 1953, pp. 116–117.

40 Voisé 1988, p. 179.

41 Modrzewski 1953, pp. 116–117.

Ill. 1. Tomasz Dolabella, *Battle of Lepanto*, 1632. Collection of the Wawel Royal Castle, Krakow

This study on conceptualizing the ways in which the Ottomans were known in the Polish Renaissance literature begins with the prediction by Gaspar Goski concerning the Battle of Lepanto. I believe that the history of one of the most famous paintings in Poland of this battle executed by Tomasz Dolabella (It.: Tomasso Dolabella 1570–1650) could serve as a conclusion (Ill. 1).[42]

The upper half of the painting shows the two armies confronting each other in the battle of Lepanto, while in its lower part, a procession of Dominicans carrying the painting of Saint Mary of the Rosary. It presents the procession that took place on 3 October 1571 in Krakow to pray for the victory of the Polish army fighting the Ottomans in Khotyn. In the middle of the painting, Dolabella portrayed a kneeling figure of a Polish magnate. Most probably, the figure represents Stanisław Lubomirski (1583–1649), who commissioned the painting and who was one of the Polish commanders in the battle of Khotyn. It is clearly a propagandist painting that aims to connect the two battles and presents them as divine interventions.[43] The painting depicts the Commonwealth as part of the Christian world, arduously fighting with the Muslim one. It signifies the end of friendly relations between Poland-Lithuania and the Sublime Porte.

[42] It is noteworthy that Dolabella was a Venetian painter, who was trained by Antonio Vassilacchi, a pupil of Paolo Veronese. The artist settled down in Poland at the end of the 16th century. For more information about Dolabella, see: Tomkiewicz 1957. On the impact of the Battle of Lepanto on the artistic life and the politics of commemoration in Venice, see: Fenlon 2007, pp. 273–331, and Paul 2011.

[43] Tomkiewicz 1957, pp. 50–53.

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Descriptions of Ottoman Turkish Professions in Old Polish Texts

From the 16th century onwards, as a result of more vivid contacts between the Ottoman Turkey and Poland-Lithuania, in Old Polish writings, some works concerning Turkish subject matter began to appear. Because a bibliographic study taking a broad view of those works has not yet been conducted, it is difficult to estimate how large and numerous this group of texts is. One should ascertain, however, that those works presenting the Turkish subject matter were very varied as regards their character.

Thus, there are some works that bear both the features of memoirs and epistolographic works, such as: the letters written by Jan Potocki to his mother from his journey to Turkey, published in 1784 and entitled *Podróż do Turek i Egiptu…* [A Journey to Turkey and Egypt…].[1] Salomea Pilsztynowa's memoirs[2] constitute another example; they were written in the mid-18th century during her stay in Turkey, where she spent almost thirty years working as 'the doctor'[3] treating the members of Sultan Mustafa III's family. One can also mention here the memoirs written by the Polish physician Władysław Jabłonowski,[4] who after the January uprising of 1863, was forced to find asylum in the Ottoman Empire, where he spent almost forty years.

Another group of literary texts consists of works which mostly contain relations from travels and legations to Turkey. This group of works, scattered throughout various archives, museums and libraries, is very numerous. Many of them have been described in a scholarly manner and edited. Therefore, among others, the scholarly descriptions of the

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1 Potocki 1789.

2 Pilsztynowa 1957.

3 Pilsztynowa practiced as a doctor but she had no medical qualifications. She gained medical experience when assisting her first husband in a medical practice.

4 Jabłonowski 1967.

texts written by Wojciech Miaskowski,[5] Karol Boscamp Lasopolski,[6] Sefer Muratowicz,[7] Aleksander Piaseczyński,[8] and probably by Zbigniew Lubieniecki[9] were used for the purpose of this paper.

There exists also a very numerous group of literary works which concern exclusively the description of the Ottoman state, its structure, administration and authorities. As an example of a rather early Polish source that presents this subject matter one can name the work entitled *Pamiętniki Janczara czyli Kronika turecka…* [Memoirs of a Jannisary, or Turkish Chronicle…] written by Constantine of Ostravica (Pol.: Konstanty z Ostrowicy) in the years 1496–1501.[10] Among other works of this kind there are also:

- *Dwor Cesarza Tureckiego y Residencya iego w Konstantynopolu* [The Turkish Emperor's Court and his Residence in Constantinople] translated by Szymon Starowolski in 1646;
- Paul Rycaut's work *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* translated into Polish in 1678 with the title *Monarchia turecka…* [Turkish Monarchy...];[11]
- Franciszek Bohomolec's *Opisanie krotkie Panstwa Tureckiego* [A Short Description of the Turkish State] published in 1770;
- Józef Mikosza's *Obserwacye polityczne państwa Tureckiego…* [Political Remarks on the Turkish State][12] published in 1787.

Still another group of Polish literary texts relates to some military actions, predominantly the wars with Turks. Within this group one can enumerate the diaries written by Jakub Sobieski,[13] the description of the Battle of Khotyn written in the form of a poem by Wacław Potocki,[14] and last but not least—*Opisánie krotkie zdobyćia Galery* (…) *zá správą* (…) *Marka Jakymowskiego* (…) [A Short Description of the Conquest of a Galley (…) by Marek Jakimowski (…)][15] published in Krakow in 1628.

The works presented above constitute only an inconsiderable part of texts which made the subject of the unknown Empire, its religion and culture more familiar to the Polish readers living at that time. These works not only made the mentioned subjects more familiar with this topic but also, since the authours inserted some Turkish words to name the discussed things, people or phenomena, allowed their readers to get acquainted with some Turkish vocabulary. This vocabulary was predominantly transcribed in the Latin

5 Miaskowski 1985.

6 Srzednicki 2004.

7 Muratowicz 1980.

8 Piaseczyński 1980.

9 Lubieniecki 1980.

10 Konstanty z Ostrowicy 1912.

11 Lubieniecki 1980.

12 Mikosza 1787.

13 Sobieski 1854.

14 Potocki 1924.

15 Jakimowski 1628.

alphabet. Although one can claim that at first glance the Turkish vocabulary present in Polish texts is not very extensive, nevertheless, some Turkish words are already recognizable and strongly assimilated to Polish and also to some other European languages. Such words as *aga, pasha/basha, bey/beg, dragoman*, *serai* or others can be found to this day in Polish and some other European languages. However, for the purpose of the present paper, the authour will focus only on the chosen Turkish vocabulary existing in Old Polish works, or to be exact, the vocabulary denoting professions, posts and functions existing in the Ottoman Empire. A superficial analysis of the material excerpted only from the above-mentioned sources of Old Polish works leads to the conclusion that the descriptions comprising words that denote professions and posts in the Ottoman state refer to three thematic groups:

- Professions and offices related to religion;
- Professions and posts related to military service;
- Other professions and posts.

The first two groups represent quite broad onomastic categories which require a separate discussion that would take into account, respectively, the Muslim religion and the history of the Ottoman military, its traditions and practices.

Therefore, the focus of this paper is solely on the third group. Within this group one can introduce a division into two subgroups:

- Professions and posts referring to all social groups;
- Professions and posts referring only to the Sultan's court (with this term being given a very broad meaning).

While discussing the names of professions from the first subgroup, one can ascertain that in the analyzed sources names of common professions referring to all social groups are represented rather inconspicuously and only some of the mentioned sources pay attention to the subject of professions in the Ottoman society. Mostly, the names of professions and posts were noted down by the authours of travel books and diaries, namely by those who during their journeys, or because of their professional duties, had the chance to meet people practicing some professions. Therefore, in *Pamiętniki Janczara*, in the memoirs by Pilsztynowa or by Jabłonowski one can find such words as:

- *bakał* 'co ogórki i harbuzy przedaje' [one who sells cucumbers and watermelons] (SP 121) < Ott. *bakkal* 'greengrocer';
- *czuhadar* 'sługa' [servant] (SP 219) < Ott. *çuhadar* 'lackey, footman';
- *dżarach baszy* 'pierwszy felczer' [a chief surgeon] (WJ 230) < Ott. *cerrah başı* 'the chief surgeon of the Imperial Court';
- *Janasma*[16] 'służebny sługa' [servant] (PJ 295) < Ott. *yanaşma* 'casual labourer';
- *kadeje* 'sędziowie' [judge] (PJ 195) < Ott. *kadı* 'judge of the Islamic canon law';
- *kafedzi* 'człowiek przyrządzajacy i sprzedający kawę' [the person who sells and prepares coffee] (SP 41) < Ott. *kahveci* 'keeper of a coffee shop';

[16] The spelling with the capital letter is quoted after the authour of the source.

- *kaftan bazy* 'człowiek szyjący kaftany' [a person who produces caftans, that is an outer gown with long sleeves] (SP 46) < Ott. *kaftan başı* 'head keeper of the wardrobe';
- *katerdży* 'poganiacz wołów' [herdsman] (WJ 284) < Ott. *katırcı* 'muleteer';
- *Meseledzi* (PJ 309) < Ott. *meş'aleci* < *meş'ale* 'torch, lantern';
- *odadży* 'służący' [servant] (WJ 218) <Ott. *odacı* 'person employed to clean and watch the rooms of an office or a public establishment';
- *sarykczy baszy* 'pokojowy odpowiedzialny za ubranie swego pana' [a person who takes care of his master's clothing] (SP 42) < Ott. *sarıkçı* 'servant who takes care of his master's turban'.

Regarding the authours of the reports from legations or campaigns, one can state that they rarely enriched their descriptions with Turkish words denoting ordinary professions or functions. However, if any words denoting the professions were quoted, they were predominantly the names of administrative or military functions. The authours inserted these words in texts coincidentally when describing the main subject. Thus, in such texts one can find the following words:

- *Baszowie sendziakowie* 'wielcy panowie, którzy wszytkim rozkazują i insze zameczki opatrują' [aristocrats who command everybody] (PJ 208) < Ott. *sancak beyi* 'governor of a *sancak*';
- *Beglerbeg* (WM 214) < Ott. *beylerbeyi* 'governor-general';
- *Czorbadzi* (PJ 328) < Ott. çorbacı '1. maker or seller of soup. 2. colonel of the Janissaries';
- *kadi* (WM 216) < Ott. *kadı* 'judge of Islamic canon law';
- *Kadieleskieri* 'Hetmani kadejow, albo sędziow' [military judge] (PJ 195) < Ott. *kadilasker* 'chief military judge';
- *Kazylar* (PJ 283) < Ott. 'pl. of *kadı* 'judge';
- *Nisandzi basza* 'jakoby u nas Kanclerz' [as our chancellor] (PJ 289) < Ott. *nişancı* 'title of the officer whose duty was to inscribe the Sultan's imperial monogram';
- *Nuz Giungiulli* 'to jest wolontaryuszow' [volunteers] (PJ 309) < Ott. *gönüllü* 'volunteer';
- *tefterdar* (WM 220) < Ott. *defterdar* 'minister of finance';
- *Saha-Baszy* 'co pić daje wody czasem przyprawnej' [who gives water] (PJ 337) < Ott. *saka* 'water carrier';
- *solak* (WM 219) < Ott. *solak* 'guardsman in attendance on the Sultan in processions';
- *Suluchtarbasza* (PJ 131) < Ott. *silâhdar* 'the regular Ottoman guards of the Janissary period'.

In Old Polish texts, however, the richest and the most varied is, beyond dispute, the group of Turkish expressions which denote professions related to the Ottoman state, the Sultan's court or the structure of its administration. Therefore, the literary sources which contain such vocabulary, *ex definitio*ne, must have been focused on very detailed descriptions of the Turkish state. Constantine of Ostravica, in his *Pamiętniki Janczara…*, mentions some functions and professions practiced on the Sultan's court, e.g.:

- *czesnegirler* 'a ci co jedło noszą' [those who bring food] (PJ 133) < Ott. *çaşnigir* 'taster to a prince';
- *dziebedzibasz* 'Płatnerzow, ktorzy zbroje czyścią (…); ich mistrza zowią dziebedzibasz' [armourers who clean armour] (PJ 134) < Ott. *cebeci* 'armorer attached to a special military corps';

– *Imbreor baszowie* 'Koniuszowie' [Master of the Horse] (PJ 195) < Ott. *imrahor mirahor* 'Master of the Horse'.

In the Polish translation of Rycaut's *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* one can also find numerous Turkish words related to the functions performed at the imperial court. The authour enumerates twelve out of the forty important functions performed in the *serai* and simultaneously gives their characteristics. These are:

– *Silichtar aga*[17] 'niby miecznik koronny co szablę cesarską nosi' [a sort of sword-bearer, who bears the imperial sword] (MT 37) < Ott. *Silâhdar Aga* 'the sword bearer of the Sultan';
– *Ciuhadar aga* 'co sukniami zawiaduje' [someone who takes care of dresses] (MT 37) < Ott. çuhadar 'lackey, footman';
– *Mirachor aga* 'koniuszy co strzemię trzyma, gdy cesarz na koń wsiada' [Master of the Horse who holds the stirrup when the Sultan mounts a horse] (MT 37) < Ott. *mirahor* 'Master of the Horse';
– *Ibriktar aga* 'co wodę tak do umywania jako y do picia ma w zawiadywaniu' [one who keeps water both for washing and for drinking] (MT 37) < Ott. *ibrikdar* 'official whose duty was to superintend the Sultan's ablutions';
– *Tulbentar aga* 'co cesarzowi zawoj kształtuje' [one who forms the turban of the Sultan] (MT 37) < Ott. *tülbent ağası* 'court officer of the wardrobe';
– *Haznadar aga* 'co skarbem zawiaduje, y chustami' [one who superintends the treasury] < Ott. *hazinedar ağa* 'treasurer of a large household';
– *Czesnegir baszy* 'stanowniczy' (MT 37) < Ott. *çaşnigir* 'taster to a prince';
– *Zagardzy baszy* 'naystarszy łowczy' [Master of the Royal Hunt] (MT 37) < Ott. *zağarcı başı* 'Imperial houndsman';
– *Turnakdzi baszy* 'co cesarzowi paznokcie obrzyna' [who gives manicure to the Sultan] (MT 37);
– *Berber baszy* 'co go goli, starszy cyrulik' [barber] (MT 37) < Ott. *berber* 'barber, hairdresser';
– *Muhasabedzi baszy* 'kuchmistrz' [head cook] (MT 37) < Ott. *muhasebeci* 'chief accountant';
– *Teskieredzi baszy* 'pisarz pokojowy' [writer] (MT 37) < Ott. *tezkereci* 'official charged with the duty of writing official memoranda';

Rycaut also mentions other functions and professions such as:

– *Dogandzi baszy* 'najstarszy sokolnik' [chief falconer] (MT 37) < Ott. *doğancıbaşı* 'chief falconer of the Sultan';
– *Hazoda baszy* 'podkomorzy' [chamberlain] (MT 37) < Ott. *has oda* 'the royal ward of the Sultan's palace';
– *Kapa agasi* 'starszy odźwierny' [doorkeeper] (MT 37) < Ott. *kapı ağası* 'chief white eunuch in the imperial palace';

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[17] The order of presentation of these functions corresponds to the order given by the authour.

– *Kurnadzi baszy* 'najstarszy łaziebnik' [bath attendant] (MT 37) < Ott. *kurna* 'basin of a bath or fountain'.

However, when reading Rycaut's description, the reader faces a difficult challenge, namely, to have some understanding of the administrative hierarchy at the Sultan's court and the subordination between the sultan's subjects. Although one can find plenty of information on professions and functions performed in the *serai* in *Monarchia turecka*, the method of presenting such information is rather chaotic.

A Polish Jesuit Franciszek Bohomolec in his work *Opisanie krotkie Panstwa Tureckiego*, written in a well-ordered manner almost one hundred years after Rycaut had attempted to present the structure of authorities and offices in the Turkish state, took up the following subject matter:
– the Ottoman law courts;
– imperial offices;
– some prominent functionaries in the Ottoman Empire;
– some offices in the *serai* intended for white and black eunuchs;
– mufti and other Moslem clergymen;
– *içoğlan*[18] and other grooms of the chamber in the *serai*;
– *acemioğlan*;[19]
– the Ottoman army, in general.

In each chapter the authour presents the names of particular posts and professions together with their explanations. In the passage below, as an example, a part from the chapter entitled: 'O urzędach saraju, które samym tylko eunuchom białym i czarnym służą'[20] [On some offices in the serai intended for white and black eunuchs only] is quoted. Here the authour introduces a division into two subgroups according to the performed functions:
– 'Eunuchowie biali należą do służby cesarza' [White eunuchs serve the emperor];
– *Kapa aga* 'eunuch biały, przełożony nad pokoiowemi cesarskimi i wszystkimi białymi' [The white eunuch, a superior of the imperial grooms of the chamber and other white servants] < Ott. *kapı ağası* 'chief white eunuch in the imperial palace';
– *Hazoda basza* 'podkomorzy y starszy dworzan cesarskich' [chamberlain and superior of the emperor's courtiers] < Ott. *has oda* 'the royal ward of the Sultan's palace';
– *Saraj kiasi* 'najstarszy pokojowy maiący w zawiadywaniu izby pokojowych, którzy z cesarzem jeżdżą. On im suknie sprawuje i wszelki porządek' [the head of grooms of the chamber] < Ott. *kâhya* 'steward, majordomo';
– *Chasnadar basza* 'mający dozor nad skarbem cesarskim prywatnym' [someone who takes care of private imperial treasury] < Ott. *hazinedar* 'treasurer';

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[18] The word *içoğlan* is written here according to contemporary Turkish spelling, whereas in the original spelling by Bohomolec it is written: *iczoglan*. The word itself means 'a page, a boy working inside the Sultan's palace'.

[19] In his work Bohomolec notes this word as: *adziamoglan*. This word denotes a boy who was selected and brought up to serve in the Janissaries.

[20] See: pp. 71–74.

- *Kilardzi basza* 'szafarz pokojowych mający dozor nad spiżarnią' [someone who takes care of the storeroom] < Ott. *kiler ağası* 'head butler';
- *Miereidzi* 'dozorca meczetu mający dwóch eunuchów pod sobą i innych 50 do podłych usług' [custodian of the mosque who has two white eunuchs and fifty other low servants].

The second subgroup comprises the black eunuchs:

- *Kiślir aga* 'jest najwyższym przełożonym lub ochmistrzem białych głów' [superior or chamberlain of the harem] < Ott. *kızlar ağası* 'chief black eunuch of the imperial harem';
- *Walide Agasi* 'starszy nad eunuchami cesarzowej'[superior for the empress's eunuchs];
- *Szahamler Agasi* 'marszałek dzieci cesarskich' [majordomo of the emperor's children];
- *Chasna Agasi* 'Podskarbi cesarzowej' [empress's treasurer] < Ott. *hazinedar* 'treasurer';
- *Kilar Agasi* 'przełożony nad jej apteką, cukrami i serbetami' [superior of the storeroom] < Ott. *kiler ağası* 'head butler';
- *Byiukoda Agasi* 'mający dozor nad izbą wielką białogłowską' [superior of the bigger chamber of the harem];
- *Kociukoda Agasi* 'mający dozor nad izbą mniejszą białogłowską' [superior of the smaller chamber of the harem];
- *Miereidzi Basza* 'przełożony nad meczetem cesarzowej, do którego białogłowy na modlitwę chodzą' [custodian of the empress's mosque for ladies].

The subject of professions and posts at the court of the Turkish sultan was also taken up by Józef Mikosza, who discusses the structure of authorities and functions performed in the *serai* in his *Obserwacye polityczne państwa Tureckiego…* and introduces a division into three subgroups, according to different criteria.

Thus, in his opinion, the first group of the Sultan's functionaries is comprised of white and black eunuchs; the second—of pages and grooms of the chamber. The third group consisted of representatives of a lower class including, among others, jesters and dwarfs. There is no need to quote the names of representatives of the professions named by Mikosza since all those names have already been mentioned.

In conclusion, several remarks may be made concerning the discussed subject.

First, it is beyond dispute that the subject matter of professions, functions, and posts practiced, performed or held in the Ottoman state, especially at the imperial court, was very intriguing for European authours, including Polish ones. This fact is unquestionably confirmed by the high number of Old Polish works concerning this subject matter, in which, beside detailed descriptions, the reader could also find a Turkish vocabulary as an illustration for the discussed subject. In what concerns the subject of the Turkish names of professions included in the texts, one can notice that very often the forms of the quoted Turkish words are misshapen, incorrect and wrongly spelt.[21] On the other hand, the explanations of their meaning given by the authours are, in the majority of cases, proper.

[21] Some names of functions in the Sultan's palace quoted by Bohomolec are probably wrongly spelt and therefore it is impossible to determine the proper forms of those words.

While examining some texts presented above one can get the impression that a very complex structure of functions and competences at the Ottoman imperial court was not very clear for the authours of those publications even if they knew this country quite well as a result of frequent sojourns or travels in the empire.

Last but not least, the final problem which should be taken up is the nature of those Turkish words denoting professions and posts. Some of them, naming ordinary professions such as: baker, doctor, etc., have a universal and long-lasting character. Consequently, they are not often mentioned in the presented works. They do, however, obviously still exist in the Turkish language. The situation of the Turkish words denoting professions and posts typical of the Ottoman period, and mostly of those related to the Sultan's court, is very different. Those words were ephemeras whose life was short. However, they can still be found in the historical sources or comprehensive dictionaries of the modern Turkish language under the label 'archaism'.

Finally, it must be admitted that the Turkish vocabulary denoting professions, functions and posts, included in the works of Old Polish literature, constitutes a very valuable source for further linguistic, historical and cultural studies.

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The Ottoman Mosques and Religious Customs as Represented in Selected Old Polish Texts from the 16th and 17th Centuries

Poland, pursuant to a papal dispensation, did not participate in the Crusades; therefore, the subject of Islam or wars fought with Muslims did not appear in Polish medieval writings. The dispensation was related to the fact that another threat existed, in view of which Poland was regarded as the outpost of Christianity, namely, that in the times of the Crusades, that is, in the 11th–13th centuries, there was still a threat of armed conflict with Poland's non-Christian neighbours, Old Prussian tribes, and also the threat of a Tatar invasion from the east.[1] Fighting the non-Christians, who according to old traditional beliefs were Old Prussians and Muslims (though not *in toto* as there were followers of Christian Nestorianism amongst them), in a way exempted Poland from the European 'adventure' and the dread of fighting the non-believers in the Near East.

The situation did not change until the 14th century, when the Ottoman Turks, arriving from Asian Anatolia, started gradually conquering new territories in the Balkans. The new geopolitical situation meant that a stance with regards to the new hosts of the Balkan territories had to be taken. The first Polish representatives to the Ottoman state were Jakub Skarbek from Góra (d. 1438) and Grzegorz the Armenian, who started performing their functions in 1414. This date is regarded as the beginning of official Polish-Turkish relations.[2] In 1440, the son of Ladislaus II Jagiełło, the Polish king Ladislaus III (r. 1434–1444), later referred to as Ladislaus of Varna (Pol.: Władysław III Warneńczyk) in historiography, took the Hungarian throne (as I. Ulászló, r. 1440–1444). The new king, having been given a favour from the side of the Habsburg faction, made preparations for war with the Turks then commenced with the campaign in 1443. However, the costs incurred and impoverishment of the treasury caused criticism, especially in Poland. In 1444, a 10-year truce was entered into in Szeged. However, an immediate breach of the pact by the king led to

[1] Nosowski 1974, vol. 1, p. 15.

[2] Kołodziejczyk 2000, pp. 99–101.

the recommencement of warfare. The king as well as the papal *legatus* died in the battle of Varna.

Between the years 1485 and 1503, there was another conflict, suspended by a few truces, between the Polish Crown and the Ottoman Empire. Its culmination was the failed expedition of King John I Albert (Pol.: Jan Olbracht, r. 1492–1501) to Moldavia in 1497. In the 16th century, the Ottoman front quietened, as a result of other growing threats from Muscovy and the Teutonic Order of Prussia. Poland experienced a number of Tatar conquests on its south-eastern frontiers, instigated by the Ottomans. The peace treaty with the Ottoman Empire was signed in 1533. The next few decades of peace were a time of taking interest in the southern neighbour, trade exchange and inspiration with regards to the material culture, e.g., clothing, fabrics and weapons. However, there were already growing problems, the consequences of which would come to light with greater strength in a few decades. The Union of Lublin, signed in 1569, which formed the basis of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth as a single state, greatly enhanced the significance of the country. In its south-eastern frontiers, a community of Cossacks was being formed, attacking the territories of the Crimean Khanate. The Crown also tried to gain control over the Moldavian throne, which was within the Ottomans' sphere of influence. The actions of the Lisowczycy formation in Transylvania urged the Ottomans to lend assistance to its Transylvanian tributary, which was the direct reason for starting the war in 1620.

