

## The Expedition of the Sultan in 1538 in Moldavia (in the view of an Italian author)

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**T**he year 1538 has special importance in the relations between the Christian powers and the Ottoman Empire.<sup>1</sup> In the face of the increasing and impertinent provocation of the Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent after 1521 (the fall of Belgrade, the defeat of Hungary at Mohács, the siege of Vienna, etc.), the Christian world (except the France of Francis I, which was allied with the Ottoman Empire) has tried, upon several occasions to mobilise itself, without notable success. Such an act occurred on 8 February 1538 when the Empire of the Habsburgs, Venice and the Holy See have formed the Holy League,<sup>2</sup> strengthened on 24 February the same year (by the treaty of Oradea)

by the addition of Hungary, led by Ferdinand of Habsburg. The Porte has reacted, planning and preparing ample military operations, both at sea (in the Mediterranean) and on land (in central and south-eastern Europe). Finally, the land expedition-conceived with a clear anti-Habsburg purpose-has been launched directly against Petru Rareș, the prince of Moldavia (1527-1538; 1541-1546), who had defied the orders of the Sultan on a number of occasions and, moreover, had reached an understanding with Ferdinand of Habsburg.<sup>3</sup> Süleyman had the advantage in this endeavour, because of the support offered by János Szapolyai, the other king of Hungary, of Sigismund I the Old,

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the king of Poland and of the Tartars of Sahib Ghirai, all of them wishing to hurt "the Wallachian." The Sultan's expedition has started in the summer of 1538 (in August) and has ended in the autumn of the same year (in October).<sup>4</sup> Its main result has been the replacement of prince Petru Rareș with one of his nephews (a member of the dynasty of the Bogdan family), considered to be faithful to the Porte, as well as the conquest of a new region in the south of the country,<sup>5</sup> turned into an Ottoman province (the *raia* Tighina, or in Turkish, Bender).<sup>6</sup>

While the Sultan was still in Moldavia, the Ottoman fleet, led by Khair ad