Thus, in the 15th century, the Kingdom of Poland maintained lively relations with the mighty Near-Eastern power – the Ottoman Empire. These relations were expressed in the correspondence maintained, agreements signed, legations sent from the royal office as well as from individual magnates' manors. Besides the official documentation, the issues regarding the 'Turks' became more topical. This is illustrated by a wide range of texts – descriptive, political, religious, etc. – that raised interest or fear among the readership.[3]

What constituted the main topic in the descriptions of the 'Turks', eliciting the expression of benevolent interest as well as negative, condemning and ridiculing, emphasizing the Turks' distinctness from the European nations, was their religion – Islam. Since the times of the Crusades, there existed an asserted myth of the hostile Muslims, whose rule in the Near East posed a threat to the so-called holy sites where Christianity was born. In the texts described as the Polish *Turcica* from the 16th and beginning of the 17th centuries, thus in writings with various intentions, addressees and styles (but thematically concerning the Ottoman Empire), the issue of Islam appeared and was discussed on many levels.[4] Considerable attention was paid to theological or sociological issues – where the fact of practising Islam itself qualified Muslims as pagan barbarians. Amongst many issues concerning Islam, there also appeared descriptions of mosques – the places of worship for Muslims. The aim of this text is to look at a few descriptions of Ottoman mosques that appeared in Old Polish writings in the second half of the 16th century and the first half of the 17th century.

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[3] Cynarski 1978, p. 55.

[4] For more on Polish *Turcica* literature, see: Ciccarini 1991, Tafiłowski 2013.

The choice of the analysed sources, apart from the chronological criterion and the general topic, i.e., the descriptions of the Ottoman Empire, is partially coincidental and partially planned. Only texts written in Polish were subject to the analysis. Many of the earlier, 16th century texts by Polish authors had been written in Latin. An important observation is the fact that none of the texts was fully dedicated to the deliberations over Islam, especially the mosques. The aim was also to choose works presenting the lifestyles of contemporary Ottomans. The following texts were analysed: *The League with an Obstacle of the Envoy Circles…* written by a person referred to as Daminaeus Krzysztof (1596)[5]; *The Turkish History and the Cossack Clashes with the Tatars…* by Michał Paszkowski (1615)[6]; *The Court and Residence of the Turkish Emperor in Constantinople…* by Szymon Starowolski (1646)[7]; *The Distinguished Embassy of Krzysztof Zbaraski from Sigismund III to Sultan Mustafa* by Samuel Twardowski (1639)[8] and, in order to compare the descriptions of other mosques, the Tatar ones in this case, *The Tatar Alfurkan…* by Piotr Czyżewski from 1617.[9]

The oldest text (Ill. 1), *The League with an Obstacle of the Envoy Circles…* had a political-propagandist undertone, and its message was to create in readers the feeling of the need to build a uniform, European front of Catholic states against the Turkish Muslims. In this text, a mosque is referred to as 'kościół' (church) or 'mescid' (Turkish word for 'mosque'). The only identified mosque from the text is 'the church of some saint Jopp [*sic!*]'[10] in Istanbul, which was visited by the Sultan during festivities and on other special occasions. It is, of course, the Eyüp Sultan Mosque in the district of Eyüp, in Istanbul. The author is not familiar with the details regarding this building, one of the more important sacral objects not only in the Ottomans' Istanbul but also in the whole Islamic world. The author's commentary is as follows: 'Jopp, whose grave is greatly respected by the Turks, saying that the saint was a Muslim or Turkish. There, for three days, the emperor was carrying out prayers five times a day with his Bashas'.[11]

In the text, the Dervishes are also mentioned: 'Their habit is such that they have only one order, that they are *solitari* [alone], not interacting with people anywhere: in the suburbs, in the fields, gardens, under any poor roof, by the road, by a grave of some saint or

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5 Daminaeus 1596.

6 Paszkowski 1615.

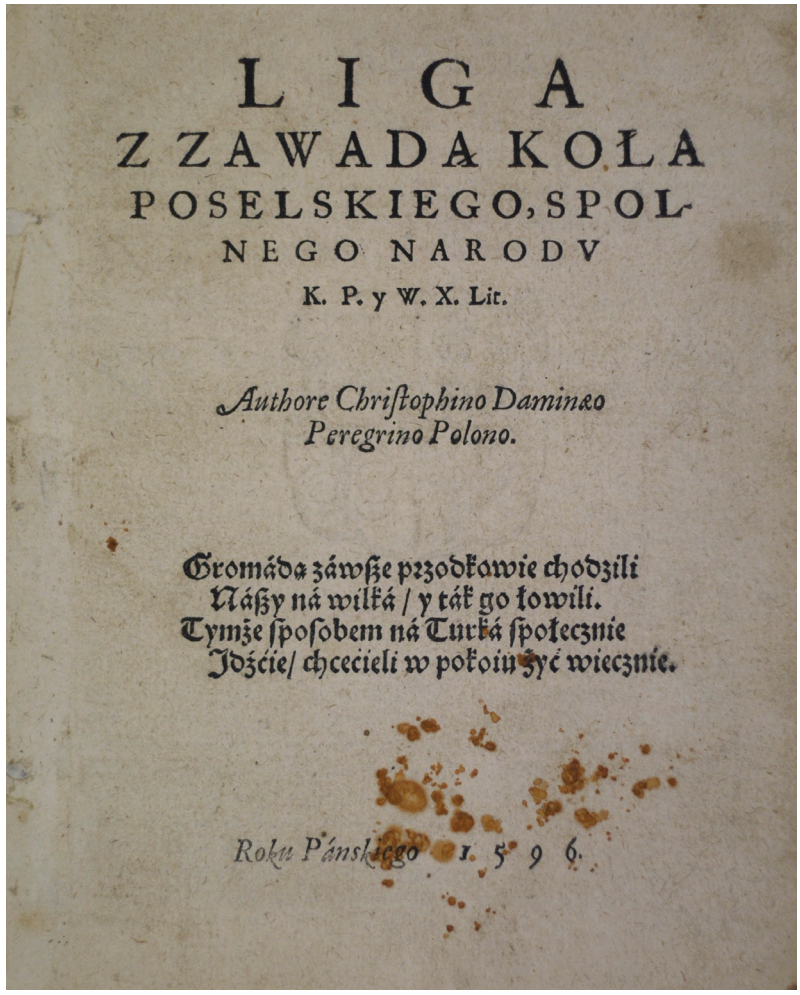
7 Starowolski 1646.

8 Twardowski 2000. The original title: *Przeważna legacya Jaśnie Oświeconego Książęcia Krysztopha Zbaraskiego, koniuszego koronnego, krzemienieckiego, soleckiego, wiślickiego, rubiesowskiego etc., starosty od naiaśnieyszego Zygmunta III króla polskiego y szwedzkiego do naypotężnieyszego soltana cesarza tureckiego Mustafy w roku 1621, na pięć rozdzielona punktow, z dotknieniem krótko przez ucieszne digresiye stanu pod ten czas rządow, ceremoniey y zwyczayow pogańskich przez Samuela z Skrzypney Twardowskiego w Krakowie, w drukarnie Franciszka Cezarego roku Pańskiego 1639.*

9 Czyżewski 1617. All translations made by Julia A. Krajcarz.

10 Daminaues 1596, p. 7. The original spelling retained.

11 *Ibidem*, p. 7.


LIGA
ZZAWADA KOLA
POSELSKIEGO, SPOL-
NEGO NARODV
K. P. y W. X. Lit.

Authore Chriſtophino Daminæo
Peregrino Polono.

Gromáda záwße przodkowie chodzili
Náßy ná wilká / y ták go łowili.
Tymże ſpoſobem ná Turká ſpołecznie
Idźćie/ chcecieli w pokoiu żyć wiecznie.

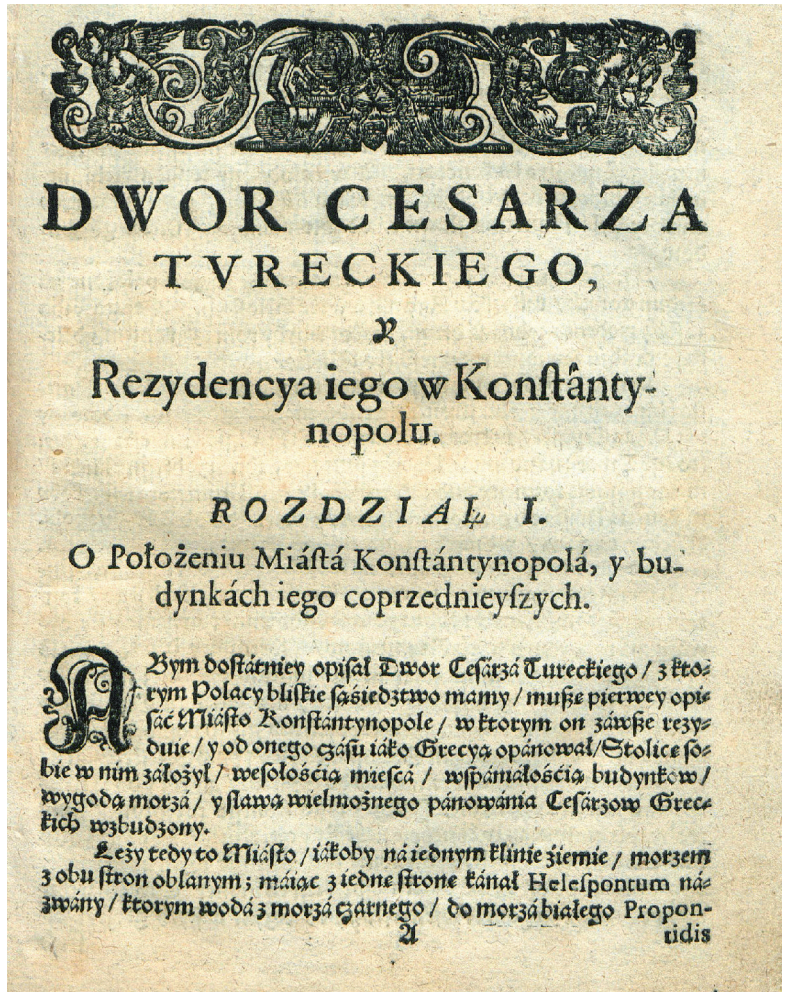
Roku Pánskiego 1. 5. 9 6.

Ill. 1. Title page of *The League with an Obstacle of the Envoy Circles* ☙

Christian'.[12] The description of their habits is rather devoid of kindness, in fact, mockery speaks from it. The Dervishes are treated as second-rate Muslims as, whilst entering the mosque, they do not even carry out the ritual cleansing: 'entering the church or rather *Mescid*, they do not clean faces, hands or other dirty places (…), sitting in the Turkish city, crying *Allah Hu Allah Hu*, which is understood as God the Spirit exists: frequently repeating, they cry *com velimenti spiritu* [with excitement] for such a long time'.[13]

12 *Ibidem*, p. 9.

13 *Ibidem*, pp. 10–11.



DWOR CESARZA
TVRECKIEGO,
Y
Rezydencya iego w Konſtántynopolu.

ROZDZIAŁ I.

O Położeniu Miáſtá Konſtántynopolá, y budynkách iego coprzednieyſzych.

Abym doſtátniey opiſał Dwor Ceſárzá Tureckiego / z ktorym Polacy bliſkie ſąśiedztwo mamy / muſze pierwey opiſáć Miáſto Konſtántynopole / w ktorym on záwſze rezyduie / y od onego czásu iáko Grecya opánował / Stolice ſobie w nim założył / weſołością mieſcá / wſpánáłością budynkow / wygodą morzá / y ſławą wielmożnego pánowánia Ceſárzow Greckich wzbudzony.

Leży tedy to Miáſto / iákoby ná iednym klinie ziemie / morzem z obu ſtron oblanym; máiąc z iedne ſtrone kánał Heleſpontum názwány / ktorym wodą z morzá czarnego / do morzá białego Propon-

A tidis

Ill. 2. Szymon Starowolski's first page of *The Court and Residence of the Turkish Emperor in Constantinople…* (1646) ☙

The treatise *The Court and Residence of the Turkish Emperor in Constantinople…* by Szymon Starowolski[14] (1646) is a geographical and historical description of and commentary on daily life at the Sultan's court in the first half of the 17th century (Ill. 2). Although this text is mainly of an educational character, presenting the information in a detailed

[14] **Szymon Starowolski (Lat.: Simon Starovolscius, 1588–1656), a Polish-Lithuanian historian and prolific writer.** As chancellor of hetman Jan Karol Chodkiewicz, he was witness to the battle of Chocim in 1621 between the Polish and Turkish armies.

and factual manner, it is not free from polemics that betray the author's (or the editor's) negative attitude towards Islam. Those elements, however, are secondary to the factual descriptions. In the text, the following words are used to describe a mosque: 'moschea' (disclosing the Italian inspirations during the text's editing, and as a matter of fact, mentioned by the author/editor in the introduction) as well as 'bożnica' (literally 'synagogue') and 'kościół' (literally 'church').

The author notes that a Muslim should go to a mosque at least two times a year: 'during two festivities, every Muhammad follower should go to a Moschea or their church for a prayer: praying to Saint Sophia'.[15] According to the author, some mosques have special prerogatives as places of 'indulgences': 'Gedicula – there is a bath inside and the imperial garden and small gardens for soldiers where they plant vegetables and the church or Moschea privileged with indulgences for Fridays by the emperor, others of their synagogues do not have such a prerogative'.[16] Such a description suggests that the author believes the mosque to be a precise equivalent of a Christian church and imagines that Roman Catholic customs, e.g., indulgences, also occur in Islam.

The author, describing the Ottoman Sultan's court, pays a lot of attention to Istanbul itself. He states that 'there are two thousand Turkish synagogues in Constantinople'.[17] And, according to the author, some of them have special distinctions from the Sultan, which means that prayer inside of these has the power of 'indulgences'. What is more, the next eight hundred are distinguished by 'old-fashioned respectability'.[18]

More attention was paid to those five mosques that were 'privileged and consecrated by the emperor himself'.[19] The first of them is Hagia Sophia – *Ayasofya* – which is described at length: 'Sultans are buried there (…) all the others (…) pricey architecture easily dominating (…) dome (…) much taller than the Dome of Saint Peter in Rome (…) mosaics (…) with beautiful floral designs. But the floor (…) is of beautiful craftsmanship (…) the image of the Holy Virgin Mother of God mosaics (…) which are hidden by the Turks for an unknown reason (…) many shops by the church (…) it is all intact, the Turks have not changed a thing (…) in those underground chapels there are also tunnels going far under the city (…) The Pagans ordered the buildings to be demolished to the ground apart from the old Convent where the Muhammad monks live'.[20] The information emerged that old Byzantine mosaics were preserved and remained untouched by the Turks, who had turned the old Christian temple into a mosque. The next privileged mosque was 'Sultan Baiazet' and 'Sultan Mehemet'; however, those buildings were not described separately. The author focused on Sultan Süleyman's mosque, the famous *Süleymaniye*, noticing that the beauty of this building surpasses the beauty of Saint Sophia's (Hagia Sophia) mosque: 'more beautiful

15 Starowolski 1646, p. 3.

16 *Ibidem*, p. 4.

17 *Ibidem*, p. 4.

18 *Ibidem*, p. 4.

19 *Ibidem*, p. 4.

20 *Ibidem*, p. 5.

on the outside than the church of Saint Sophia (…) it has inside beautiful marble pillars, exquisite works with different paints and a hospital nearby, *Collegium* for students, baths and other buildings erected for priests (…) marbles from Alexandria, Syria and Mesopotamia (…) four towers in every corner of the church (…) of white marble, from which, according to their custom, priests call simple people at certain times for prayer as there must be no bells according to the Muhammad order. And when they celebrate their festivities, they hang ropes between those towers and hang lit lamps on them, making them into the sun, stars, horses and other shapely things (…) they look beautiful'.[21] The fifth privileged mosque is the 'Sultan Selim' (*Yavuz Selim Camii*); however, here there is only a tale given that mentions that the erection of this building was an act of propitiation to Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520). However, the author lacked the proper knowledge as Selim's mosque was founded by his son Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520–1566) with the intention to commemorate his father. The next listed mosque is the 'Muradi' mosque, with a reference that 'in this place the Church Cathedral of the Constantinople Patriarch was located'.[22] It refers to the former Byzantine church of Theotokos Pammakaristos, which served as the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople between 1456 and 1587. The building was turned into a mosque, *Fethiye Camii* (Conquest Mosque), by Sultan Murat III (r. 1574–1595) following a successful campaign in the Caucasus. The name of one more mosque is also mentioned: 'Sultan Amurat – of similar shape and size to Süleyman's Moschea, it has many buildings around it but is not as beautiful as Süleyman's'.[23] At this point, the author most likely uses an incorrect name. As regards the similarity of the decorations and size to Süleyman's mosque, it can be assumed that he may have meant the Blue Mosque or the Shehzade Mosque, though the Blue Mosque (*Sultan Ahmet Camii*) was founded by Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617) and the Shehzade Mosque complex (*Şehzade Camii*) commissioned by Sultan Süleyman in honour of his deceased son, Şehzade Mehmed (d. 1543). It is also possible that he meant the Eyüp Sultan Mosque, but the one existing in the form from the first half of the 17th century, when the aforementioned description was created, which was founded by Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444–1446, and 1451–1481).

Then the text is dedicated to the descriptions of walls, market square gates and shop stalls in Istanbul. The author mentions that 'the second [is the gate] at the outskirts of the city where they say that there is the body or church of Saint Jop [*sic*!]'.[24] It can be supposed that an erroneous identification of Eyüp occurred here, a companion of the Prophet Muhammad, with the biblical Job. 'Then, by the gate Aykapisi (…) there was one church there with the power of God's saints, which church is now Moschea'.[25] This refers to the mosque known as *Gül Camii* (The Mosque of the Rose), which, before the Ottoman conquest of the city, probably had been the church of Saint Theodosia.

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21 *Ibidem*, p. 8.

22 *Ibidem*, p. 8.

23 *Ibidem*, p. 8.

24 *Ibidem*, p. 10.

25 *Ibidem*, p. 10.

With regard to the market squares, the author notices that 'there are many market squares in the city of Constantinople, noteworthy in front of greater Moscheas (…) the second market square is in front of the Moschea of Sultan Beyazid (*Beyazıt Camii*), where all the jumpers, jugglers perform tricks… whoever can show something. The third market square is grander than the Moschea of Sultan Süleyman'.[26]

The author does not fail to notice that there were whole complexes of buildings serving various functions around the Ottoman mosques: 'by which there are hospitals and tables and houses for their Muslim priests and there are 80 individual hospitals, grand and rich with all the provisions. Not such as those which are by the Moscheas, the buildings of which are more grand and have more revenue and are governed better than others (…) there are also 120 colleges where students called sopha live, where every one of them has his own room, 2 benches, a blanket, 2 pairs of clothing per year'.[27]

Also, in a different context, the author of the text tries to explain the realities of the Muslim world using similar phenomena known to him from the Christian realities, on occasion of describing the cult of the venerated, deceased Muslims. The deceased Dervishes or persons surrounded by the aura of sainthood were, according to the author, buried in *chapels* honouring them: 'and when one of their preachers dies, they build a chapel for him beside a synagogue, making the door from the Moschea and closing it with metal bars to prevent anyone from entering, as they regard him as saint and revere his grave (…) when one of them dies they bury him separately in a Moschea and regard him as a saint'.[28] He also believes that, similar to Christians, the Muslims adhere to the equivalent of the Decalogue and that commandment 'ninth [is] about respecting the synagogues'.[29]

The author also notices that small mosques are often situated within bigger complexes of buildings of industrial-craftsmanship character, as was the case in Istanbul's location referred to as *Saraçhane*, where the guild of saddlers worked: 'this fortified court in the middle of the moat has a Moschea and a fountain of healthy water'.[30] Similarly, small mosques were situated within the palace grounds belonging to the Sultan: 'There in Sarai, where the Sultan lives, are two synagogues or Moscheas, one surrounded by the chambers where the men live and the second by those where the women live. And since they shall not have bells, they have various clocks on those synagogues which show the time day and night, and when one of them breaks down, the chamber attendants fix them because they have learnt that'.[31]

The author also gives the information regarding the ritual of mosque prayer, highlighting the fact that those entering the mosque have to carry out ablution first. He thinks that mosques are only erected in places where there is constant access to water, 'so such a sermon is necessary for them as they do not build synagogues where they would have no

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[26] *Ibidem*, p. 11.

[27] *Ibidem*, pp. 16–17.

[28] *Ibidem*, p. 18.

[29] *Ibidem*, p. 57.

[30] *Ibidem*, p. 18.

[31] *Ibidem*, p. 30.

water and there should always be a fountain in front of the Moschea'.[32] Following the ablution, a Muslim must remember 'that when entering the synagogue, he must leave the shoes in front of the doors (…) with the front on the ground towards the altar (…) bowing his head to the ground'.[33] The author notices, 'moreover, no beast or dog can be allowed to enter the Moschea'.[34] It is also noticeable that the Muslims show great respect to their place of prayer: 'despite no celebrations being carried out in the Moschea, they do not dare to speak to each other or laugh (…) with thousands of them, none of them would clear his throat or spit (…) everybody should give an offering to the poor sitting by the Moschea before they go home'.[35] There are also certain rules on who can enter the mosque: 'The Turkish women are never in the Moschea, they pray at home. No Christian, Jew and man of any other religion can enter their Moschea, either (…) if somebody was to enter (…) without a permission they would burn him unless he becomes a Muslim immediately'.[36]

He described the mosque's appearance in the following way: 'Synagogues or Moscheas are all whitewashed inside and have no images, but the Immam or priest stands up facing south when calling for prayer. There is a round vault; over it shaped chapels are built into the wall for the memory of that chapel in Mecca where Muhammad lies. On the left hand side of that chapel, there is a high pulpit, onto which the Immam walks on the stairs when he reads the Alkoran to them (…) and in the corner there is a place one stair above where the Cantors stand who reply to the Immam's prayers with their voices'.[37]

The author of the text is slightly surprised that it is a Turkish custom to feed stray animals: 'oddly in the market square by the Moschea of Sultan Beyazid can always find many people who bake on coal lungs of various animals on wooden spits, where the Turks leaving the ceremony grab those half-baked lungs and give them to eat to those in the market square, large numbers of whom always congregate. In such a way they feed dogs, too (…) regarding this as an act of compassion and great alms'.[38]

The Distinguished Embassy of Krzysztof Zbaraski… of 1639 by Samuel Twardowski draws a picture of the Ottoman state in the first half of 17th century and also describes the wide political background of the legation of Krzysztof Zbaraski to Istanbul in 1621 (Ill. 3). It is a poetic text in which the author displays a clearly negative attitude towards the Sultan, the Turks and their customs. Mosques are already mentioned in the first verses of the text, in the description of the legation's arrival to the Ottoman capital: 'Istanbul – to see the roofs and towers with the imperial mosque'.[39] After arriving in the city, the travellers can see further various buildings, including mosques:

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32 *Ibidem*, p. 58.

33 *Ibidem*, p. 58.

34 *Ibidem*, p. 59.

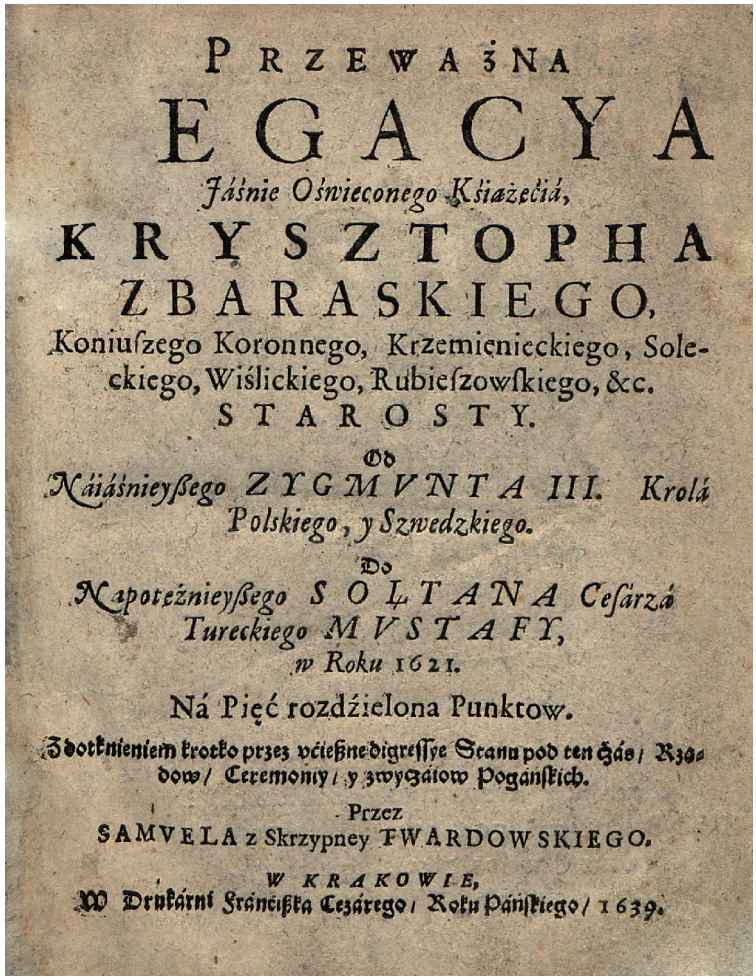
35 *Ibidem*, pp. 59–60.

36 *Ibidem*, p. 60.

37 *Ibidem*, p. 60.

38 *Ibidem*, p. 73.

39 Twardowski 1639, p. 55.


PRZEWAŻNA
EGACYA
Jáśnie Oświeconego Kśiążęcia,
KRYSZTOPHA
ZBARASKIEGO,
Koniuszego Koronnego, Krzemienieckiego, Soleckiego, Wiślickiego, Rubieszowskiego, &c.
STAROSTY.
Od
Náiáśnieyßego ZYGMVNTA III. Krolá Polskiego, y Szwedzkiego.
Do
Nápotężnieyßego SOLTANA Cesárzá Tureckiego MVSTAFY,
w Roku 1621.
Ná Pięć rozdźielona Punktow.
Zdotknieniem krotko przez vćießne digressye Stanu pod ten czás/ Rządow/ Ceremonij/ y zwyczáiow Pogánskich.
Przez
SAMVELA z Skrzypney TWARDOWSKIEGO.
W KRAKOWIE,
W Drukárni Fráncißka Cezárego/ Roku Pánskiego/ 1639.

Ill. 3. Title page of *The Distinguished Embassy of Krzysztof Zbaraski from Sigismund III to Sultan Mustafa…* by Samuel Twardowski (1639)

'Süleyman's church where his Cathedral is (…) father's Mosque (…)
Ahmed has just built a fine mosque
covering it with gold plates
he erected it and the towers made of porphyry covered with gold
which are guarded by six alabaster obelisks
(…) one hundred lamps inside'.[40]

40 *Ibidem*, p. 32, 56.

Describing the city's famous mosques, the author explains the circumstances in which they were founded:

'there is an ancient law in the Ottoman house
that no one is allowed to build a mosque
in order to take the provision so that the annual
profits from it go towards the priests' rent and annates'.[41]

And here, once again, the author expresses his surprise as to a special attention the Turks give to animals. Organising this care is one of the elements of the mosque social assistance programme:

'So the hospital for the ill
(…) and strange funds
for dogs, birds and cats for the deceased souls
they give cats alms like we give to the poor'.[42]

The writer's attention focused also on the fact that many former churches in Constantinople had been turned into mosques under the Ottoman rule:

'or all of their [churches]
were turned into vile stables and ugly mosques'.[43]

The Turkish and the Cossack clashes with the Tatars… published in 1615, written by Marcin Paszkowski, is a propagandist treatise with clear anti-Turkish, anti-Islam and anti-Tatar overtones (Ill. 4). It depicts the clashes between the Cossacks and the Tatars and describes the wars fought by the Poles with the Ottomans. The author does not omit the cruelties inflicted by the enemy – political and at the same time religious ones. In the text, there are a few direct references to Turkish mosques, but not those in Istanbul. There is a remark that in Jerusalem, on Mount Zion, there is a Turkish mosque and the information that the Turks' presence makes it impossible or at least more difficult to visit the holy sites, important for Christians in the Holy Land. There is also some information regarding Muslim rituals when entering the mosque and behaviour during the prayer time:

'They enter the Mosque: others also have the footwear
Not to make the church square dirty.
There, the Priest who took vows would walk down from the tower
And he shall pray with them and they shall pray
To confess their sins five times
In the morning, at midday, in the evening, at dusk and dawn.
Women do not mingle with the men
They conduct their prayers in separate places

41 *Ibidem*, p. 56.

42 *Ibidem*, p. 56.

43 *Ibidem*, p. 58.


DZIEIE
TVRECKIE,
y vtárczki Kozàckie z Tàtary.
Tudźież też /
O NARODZIE, OBRZĘDZIECH
NABOZENSTWIE GOSPODARSTWIE
Y RYCERSTWIE &c. TYCH POGAN,
ku wiàdomości ludziom roznego ſtanu
pozyteczne.
Przydány ieſt do tego/
Dictionarz iezyká Tureckiego/y Diſputátiá o
wierze Chrześciańſkiey/ y Zabobonach Byſurmańſkich &c.
Przez
MARCINA PASZKOWSKIEGO.
Ná czworo Xiąg rozdźielone opiſáne y wydáne.
Cum GrStia & Priuilegio S: R. M.
W KRAKOWIE,
W Drukárniey Mikołáiá Lobá, Roku P. 1615.

Ill. 4. Marcin Paszkowski's title page of *The Turkish History and the Cossack clashes with the Tatars…* (1615)

Like with the Jews, crying out loud.
They shake in all directions /leaning their bodies.
They do not stay in church long on ordinary days
But they pray for three hours on the Holy day'.[44]

In the second-to-last chapter of the treatise, the 13th, the author included a Polish--Turkish dictionary. The Ottoman words are written down phonetically and contain many errors, including semantic ones. The application of the following distinction is interesting:

'Church Mosque.
Synagogue Mosche'.[45]

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44 Paszkowski 1615, p. 330.

45 *Ibidem*, p. 330.

In the end, it is worth noticing the descriptions of the Tatar mosques presented by Piotr Czyżewski in his text *The Tatar Alfurkan…* of 1617. It is a squib, full of personal animosity towards the Tatars, who had killed his father. The Tatars are depicted here as the national and religious enemies of the Poles. In his text, Czyżewski frequently mentions 'pagan synagogues' (as he calls the Tatar mosques) which are 'wooden and slapdash'[46] and erected for 'the service of devil (…) satanic'.[47]

Thus, the architectural and decorative differences between modest Tatar mosques and representational Ottoman mosques, particularly in Istanbul, were observed. However, even if the Ottoman buildings impressed the Polish authors, there were no positive comments regarding those buildings where 'satanic' ritual was practiced. In the texts created over the period of fifty years, from the end of the 16th century until the mid-17th century, mosques are referred to by various words: 'kościół' (church), 'bożnica' (synagogue), 'mieczyt', 'meczyt', 'moschea', 'mescid' (mosque). The Istanbul mosques founded by the Sultans were given the most attention. It was noted that those buildings were surrounded by public-use building complexes, namely hospitals, alms-houses, schools, and boarding houses. The fact that there were animals living in close proximity to the mosques and feeding them was treated by the Muslims as a good deed, was also noticed by the Polish writers. Almost every one of the quoted authors gave a detailed description of the ablution ritual, which was in effect before entering the mosque for prayers. The absence of women visiting the mosques was noticed as well as the prohibition of entrance for people practicing other religions. The absence of bells calling for prayers was noted as well, which were substituted by the muezzin's calls. Attempts were made to explain many incomprehensible customs by similar phenomena in the Roman Catholic observances. The Dervishes and their customs were regarded with pronounced contempt. Some of Istanbul's mosques are mentioned by name, though the descriptions do not lack mistakes.

To summarise, it should be noted that the subject of Ottoman mosques in Old Polish texts at the turn of the 16th century appeared in a rather critical context of descriptions of the Ottomans' customs.

The Polish writers, describing the places of a 'pagan', strange cult, relied on their own observations made during visits to the Empire, especially Constantinople, or used other sources by different authors. All of the presented texts have not only a character of instruction but also of propaganda, with the aim of constantly becoming aware of the threat caused by the close vicinity and repeated wars with Turks, regarded as political and religious enemies. The analysed texts, presenting Islam, its confessors and places of the 'cult' in a bad light, could be included in the current of anti-Islamic literature.

46 Czyżewski 2013, p. 85.

47 *Ibidem*, p. 77.

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The Changing Image of Ottoman Turks in East-Central European Renaissance Literature[1]

The task for the critical scholar is not to separate one struggle from another, but to connect them.
(Edward W. Said)[2]

The image of the 'Turks' in the literature of East-Central Europe (particularly in the former Kingdom of Hungary, which was becoming more and more of a battlefront against the Ottoman advances from the second half of the 15th century onwards) is of course that of an enemy (similar to the Ottoman image of the Christians).[3] However, this image is being constantly contested as current scholarship on the topic unearths new findings.[4] This essay seeks to present a few of these characteristically contradictory representations of the 'Turk' in the literature of the 16th century. Some of the images (the 'Hero', the 'Antichrist', the 'Grand Turk', the 'Good Turk', etc.) belong to the realm of hundreds-of-years--old positive or negative stereotypes. Renaissance writers, poets, humanists and clerics tried to bring these characters to life by imparting them authenticity and verisimilitude. The ordinary man's life, however, as is usually the case, breaks through the walls of these rigid categories. The scene of the events is Ottoman Hungary but the actors are by no means only Turks and Hungarians. The Greeks, Jews, Germans, Italians, Flemings, Poles, and Croats also appear on the stage, the peoples knowing one another much more closely than one might think.

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[1] The author would like to express special thanks to Nil Pektas for reviewing the manuscript and providing many valuable suggestions.

[2] Said 2003, p. 332.

[3] Lämmermann 2008; Jankovics 2000.

[4] MacLean 2005; Borromeo 2008; Harper 2011; Ács and Székely 2012; Born and Jagodzinski 2014; Born and Puth 2014; Karner, Ciulisová and García 2014; Born and Dziewulski 2015.

Dragon-slayers beyond the border

The troublesome and often animosity-laden relationship between the Christian world and Islam manifests itself strongly in symbols demarcating the two civilisations, such as the image of Saint George, the dragon-slayer. The worship of the popular military saint promised protection and reinforced the sense of togetherness among all the Eastern and Western Christian peoples threatened by Islamic expansion.[5] It was in this spirit that after the catastrophic defeat by the Ottomans at Nicopolis (1396), the Hungarian king Sigismund of Luxemburg founded the Order of the Dragon (*Societas Draconistarum*) in 1408. The knights of the order followed in the footsteps of the medieval order of Saint George, and swore an oath to fight against the 'ancient dragon', Islam.[6]

Few Christians knew, however, that Saint George also was revered by the Muslims. In his famous *Turkish Letters*, the Flemish diplomat Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522–1592) writes that upon his arrival in Amasya in Turkey, local dervishes told him stories of a dragon--slayer saint they referred to as Chederle (or al-Khiḍr), who was none other than Saint George.[7] The Ottoman dragon-slayer saint mentioned by Busbecq was rather a mixed form, containing elements of the cult of St. Theodore, who was actually revered since late Antiquity in Amasya. Busbecq's report is authentic and within Islam, as the mystical figure of al-Khiḍr had been syncretized over the centuries with other previous figures and cults, such as the prophets Elias and Moses or Alexander the Great. In Asia Minor, he was frequently associated with Saint George.[8]

There are two sides to every coin.

The Hero

'*Sesini kes! Hunyadi geliyor*!' – 'Shut up, Hunyadi is coming.'[9]

According to Géza Gárdonyi's *The Stars of Eger* (Hung.: *Egri csillagok*), one of the most popular Hungarian youth novels first published in 1899, Turkish mothers of the 16th century hushed their children with these words, scaring them by invoking the name of the Hungarian hero John Hunyadi (Hung.: Hunyadi János, Rom.: Ioan de Hunedoara, c. 1407–1456), who had defeated the Ottoman Army in Belgrade (Hung.: Nándorfehérvár) in 1456. True, as the

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5 Jardine and Brotton 2000, pp. 5–23.

6 Lővei 2006.

7 Busbecq 1994, pp. 96–97; Martels 1989, p. 173.

8 Pancaroğlu 2004, p. 151. The veneration of Christian military saints under the Ottomans would be interpreted in a broader perspective. It might be interesting to mention the survival of the cult of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki in addition to the above-mentioned cults in Amasya related to St. George and St. Theodore. Cf., Tolan, Veinstein and Laurens 2013, pp. 163–185.

9 Gárdonyi 2013, part 3, chapter 10.

Ill. 1. The tomb of Gül Baba, Buda, 1543–1548

conquering armies of the Ottoman Empire entered Europe and battled against the Christians over and over again, both parties began to recognise, fear, and also to some extent respect each other's heroes. The heroic deeds of the Albanian Skanderbeg (George Kastrioti, Alb.: Gjergj Kastrioti, Turk.: Iskander Bey, 1405–1468),[10] the Hungarian John Hunyadi[11] and the Hungarian-Croatian Miklós Zrínyi (Croat.: Nikola Zrinski, 1620–1664)[12] had already appeared in several Latin and vernacular literary works in Europe even in their own age. The Turkish bards called *ashik*s and the masters of *divan* poetry sang praises to the courage of the Ottoman *ghazi*s in the manner of Christian works.[13] The tomb of Gül Baba (Ill. 1), the legendary *Bektashi* dervish, who is believed to have died during the 1541 occupation of Buda, as well as the Szigetvár mosque of Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566)—

10 Di Francesco 2008.

11 Engel 1982.

12 Kühlmann 2009.

13 Sudár 2005a, pp. 57–63; Halman 2011, pp. 25–53.

Ill. 2. Ottoman Miniatures depicting the Fall of Szigetvár, in: Seyyid Lokman, *Tarih-i-Sultan Süleyman*, 1579. Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, inv. no. T. 413, fol. 93b–94a

شد ابن پرنسقه چو خوک بزرگ
بدندانهای درشت سترگ
بکف تیغ آن پهلوان دوان
گریزان از آن قلعه بیرون روان

who died at the siege of the city defended by Miklós Zrínyi (Croat.: Nikola Šubić Zrinski, c. 1508–1566)—are still popular sites of pilgrimage for Turkish visitors (Ill. 2).[14]

The Ottoman expansion threatening East-Central Europe came to a halt after the bloody wars fought during the beginning of the 16th century, and the borders separating the Christians from the Islamic realms started to take shape gradually, with the largest part of the medieval Hungarian territory coming under direct or, as with the case of the later principality of Transylvania, indirect control of the Ottoman Empire (Ill. 3). Hostilities never ceased along the double (Ottoman–Habsburg) chains of border fortresses from the Adriatic Sea to the Lower Danube and there was never a moment of peace for almost 150 years. Sieges, duels, ambushes and raids continued even after an official peace treaty was signed between the Habsburg and the Ottoman rulers.[15] The Ottomans became the 'natural enemies' of the Eastern European Christians, in a similar way to the moors who had become the archenemies of the Spaniards during the *reconquista*.[16]

In the early modern period, the word 'Turkish' was a religious denomination rather than a national one, more or less synonymous with the word Muslim. Identity was primarily determined by religion, not by language, ethnicity, origin or lifestyle. In terms of language and ethnicity, the opposing garrisons of the Hungarian and Ottoman border fortresses were often neither Hungarian nor Turkish; the enemies often shared the same Southern Slavic language.[17] Although the Christian and the Muslim realms were strictly separated, the inhabitants of the Ottoman and Christian border fortresses were highly familiar with one another's language, customs, clothes and everyday objects. Merchants and tradesmen from Christian princedoms and the Ottoman Empire indulged in intense and dynamic commercial activities with each other during this period. Despite the underlying distrust and hatred between the enemies, they were forced to interact with each other. This was no friendship—only a kind of involuntary togetherness.[18]

A significant part of East-Central European literature of the 16th and 17th centuries made the fortress wars and the cruel beauty of life in border settlements their primary subject matter.[19] Short Turkish epic poetry pieces from the era of the Ottoman occupation also dwelt upon similar themes. The central figure of all these literary works of different languages is the unfaltering hero, the warrior of faith, the Christian martyr or the Muslim *shahid* who courageously attacks the faithless ('pagan' or 'Giaour') ancient enemy in the name of Jesus or Allah. The hero is happy to meet his death because he believes his soul

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14 Sudár 2008; Fata 2013; Sudár 2014, pp. 500–504.

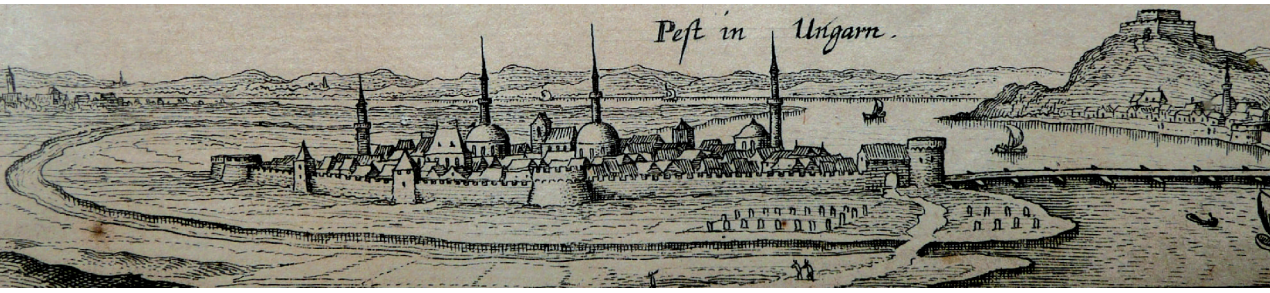
15 Pálffy 2012; Tolan, Veinstein and Laurens 2013, pp. 186–205.

16 Suchý 1968; Bóka 2004, p. 14; Srodecki 2013; Tolan, Veinstein and Laurens 2013, pp. 27–48.

17 Sudár 2014, pp. 37–39.

18 Pásztor 2005. Despite the differences mentioned above, there had been a 'law of the borderland' that encompassed everyday practices such as the blood-brotherhood between the Christians and the Ottomans on the one hand, and among various Christian confessions on the other. Bracewell 2000; Štefaneć 2014.

19 Jankovics 2000.



Ill. 3. Unknown master, *View of the Pest*, 17th century. Private collection. ☙

will be carried to Heaven by angels, or *houri*s will await him in Paradise (*Jannah*).[20] This image embedded in contemporary literature is rather one-dimensional. In reality, Muslim and Christian heroes went about their everyday lives, going through trials and struggles similar to one another's. The fate of the border fortress heroes was often sealed by death, although a soldier's life could take surprising turns.

One of the most brilliant soldiers of the second half of the 16th century was Ferranto Samaria de Speciecasa, the commander of the Veszprém and Érsekújvár (today: Nové Zámky, Slovakia) fortresses in the second half of the 16th century, who was feared by the Ottomans owing to his bold deeds and unexpected raids. The enemy tried to ambush him twice, but he saw through their intent and escaped their snare. Courageous in open battles he had no desire to become a martyr. Although he was captured by the Ottomans three times, he always escaped, fooling the enemy with unbelievable tricks. On his last attempt, he fled from the Nebojsa Tower in Belgrade by descending a rope, having first bribed the Ottoman guards.[21] The clever Hungarian commander had a peculiar Italian name. Ferranto was born in Hungary, while his father, the Naples-born Giovanni Mario de Speciecasa, was working there as a military architect. Reportedly, he hardly spoke Italian at all, he was naturalised as a Hungarian and chose a military career. A contemporary described him as 'a short man, with a dense, black and brown, well-trimmed beard, wearing a wolf skin coat. […] He was a strong, hairy, uncivilized man, much like a bear. He did not need luxury, always slept in the stable, with the horses.'[22] Such was a real 'Hungarian' fortress warrior, a real hero.

In the 1580s, one of the most terrifying warriors in Ottoman Hungary was Şehsuvar (Hung.: Sásvár), the *sanjak-bey* of Szolnok. Hungarian and German historical songs describe his life and actions (basically raiding and destroying everything), and identify him

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[20] One can compare the epic poems of the 16th-century Hungarian poet Sebestyén Tinódi and the contemporary Turkish epic poetry piece about the 'heroes of the fortress Görösgal'. Sudár 2002; Cf., Cook 2007.

[21] Pálffy 1989, pp. 113–116; Rusnák 2012.

[22] Ács 1999, pp. 476–477.

as Satan himself. These poems and the historical sources depict him not as a hero but an 'anti-hero'.[23] In the Nádudvar battle of July 1580, which was one of the significant battles of the so-called 'peace years' (1568–1591), Şehsuvar was shamefully defeated by German and Hungarian soldiers. According to the verse chronicle describing the battle, the *bey* fled like a coward, and reached home on horseback 'sobbing heavily'. Strangely enough, the same thing happened again seven years later. This time, he was ambushed by the Hungarians near the fortress of Kanizsa during a night raid. Many members of the Ottoman elite died in the battle, including the sultan's son-in-law. Şehsuvar, however, managed to flee yet again. He was arrested upon the sultan's order, but the sultan was merciful and only stripped him of his wealth and possessions. He allegedly tried to blame the defeat on the pasha of Buda. One of the most peculiar pieces of information revealed by the Hungarian poem on Şehsuvar is that the much-feared Ottoman *bey* was born a Hungarian peasant and became a renegade after leaving his Christian faith, which is why the Hungarians regarded him with double hatred.[24]

Turning Turk

It is a generally accepted view that the Ottoman Empire did not trust foreigners and shut the doors on them. Nevertheless, there were always people who moved freely between different cultures and religions. Renegades who had changed their faith played an important role in the slow but continuous information flow between the Christian and the Muslim world. The number of those who had renounced their faith was not high compared to the size of society, but they had a great influence on the political and cultural exchange processes.[25]

We must differentiate between those who 'became Turks'—that is, converted to Islam—in their childhood and those who did so as adults. The latter had no high hopes for a coveted position in the Ottoman bureaucracy but could still integrate into society. Most of them were captives of war who wished to avoid cruel imprisonment or becoming galley slaves by undergoing circumcision and becoming Muslims.[26] Prisoners holding on to their Christian faith—if they avoided execution—had to wait many years until their relatives bailed them out. This is what happened to the Vice-Commandant of Székesfehérvár (Ger.: Stuhlweißenburg, Turk.: İstolni Belgrad), Ferenc Wathay (1568–1609), who spent his time in the Galata Tower in Istanbul, writing poems and

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23 Ács 1999, pp. 157–172 and pp. 429–443.

24 On the Hungarian, Christian origin of Şehsuvar *bey,* see: the Hungarian poem by György Szepesi: *Historia cladis turcicae ad Naduduar…*, Kolozsvár (Rom.: Cluj-Napoca, Ger.: Klausenburg), 1581. For a critical edition, see: Ács 1999, pp. 157–172, here p. 157.

25 Szakály 1983; Tolan, Veinstein and Laurens 2013, pp. 159–160.

26 Takáts 1915; Matuz 1975; Kristić 2011.

Ill. 4. Pen drawing in the song book of Ferenc Wathay (1604–1606).
Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest,
inv. no. MTAK K 62. 37b.

painting (Ill. 4).[27] Others changed their faith in the hope of a better life or for family reasons, but there were also those Christians who chose Muhammad's faith out of true conviction and as a result of their inner religious development. Adam Neuser (c. 1530–1576), a Protestant anti-trinitarian, fled from Heidelberg to the Ottoman

27 Drosztmér 2014; Born 2015, p. 65.

Empire; and he was not the only one to do so.[28] Many Greeks, Italians, Serbians, Croatians, Hungarians, Poles and Germans converted to Islam during the Early Modern period.

The Hungarian-born Şehsuvar *bey* was evidently converted to Islam in his childhood, brought up as an ardent Muslim and a faithful servant of the sultan, like many other pupils of the *Enderun* (the palace school for Janissaries). He owed his unique Hungarian career to his early conversion and education. He almost became the pasha of Buda after all.[29]

Some renegades educated in the Istanbul palace school chose the most direct career path by becoming the sultan's interpreter, a dragoman. Many dragomans were renegades, mostly Greeks, Germans, Italians, Poles and Hungarians. Their task was not limited to interpreting for the sultan and other high-ranking dignitaries during official audiences; they became key figures in Ottoman diplomacy and intelligence. They were erudite men, multilingual intellectuals well-versed in European culture.[30]

Chief interpreter İbrahim—his Christian name was Joachim Strasz (d. 1571)—was of noble Polish origin and he was especially interesting because he was a close relative, probably an uncle, of Regina Straszówna, the first wife of the famous Croatian-Hungarian humanist András Dudith (Pol.: Andrzej Dudycz, 1533–1589).[31] İbrahim Bey was an informant of Sigismund II Augustus (1520–1572), and the Polish king gave him an annual fee for his services. Dudith worked as the Habsburg emperor's ambassador in the court of the Polish king, Sigismund II Augustus. Despite being a Catholic bishop, he married, which not only angered the Catholic Church but also his own monarch, Emperor Maximilian II (r. 1564–1576). When Regina and András Dudith became married, their only supporter was İbrahim Bey, the renegade Ottoman uncle, whose financial aid helped them survive until Emperor Maximilian forgave Dudith. Dudith became a half-secret informant of the Habsburgs and continued to be on good terms with his 'Turkish' brother-in-law İbrahim, the agent of the Polish king. This lively and peculiar exchange of information did not alter Emperor Maximilian's faith in Dudith, nor did İbrahim the dragoman lose the sultan's grace.[32]

Another strange pair in Istanbul was the interpreter Mahmud and his assistant interpreter Murad. The original name of Tarjuman Mahmud, born the son of a Viennese Jewish merchant, was Sebold von Pibrach,[33] while the Hungarian dragoman Murad was born in Nagybánya (today: Baia Mare, Romania) as Balázs Somlyai. In the years preceding the battle of Mohács, they had both studied in Vienna, then became pages to the Hungarian king Louis II (r. 1516–1526). During the battle of Mohács and at the age of 17, they were captured by the Ottomans, became Muslims and later continued their studies in Istanbul. Thanks to

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28 Burchill 1989.

29 Ács 2002.

30 Ágoston 2007.

31 Szczucki 1987.

32 Ács 2006.

33 Petritsch 1985.

Ill. 5. Mahmud Tarjuman, *Tarih-i Ungurus*, after 1540. Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, inv. no. MTAK K Török F, f. 1v ☙

his command of languages, talent and Viennese connections, Mahmud made a successful career at the Sublime Porte. He entered the diplomatic service in 1541 and he came to be considered the greatest expert of Hungarian, Polish and Transylvanian affairs. He also negotiated with France and Venice and in 1550, he had a meeting with the Habsburg ruler in his home town, Vienna, where he took time to visit his elderly mother.[34] Hungarian-born Murad began working as the sultan's interpreter in 1553. As an interpreter, he participated in the peace negotiations between Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq—representing the Habsburgs—and the Sublime Porte in 1556.[35] At the age of 75, he met Philipp Haniwald and Johannes Löwenklau, members of the 1584–1585 Habsburg embassy.[36]

Beyond their diplomatic activities, Mahmud and Murad were both writers, poets and humanists and their literary works constitute the most important documents of the cultural relationship between the Europeans and the Ottomans in the 16th century. Mahmud's Turkish language Hungarian chronicle, *Tarih-i Ungurus*, has been of interest to historians and literary researchers for a long time (Ill. 5).[37] Dragoman Murad is a notable figure in

34 Ács 2000.

35 Martels 1989, pp. 249–251; Rasmussen 2015, p. 61.

36 Ács 2011, p. 12.

37 Hazai 2009.

literary history, known for being the only Ottoman-Turkish poet writing in Hungarian.[38] Mahmud ordered books from Vienna even in his old age, while Murad, although his Latin was far from perfect, supplemented his income with translations: scholars attribute the 1559 Turkish translation of Cicero's *De senectute* to him.[39] The Europeans travelling within the Ottoman Empire sought his company, they bought manuscripts from him (especially Latin translations of Ottoman chronicles) and had him sign their personal diaries. He wrote the following aphorism in Turkish, Latin and Hungarian in the *album amicorum* of the physician Arnold Manlius (1530/37–1607) from Cologne: 'It is much better to have an enemy than a friend who does not feel the way we do' (Cicero: *De amicitia* 24, 90).[40]

The Antichrist

We do not know how much Commandant Ferranto Samaria liked literature, probably not at all: literary historians only mention his name in connection with his wife's love affair with the great Hungarian poet Bálint Balassi (1554–1594).[41] However, in 1583, an interesting piece of literature dedicated to Samaria was printed in Debrecen. The author, Antal Zombori, was a Calvinist parish pastor who lived in the second half of the 16th century and most probably wanted to please the commandant's literature-loving Protestant wife with the dedication. The lengthy work presents the spiritual aspects of the heroic struggle against the Ottomans in the peculiar language of the Reformation.[42]

The verse history of the Maccabee martyrs describes the martyrdom of the Jewish priest Eleazar and his seven young followers and their mother in 167 B.C., during the persecution of the Jews under the reign of the Seleucid king Antiochus IV. Tradition calls the martyrs Maccabees, although there is no proof that they were related to the Maccabee (Hasmonean) family heading the future Jewish revolt. This is not just any martyr history, but the role model of all martyrdom, the literary pattern of suffering torments, of martyr heroism.[43]

Antal Zombori details the sufferings of the nine Jewish martyrs in more than two thousand lines: how the tyrant tries to make them break Moses' rules, how he tries to convince them politely, then by threats to eat pork, and how—when they all refuse—he makes them endure all kinds of torments until they all die. The last person to be led in front of the king is the mother of the young Jewish men; she is offered the possibility to save her youngest son from death if she manages to persuade him to deny his faith. The woman, however, urges her youngest to follow his brothers' example. She died soon after her youngest son was executed.

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38 Babinger 1927; Ács 1999, pp. 141–153, and pp. 424–428.

39 Rossi 1936.

40 Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek, Sign. Hs. 487.

41 Kőszeghy 2008, pp. 280–285.

42 Ács 1999, pp. 257–315, 475–487.

43 Assmann 2012.

Zombori refers to Chapters 6 and 7 of the Second Book of the Maccabees, which indeed relates the story of the martyrs. This biblical book, however, could not have been the sole source of the narrations, as the story written in the Hungarian verses differs from the biblical text in several important respects. The history is based on another work, the apocryphal Fourth Book of the Maccabees. This Jewish piece of literature written in the first century A.D.—for a long time mistakenly contributed to Flavius Josephus—is part of the *Septuaginta* but not of the *Vulgata*. Western Christianity became acquainted with it when, in 1517, Erasmus of Rotterdam edited the characteristically hagiographic, Latin variant originating from Cologne. The Maccabee martyrs were especially revered in Cologne because the city had allegedly guarded the relics of the faithful martyrs since the 12th century. Erasmus rewrote the book on the 'Supremacy of Reason' at the request of the Benedictines of Cologne, and he himself believed it to have been written by Josephus. Erasmus's variant of Cologne origin was included in the complete Latin editions of Josephus, thus it became well-known all over Europe and gained much popularity, especially in Protestant circles.[44]

The followers of the Reformation usually interpreted the story allegorically and applied it to themselves. They identified the tyrant Antiochus with the Antichrist, and the Jewish martyrs with the community of the chosen sufferers of the 'end times'. The rhetorically elaborated apocryphal writing was also supported by the respect given to Erasmus; the martyrdom of the Maccabee brothers and their mother, well-known from the Second Book of the Maccabees, is here centred on a single Stoic philosophical theme: the deeds of the faithful prove that firm conviction and reason may overcome emotions.

The apocryphal biblical story of the 'Holy Maccabees' is thus a parable, encouraging the unfaltering struggle against and resistance to the Ottoman occupation. We know that Europe was expecting the world to end in the approaching 16th century. Martin Luther (1483–1546) and Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560) both interpreted the apocalyptical books of the Old and New Testament with a special sensitivity. No wonder then that the symbolism of the Maccabee story deeply interested the Reformers. Antiochus Epiphanes immediately found a place in Protestant apocalypticism.[45] In Luther's and Melanchthon's interpretation of the story, Antiochus Epiphanes has a leading role: he rules around the end of the third world empire, he is the 'little horn', the 'king of fierce countenance' who enters 'when the rebels are come to the full' (Dan 8:23). His failure is thus the sign of the last era of the world. It is a well-known fact that 16th-century Protestant denominations expected the end of the last era, the last judgment in their own age. We must note that this book of the Bible also predicts the tyrannical prosecution of religions of the 'abhorrent' Antiochus Epiphanes and the perseverance of the martyrs. And we know that this book greatly influenced the Reformation's understanding of history in that, among other texts, it provided arguments for the concept of the transfer of rule (*translatio imperii*).

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44 Collins 2012.

45 Andermann 2000.

It is also of interest that Melanchthon himself associates Daniel's prophecy, the example of Antiochus, with Hungary: 'The Turks are not attracted to Hungary by the words of the Gospels but by the long-standing and excessive adoration of idols, and other horrors'—he writes in his commentaries on the Book of Daniel.[46] For Hungarian Protestants, 'pagan Antiochus' inarguably represents the 'embodied Antichrist', the Turks. The Hungarian Protestant preacher of the country, interpreting Erasmus' work, talks about the presence of the struggle against the Ottomans in the language of the centuries-old Christian and Jewish tradition renewed by the Reformation.[47]

The Grand Turk

Tarjuman Mahmud wrote his famous Hungarian historical work, *Tarih-i Ungurus* in the 1540s.[48] The valuable Turkish manuscript preserved in Hungary is a clever blend of a Latin biography of Alexander the Great following the *World History* of the Late Roman historian Justinus, and Hungarian chronicle literature. The book belongs to the popular Ottoman *Iskendername* genre and does not contain any historical novelty but it is a remarkable composition in a literary and political sense. The Hungarian chronicle dedicated to Emperor Süleyman I uses an ingenious idea to present the Macedonian ruler called Iskender as the conqueror of Western Europe.[49] The Ottoman padishah reigning in the empire of Alexander the Great considered himself the heir of the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire and also claimed the Western part of the Roman Empire. Mahmud's chronicle reinforces Süleyman in this venture, and explicitly urges him to occupy the capital of the German (*nemce*) king, Vienna.[50] This also expresses Mahmud's personal ambitions. He would have liked to return to his home town with the victorious armies of the sultan, and he would not have in the least minded living in the Hofburg as the pasha of Vienna.

The Ottoman expansion had always had this peculiar, imperial aspect, not explained by the Islamic religion. Ever since the occupation of Constantinople (1453), the Ottoman imperial concept had gradually been reinforced, namely that by occupying Byzantium, the Ottomans became the legal heirs of the Byzantine rulers, among them Alexander the Great.[51] This was also supported by the myth of the Trojan origins of the Turks.[52] According to this ideology, the Ottoman emperor with headquarters in Constantinople,

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46 Melanchthon 1846, p. 960; Cf., Tolan, Veinstein and Laurens 2013, pp. 208–210.

47 Ács 2005.

48 Hazai 2009.

49 Borzsák 1988.

50 Radway 2013.

51 Crane 1991.

52 Heath 1979; Szilágyi 2012.

the 'second Rome', had the same rights as the Holy Roman emperor to rule the unified and indivisible empire, the former *Imperium Romanum*, that is, Asia and Europe.[53]

This ideology was reinforced by the Porte's influential European (originally Christian and Jewish) intellectuals. In the 1520s and 1530s, grand vizier Ibrahim Pasha (Turk.: Makbul İbrāhīm Paşa, 1493–1536) [54]—born of a Greek mother—and the Venetian Alvise Gritti (1480–1534),[55] the pro-Ottoman governor of Hungary, had an ambitious plan to conquer Europe. They planned to simultaneously attack Austria through Hungary and Italy via the sea. Following the Ottoman victory, Italy would have been divided into two under an Ottoman protectorate, the northern part would have belonged to the French king, Francis I, while an Ottoman vassal state would have been created in the south under the governance of Alvise Gritti, the Venetian *doge's* son himself. We know that the ambitious plan was never realised, the land attack against Europe was stopped in 1532 at a small Hungarian border fortress, Kőszeg (Ger.: Güns), while Ibrahim and Gritti soon fell out of the sultan's grace.[56]

It is not by accident that Gritti and Ibrahim were primarily accused in Istanbul of turning the court Christian. In the eyes of faithful Muslim *ulema*s, the Ottoman Rumis often seemed unreliable. They saw them as perverted former Christians who turned Muslims with very weak faith.[57] One of the important reasons for the fall of pasha Ibrahim was the grand vizier's power representation that qualified as anti-Islamic.[58] It is a well-known fact that Ibrahim erected Renaissance statues stolen from the Buda palace of King Matthias Corvinus (Hung.: Hunyadi Mátyás, r. 1458–1490) in front of his own palace on the *Atmeidan*, the former Hippodrome of Constantinople.[59] His enemies wrote and distributed a pasquil on him: 'There were two Abrahams on Earth: one demolished idols, the other erected them'.[60] The 'heretic' Ibrahim who had turned into a *mazur*, was soon suffocated, while his protégé, Gritti was beheaded by the Transylvanian Hungarians.

Nevertheless, the Ottoman ruler—who was called the 'Grand Turk' in Europe—did not give up his ambitions to become the heir of the Roman emperors. These goals were expressed in the grand mosque built in Istanbul by Süleyman I, as well as in the complex erected in Adrianople (Turk.: Edirne) by Selim II (1566–1574). Both buildings were meant to be matching rivals of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. This Ottoman intention was sensed and appreciated by European Humanists. Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq understood the real meaning of Süleyman's mosque.[61] The Flemish writer was well aware that the architect

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53 Necipoğlu 1989, pp. 424–425; Born 2014.

54 Turan 2007, pp. 106–239.

55 Papo and Papo 2002.

56 Necipoğlu 1989, pp. 406–407.

57 Fodor 2012, p. 28.

58 Jenkins 1911, pp. 109–119.

59 Necipoğlu 1989, p. 423; Mikó 2000, pp. 44–45.

60 Jenkins 1911, p. 110.

61 Busbecq 1994, pp. 396–397.

of Süleyman the Magnificent, Sinan (c. 1490–1588) consciously attempted the symbolic rebuilding of Solomon's former temple in Jerusalem, just as Süleyman himself was regarded by his people as the king of kings (padishah), a second Solomon.[62]

Tarjuman Mahmud's literary work, *Tarih-i Ungurus*[63]—based on Hungarian sources—used words to serve the same imperial purpose as the building blocks designed by the architect Sinan.

The Good Turk

Johannes Löwenklau (1541–1594),[64] one of the significant German humanists of the era, arrived in Constantinople as part of the 1584–1585 Habsburg imperial embassy.[65] As an expert on Greek and Byzantine history, he had long since been interested in the history of the Ottoman Empire, which he also imagined as a continuation of Byzantine history.[66] The fact that nobody in Europe had yet tried to write an Ottoman chronicle based on original Ottoman sources constituted a great challenge for him. In Istanbul, Johannes Löwenklau collected manuscripts for such a monumental work. The task was all the more difficult since he did not speak Turkish, so besides the manuscripts, he also needed an interpreter-translator. This is how he found the Hungarian-born dragoman Murad, alias Balázs Somlyai, who, in exchange for a considerable fee, agreed to translate the most important Ottoman chronicles into Latin. Murad's manuscript, known in Ottoman studies as *Codex Hanivaldanus*, is the main source of Löwenklau's chronicle (*Historiae Musulmanae Turcorum*), published in 1591 (Ill. 6). Unfortunately, Murad's manuscript is now lost but Löwenklau's work provides precise clues about its content.[67]

Murad *bey*'s Latin manuscript, the *bey*'s own work, was mostly a translation with commentaries of the 15th-century Ottoman chronicle by Mehmed Neşri. Research on Ottoman history also demonstrated that Murad had used other chronicles, including *Tâc üt-Tevârîh* (*The Crown of Histories*) by Hoca Sadeddin Efendi (1536/37–1599), who was one of the greatest authors of the era, also from a literary point of view. Neşri's work, by the way, had not been printed in Europe nor in the Ottoman Empire until the 20th century. The Latin translation, however, had already been published in the 16th century, thanks to the contribution of the Hungarian Murad *bey* and Löwenklau. Löwenklau often mentioned the 'Barbarian' Latin of the elderly dragoman Murad, but we also learn that he was just mediating the excuses of Murad, who had studied Latin in Vienna a very long

62 Necipoğlu-Kafadar 1985.

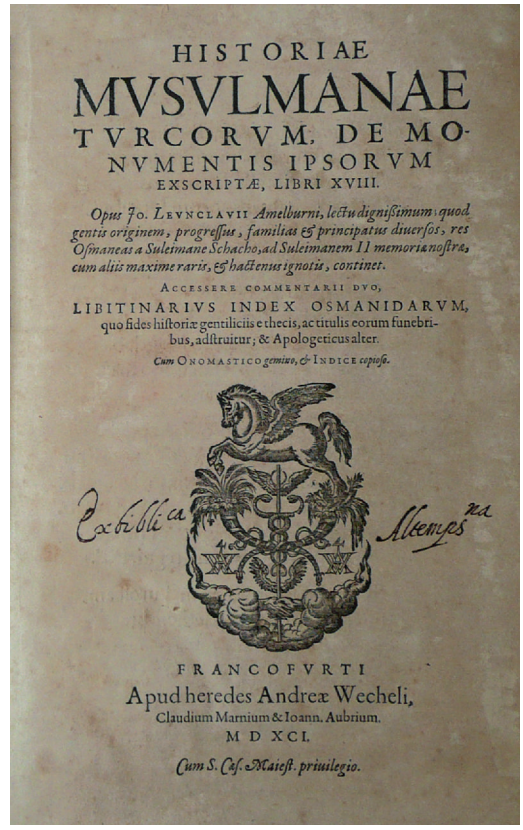
63 Hazai 2009.

64 Burtin 1990.

65 Ács 2011, p. 4.

66 Şahin 2013, pp. 193–200; Fodor 2015, pp. 11–55.

67 Ménage 1964, p. xvi.


HISTORIAE
MVSVLMANAE
TVRCORVM, DE MO-
NVMENTIS IPSORVM
EXSCRIPTÆ, LIBRI XVIII.

Opus Io. Levnclavii Amelburni, lectu dignißimum: quod gentis originem, progreſſus, familias & principatus diuerſos, res Oſmaneas a Suleimane Schacho, ad Suleimanem II memoriæ noſtræ, cum aliis maxime rariis, & hactenus ignotis, continet.

Accessere commentarii duo,
LIBITINARIVS INDEX OSMANIDARVM,
quo fides hiſtoriæ gentiliciis e thecis, ac titulis eorum funebribus, adſtruitur; & Apologeticus alter.
Cum Onomastico *gemino, &* Indice *copioſo.*

FRANCOFVRTI
Apud heredes Andreæ Wecheli,
Claudium Marnium & Ioann. Aubrium.
M D XCI.
Cum S. Cæſ. Maieſt. priuilegio.

Ill. 6. Johannes Lowenklau, *Historiae Musulmanae Turcorum*, Frankfurt am Main 1591 ☙

time ago, before the battle of Mohács. The *bey*, however, was a very educated man, one of the few Istanbul intellectuals who—in breaking down the barriers of traditional Ottoman insularity—sought and found links to like-minded Christian intellectuals.

We could hardly call the relationship between the Hungarian renegade interpreter and the famous German humanist 'friendship' but, surely, there was a spiritual link. This bizarre acquaintance also helped Löwenklau to overcome the century-old stereotypes and write an unbiased and accurate Ottoman chronicle. Actually, he did much more than that. In the dedication to his Ottoman chronicle he puts forward a *pro Turcis* arguments to portray the Ottomans in a favourable light. The image of the Turk in the *Prooemium* is rooted in Erasmus and it foreshadows the topos of the 'good and honest Turk'[68] that became popular during the Enlightenment period: 'There is a certain smartness in these barbarians that is far from being barbarian. Their wisdom comes from their customs and from remembering things … Books and the memories of things stand witness to this wisdom, and these two

68 Ács 2014.

are identical with history. Their people are thus not fooled. These books are made not of mere flattering but of memorable things and the habits of the state—and they do not hide the old sins of sultans.'[69]

Löwenklau was probably one of the precursors of Enlightenment. It is an irony of fate that during the long war against the Turks which erupted in 1593, he became seriously ill in Hungary, at the siege of Esztergom (Ger.: Gran), defended by the Ottomans, and he soon died (Ill. 7). There, under the walls of the fortress, he might even have met Bálint Balassi, the greatest Hungarian lyrical poet of the 16th century.[70]

The Oriental

Bálint Balassi was on the one hand a hero fighting against the Ottomans and, on the other, a lover of the Turkish language and culture. This fact cannot be appreciated enough. Naturally, he was not the only Christian intellectual in the region who was familiar with Eastern languages.[71] Still, he was far ahead of his era and even more knowledgeable than the great Ottoman scholar Löwenklau in the study of the Turkish language. To understand the language better, he cultivated an affinity with Turkish literature and Islamic culture, which he could have only achieved through personal links with Turkish poets living in the occupied territories. We do not know exactly how he did it but Balassi became quite familiar with the popular *ashik* poetry, as well as with the more sophisticated, mystic *divan* poetry, which flourished under the Arabic-Persian influence.

Renaissance love poetry filled with refined intellectualism constitutes a significant part of Balassi's poems. It comprises light, playful eroticism and the abstract lady worship of troubadours (and Petrarch's followers). Interspersed among his poems of 'earthly' and 'heavenly' love are pieces translated from Turkish or set to a Turkish tune. The *ashik* poetry provided a model for a poem in which two beautiful girls offer themselves to the poet, who must choose between them.[72] In another poem, he expressed the suffering caused by the absence of his beloved, and translated an elevated, mystical *divan* poem into Hungarian.[73] Yet another poem, a Turkish song filled with flower symbolism, is turned into a Hungarian courting poem by Balassi.[74] We do not know the precise Turkish sources of these three poems; we can only determine the genres to which the original Turkish texts must have belonged.[75]

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69 Leunclavius 1591, p. 4.

70 Picombe 2007.

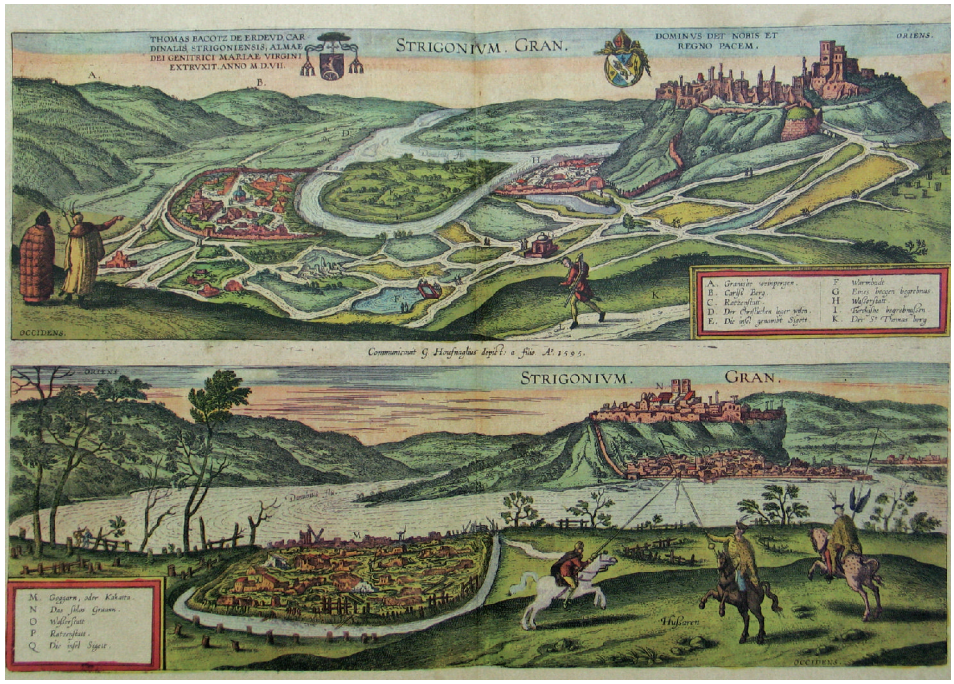
71 Sudár 2005b.

72 *Minap mulatni mentemben* … [The other day, while I went to have a good time …], in: Balassi 1986, p. 71.

73 *Kegyes, vidám szemű* … [The gracious, cheerful eyes …], in: Balassi 1986, pp. 136–137.

74 *Ez világ sem kell már nekem* … [No longer do I need this world …]; following the Turkish verse: *Gerekmez bu dünya sensiz*, in: Balassi 1986, p. 98.

75 Sudár 1995.



Ill. 7. Georg Hoefnagel, *Esztergom (Gran) in 1595*. Private collection ☙

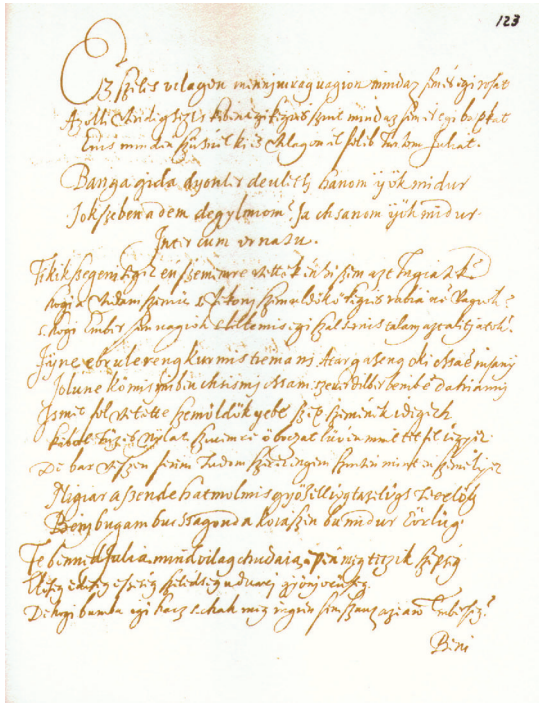
The *divan* poetry cycle, consisting of nine poems, translated from Turkish into Hungarian, is a different case, as Balassi meticulously wrote down the originals; these metric Turkish *beyt*s were copied into the codex preserving Balassi's Hungarian poems (Ill. 8). Balassi's command of Turkish was good enough for providing a precise, effective and mostly literal translation. He could not—or maybe would not—reveal the secrets of and mysterious references to his original Sufi sources.[76]

We can certainly say that Balassi came very close to fully comprehending the Islamic literary culture. He did not simply translate Turkish poems but made them his own. For him, Petrarchan and Turkish poetry were equally valid sources for the Hungarian Renaissance poetic language and intellectual works he created. There is an ongoing debate on whether he formed his most characteristic poetry form, the so-called Balassi verse, on the basis of a Turkish metric model.[77]

Many people are still struck by the intimate relationship between Balassi and Islamic literature, all the more so since in his personal experience as a soldier he heroically fought the Ottoman conquerors. He knew Şehsuvar *bey* from the battlefield, while he entered

76 Szörényi 1976.

77 Horváth 1978.



Ill.8. Bálint Balassi, one page of his translation of Turkish *beyts*, Balassa-kódex [Manuscript Balassi], 17th century. National Széchényi Library, Budapest, inv. no. Quart. Hung 3247

into contact with Ferranto Samaria, whose wife he seduced in the breaks between battles. Balassi died as a hero fighting the Turks: he was killed by a Turkish cannonball in the 1594 siege of Esztergom.

Life and literature, however, do not belong in the same sphere. In the world of literature, Balassi found no difference in rank and values between Eastern and Western cultures. Before Balassi, Dante, who was knowledgeable about Eastern literature, had adopted a similarly unbiased approach by using Islamic sources for his universal poetic vision.[78] At the time, the Orient was more than a simple *couleur locale* in Western eyes. The sentimental, despising Orientalism characteristic of 19th-century literature had not yet become visible.[79] It is precisely this untarnished perspective that created the unique freshness of 16th-century Renaissance 'Orientalism'.[80]

78 Palacios 2008

79 Said 2009, p. 19.

80 Harper 2011, pp. 7–14.

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III. Between Churches, Residences and Battlefields. Oriental Artefacts in the Material Culture of East-Central Europe

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Ottoman Turkish Textiles in Christian Churches—Particularly in Transylvania and Royal Hungary

Ottoman Turkish metalware, ceramics and textiles—particularly knotted carpets—became prized luxury articles throughout Europe from the mid-15th century onwards. Among the sumptuous oriental goods brought by the Levant trade to Italy, particularly Venice and Genoa, and later by Flemish and other traders to Central, Eastern and South-East Europe, Turkish textiles had an exalted place.[1] The ostentatious trappings of royalty and the aristocracy started to include sumptuous silk fabrics brocaded with gold and silver from Bursa and Istanbul, knotted wool carpets from Asia Minor, gossamer-thin linen and cotton embroidered kerchiefs, table coverings and ornamental textiles for horses and weapons, displaying the wealth, rank and power of their owners.

As the countries of Central and Eastern Europe established diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century, they also opened up to the trade in woven goods, as we can see from the number of textile items that survive from the final decades of the 16th century and the 17th century. The Tsardom of Russia stands out as a customer for Turkish luxury textiles at that time. It had close diplomatic relations with several countries in the East in the 16th and 17th centuries, including the Ottoman Empire. Opulent wares brought in by Turkish, Armenian, Greek, Russian and other traders became well known among the Russian elite. As a result, very many luxury Turkish silks from the 16th and 17th centuries survive in the Kremlin Armoury Museum (Rus.: Оружейная палата) and other Russian museums, most in the form of church textiles.[2]

European rulers did not depend solely on traders for access to Turkish wares. Their courts often placed direct orders in Istanbul to satisfy their specific demands. Sources record textiles and carpets being purchased in Istanbul and Bursa for Sigismund II

[1] Atasoy et al. 2001, pp. 176–178.

[2] *Ibidem,* p. 180. Useful clues for dating Turkish silk fabrics are the names of donors and the years of donation, which were customarily applied to the embroidered parts of Russian liturgical garments.

Augustus of Poland (Pol.: Zygmunt II August, r. 1548–1569).[3] The princes of Transylvania were vassals to the Ottoman Empire, and there are records of several of them, most notably Gabriel Bethlen (Hung.: Bethlen Gábor, r. 1613–1629) and George I Rákóczi (Hung.: I Rákóczi György, r. 1630–1648), making orders in Istanbul for the purchase or custom-manufacture of fine Turkish weapons, horse gear and textile items, both for their own use and for gifts.[4]

One way that Ottoman Turkish goods came to Central and Eastern Europe without any kind of purchase, whether through traders or directly in Istanbul, was the Ottoman custom of presenting gifts at diplomatic occasions in the 16th and 17th centuries. Many of these gifts were textile items. The most valuable diplomatic gifts were those from the Sultan, which had great symbolic significance as well as material value. The size and the quality of the gift expressed the giver's respect and esteem for the receiver.[5] The greatest collection of Ottoman diplomatic gifts is now held in the Kremlin Armoury Museum.[6] The magnificent weapons, ornamental horse gear, jewellery, costumes and other items in that collection were gifts made to known people at known times. By contrast, there are very few surviving items from the many gifts the sultan is recorded as giving to his vassal princes of Transylvania upon their confirmation as rulers.[7]

An essential part of Ottoman diplomatic events was dressing in the kaftan. Under the Ottoman court protocol, the sultan and grand vizier, upon the appointment of high-ranking officials and at the first reception and the departure of foreign ambassadors, presented those invited to the audience, and their escorts, with ceremonial kaftans (*hil'at*) of the quality deemed appropriate. To wear such a kaftan was obligatory when presenting themselves before the sultan or grand vizier. This is the origin of the many fine silk Turkish kaftans which came into the treasuries of sovereigns in diplomatic connection with the Ottoman Empire, or into the possession of negotiating ambassadors and their escorts. There are no records of such ceremonial dress subsequently being worn in Hungary or Transylvania. Instead, their opulent silk material was converted into quilts, cushions, skirts, antependia, liturgical garments or the like,[8] referred to in Hungarian sources as *kaftányos*, or 'kaftan-quilt', etc.

Yet another route by which Turkish textiles came into European possession was the taking of war booty after clashes with the Ottoman army. This mostly consisted of military equipment and horse gear. In addition to their purely material value, these objects also

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3 Biedrońska-Słota 2000, p. 59.

4 Radvánszky 1888, pp. 51–57, 116–121, etc.; Beke and Barabás 1888, pp. 385, 428, 511–512, 795, etc.

5 Reindl-Kiel 1997, pp. 161–189. On this topic see also the contribution of Hedda Reindl-Kiel in the present volume.

6 See Washington 2009.

7 On Turkish insignia sent to Transylvania princes, see Szabó 2005, pp. 131–142.

8 An example is the record of the possessions of László Majtényi, Bishop of Syrmia (1607–1644). It states that one of his chasubles was made from kaftan material sent to his father by the Governor of Fülek (now Fiľakovo, Slovakia), and decorated with a border from his mother's skirt. Szerémi [?], Majtényi 1897, p. 84.

proclaimed the military glory of those who won them. Most of the booty went to the commander of the victorious army, but some of the generals and senior officers who participated in the battles also took a share. Some impressive collections of war trophies acquired by commanders of European Christian armies, mostly linked to specific persons and military events during the Ottoman wars of the late 17th century, have remained intact up to the present.[9] The greatest victory of that period was a battle won by John III Sobieski, the elected king of Poland (Pol.: Jan III Sobieski, r. 1674–1696), whose enormous booty from Kara Mustafa Pasha (1634/35–1683) at Vienna in 1683 greatly boosted his treasury.[10]

Another form of profit from battle was ransom for Ottoman captives. Well-to-do Ottomans who fell into captivity during battles in Hungary had to pay for their release in money, horse gear, and valuable textiles, including silk cushions interwoven with gold, gossamer-thin cotton fabric, and carpets.[11]

Whatever route they took, these 'Porte' textiles (as contemporary sources refer to them) were put to use when they arrived in Europe, and over the years they suffered wear and tear, and in many cases, destruction. The existence, quantity and value of the fine silk fabrics, velvets and other textiles can only be inferred from written sources such as treasury inventories and registers of dowries and estates. These include garments (most notably kaftans presented as diplomatic gifts), household textiles (cushions, floor carpets, curtains and knotted rugs), scarves and kerchiefs with gold- and silver-thread silk embroidery on cotton fabric, wrapping cloths, and military textiles (horse and saddle cloths, flags, tents, tent curtains, etc.). The items that survive from this array of Turkish luxury textiles are mostly those whose actual or perceived value brought them into royal[12] or aristocratic[13] treasuries, or into churches.

In addition to monetary donations, giving support to the church by providing appropriate furnishings and fittings was a widespread custom among wealthy sections of society

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[9] The most significant ensembles of Turkish spoils of war are those of John III Sobieski, King of Poland (1629–1696), Krakow; Charles V, Duke of Lorraine (1643–1690), Innsbruck; Frederick Augustus I, Elector of Saxony (1694–1733), Dresden; Lewis, Margrave of Baden (1655–1707), Karlsruhe; Maximilian II Emanuel Elector of Bavaria (1662–1726), Ingolstadt; and Count Nils Bielke (who participated in battles against the Ottomans in Hungary in 1684–1687), Skokloster, Sweden.

[10] In a letter to his wife written from his camp beside Vienna on 13 September 1683, John III Sobieski wrote that he had obtained treasures 'worth several thousand gold florins' from Kara Mustafa Pasha—opulent hangings, tents, carriages, jewelled quivers, swords, etc. (Contemporary Hungarian translation of the original letter published by Lénárd 1881, p. 205). On the strategies of commemoration initiated by John III Sobieski with the presentation of the war-trophies from Vienna: Jagodzinski 2013, pp. 110–115.

[11] In 1682, for example, Hussein Pasha of Újlak (Ilok, Croatia), the 'chief Turkish prisoner' was required to give enough silk Turkish fabric for a tunic, a silk belt, two bolts of fine linen, seven yards of atlas silk, one carpet, a silk horse blanket for one horse, a fur calpac and a pair of lined boots as ransom. Sörös 1905, pp. 308–309.

[12] See n. 9.

[13] An example is the treasury of Miklós Esterházy (1583–1645) and his son Pál Esterházy (1635–1713), palatines of Hungary. This preserved several items of 16th and 17th century Ottoman Turkish horse gear and textiles. Pásztor 2013, pp. 36–55.

in the 16th and 17th centuries. The churches received donations by legacy and by gifts given on special occasions such as religious feasts, weddings and baptisms as well as votive offerings. Victories over the enemy were also followed by donations of embroidered linen kerchiefs, table coverings, carpets, looted textiles. Embroidered inscriptions on these gifts often record the occasion (Ill. 1).[14] We have many examples of donations and bequests to churches in Transylvanian wills. Property owners usually included a church among the recipients of their movable goods upon death. They also gave detailed instructions about what should be done with the textile items placed on their bier or coffin. These, some of them being made of Turkish cloth, were usually left to a church, to be reworked into specific vestments or paraments. Textiles bequeathed to the church, other than coffin covers, included Turkish kaftans,[15] skirts (!)[16] and carpets.[17] In a will made in Kolozsvár (now Cluj-Napoca, Romania) on 3 May 1723, Druzsianna Bethlen, widow of Mihály Mikes, left to the church of the Jesuit fathers in Kolozsvár a skirt and apron, to be made into a chasuble and altar frontal; she gave to the Congregation of Our Lady in Kolozsvár one bolt of 'green-gold material' which she had received as a gift from the Voivode of Wallachia, to be transformed into a flag; and she gave to the monastery church of Mikháza (now Călugăreni, Romania) a skirt to be made into 'attire for a priest'.[18] There is no indication as to whether the Wallachian Voivode's 'green-gold material' was Turkish, but bequests such as hers were certainly responsible for many Turkish textiles coming into church possession.

The churches which received these Turkish kaftans, cushion- and pillow-covers, turban covers, wrapping cloths, saddle cloths, etc. did not, of course, undertake to preserve them as museum items in the modern sense. Instead, they converted them into liturgical objects or used as decorative items of the interiors of the church buildings. Turkish tex-

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14 In 1927, the Museum of Applied Arts, purchased a late-17th-century Turkish linen tablecloth with polychromatic silk embroidery, bearing the year 1728 and the Hungarian-language but now undecipherable inscription 'NNKAUMHÖ NK S MAIA ANNO 1725', for the communion table of a Protestant church, inv. no. 17 376.

15 In a letter to his wife from camp in Kistálya in the county of Heves, Pál Telegdy wrote on 12 March 1594 that in case of death a 'priest's vestment' should be made out of a garment 'given by the Turkish emperor', probably Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–1595). Published by Eckhardt 1944, p. 50.

16 There is also a case of a skirt being donated to a church in the territory of Royal Hungary. In 1648, the captain of the border fort of Szendrő in the county of Borsod (now Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén), István Móré of Csatóháza wrote a will leaving to the Jesuit church in Szendrő a skirt that had belonged to his former wife, made of 'elder-coloured' (blue-violet) velvet. All of his carpets were to be divided among Jesuit and Franciscan churches. Radvánszky 1986, III, pp. 311–312. A woman's skirt in 16th and 17th-century Hungary and Transylvania was made by sewing together seven pieces of uncut selvage and drawing them together at the waist. If it was unravelled, the 1 metre high and approximately 4 metre wide cloth was suitable for making items such altar frontals, chasubles or church flags.

17 In a will written in Gernyeszeg (now Gornești, Romania) in 1679, Krisztina Mindszenti, widow of István Csáki, left fourteen 'ordinary coloured carpets, each for one table' to be divided among five churches. Tüdős 2011, p. 127.

18 Tüdős 2011, p. 288.

Ill. 1. Ottoman embroidered tablecloth used later as communion table of a Protestant church, late 17th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 17376 ☙

tiles thus took on a new life in the service of worship in Christian churches and Jewish synagogues.[19] This practice brought a large proportion of originally secular textiles into church possession and use, and helped to preserve conserving them up to the present day.

In Catholic churches, the most common items which were made either wholly or partly from Turkish fabric were chasubles (*casula*), copes (*pluviale)*, maniples (*manipulus*), stolas and altar frontals (*antependium, pallium altaris*), but we also find some church flags and Turkish linen-embroidery altar cloths. Protestant churches also found use for Ottoman textiles. There are nearly five hundred Turkish rugs in Lutheran collections, mainly in Transylvania. In Sweden, where there were no strict specifications on liturgical textiles,

[19] An illustrative example of multiple changes of function is a chasuble now in Örebro Museum in Sweden, and formerly of the Almby (Lutheran) Church. It was made in the second half of the 16th century from Turkish *kemha* silk. On its back is a cruciform embroidered application with the coat of arms of the Polish nobleman Łukasz Serny and his wife Zofia Strzyżowska. The couple donated the chasuble in 1581 to the church of Sadomierz, in the Polish province of Masovia, from where it was looted by Swedish soldiers in 1702. In 1707, Count Nils Stromberg (Waldén) donated it to the Almby Church in Örebro, Geijer 1951, p. 160. No. 50 and fig.

the former Catholic chasubles, copes and altar frontals made of Turkish fabric remained in use.[20] In Calvinist churches, the most common examples are embroidered Turkish linen table covers used on the communion table, the pulpit and the lectern, and knotted carpets covering pews and the gallery. Some textiles in Greek-Orthodox churches, including copes (*phelonion*), dalmatics (*sakkos*), altar covers (*pelena*), altar frontals, curtains and covers for liturgical objects such as books, were made from Turkish material.

The volume *İpek. The Crescent & the Rose. Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets*, published in 2001, is a scholarly and lavishly-illustrated account of the history of Ottoman Turkish silk weaving. It presents many examples of silk fabrics which have survived as material, garments and church textiles. Through this book and other publications, the ecclesiastical collections that preserve large numbers of Turkish-origin textiles in Poland,[21] Russia and Sweden are now well known, and *İpek* also covers Turkish silks from collections in other countries. Consequently, we will concentrate on Turkish textiles that do not appear in *İpek,* those which were used and preserved in Catholic and Protestant churches in Hungary and Transylvania. The examples have been selected to illustrate the most typical categories of Turkish textiles that survive in Christian church collections.

The most common liturgical objects made wholly or partly from Turkish fabric are chasubles. They characteristically feature the most opulent types of Turkish silk fabrics: metal- and silk-thread interweave *taquetés* (*serâser*), *lampas* (*kemha*) and silk velvets with gold and silver patterns (*çatma*). These mostly came to Transylvania or Royal Hungary in the form of ceremonial *hil'at*s, received as gifts, but occasionally as silk material that was looted or received as ransom, or via direct purchase in Turkey. The fabric of *hil'at*s was of variable quality. The weave could be dense or loose, and varying amounts of metal thread were used for the pattern. There are eye-witness reports of kaftans of varying quality being available for diplomats being 'dressed up' at the Sublime Porte, causing something like a fight for the best items, the contenders occasionally going so far as to pull kaftans off each other's shoulders.[22] The enormous value of the silk used for ceremonial kaftans is clear from alterations made on them using small pieces that were not appropriate for the cut of the garment. Neither did it seem to be a problem if the component pieces of fabric had patterns that did not match or were off-centre. A distinctive example of this is a chasuble in the church of St John the Baptist in Pilica (Poland). It consists of the two different *kemha* kaftans sewn together so that their patterns are leaning in different directions.[23]

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[20] Altar frontals, chasubles, tablecloths, velvet cushion covers, saddle-cloths and prayer rugs made from 15th–17th-century Turkish silk and velvet and linen-based embroidery held in Swedish church collections are the subjects of Agnes Geijer's book *Oriental Textiles in Sweden*. She lists sixteen such chasubles: one from the 15th century, five from the 16th, and ten from the 17th, four of which are from Poland. Of the seven altar frontals made of Turkish material, two are from the 15th or 16th centuries and five from the 17th. Geijer 1951.

[21] On Turkish textiles in Poland: Warsaw 1983.

[22] Borsos 1972, pp. 70–71.

[23] Kraków 1990, vol. I, pp. 324–325, cat. no. 616, and plate XXXIV. The chasuble of the parish church of Pilica was probably made from a Turkish *hil'at*, because the donor couple, Jerzy and Krzysztof Zbaraski, fought at Khotyn (Pol.: Chocim) in 1621, and Krzysztof went on a diplomatic mission to Istanbul in 1622.

The chasuble of the Hungarian diplomat Cardinal György Szelepcsényi (1595–1685) was made from the most expensive silk fabric, gold- and silver-thread *taqueté* (*serâser*).[24] Szelepcsényi donated it to the Mariazell Basilica in 1673.[25] Its ornament consists of enormous stylized carnation motifs woven in gold. The column on the back displays the year of manufacture, 1659, and the coat of arms of its owner, at that time Bishop of Nyitra (now Nitra, Slovakia) and Archbishop of Kalocsa. The pattern of this sumptuous fabric was fashionable at the time when Szelepcsényi went to the Sublime Porte as an emissary in 1642. Although we know of many items made of Turkish material from churches in Royal Hungary,[26] most sources and surviving pieces originate from Transylvania, which was a tributary to the Porte. Members of its embassy in Istanbul travelled back and forward every year and they returned from their missions with ornate silk kaftans, which they subsequently converted into cushion and quilt covers, garments or liturgical garments.

Three chasubles made of Turkish fabric were discovered in the collection of the Székely National Museum (Rom.: *Muzeul Național Secuiesc;* Hung.: *Székely Nemzeti Múzeum*) in Sfântu Gheorghe, Romania, in 2010. They had previously been classed among the art treasures lost in the Second World War. The oldest among them was made from polychromatic Turkish velvet, which was fashionable in the first half of the 16th century (Ill. 2).[27] The second is an early 17th-century chasuble from Kézdiszentlélek (now Sânzieni, Romania), cut from a magnificent *zerbaft hil'at*, with a silver pattern on a white silk ground (Ill. 3).[28] The third, made from a poorer-quality, looser-weave *serâser* kaftan, dates from the second half of the 17th century (Ill. 4).[29] Also from Transylvania is a chasuble made from a late 16th-century silk lampas (*kemha*) kaftan with a *çintamani*-pattern. It came into the collection of the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest from the Armenian Catholic church in Gyergyószentmiklós (now Gheorgheni, Romania) in 1893 (Ill. 5.).[30] One year later, the Museum acquired a chasuble of unknown provenance, probably from another Transylvanian church, made from Ottoman silk lampas (*kemha*) of a late 16th-century style which betrays a strong Italian influence (Ill. 6).[31]

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[24] Szelepcsényi went on several diplomatic missions within the Ottoman Empire: first to the Sublime Porte in 1642 and later, as Chancellor and Lieutenant-Governor, to five series of negotiations in Buda and Istanbul between 1667 and 1673. In 1683, he assisted Sobieski's forces near Vienna, gaining the epithet 'Saviour of Vienna'.

[25] Mariazell, Basilika, Schatzkammer, 1.P 39–97. The chasuble is mentioned in 1868 as a 'gold embroidered white old vestment', without further statement of provenance. Miksa 1868, 21. Also: Budapest 2004, V-3 and figures. The Turkish origin of the fabric is still not widely known.

[26] See n. 15.

[27] Székely National Museum, Sfântu Gheorghe, inv. no 21. There a fabric of related pattern in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, inv. no. 145–1891, and in the Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels, inv. no. 1231. Atasoy et al. 2001, plates 73–74.

[28] Székely National Museum, Sfântu Gheorghe, inv. no. 21/884.

[29] Székely National Museum, Sfântu Gheorghe, inv. no. 21/c.

[30] Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 7375; Budapest 2013, pp. 146–147, cat. IV.16 and fig; Brussels-Kraków 2015, p. 245, cat. no. 138 (Emese Pásztor).

[31] Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 13 414, purchased from Fülöp Lőwy, 1894.

Ill. 2. Chasuble cut from polychromatic Ottoman velvet, 1st half of the 16th c., Székely National Museum, Sfântu Gheorghe, inv. no. 21/884

Ill. 3. Chasuble cut from Ottoman *zebaft*, early 17th c., Székely National Museum, Sfântu Gheorghe, inv. no. 21/884

Ill. 4. Chasuble cut from Ottoman *serâser*, 2nd half of the 17th c., Székely National Museum, Sfântu Gheorghe, inv. no. 21/c

Ill. 5. Back chasuble panel cut from an Ottoman *kemha* silk, late 16th–early 17th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 7375

ll. 6. Back chasuble panel cut from an Ottoman *kemha* silk, late 16th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 13414

Several kinds of non-garment Turkish textiles also became popular in Europe. One was the *yastık*, the ornate top cover of a rectangular cushion made to be placed on the floor or on a low, platform-like seat. *Yastık yüzüs* (sofa cushion covers) were made out of Bursa velvet interwoven with gold and silver thread (*çatma*), silk lampas, or atlas embroidered with gilded silver and silver wire (*sim, sırma*) and silk. These were usually made in pairs, sometimes in sets of four or more[32] and had sizes of 135–150 × 75–85 cm. Their ornament always had the same layout: stylized flower patterns in six pointed niches in a narrow band forming the border at each short side, and a centre field pattern of large flowers, palmettes and rosettes in displaced rows or an enormous mandorla decorated with flowers and leaves. The cushions belonging to the furnishings of Turkish war tents, being easily portable items, were frequent parts of the booty during the wars with the Ottoman Empire, and became well known all over Europe. In Hungary and Transylvania, they were used for comfortable travel in wagons, carriages or sleighs, and were known as 'Porte carriage cushions'.[33] It was also a custom to place one under the head of the deceased at the burial of a Hungarian noble. Despite the many written sources telling of secular uses of *yastık*s,

32 Atasoy et al. 2001, p. 321.

33 Pásztor 1995, pp. 137–145.

Ill. 7. Bursa velvet cushion cover, Ottoman, 16th–17th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 7362 ☙

most of the existing examples survived in church collections, where they found diverse uses, either whole or in converted form.[34] In Catholic churches, they were transformed into altar frontals, chasubles and copes or used to decorate the centres of church flags and wall hangings.[35] They also found uses in Lutheran and Orthodox churches. The Lutheran church of Garamszeg (now Hronsek, Slovakia) donated a fine 16th–17th-century velvet *yastık* to the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest in 1890[36] (Ill. 7), but we have no information concerning its previous function in the church.

In Catholic churches, cushion covers were most commonly made into chasubles. One made out of a *serâser yastık* brocaded with silver and gilt thread survived in the collection of the parish church of Turobin in Poland, and is now held in the Archdiocesan Museum of Religious Art (Muzeum Archidiecezjalne Sztuki Religijnej) in Lublin.[37] On a chasuble made from a 17th-century *çatma yastik* held in the church of Matthew the Apostle in Klwów, also in Poland, the fan-shaped carnations are inverted.[38] The Budapest Iparművészeti Múzeum

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34 Atasoy et al. 2001, pp. 320–321.

35 The SS Małgorzata and Stanisław Church of Żębocin, Poland, has a church wall hanging adorned at the centre by a complete 17th-century cushion panel. Kraków 1990, vol. II, fig. 414. (not in catalogue).

36 Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 7362. Bursa velvet *(çatma)* cushion cover. Ottoman, 16th–17th c., from the Lutheran church at Garamszeg, c. 1890.

37 Kraków 1990, vol I, p. 326, cat. 619; vol II, plate XXXIII.

38 Warsaw 1983, p. 54, cat. 107, plate XI.,. A close analogy of the cushion cover is held in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, no. 77–268.

Ill. 8. Front chasuble panel cut from an Ottoman Bursa silk velvet, 17th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 8396

holds two chasuble pieces made from Turkish *çatma yastık*s, both donated in 1895 from the collection of the decorative painter Róbert Scholtz (1837–1912). One is a front panel (Ill. 8),[39] and the other is a back panel made from an exquisite Turkish velvet, *çatma* of deep claret colour with a well-proportioned pattern woven in silver thread (Ill. 9).[40]

There are also examples of liturgical garments made out of more than one cushion. Such is a Russian Orthodox cope in the Kremlin Armoury Museum in Moscow, made of two velvet panels with similar patterns.[41] In addition to velvet cushion covers, large Turkish floor coverings, often with bordered designs, were used to make vestments.[42]

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39 Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 8396

40 Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 8397. When the lining was removed, the top and bottom ends of the velvet were found to be five-segment strips, typical of cushions, contradicting its previous identification as part of a floor covering. Cf. also Brussels-Kraków 2015, p. 245, cat. no. 138 (Emese Pásztor).

41 Atasoy et al. 2001, p. 212, fig. 95 (Inv. no. TK -2216)

42 The parish church of Kościelec, Poland, holds a chasuble made of floor coverings, with an asymmetric pattern. Kraków 1990 vol. I, pp. 328–329, cat. 625, and vol. II, fig. 392.

Ill. 9. Back chasuble panel cut from an Ottoman silk velvet, Bursa or Istanbul, early 17th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 8041, 8397

Cushions decorated with embroidery imitating fabric patterns were almost as popular as those made of costly silk fabric. The simpler were made with silk thread on linen,[43] and the more sophisticated with metal thread on silk atlas. An altar frontal assembled from Turkish cushion covers embroidered with gold and silver thread on silk atlas and European silk fabric has survived in the collection of Mariefred Church in Sweden.[44]

Turkish knotted carpets were held in high regard in Protestant churches[45] (Ill. 10). Prayer, bathing and audience rugs were put to various purposes—covering the communion table, the lectern and the pulpit, or the bier at a funeral. Although Turkish carpets were widespread in Calvinist churches in Royal Hungary, where 17th and 18th-century inventories regularly mention one or two items, the richest collection of Ottoman Turkish carpets today, numbering some five hundred, is that of the Saxon Lutheran Church of Transylvania.[46] Carpets from Lutheran and Calvinist churches in Transylvania made

43 17th-century Turkish embroidered linen cushion cover held in the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest; a picture of it was published by Palotay 1940 (cat. 7 and fig.), who considered it to be Transylvanian.

44 Geijer 1951, cat. 110. and pl. 47.

45 Prayer rug, 17th century. Purchased from the Transylvanian Reformed Church in Bősháza (now Biușa, Romania), 1914, Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 7951.

46 Cf. Boralevi et al. 2005 and Wetter and Ziegler 2014, pp. 272–278.

Ill. 10. Prayer rug, Ottoman Empire, 17th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 7951

up most of the 312 items dating from the 15th to the 18th centuries which the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest displayed at the world's first exhibition dedicated to Turkish carpets in 1914. The Museum subsequently acquired possession of many of these carpets, so that it now has the second largest collection of Ottoman Turkish carpets in the world, after the Türk ve İslâm Eserleri Müzesi in Istanbul.[47]

Another type of Turkish carpet was the prayer rug (*seccade*) with gold and silver thread embroidered on velvet. One of these, converted into an altar frontal, is held in Vårdnäs Church in Sweden.[48]

In addition to carpets, Protestant churches have preserved square or rectangular *makrama* headscarves with silk and gold-and-silver embroidery on gossamer-fine linen (*dülbent*), turban covers (*kavuk örtüsü*), napkins (*yağlık*) and wrapping cloths (*bohça*) used as communion

47 Budapest–Keszthely 1994; Budapest 2007.

48 Geijer 1951, 119, no. 120 and pl. 46, no. 111.

kerchiefs, communion table covers, and pulpit and lectern covers.[49] Whereas Turkish knotted rugs were for everyday use, embroidered covers were only laid out for communion.

Turkish embroidered cloths of various kinds were popular in both Hungary and Transylvania. There were often more than ten of them in the trousseau of noble brides. Subsequently, by the custom of the time, they were donated to Protestant churches, where they survived as communion table covers, and many of them are now held in the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest. Among them are Turkish turban covers purchased from the church in Ónod in 1914 (Ill. 11),[50] and from the Calvinist church of Szendrő in 1939 (Ill. 12),[51] and a wrapping cloth, also from Szendrő (Ill. 13).[52]

The last major category of Christian church textiles of Turkish origin are saddle covers (*çaprag*) and horse blankets (*çuldar*) (Ill. 14),[53] with gold and silver wire embroidery on velvet or covering the entire surface. These were usually parts of the booty of war. Later they were worked into altar frontals in Catholic and Lutheran churches[54] and dalmatics in Orthodox churches, but there are also Turkish saddle cloths which adorn the centre of a Torah curtain kept in the Jewish Museum (Židovské Muzeum) in Prague.[55] Metal-thread embroidery applications cut from saddle cloths have been found adorning chasubles and altar frontals.[56]

Some of the Turkish textiles we have considered form distinct categories, while others survive in scattered examples. However, they were all familiar everyday objects in Hun-

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49 The most substantial collections of linen-based embroidered church textiles—including Turkish embroidery—in Hungary are those in the Iparművészeti Múzeum (Museum of Applied Arts), Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum (The Hungarian National Museum) in Budapest, Tiszáninneni Református Egyházkerület Tudományos Gyűjteményei (The Museum of the Tisza Reformed Church District) in Sárospatak, Tiszántúli Református Egyházkerület Tudományos Gyűjteményei Múzeuma (Museum of the Tiszántúl Reformed Church District) in Debrecen. See also: Takács 1975, pp. 397–413.

50 Turban cover *(kavuk örtüsü)* used as communion kerchief in Protestant church. Purchased from the Calvinist church at Ónod (Hungary), 1915, Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 11 307.

51 Turban cover *(kavuk örtüsü)* used as communion kerchief in Protestant church. Purchased from the Calvinist church at Szendrő (Hungary), 1939, Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 19 462.

52 Wrapping cloth *(bohça)* used as communion kerchief in Protestant church. Purchased from the Calvinist church at Szendrő (Hungary), 1939, Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 19 465.

53 Horse cover *(çuldar)*. Purchased from the Calvinist church at Szendrő (Hungary), 1939, Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 19 477.

54 Four altar frontals from Polish Catholic churches may serve as examples: there are two embroidered red velvet Turkish saddle covers in the Archdiocese Museum in Poznań (Muzeum Archidiecezjalne w Poznaniu) (Warsaw 2000, pp. 216–217, cat. 115–116) and two saddle covers with full-surface gilded silver wire embroidery in the parish church of Krasne (Kraków 1990, vol. I, p. 299, cat. 546), all made in the second half of the 17th century. The Lutheran Köping Church in Sweden also holds a Turkish saddle cover of embroidered velvet, donated to the church in 1701. Geijer 1951, p. 116, no. 105.

55 Tora curtain, Bohemia (Prague, Old-New Synagogue), 1718, donated by Zelig ben Samuel Gershelis and his wife Rizlah, inv. no. 27.356. Kybalová et al. 2003, p. 146, no. 36. and fig. 36.

56 The collection of the Rezidenz, Paramentenkammern und Depot in Munich holds such a chasuble and altar frontal, inv. no. Res. Mü, AHK, 116, Nr. 44 and 174, Nr. 6. Munich 1984, pp. 67–71, cat. 5.

Il. 11. Turban cover (*kavuk örtüsü*) used as communion kerchief in Protestant church, Ottoman Empire, late 16th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 11307

Ill. 12.Turban cover (*kavuk örtüsü*) used as communion kerchief in Protestant church, Ottoman Empire, 17th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 19462

Ill. 13. Wrapping cloth (*bohça*) used as communion kerchief in Protestant church, Ottoman Empire, 17th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 19465

Ill. 14. Horse-cover (*çuldar*), Ottoman Empire, late 17th c., Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, inv. no. 19477

gary in the 16th and 17th centuries, and Hungarian-language sources frequently refer to them by name. After the Ottomans were expelled from Hungary in the 18th century, however, Turkish expressions fell out of European usage, and the provenance and original function of the liturgical textiles in places of worship gradually fell into oblivion. References to their 'Turkish' or 'Porte' origins became increasingly rare in church inventories, and by the second half of the 19th century, everybody had forgotten where these liturgical textiles had come from.

At about the same time, however, world's fairs started to foster the interest for the relics of the past, and stimulated collection and research. This led to a rising interest in Eastern art. For the purpose of raising the standard of manufactures, great public collections were set up throughout Europe, the first being the South Kensington Museum in London in 1852 (the Victoria and Albert Museum after 1899), followed by a series of others, including the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest in 1872, which enthusiastically built up collections of oriental, and particularly Turkish, textiles. The Turkish textiles purchased by or gifted to the new Budapest museum in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however, were usually registered as 'Persian' works without any more detailed description.[57] Owing to the fashion for the Persian style in Western Europe, Turkish knotted carpets, silks and embroidery were often labelled 'Persian'. Hungarians still tend to refer to knotted carpets as 'Persian rugs'. Scholarly research on Ottoman carpets, mostly surviving in Transylvanian churches, only started in the early 20th century.[58] The springboard for this process, and its greatest event, was the Exhibition of Turkish Carpets (*Erdélyi török szőnyegkiállítás*) held in the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest in 1914.

In the century since then, many exhibitions, books and articles have explored Ottoman Turkish crafts and once again brought them to public attention. This present event demonstrates that the process has still not come to an end.

(Translated by Alan Campbell)

[57] Although *çatma yastık* cushion covers were known and used in Central and Eastern Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries, several examples having survived in museums and church collections, their origin and original functions were forgotten by the second half of the 19th century. The *Beérkezési Napló* ('acquisitions diary') of the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest for 1878, illustrated with drawings, records cushion panels purchased or donated during the year as 15th–16th century 'Persian brocade' or 'Damascene work' (inv. no. 7569, 7570 7377, 8036 and 7566).

[58] Kröger 2006.

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The Place of Ottoman Art in Polish Art during the Renaissance

Textiles are often regarded as 'cross-cultural phenomena'[1] in studies on the transfer of art forms between various cultures. Elegant silk textiles, imported to Europe from the East since early mediaeval times, were a source of inspiration and led to the emergence of innovative stylistic concepts. Eastern textiles became in Europe synonymous with wealth; they singled out their owners as members of the court and church elites. This is why in 1365, Rudolph IV (1339–1365), Duke of Austria, Styria and Carinthia, who in 1365 founded the University of Vienna, was entombed in attire made from cloth brought from northern Persia, ruled then by the dynasties of Turco-Mongol lineage;[2] the clothing of Charles de Blois (1318–1364), prince of Brittany, manufactured around 1364, was sewn from 32 pieces of cloth of similar provenance;[3] and, at the same time, ceremonial masses in St Mary's church in Gdańsk (Ger.: Danzig) were celebrated in vestments made of textiles with Arabic inscriptions. The textiles imported from the Near and Middle East inspired the production of imitations in European workshops, primarily in Italy and Spain. As a result, among the rich patterns that contribute to the artistic expression of mediaeval European textiles, we can see many elements imported from eastern ornaments, transmitted by diffusion and adopted in Europe, already in the Early Middle Ages. In this way, patterns and their elements acquired from the East enriched various domains of European art. In some cases, they imparted a specific kind of expression to the works of art, added an exotic note, and enhanced decorative value by using contrasting sets of vivid colours. The same occurred when the balanced, elegant and formally perfect Renaissance art ruled in Europe and the tastes of the patrons followed the forms flourishing among the artistic elites of Florence, Venice and Rome.

The relations between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ottoman Empire were satisfying for both powers at that time. This policy withstood even the joint Tatar

1 Wittkower 1987, pp. 9–15; Grabar 1999; Rublack 2010.

2 Ritter 2000, pp. 105–136.

3 Boucher 2003, p. 157.

and Ottoman raids, which reached as far west as the towns of Tarnów and Przemyśl and central Lithuania at that time. The truce concluded between Poland and the Ottoman Empire in 1501 led to many decades of an almost friendly relationship. A peace treaty with the sultan, signed in 1533, lasted till the beginning of the 17th century and it was the first 'eternal' treaty between a Christian and a Muslim state in modern Europe.

The mutual, pacific attitude between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ottoman Empire was not shaken even by anti-Turkish, somewhat condescending, pieces of writing, known as *turcyki*, popular in Poland in the 16th century. These short, usually rhymed pieces were known in the West as *Turcica*; in Poland, they were probably distributed by Filippo Buonaccorsi, known as Philippus Callimachus Experiens (Pol.: Filip Kallimach, 1437–1496), an Italian humanist, teacher of the elder sons of King Casimir IV Jagiellon (Pol.: Kazimierz IV Jagiellończyk 1427–1492). The most popular authors of *turcyki* were the writer Stanisław Orzechowski (1513–1566) and the poet Jan Kochanowski (1530–1584). In his poem *Satyr*, Kochanowski recalled Tatar raids and the horrible fate of Polish prisoners suffering in Ottoman captivity. Among those calling in their writings on a fight against the 'Turks' were the poet and chronicler Marcin Bielski (1495–1575) and the political writer Józef Wereszczyński (c. 1530–1598/99). A considerable number of anti-Turkish publications were printed in Krakow. These included, for example, *turcyki* by foreign authors issued in the aftermath and dealing with the naval victory of the Holy League at Lepanto in 1571. On the other hand, the poet Mikołaj Rej (1505–1569) had also pointed out positive aspects in his poem *Turk*. So did another poet, Erazm Otwinowski (1529–1614), who together with Andrzej Bzicki represented Poland on a diplomatic mission to the Ottoman Imperial Court in 1557. He gathered his impressions from the journey in *Wypisanie drogi tureckiej* (A Recount of the Turkish Route).[4] Hetman Jan Amor Tarnowski (1488–1561), who studied Ottoman military art, gathered his numerous favourable comments on the subject in the treatise *Consillium rationis bellicae* (Plans on Methods of War, 1558).

As a consequence of these diverse perceptions and attitudes towards their south-eastern neighbour, the Polish-Lithuanian gentry recognized the Ottoman state as a great and strong empire, and therefore tried to avoid conflicts, but at the same time also as a country exceptionally interesting and rich, attractive for its exotism and cultural identity. This mixture of fear and curiosity, respect and fascination, motivated Polish society to be inclined to peaceful relations with the neighbouring Ottoman Empire.

Under these circumstances, the king's will and the inclination of the gentry favoured extensive trade with the Ottomans during the Renaissance, continuing a tradition as old as the 14th century. The trade with the Ottoman Empire became for 16th-century Poland one of the major routes of foreign commercial exchange, and hence the Renaissance epoch saw great amounts of Oriental goods arriving in Poland. The higher ranks of Polish-Lithuanian society, then rising in wealth, thus acquired a variety of luxurious and exotic goods.[5] Oriental textiles became essential in transmitting elements from the Otto-

[4] Nosowski 1974.

[5] Dziubiński 1998, p. 147.

man Orient to the formal repertoire of Polish art. They systematically altered the tastes of the Polish-Lithuanian people and prepared the ground for the emergence of Sarmatism. The term appeared for the first time in Polish Enlightenment circles around 1760 and was used by scholars to characterize Polish culture during the Early Modern period in its entirety or, respectively, with regard to particular features.

The textiles were readily acquired by rulers, the aristocracy and townsmen thanks to the tradition, to their high quality, and recognized aesthetic value. Manufactured in the Ottoman Empire, they were made from the best materials: carpets knotted with quality wool, silk wall hangings often woven with an addition of gold and silver threads, spectacular silk textiles, velvets, and brocades with golden or silver threads. The patterns on the textiles usually consisted of floral or geometric ornaments in contrasting colours, most frequently placed on a red background, in a dark red hue, distinctive and expressive. The imported textiles were readily accepted for the sake of prestige due to their material and artistic quality, especially when compared with western imports, which did not satisfy the desire for luxury. The owners used them to demonstrate their material status and for practical reasons—interior decoration and for tailoring of clothes. This is profusely evidenced by representations in Polish portrait painting.

Trade routes ran from Bursa, Istanbul and Ankara, Ottoman towns with active looms, through Kam'yanets-Podilskyy (Pol.: Kamieniec Podolski, today in Ukraine), an important trade town, lying closest to the boundary with the Ottoman Empire. Another trade route ran through Śniatyń to Lviv (Pol.: Lwów, now Ukraine). The Ottoman traders did not stop in Lviv. They went farther to the west, to the famous markets in Jarosław, or to Poznań, Gdańsk, Krakow, and Wrocław (Ger.: Breslau); some of them went through Kiev (now Kyiv, Ukraine) to Moscow.[6]

The end of the 16th century was a time of increased inflow of Ottoman carpets to Poland.[7] Their great popularity was related to the interest shown by the king and his court as early as the middle of the century.[8] Tadeusz Mańkowski quotes sources indicating that the castellan of Krakow, Wawrzyniec Spytek Jordan, set out to the Ottoman Empire in search of carpets for the decoration of the halls in the royal castle in Krakow on the occasion of the royal wedding of Sigismund II Augustus (Pol.: Zygmunt II August, r. 1548–1572) with Catherine of Austria (1533–1572) in 1553. Jordan supposedly brought 132 carpets, which were used to cover and decorate walls in a part of the castle that lacked tapestries.[9] In 1585, King Stephen Báthory (Hung.: Báthory István; Pol.: Stefan Batory, r. 1576–1586) ordered 34 carpets in Turkey through some Armenian merchants. Báthory had previously ruled as Prince (1571–1576) of Transylvania, a tributary state of the Ottoman Empire. In this intermediate cultural realm between Ottoman-oriental and

6 Mańkowski 1959, pp. 50–51.

7 Biedrońska-Słota 2013, pp. 175–182.

8 Paweł Postolski, royal courtier, in 1591 had an 'old striped small rug', cf. Gębarowicz, 1973, vol. I, p. 102.

9 Mańkowski 1935, pp. 21–22.

European traditions, carpets were very popular and became integrated into special liturgical services. Ottoman rugs have retained their use as a church decoration especially in Protestant congregations in Transylvania.[10] The King's order comprised various groups of carpets: six carpets of various size, as well as red carpets with a yellow and blue pattern. The king also ordered 'carpets all alike, beautiful, white with red paint, as in Turkey they commonly make, with birds'.[11] These carpets with a white background and a pattern known as the 'bird motif'—a rhythmically repeated motif resembling contours of birds, or the 'dragon type' composed of dragon-shaped motifs—became very popular in Poland (Ill. 1). Textiles of this type are mentioned in customs registers of Krakow.[12] Their popularity is also proved by a fragment of the so-called 'Carpet with dragons' preserved in the collection of the National Museum in Krakow, dating from the end of the 16th century, as well as the so-called 'carpet with birds', stored in the Medelhavsmuseet (Mediterranean Museum) in Stockholm (Ill. 2). The latter was ordered in the Ottoman Empire by the Archbishop of Lviv, Jan Andrzej Próchnicki (d. 1633), as is demonstrated by the bishop's coat-of-arms placed centrally in the carpet's composition. Carpets of this type were very costly and therefore commissioned mainly by the king and by other high-ranking people. The members of other social classes wanted to follow the fashion established by the court but they had to satisfy themselves with painted images of these carpets. This strategy is evidenced by the wall-frescos from the end of the 16th century preserved in the town houses at the Tarnów market square (Ill. 3).[13] 'Carpets with birds' are represented there alongside images of Ottoman carpets decorated with motifs known as *çintamani*, which belonged to the basic canon of Turkish art and was connected with different symbolic meanings (Ill. 4).[14]

Similar processes can be observed in other regions, where Ottoman carpets with various decoration found their place in townsmen's houses, manors, palaces and churches.[15]

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10 Gdańsk 2013–2014; Wetter and Ziegler 2014, pp. 272–278.

11 'Kobierczow iednakich czudnych białych z czerwoną farbą, iako w Turczech pospolicie robią, s ptaki… ', Mańkowski 1935, pp. 22–23 (all translations by Beata Biedrońska-Słota).

12 For example, one white carpet was recorded in 1593, The National Archives in Krakow.

13 Leo 1994, pp. 25–34.

14 The motif known as *çintamani* came from China and Mongolia through Persia and became a characteristic feature of Turkish art, especially in the early period of the Ottoman dynasty. It had the form of three circles, or a simplified form reduced to one circle, usually supplemented with two parallel forms of Chinese clouds called *t'chi*. The origin of the combination of three circles and two clouds is deduced from animalistic symbolism of the Turkish ornament. The *çintamani* motif composed of three circles and two clouds is intended to recall fine regular circular patches on the leopard's coat and stripes on the tiger's coat. In oriental art, these animals were symbols of strength and power.

15 For example, in 1616, the Princes Ostrogski at Dubno in 1616 had: '6 large Persian carpets, 3 small red Persian ones; 30 smaller white Persian carpets'; '13 larger white Persian carpets'; '13 white leopard carpets (with *çintamani* motifs?)'; '12 Persian carpets in columns (ladik type?)'. See Lubomirski 1900, p. 212.

Ill. 1. Carpet with dragons, end of 16th century. The National Museum in Krakow, inv. no. MNK XIX-9464 (photo by Paweł Czarnecki) ☙

Ill. 2. The so-called 'carpet with birds', late 16th century. Medelhavsmuseet, Stockholm, inv. no. NM 0100/1977

Ill. 3. Frescoes in the town houses in Tarnów, Poland, end of 16th century. Author's archive ☙

Ill. 4. Fragment of *çintamani* carpet, Cairo, late 16th c. The National Museum in Krakow, inv. no. MNK XIX-8950

Townsmen of Krakow[16] and Poznań[17] expressed pride in their carpets as early as in the 16th century. Sources reveal that the town residences of Lviv patricians were equipped with carpets described as: Melik Pasha carpets, large carpets, Persian carpets, carpets with columns, Turkmen carpets, Khorasan carpets, Turkish carpets, and silk carpets. The town hall in Lviv even kept a collection of carpets that were loaned for various events.[18]

Turkish carpets also belonged to the standard furnishings of Polish churches in the Renaissance period.[19] It is noteworthy that geometrical ornaments such as those that appear on 'carpets with birds' or 'carpets with dragons', with a pattern of rhythmically repeating elements, were so popular that they influenced forms of artisanal works in Poland. One example of this is the ornamental decoration with unusual compositions presented on the support panels in the choir stalls of the parish church at Biecz,[20] dated to the beginning of the 16th century. The decoration consists of geometrical and floral motifs arranged in a network of variable and complex symmetrical sets. They probably originated from the wish to repeat the decorations on rugs that were being hung on the stall support panels for the convenience of the clergy and lay persons. Such a habit is known chiefly from Transylvania, where rugs were used in the decoration of churches, including on the fronts and support panels of choir stalls, as in the church at Biertan (Ger.: Birthälm; Hung.: Berethalom) at the beginning of the 16th century. This tradition is clearly reflected in the rugs placed in this manner in the churches of Sighişoara (Ger.: Schässburg; Hung.: Segesvár) and Braşov (Ger.: Kronstadt; Hung.: Brassó).[21] As for Biecz, a town situated on the trading route from Transylvania, Turkish rugs would be

16 Customs registers of Krakow mention in 1593: 'one white carpet', 'carpets from Turkey', 'Turkish carpets', '18 Turkish carpets were brought to the town' in 1595. In the years 1599–1600, merchant Sierggiaty Andreas from Kaffa paid customs in Krakow for 40 small Turkish carpets and 50 Turkish carpets; in 1602, merchant Janus Mosal from Kłapina brought five carpets, another merchant, 12 carpets from Kaffa and 24 Turkish carpets, a Jew from Krakow, 45 Turkish carpets; in 1607–1608 six variegated carpets were brought in, Samuel Sanman brought six white ones and Tomasz Kulesza, three carpets. In 1556, the wife of a goldsmith from Krakow, Mathisek, had five carpets; a painter from Krakow, Wojciech Stefanowicz, in 1588 had 'two yellow carpets'; in 1602, a single merchant brought 45 carpets. Individual townsmen had in their houses about a dozen carpets each, e.g., goldsmith Mateusz had 12 carpets.

17 Thus: a goldsmith from Poznań, Mikołaj Schillong, had three carpets in 1578. In 1571, the widow of the merchant David had a 'large carpet with a lot of holes' evaluated at 15 zloty. We may suppose that it was worth a fortune, even if largely destroyed. In 1577, Regina Bruxellowa had red carpets hanging on the walls. Similar notes refer to the 17th century, again mentioned being Turkish carpets: red, Persian, white. In Poznań, the head of the Customs House, Grzegorz Greda, who died in 1582, had: '9 new yellow carpets 7 florins each; 4 old yellow carpets, 4 florins each; 4 new white ones, 10 florins each, among them an old white one worth 6 florins'. Cf. Nawrocki and Wisłocki 1961.

18 Lewicki 1921.

19 For example, an 'old carpet-like rug' was recorded in Our Lady's church at Kamieniec Podolski in 1580; cf. Gębarowicz 1973, vol. III, p. 316.

20 Rehorowski 1963, pp. 289–300.

21 Gdańsk 2013–2014, fig. on pp. 20 and 61.

used in the same manner to decorate the support panels of the stalls and to inspire local woodcarvers to create a decoration that followed the pattern on the rugs. These compositions, unusual in Polish art, were interpreted as taking into account connections in style and workmanship. However, if we consider the direct import of forms from oriental rugs, the composition on the stall support panels becomes clearer. This interpretation is corroborated by information in sources that the rugs were popular among Biecz townsmen.[22] Further proof that Turkish art (including rugs) was present already in churches at the beginning of the 17th century is provided by Polish paintings.[23] It should be added that fascination with oriental art, present in nearly every home, did not hamper the development of the Renaissance art forms. This mainstream art flourished thanks to royal patronage and resulted in first-class creations.

Ornamented silk textiles arrived in Poland from the Ottoman Turkey already at the end of the 15th century and were used throughout the Renaissance period for the fabrication of liturgical vestments. Turkish, as well as Persian textiles were profusely represented in the treasuries of churches and monasteries. In the inventories of these institutions these objects are frequently recorded as purchased or as donations.[24] Wawel Cathedral, for example, possessed in 1562 ' …*casula ex camcha turcica; tela Turcica; Faciletum Turcicum caelestini coloris; Ornatus Turcicus in hatlaso*… '.[25] Noteworthy is the high value of such textiles, e.g. quilts covered with gold-threaded textile, whose value equalled that of a highest class horse.[26]

The most striking influence exerted by the eastern works of art on the tastes and appearance of Poles was that of oriental attire for men. In comparison to other countries, men's garments reigned as expressions of wealth and luxury in Poland quite early, and this was observed with some anxiety by contemporaries. The writer Łukasz Górnicki (1527–1603) noted with astonishment in his *Dworzanin polski* [The Polish Courtier], that a great variety of dress was present in Poland, following the modes not only of other European countries but also of the Near East.[27] Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski (1503–1572), in his treaty *O poprawie Rzeczypospolitej* [On the Improvement of the Commonwealth], expressed his surprise that Poles were using at the same time garments coming from the East and from the West.[28] Historian and commentator Jost Ludwig Dietz (Pol.: Justus

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22 Patrician Stanisław Mączka had 'on the walls two carpets, one new, the other old'; cf. Bujak 1902, p. 373.

23 Biedrońska-Słota 1999.

24 Sokołowski 1900. p. III.

25 Bochnak 1979.

26 Dziubiński 1998, p. 166.

27 'They are dressing once in Italian, once in Spanish, Brunswick, hussarian, both in new and old fashion, in Cosssack, Tatar or Turkish style' ['Ubierają się… to po włosku, to po iszpańsku, po brunszwicku, po usarsku dwojako: staro i nowo, po kozacku, po tatarsku, po turecku…'], Górnicki 1954, pp. 161–162.

28 'And even more amazing is, when one who wears a hood in the morning, is taking a walk in Turkish attire later in the evening, wearing a pointed calpac, shod shoes, red or white in colour' ['A bardziej jeszcze niesamowite, gdy ktoś, kto rano nosił kaptur, wieczorem kroczy w tureckiej szacie, w spiczastym kołpaku, w podkutych butach czerwonych lub białych'], Modrzewski 1953, p. 197.

Ludwik Decjusz, 1485–1545), wondered why Poles dressed themselves in an Asian style, in long robes, which he described as effeminate.[29]

Oriental elements were also noted by contemporaries in the attire of Hetman Jan Zamoyski (1542–1605) when he arrived in Byczyna after defeating Austrian Archduke Maximilian in 1588. He was wearing a dark violet Hungarian-style dress, lined with lynx fur, and a Hungarian calpac on a cushion with three great white ostrich feathers was kept behind him.[30]

As already mentioned, garments and textiles from the East were popular already at the royal court of the Jagiellons. There is a record preserved that Sultan Süleyman's wife Roxelana (1500/06–1558) sent a letter to King Sigismund II Augustus in 1549 '… To avoid the letter being without significance …, Sultana sents 2 pairs of trousers with a shirt, with a sash for them, 6 kerchiefs and a towel'.[31] The kerchief was a symbol of power imported from Byzantine culture, used in the Ottoman Empire, especially in the times of Süleyman the Magnificent.[32] In this case, the kerchief symbol was interpreted in a similar way in the Ottoman Empire and in Europe, and hence also in Poland. The kerchief appears on portraits not only in the hands of rulers but also of aristocratic women. King Sigismund II Augustus's envoy wrote in 1557 that during the farewell ' … an underwear dress of gold--threaded textile was brought and another, also gold-threaded, wide overcoat, and also a few pieces of *kemha*'. [33] Also, Henri Valois (Pol.: Henryk Walezy, 1551–1584), the king of Poland in the years 1573–1574, was not reluctant to such luxury. Despite his French origin, he dressed in Polish costumes on several occasions and was later commemorated in this garb in an engraved portrait by Peter de Jode II.[34] The artist presented the king in a *zupan,* with a soft silk sash and a *delia* overcoat lined with ermine fur, buttoned in the centre with a splendid brooch.

A document from 1568 reports on the trade in Turkish clothes, enumerating a register of goods sent by the Sublime Porte to Poland and Moscow through a merchant named Mehmed.[35] The presence of Turkish garments in Poland is also documented by chasubles preserved in the Jasna Góra Monastery and in Muzeum Diecezjalne (Diocesan Museum) at Tarnów, sewn from Turkish textiles of the *serâser* type.[36] They are clear evidence of undoubted *hil'ats*, that is kaftans sewn from the most expensive textiles for sultans and court

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29 Justus Ludwik Decjusz says: 'When Albert and Alexander the Jagiellons ruled, the splendour of the costumes up to effeminacy was observed; the clothing was a long, velvet dress, gently undulating, similar in fashion to those used by Parthians in Asia' ['Gdy Olbracht i Aleksander Jagiellończyk panowali, przepych w ubiorach aż do zniewieściałości był posunięty; odziewano się w suknię bławatową długą, rzadko fałdowaną, krojem niegdyś u Partów w Azji używanym zrobioną'], after Gołębiowski 1861, p. 36.

30 *Ibidem*, p. 21.

31 Abrahamowicz 1959, p. 106.

32 Mangir 2014.

33 Kraszewski 1860, p. 20.

34 Warszawa 2002, cat. H8/1.

35 Abrahamowicz 1959, item 193.

36 Atasoy, et al. 2001, p. 262; Piwocka 2006.

officials of the highest rank, donated also to Polish rulers as 'robes of honour'. These were not only diplomatic presents but also dress given to envoys, who were obliged by ceremonial rules to wear them when meeting the sultan.

These selected examples confirm that complete oriental attire were imported to the Commonwealth and that they could be used for special occasions in order to impress and demonstrate splendour, and in this manner they influenced the development of clothing habits in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The aristocracy, gentry and townsmen followed the example of the court and purchased clothes made from oriental fabrics. Such garments made up an important part of their wealth. Registers of movables in Krakow noted: in 1616, 'a Turkish delia made of green brocaded velvet', 'a green Turkish *delia* lined with sable fur',[37] and in 1627, 'a Turkish dress for summer time in peacock eye',[38] that is, made of a fabric with a characteristic pattern resembling the bird's feather. We should note here that Krzysztof Zbaraski (1580–1627) is shown in portrait wearing clothing made of just such fabric (Ill. 5). Townsmen possession registers in Poznań include as early as 1583, 'a Turkish *giermek* dress made of *mukhayyar*', and in 1569, 'a waistcoat made of *mukhayyar*'. Summer-time dresses made of *mukhayyar* were used by Poznań townswomen; men used mostly *shubas* made of *mukhayyar*, towels and *inderak* petticoats made of *mukhayyar*. Members of the intellectual elites wore similar garb. The movables of Paweł Jasiński, a doctor of philosophy and medicine, included in 1620 a Turkish overcoat made of *mukhayyar*, a Turkish red towel-like garment, Turkish dark brown *inderak* petticoat made of *mukhayyar*, and two ells of length of Turkish gold-threaded textile.[39]

The Polish costumes imitated oriental ones and the close relation was further enhanced by the use of Ottoman luxury items. Mentions of Turkish *ferezjas*, *shubas* made of *kitajka*, summer dresses made of *kitajka*, *mentliks* made of Turkish *mukhayyar*, gowns of *mukhayyar*, bodices, *delurkas* of Turkish *mukhayyar*, recur many times in movables inventories of both aristocrats' and townsmen's families. Members of those families were commemorated in such costumes on portraits. A long dress made of a gold-threaded fabric, with open sleeves reaching to the lower end of the dress, as in the Ottoman sultan's clothing, is worn by the king on the painting of the former altar of St Stanislaus (c. 1500, today in the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw).[40] A drawing depicting a parliament session in 1506 shows some deputies wearing high exotic turbans.[41] Similarly, one relief on the tomb of Krzysztof Szydłowiecki, dated 1533–1536, in the collegiate church at Opatów, presents persons in tunic-*zupans* resembling Turkish garments.[42] Beside the scenes of the battles of Orsha (1514, Pol.: Orsza, today in Belarus) and Obertyn (1531), the tomb of Hetman Jan Tarnowski and his son commemorates the conquest of Starodub. In the depiction of this

37 Czubek 1912, p. 392.

38 The National Archives in Krakow, Acta Advocatialia no. 239, p. 1417.

39 Nawrocki and Wisłocki 1961, p. 772.

40 Kochanowska-Reiche 2002, fig. on p. 30.

41 Warszawa 2002, vol. I, cat. H1/4.

42 Kraków 1979, ill. 38–49.

Ill. 5. *Portrait of Krzysztof Zbaraski*, Lviv, c. 1627. Lviv National Art Gallery, inv. no. ж-5894

important event, the hetman is presented in a *zupan* and *delia* of oriental style.[43] Judges in the *Statuty…* (Statutes) by Stanisław Sarnicki, published in 1594, are shown in similar dress, i.e., *zupans* buttoned with small buttons, with ornamental sashes. *Delias* borne on the *zupans* have either short or long free-hanging sleeves, as in Turkish dresses.[44] King Stephen Báthory was presented, as shown in portrait in the Princes Czartoryski Museum in Krakow, wearing a red ornamented *zupan* with a narrow sash, a *delia* with a straight fur collar, and a *magierka* cap with a tall feather fastened in an ornamented aigrette (Pol.: *szkofia)*. He is shown in the same costume in other portraits. A full-figure portrait from the Missionaries monastery in Krakow, painted ca. 1583 by Martin Kober (1550–1609) shows the king wearing a *delia* reaching nearly to his ankles, with a down flare, fitted top, buttoned with small buttons, with open sleeves, hanging along the back; the *zupan* is red, ornamented; the shoes made of yellow leather reach to the ankles, the right hand holds a kerchief (Ill. 6). In a portrait from the beginning of the 17th century in the collection of the Royal Castle in Warsaw, the king is shown in an ornamented damask *zupan*, reaching below the knees, buttoned with small buttons, with a visible narrow white collar of a shirt; on his head he wears a high cap, bent and leaning backwards, with a *szkofia*; his arms are covered with a *delia* buttoned with ornamented metal buttons. The *delia* has a broad simple collar and long open sleeves hanging along the back. On his legs he wears yellow shoes reaching up to the ankle, and red socks. Such costumes were readily imitated by his contemporaries. Similarly, Fieldhetman of Lithuania Roman Sanguszko (1537–1571), in a portrait from the late 16th century in the collection of Regional Museum in Tarnow (Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie), is dressed in a cream-with-blue coloured *zupan*, covering the knees, with a large repeated pattern and a high collarband (Ill. 7). He also wears a fur-lined *delia*, buttoned with small buttons, with a strong flare at the bottom, a large simple collar and open sleeves hanging freely from his arms along the back. A good example is provided by the already mentioned portrait of Krzysztof Zbaraski, who, in the years 1623–1624, acted as an envoy of King Sigismund III Vasa (Pol.: Zygmunt III Waza, r. 1587–1632) to the court of Sultan Murad IV (r. 1623–1640). This mission is confirmed by an exquisite document, a diplomatic credential composed of seven sheets, nearly 5 meters long.[45] Krzysztof Zbaraski is portrayed in a *delia* with motifs characteristic of Turkish textiles of the *serâser* type, from the beginning of the 17th century. The inscription: *Mustafeo/Turcarum/Potenti/simo* is legible in the background of the portrait.[46]

Another important example for our discussion is a portrait of Jan Tarnowski, dated to the turn of the 16th century (Ill. 8). The hetman is presented in attire with Turkish elements, such as the fabric of the *kaftan*, which has a fine diamond pattern. A dress made of a similar fabric is worn by Süleyman the Magnificent in a drawing from the Musée des

43 Kozakiewiczowa 1984, p. 118, fig. 182.

44 Sarnicki 1594, p. 553; Miodońska 1976, pp. 86–95.

45 Żygulski 1988, p.176.

46 Twardowski 2000; Kraków 1992, cat. nr. II/8, ill. 66.

Ill. 6. Martin Kober, *Portrait of King Stephen Báthory*, 1583.
The Missionaries Monastery in Krakow

Ill. 7. *Portrait of Roman Sanguszko*, 16th/17th c. The Regional Museum in Tarnów, inv. no. MT-AM/391

Ill. 8. Portrait of Jan Krzysztof Tarnowski, 18th c. The National Museum in Warsaw, inv. no. MP 5249 (photo by Teresa Żółtowska-Huszcza) ☙

Arts Decoratifs in Paris, dated 1577.[47] Tarnowski's *kaftan* resembles a dress of a *pajk* in the sultan's personal guard. Also, the high socks worn by Tarnowski, tied below the knees, were a distinctive detail of costumes used at the sultan's court. Tarnowski's head is covered with a high *calpac* decorated with an aigrette (*szkofia*) holding very long feathers. The man in the portrait holds in his hand a kerchief from a soft embroidered cloth.

Polish sources note that imports from the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century included sashes from Bursa, Ankara, Chios, and Istanbul.[48] It is well known that silk sashes became an indispensable part of Polish costume already in the 17th century. This information is important because it indicates that sashes were imported also from the Ottoman Empire as early as the 16th century and so challenges the commonly held view that sashes as accessories began to be imported from Persia in the 17th century.

Women's clothes were enriched also with elements originating from the Ottoman Empire. Scarves called *machrama* were imported throughout the 16th century.[49] Such accessories, decorated along margins with embroidered floral motifs, were worn under bonnets. The characteristic long scarves falling on arms and decorated along their margins with flower motifs can be seen on many a female portrait from the 16th century.

The orientalisation of tastes was marked in Polish art already in the 16th century, preparing the ground for a great influx of those influences from the Ottoman Orient a few decades later. It should be stressed that during the Renaissance, Polish art created its own native features, unique and local in character. The then-developing art in Poland acquired more and more features independent of mainstream European trends. The portrait of hetman Tarnowski, described above, bears all these native characteristics. It is painted in a decorative, planar mode; the bulk is reduced to contours filled with colour. The outline is accentuated.

The presented examples clearly demonstrate how Ottoman art assisted in shaping the elements of Polish native style. The motifs accepted from the art of the Orient, intriguing and rich, were adopted from the terrain of a state that was considered a neighbouring power. The reception and adoption of elements of Turkish art provided the foundations for the developing artistic production of Polish Sarmatism.

47 Biedrońska-Słota 1994.

48 Dziubiński 1998, p. 165.

49 *Ibidem*.

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Interactions with the Islamic Orient in Polish Art and Culture

The cultural exchange between Poland and the Islamic Orient has a rich tradition, and it is easy for us to see the traces of the impact and interaction of this relationship, especially during the time of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th and 18th centuries. Poland's relationship with Islamic oriental art and culture during this period presents numerous processes of reception and adaptation.

Objects of applied art from Islamic cultures were highly favoured for their aesthetics among the Polish society of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. There was a noticeable increase in the number of imported goods from Islamic cultures and local production of these Orient-inspired objects flourished in Poland.

The aim of this study is to present these cultural relations along with questions about the reception process and integration of elements from the Islamic Orient in Polish culture of the Early Modern period.

For this aim, Polish art and culture between the 16th and 18th centuries are some of the best examples to examine, especially when trying to describe the phenomenon. It is interesting to notice that these relations were neither just a set of artistic productions revealing Ottoman and Islamic influences. Also, it is important to focus on the socio-political dimensions of the development of artistic forms and styles in Poland that were inspired by the Islamic Orient.

During this process, relations between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Islamic Orient were focused on three main cultures—the Ottoman Empire, the Safavid Empire and the Crimean Khanate—and these contacts were influential on Polish art and culture, as well as customs, as is demonstrated by the costumes worn by the nobility, arms and armour, and even in cuisine and vocabulary assimilated into Polish food and language.

From the 14th to the 16th centuries, three great new empires formed across the eastern world of the Islamic Orient: the Ottoman Empire in Asia Minor and the Balkans, the Safavid Empire in Persia, and the Mughal Empire in India. They continuously influenced each other, not only in political and diplomatic relations but also in artistic production, and each established connections with Europe. The beginning of the relevant timeframe coincides with the Renaissance and Baroque periods in Europe.

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, situated on the borderlands of East and West, was a crossroads of various cultures. The state consisted of different ethnic groups: Poles, Lithuanians, Ruthenians, Tatars, Armenians, Greeks, Jews and Karaites, who alltogether played an important role as mediators between East and West.

The fascination of Polish nobility with Islamic art contributed to great demand for works of Ottoman and Persian craftsmanship. From the 16th to the 18th centuries, Turkish-style costumes for men became fashionable. Expensive Ottoman fabrics, such as velvet, brocade, satin, as well as carpets, tents, weapons and horse tack were purchased in great quantities. Soon, the import of these goods was not adequate to the demand and gave rise to domestic manufacturing of goods that imitated Islamic Oriental models, both in form and decoration. Many workshops established on royal and noble estates, mainly in the border areas of the Commonwealth, competed with Eastern goods and supplemented the demand for them. Initially, Armenians, Jews and Turks from the Ottoman Empire were employed in these workshops, as they were skilled in various crafts and familiar with the decorative motifs, colours and production techniques used in Islamic lands. Therefore, it is possible to say that in the beginning, the goods made in the Polish workshops generally were no different from the originals, with a process whereby oriental influences were absorbed first by accepting a formula or type of object, and then by producing it in workshops. We are able to notice that the demand for oriental goods was unique and greater than in most other European countries, where extensive trade connection with the Islamic East was maintained, but the volume of local production of Islamic Orient-inspired goods and the level of appreciation for this was somehow different Polish kings and the nobility, in contrast to other realms, invested in the requisite skill and labour to make local imitations of Eastern products, and thus satisfied their own growing demand for Islamic Orient-style applied arts.

In fact, within a relatively brief period the impact of Islamic cultures swept across the Polish arts, primarily in fields where Polish culture crossed paths with the oriental world, such as in male fashion and military equipment. The Polish costume of this period was made almost exclusively from imported raw materials and was a mixture of Ottoman and Persian elements. The diversity of available goods was largely due to the privileges granted to merchants, who were permitted to supply the local demand for these goods to a larger extent than in any other European country. Additionally, the goods were traded or produced locally by Polish craftsmen and foreign artisans.

Poland of the 14th century had expanded towards the southeast, annexing Ruthenia and Podolia, and after the dynastic union with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at the end of the century, extended its borders to the coasts of the Black Sea. During this process, two cities, Lviv (Pol.: Lwów) and Kam'yanets-Podilskyy (Pol.: Kamieniec Podolski, both cities now in Ukraine), became the most important centres of Polish trade with the Islamic Orient. Andrzej Dziubiński states that the Ottomans, on taking Genoese Kaffa in Crimea (1475) and the Moldavian ports of Akkerman (Rom.: Cetatea Albă, today Bilhorod-Dnistrovs'kyj in Ukraine) at the mouth of the Dniester and Kilia (Rum.: Chilia, today in the Ukraine) in the Danube delta (1484), gained political and military dominance in the Black Sea. But these shifts did not change the traditional trade routes of the region. The conquest of Constantinople, closing access to Genoese ships to their colonies in Crimea, forced Italian merchants to transport freight by land through Poland. The Ottomans were fully aware of the profit-

able economic significance of the new conquered lands.[1] The Polish and Ottoman states were connected by a dense system of land and sea trade routes. The main one ran from Lviv through Iași and Galați in Moldavia, and after crossing the Danube at Isaccea, ran through eastern Dobruja and eastern Rumelia (Thrace) to Edirne, then on through the towns of Havsa and Çorlu to Istanbul. Merchants on these routes usually preferred the faster and less expensive land-sea route linking Istanbul with Lviv through the Black Sea via the ports of Kiliya and Akkerman. The Ottoman cities most frequently visited by merchants from Poland were Edirne, Istanbul and Bursa. From the second half of the 16th century, Ankara was also an important trade centre, especially for *sof* (camlet) and *tiftik* (mohair). This city was also a stage on the road to Persia through Erzurum and Tabriz. In the Balkans and on the European territory of the Ottoman Empire, wagons were used to carry goods while in Asia caravans of beasts of burden journeyed together for safety. Because of the distance and duration of the journey, a merchant was able to make only two journeys a year between Lviv, Istanbul and Ankara. Nonetheless, these were lucrative journeys that came with high profits. The cost of transport, including the customs duty paid along the way, amounted to about 30 percent of the value of the cargo; however, the oriental trade still remained extremely profitable.

The traces of interaction with the Islamic Orient can be seen especially in military objects. During the Renaissance, Polish weaponry (armaments), which during the Middle Ages had been more closely connected to the Western tradition, moved closer to Ottoman models. Also, many similarities between the Polish and Lithuanian hussar regiments and Ottoman cavalry can be observed. The hussar headgear was derived from Ottoman helmets, with ear flaps, neck guards and visors with attached nose guards. Similar examples can be found in Ottoman miniatures.[2] The wings and wild animal skins used in the uniforms of the Polish hussars were directly inspired by the feathers and skins used by the Ottoman *Deli* Cavalrymen. Also, several contemporary visual materials demonstrate the similarity of their appearance (Ill. 1). We can also mention that the Polish *hetman* insignia, decorated with a plume of feathers, horsetail and cotton ribbons, was also modelled on the *tuğ*—horsetail standards of the Ottomans. The Polish light cavalry, called *pancerni* (or *petyhorcy*), formed in the 16th century and developed during the second half of the 17th century, had a look that was almost the same as the Ottoman models. They wore chain mail on the body with a mail helmet and weapons consisting of sabre, bow and a circular, Ottoman-style shield called by their Turkish name, *kalkan*. Considerable numbers of circular shields were imported from the Islamic East, especially from Ottoman lands and Persia, but many were also manufactured in Poland's eastern cities, especially in Lviv. In Polish collections we are able to find richly decorated Ottoman ceremonial shields, such as one from the Czartoryski Museum in Krakow (Ill. 2).[3] It had come into the possession of Hetman Mikolaj Hieronim Sieniawski during the battle of Vienna. In a mid-17th century portrait of Hetman Wincenty

1 Dziubiński 1999, p. 39.

2 Atıl 1986, pp. 132–133.

3 Żygulski 1999/I, p. 72.

Ill. 1. The so-called 'Stockholm Roll' or 'Polish Roll' (fragment), Krakow, after 1605. Royal Castle in Warsaw, inv. no. ZKW/1528 (photo by Maciej Bronarski)

Gosiewski (1620–1662) held in the Royal Łazienki Muzeum in Warsaw (Ill. 3), we can see his figure in *pancerny* costume, depicted with chainmail and *misiurka* headgear, and with a jewelled Ottoman-style shield that resembles the Czartoryski Museum shield. Jewelled shields were costly decorative pieces in Poland, serving as ornamental accessories for costumes or horse trappings, rather than as actual defensive armour.

We are also able to find Ottoman-style armguards from the first quarter of the 17th century that were used by hussars. For instance, a pair of vambraces used in Poland closely resembles its Ottoman counterparts, but has Old Testament quotations in Latin characters, emulating the Quranic quotations often found on Ottoman armour (Ill. 4).

The war hammers used by the hussars called *nadziak* in Polish derived from the Turkish *nacak*. Ceremonial maces in Poland were called *bulawa*, and they were modelled on Ottoman or Persian prototypes. We are able to see many portraits of Polish commanders painted holding these maces as symbols of power. Another type of mace with six wing plates called a *buzdygan* in Polish were manufactured on a large scale in Poland, both for ceremonial use and for combat. Also, quiver and bow cases, cartridge boxes, mail helmets, and other pieces of armour were among other objects based on Ottoman models.

Saddles replete with equipment represented luxury. They were usually made of a wooden construction and covered with leather and velvet, embroidered with gold or silver and inlaid with precious stones. Large saddlecloths were usually made from heavy silk, velvet or brocade decorated with floral and geometric motifs. Polish saddles in Ottoman style, with embroidered accoutrements (caparisons, saddlecloths, etc.) are preserved in various

Ill. 2. A kalkan shield that according to tradition belonged to Sieniawski family, Turkey, 17th c. The Princes Czartoryski Museum, Krakow, inv. no. XIV-380 (photo by Przemysław Stanek) ☙

Polish collections. Also stirrups were made of a high quality with metal decorations just like the stirrup of Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa Pasha (1634/35–1683).

For hundreds of years the sabre has been considered a typical Polish weapon, arriving from the East with the invading Tatars and Turks, and peaceful Hungarian influences. During the reign of King Ladislaus of Hungary (Hung.: I. László; Pol.: Władysław III Warneńczyk, r. 1440–1444), Louis II of Hungary (Hung.: II. Lajos, r. 1516–1526), and finally Stephen Báthory (Hung.: Báthory István; Pol.: Stefan Batory, r. 1576–1586) on the Polish throne, the sabre became the most important Polish armament for the infantry and hussars. In the second half of the 17th century, a type of sabre called in Poland a *karabela* (meaning 'black menace' in Ottoman Turkish) became extremely popular. In Poland, it was used as a combat weapon until the 18th century, and then it acquired an exclusively ceremonial use. The *karabela* was so popular that it soon gained the status of a national weapon and was worn with a kaftan-like garment, the *kontusz*, that had an equally national

Ill. 3. Portrait of Wincenty Gosiewski, c. 1650–1651. The Royal Łazienki Museum in Warsaw, inv. no. Ł. KR. 136

Ill. 4. Pair of Polish hussars vembraces, 17th/18th c. The National Museum in Krakow, inv. no. MNK V-3902 (photo by Paweł Czernicki) ☙

character in Poland (Ill. 5).[4] Even nowadays, distinguishing Polish-made *karabela* sabres from Ottoman ones is considered to be extremely difficult, especially since the artisans often used imported blades which they reset and ornamented. In many cases, it is known that *karabela* sabres were also emulated in eastern Polish workshops and were imported from Ottoman lands. Ottoman sabres were simply altered for the Polish market by, for instance, adding inscriptions, coats of arms, or initials to the blades or hilts. Such additions are often misleading when determining origin.

4 Biedrońska-Słota 2005, pp. 66–69.

Ill. 5. Karabela sabre, Poland, mid-18th c. The National Museum in Krakow, inv. no. MNK V-44

The largest collection of oriental tents in Europe is kept at Wawel Royal Castle in Krakow. It consists of five complete specimens and one incomplete tent and some separate walls and roofs.King John III Sobieski (Pol.: Jan III Sobieski, r. 1674–1696) obtained the most precious of them during Relief of Vienna in 1683. The Poles made use of Ottoman tents, both in campaigns and at ceremonial events, festivals and hunts. In the letters of Sobieski to his wife, we can read the tremendous sense of his admiration for them.[5]

According to the memoirs of Jan Chryzostom Pasek,[6] Ottoman tents had served to embellish the walls of European mansions and palaces. The tents obtained as war booty in Vienna were held in very high regard, and immediately after being brought to Poland they underwent conservation. Also, it is possible for us to see that as early as October 1683, tent

[5] According to Atasoy and Uluç 2012, p. 73, his perception of the Ottoman vizier's tents was such that after describing the whole complex with its textile walls, 'baths, gardens and fountains', the Polish king wrote that it was as large as Warsaw or Lviv within the walls. The area in which the tents were pitched was encircled by a textile screen, just like the walls encircling a city, and Sobieski's comparison with Warsaw shows how much he was impressed by the tent complex of the Ottoman grand vizier, and the manner in which he refers to the 100,000 Ottoman tents in his letter makes it evident that he was still in a state of disbelief over the victory.

[6] Pasek 1991.

specialists were brought from Lviv to carry out the necessary repairs for the tents stored in the cellars of the royal Łobzów Castle near Krakow.[7] Unfortunately, most of the tents in Polish museums, the number of which at the end of the 18th century is estimated at 'nearly one thousand pieces', were habitually, but often mistakenly referred to as Ottoman tents from the Vienna Battle.[8] Although the main source of Ottoman tents in Poland was war booty in general and looted from the 1683 Ottoman defeat in particular, documentary evidence also indicated to the researchers that many were acquired earlier as orders or direct purchases.

Tadeusz Rybkowski's painting from 1881 also documents that the prestigious Ottoman tents continued to be used for ceremonial purposes as late as the 19th century.[9] It depicts an Ottoman tent pitched next to a wedding procession. Possibly captured in the battle of Żurawno in 1676, the tent came into the possession of the Druszkiewicz family and was used on special occasions that were meticulously recorded. Also, surviving fragments from 18th century tents of Polish workmanship that were manufactured in Lviv or Brody illustrate the close imitation of Ottoman tents. According to Atasoy, some of them are so similar to the Ottoman models that it requires an expert eye to distinguish them. As stated, it could be the result of bringing Ottoman tentmakers to Poland. Also, their presence is documented by a headstone in a cemetery at Lviv dated 1662 that marks the grave of an Armenian tentmaker from the Anatolian city of Diyarbakir.[10]

It can be stated that these influences stood in connection with the wars between Poland and the Ottoman Empire and that the trophies brought to Poland from the field of battle furthered the taste for Islamic art and propagated imitation of Eastern ornaments in objects of art, especially in artistic production.

Trophies from the wars of Poland and the Ottoman Empire between the 16th and 18th centuries, commonly known as the Turkish Wars, have found their way into secular and sacred treasuries and museum collections throughout Europe, with examples appearing in several European countries.[11]

In the first half of the 17th century, Polish encounters with Ottomans were defensive, marked by the defeat at Ţuţora (Pol.: Cecora) in 1620 and the defence of Khotyn (Pol.: Chocim, now in Ukraine) in 1621. In the second half of that century, in the reigns of kings Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki (1669–1673) and John III Sobieski, Poland first suffered defeat, losing the important fortress of Kam'yanets-Podilskyy and surrendering Podolia to the Ottomans. So the Ottomans had occupied a substantial part of Poland's south-eastern lands for 27 years, converting the Kam'yanets-Podilskyy Cathedral into a mosque. Later, Sobieski was victorious again at Khotyn in 1673, at Vienna and Párkány in 1683, which paved the way for the peace of Karlovitz (Sremski Karlovci) in 1699. Chocim and Vienna

7 Piwocka 1999, p. 54.

8 *Ibidem*, p. 56.

9 Atasoy 2000, p. 250.

10 Atasoy and Uluç 2012, pp. 75–76.

11 That is, in Vienna, Budapest, Krakow, Warsaw, Moscow, Dresden, Munich, Karlsruhe.

can be considered two essential victories against the Ottomans. One of the most important post-war impacts of these triumphs was the capture of vast quantities of trophies, especially after Vienna. On this occasion, the Poles captured the entire camp of the Grand Vizier.[12]

Zdzisław Żygulski determines the situation as: 'The rich sources on the military campaign of 1683 that have come down to us make the relief of Vienna one of the best documented historic events, which in addition has been dealt with by numerous historians concerned with political, strategic and tactical questions. On the other hand, the problem of weapons and war trophies has not been tackled frequently enough.' And he also states: 'The relief of Vienna gave rise to many legends and myths, as a result of which many Ottoman items in Polish and foreign collections used to be associated with Vienna. And in regard to both quantity and quality the Viennese booty has no equal in the modern history of war.'[13]

Both the Christian participants' sources and Turkish sources mentions the magnificence of the Ottoman army at Vienna, even John Sobieski himself gives information about the camp and trophies in his letters to his wife.[14]

On the other hand, S. Jagodzinski, in her extensive study which focuses on the use of the memory of the wars against the Ottomans to foster the identity of the Polish nobility, also presents information about the secondary life of the trophies. After mentioning the history of Żółkiew (Ukr.: Žovkva) Castle and its importance for the Sobieski family, she suggests that these trophies were used to create a kind of remembrance culture afterwards.[15] Stanisław Żółkiewski (1547–1620), the builder of the castle, was the hetman of the Crown of Poland and the commander of the Polish army. He died in 1620 in the battle against the Ottomans at Cecora. Later, the castle was transferred to the Sobieski family. John Sobieski, the king of Poland, spent his youth here. In 1740, it was sold to the Radziwiłł family, who were also distantly related to the Sobieski family.

John Sobieski was Żółkiewski's great-grandson, and after the victories against the Ottomans, Sobieski brought considerable amounts of war booty to Żółkiew. They were placed in Krakow and Żółkiew for inspection by the public. It is possible for us to suggest that the artefacts of Ottoman culture had been included in a kind of commemoration culture. On the one hand, these trophies demonstrated the overcoming of the enemy, but on the other hand, they were integrated to a great extent into their own lives so that the culture of the vanquished held influence on the culture of the victors.

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12 According to the sources, the Polish army came into possession of the entire Ottoman camp, its tents, and huge volumes of weapons, horse trappings, garments, vessels and other artefacts. Sobieski himself dispatched many carts filled with Turkish war booty directly after the victory. Compare: Żygulski 1985, Dziewulski 2007.

13 Żygulski 1985.

14 *Ibidem*, Żygulski cites these sources and mentions that the Ottoman camps, referred to as cities of tents, constituted in part a refuge for their enormous army. Such tents were captured by Poles at Vienna in 1683, owing to which John Sobieski's booty was the most valuable of all of it. Many of the trophies had been distributed by the king among the commanders of the allied armies.

15 Jagodzinski 2013.

However, the mutual commercial penetration in times of peace was the most important factor. The trade network was a significant link between the Christian and Muslim worlds, being at the same time a way of exchanging goods as well as mutual influences and contacts.

When we look at Polish cities, Krakow was an important centre of foreign trade, with routes connecting from all four directions. Eastern routes led either to Kyiv or through Lviv and Kam'yanets-Podilskyy, and across the Black Sea to Istanbul and Bursa. Among the Polish cities, Lviv was the closest one to the East and was frequently visited by merchants from the Orient: it was possible to find many oriental goods easily in this city, such as Ottoman or Persian rugs and tapestries, tents, arms, etc. Also, this city, along with other towns in the south-eastern border territories, developed large-scale production of articles in oriental style, partly from imported raw materials and semi-manufactured products.[16] The mercantile environment of the trade was composed of various groups:[17] Armenians, Greeks, Turks, Jews and Poles. Armenian merchants, whose homeland usually was ruled by the Ottomans, settled in Poland, and made use of the help and negotiating skills of relatives remaining in the Levant, as did the Greeks from the Ottoman or Venetian state. The most famous Armenian merchant was Sefer Muratowicz, who was sent by Polish King Sigismund III Wasa to Kashan in Persia, returning in 1602 with extensive purchases of carpets, sashes and other goods.[18]

In trade contacts and crafts, Polish Armenians played a significant role. As early as the 15th century, Armenians began to settle on Polish lands, especially in the south-eastern regions. There were, in addition, Armenians from Asia Minor. Polish Armenians, speaking a kind of Turkish dialect called Armenian-Kipchak, were excellent liaison agents between Ottomans and Poland. They were often used in diplomatic missions and as Turkish interpreters. They largely gained control of trade with the Near East and set up very successful workshops in Poland.[19]

When understanding the cultural influences that abound within Poland, it is important to comprehend the history of how Poland developed as a country and eventually a nation. While the entire history of Poland is certainly important to understand the full depth of Polish identity and heritage, it seems too vast a period of change and history.

An important demographic characteristic of Poland was its large noble population (the *szlachta*)—around 10%, which was far more than in other European countries. The *szlachta* were the main buyers of these luxury oriental goods. Specific features of the culture and mentality of the nobility of the late 16th and 17th centuries was the belief in the special care of God over the Commonwealth. In the opinion of the 'Sarmatians', as representatives of the nobility called themselves, the country played a unique role in the arena of history. The 'Sarmatism' ideology has appeared in Polish history since at least

16 Poskrobko-Strzeciwilk 2011, pp. 340.

17 Dziubiński 1999, p. 42.

18 Poskrobko-Strzeciwilk 2011, pp. 340.

19 Żygulski 2011, pp. 317–336.

the mid-15th century. It was a concept used to define the ideology and lifestyle of the Polish nobility in the modern era. The term was developed as late as in the second half of the 18th century, even though it was based on the old myth of the descent of Poles and other Slavic nations from the warrior tribe of the Sarmatians, who inhabited the lands of today's Ukraine in ancient times. According to the myth of Sarmatian origins, the nobility were descendants of the Sarmatians.

Owing to the intensity of trade relations with Ottomans and Persia, the influence of Islamic Oriental culture on the widespread orientalisation of common artistic taste and fashion in Poland during the Sarmatian era was very high. First of all, it was trade and the rich trophies of the Khotyn and Vienna wars that satisfied the Sarmatian tastes of the Polish nobility and the wide circles of wealthy bourgeoisie. This Sarmatism theory lay at the root of the orientalisation of the gentry's customs, habits and aesthetic tastes, realized above all in costumes and arms. According to Z. Żygulski, this great national trend in the civil and military dress of the Sarmatian period, cultivated in full blossom throughout two centuries, could not have been realized without the assistance of the Armenians as craftsmen. They were the principal suppliers of patterns and materials from abroad and also producers of excellent objects in the local workshops.[20] Even in everyday life, Eastern artistic products were being used, either originals or those made in Poland and based on oriental patterns. The traces of this large demand for oriental products can be seen especially when we search old family collections of oriental objects and royal and nobility inventories, which often mention Ottoman products. It can be determined that there was wide assimilation of Ottoman and Persian decorative motifs and forms by the Polish nobility, and possibly it was the result of the fact that Islamic Oriental art was thought to be something familiar, not exotic. Especially during the reign of King Sobieski, admiration of oriental art produced a kind of special taste among the noble class, both in daily life and in cultural demand and production such as the decorative arts, artistic workmanship, armaments, men's clothes, or in customs and even in music and baroque literature. It is possible for us to state that the workshops producing objects imitating and modelling Ottoman patterns rapidly grew during his reign.[21]

On the other hand, especially when we analyse the commercial potential, we are able to see various goods from Ottoman and Persian lands were being brought to Poland, and the prevailing imports were fabrics, carpets, woven belts, several types of shoes including *papuç*, tents, sidearms and horse trappings. There were also ceramics from İznik, which are mentioned in inventories. In the 16th to 17th centuries, white-blue faience enjoyed great popularity in Polish households. This can best be traced in the inventories of the burghers. Plates, bowls, jugs and Ottoman mugs made in İznik and Kütahya were used in nearly every house.[22]

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20 *Ibidem*, pp. 317–336.

21 Kroll 2013.

22 Dziubiński 1999, p. 42.

From the towns of Bursa and Tokat in Turkey and from Persian Azerbaijan, silk was transported to Poland. The most expensive fabrics from the Ottoman Empire were brocade, *kadife* (Turkish velvet), *kemha* (damask) and taffeta from Bursa and Tokat. Also, an interesting point in this context is that fabrics from the Islamic Orient were occasionally used for different purposes than the one for which they were originally intended. Ottoman or Persian upholstery fabrics, whether they had been traded or taken as trophy and somehow gifted to churches, could be easily turned into Polish liturgical garments. Despite the basic contempt for Islam, the Polish clergy also held a fascination for Islamic fashion, and sometimes followed them, although to a lesser degree than the nobility. Members of the clergy acquired eastern objects and Polish churches were enriched with Islamic textiles, which had been received as votive offerings from noblemen and kings and Ottoman, Persian and other Islamic textiles were used in making liturgical costumes. But also, it is interesting to note that while the offerings displayed in churches often celebrated the triumph of Christianity over Islam, trophies and imports sometimes were endowed with functions and meanings widely divergent from the original, oriental ones.[23]

Also, in the 16th and 17th centuries, Ottoman *mahrama* (shawls) and *futa* (bath towels) from Egypt were very popular in Poland. In 1549, Sultana Roxelana–Hürrem Sultan, wife of Süleyman the Magnificent, and their daughter Mihrimah sent gifts to Sigismund II Augustus (Pol.: Zygmunt II August), among which were shawls and towels. Among the imports of thousands of pieces of *sahtiyan* (saffian leather), Ottoman sheepskins in white and green were imported, as was lambskin from Egypt. Tiger skins from India, cheetah skins from Persia, and leopard skins from Africa were trans-shipped through the Ottoman Empire. With these skins, the Polish hussars of the 17th century covered their parade armour like the Ottoman light cavalry corps known as *deli.* The demand for carpets and tapestries was also extremely large among the gentry. And usually were being brought from Ottoman lands and Persia. For example, in 1589, a Lviv Armenian bought 271 carpets in Istanbul. In 1600, another merchant bought 150 carpets.[24] These Ottoman carpets and tapestries came from Istanbul and the towns of west Anatolia, such as Uşak and Gördes. These imports were extensive enough for Ottoman carpets to become less expensive on the Polish market in the 17th century.

On the other hand, merchants from Poland, as well as kings such as Sigismund II Augustus and Stephen Báthory, sent agents to the Ottoman Empire to buy horses. Even in the Renaissance era, a horse was a sign of noble birth and synonymous with such social status. This was the case throughout Europe. But for the Poles, however, while also in love with horses, took on all the fundamental concepts of their cultural concept, too. From that era, the Polish language inherited the term *ogier* from the Turkish *aygir* to denote a stallion, and the adjective *kary* from the Turkish *kara* (black) to describe the colour of a horse. Turkish and Arab steeds were the dream of every rich nobleman and magnate. Saddles and harnesses were eastern-oriental or semi-oriental, and an eastern horse became the preferred mount, and the Poles have retained this tradition to the present.

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23 Piwocka 2006, pp. 343–350.

24 Dziubiński 1999, p. 42.

As stated above, the Polish-Ottoman wars of the 17th century were manifested in politics and the economy, and not only in a negative way. A positive result was the inter-penetration of cultures, which resulted in Poland's adopting Ottoman music also. In Polish territories, there appeared janissary ensembles—typical Ottoman military bands. Sobieski introduced them in the second half of the 17th century. He himself was very fond of Ottoman music and listened to it with pleasure. The first bands consisted of genuine Turks, dressed in their typical attire, which over time significantly changed. Poles or Slavs now became members of bands, but were dressed in costumes modelled on the Ottoman outfit and performed music reminiscent of that played by the janissary bands.[25]

As B. Biedorńska-Słota stated, Sarmatian theory was already well-established and respected by the end of the 16th century and writers of the period referred almost exclusively to Sarmatians, substituting the term for Poles. All these factors served for the emergence of a kind of national ideology. It was based on dogma such as that of Poland as the granary of Europe, a state with the best political system, one modelled on ancient Rome and combining the power of a king, the people and the magnates, of Golden Liberty as the highest civic value, and of Poland as the bastion of Christendom in the fight against Islam.[26]

Although the slogan of Poland as a bulwark of Christianity emerged as early as the 15th century, it was only in the 17th century that it gained huge popularity among the nobility, appearing in diaries, letters and instructions for deputies, speeches, sermons, etc.[27] Despite hostility to the Islamic Orient, conditioned by political and religious factors, a clear addiction to objects in typical Eastern style could be easily observed in the culture of the old Commonwealth. Those influences resulted in and, at the same time, were confirmed by a number of linguistic borrowings. K. Schneiderheize, when examining the Polish nobility in the Early Modern Age, analyses the elements of Polish Oriental-ness in his methodology and takes into consideration the costume and war and military equipment of the period and states that the oriental influence on the Polish military is not only traceable in material objects but also in the respective Polish vocabulary, which is full of loan words from oriental languages.[28] On the other hand, the unique conditions of Sarmatism in Polish culture is still being discussed in detail, especially in terms of its ideological concept and the history of its cultural perception.[29]

As for the conclusion, the influence of the Islamic Orient in Polish art and culture is very obvious. But here it has to be stated that this was not a situation that occurred because of a kind of dominance of Islamic culture. This was in fact a situation that occurred because of the choices of Poles and their fascination with Islamic art and culture.

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25 Klimek 2013.

26 Biedrońska-Słota 2010, p. 38.

27 In his detailed study 'Antermurale Christianitatis', Paul Srodecki deals with the concept of 'bulwark of Christianity' and discusses the historiography and the different conditions and experiences in this context within different cultures such as those of Poland, Hungary and Croatia, and analyzes how the *antermurale* myth contributed to these communities through different processes. Srodecki 2013, pp. 804–822.

28 Schneiderheinze 2014, pp 195–198.

29 Scholz 2013, pp. 93–114.

Conclusion

It was in the 17th century, during the most intense struggle against the Ottoman Empire, that oriental influences reached their apogee in Poland. Elements of Ottoman costume, weapons, household objects and their effects had appeared in Poland before, however these were minor borrowings. In the 17th century, oriental influences were growing stronger and occurred so massively that we can talk about the orientalisation of gentry culture.[30] The well-developed trade with the Islamic East, from where all these oriental objects were imported, contributed to the phenomenon. Also wars, during which substantial loot was taken, contributed to the multiplication of Eastern goods and products in the houses of the gentry. There was a noticeable drop in prices for Ottoman goods in the second half of the 17th century, which resulted from market saturation. It was additionally affected by the wars with the Turks, when rich trophies replenished the domestic markets.

Lots of Islamic-inspired products were bearing both local and Eastern features but the aim of the workshops was not to make them to appear 'exotic', as a long time prior the host culture had absorbed these interactions.

The Europeans thus perceived the 'Sarmatians' as representatives of yet another variant of oriental culture. Nonetheless, the lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were also affected by the Baroque period, which linked them with the main current of European culture. Hence, the territories ruled by Sarmatia ideology differed considerably from Western countries. In no other epoch did Poland create such an original and distinct cultural form, nor depart so far from general European culture.

Poland's interaction with the Islamic Orient and the volume of this interaction is in fact closely related to its characteristic and unique conditions. Until the Union in 1385, Poland was very much in the frame of Western European culture. It was the Union that opened Polish lands towards the East. Beginning with this period, Polish art and culture began to take shape with both the Christian culture of the West and later with an exotic combination of Eastern and Western influences. Poles had direct contact with the khanates, which arose after the collapse of the Mongolian empire, and from the 15th century the importance of relations with the Ottomans grew continually. As we know, these contacts were also through war. The dangers were accompanied by an increasing sense of foreignness with regard to Muslims and Islam. At the same time, however, there was an orientation towards the Muslim Orient, a turn to the south in the direction of the entire Ottoman border, from Wallachia to Crimea, was motivated above all by the economic situation.

All these contacts—though in various ways—served to deepen knowledge of the East, a penetration of influences, and the orientalisation of tastes. This process intensified not only amongst the magnates and the gentry but also amongst the middle classes.

On the other hand, the original Polish social system, its economic and political structures, distinguishing Poland more and more from the West, which, though, cannot be regarded as sufficient evidence of belonging to the East. Poland in the 16th–17th centuries

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30 Kroll 2013.

had already entered into relations with the European world economy but maintained connections with the East, and the ties with the Orient were independent of these relations.

From the 15th century, Polish Oriental-ness appeared as the sum of borrowing in language, dress, weapons or manner of living of the gentry. Gentry culture was in fact the main core of the interactions. In the 17th century, we can easily talk about a Polish style in the realm of weapons, which owes a great deal to oriental inspiration. Gentry dress also acquired oriental characteristics, and it was very easy to come across oriental influences in all areas of everyday life. All these were absorbed by gentry culture.[31] K. Schneiderheinze, when discussing the Polish nobility in the Early Modern age, indicates with reference to Geller that: 'The dominant values were the values of the dominant class'. In the case of the Commonwealth, the *szlachta* occupied this role.[32]

As has been said, it is easy for us to point out that these influences came about through close relations such as trade, merchants, oriental objects, and even wars, but these still do not entirely explain the force of their effect. We have to take into account that, at the same time, there were other European cultures, too, that had been even more active and had had wider contact with the Islamic Orient and Islam but yet were not so strongly subject to its influences.

Beginning from the 16th Century, the Islamic Orient and oriental influences in Poland were mostly focused on the Near East. Despite the religious alienation, Islamic Oriental influences were not regarded as an ideological diversion. The everyday nature and obviousness of contact with the Orient gave rise to interactions.[33]

Even now, we still have the same questions about what created the cultural fascination with the Islamic Orient and how did it overcome the hostility and foreignness, making Christian Poland the most oriental country in Europe. Maybe the only exact answer that we can give now is the special situation of Polish culture with its geopolitical eastern-ness and cultural Oriental-ness.

The history of Poland's relations with the Islamic Orient is still in need of more research that will take into account the relationships between cultures, politics and the arts.

31 Kieniewicz 1984, p. 77.

32 Schneiderheinze 2014, p. 201.

33 Kieniewicz 1984, p. 78–79.

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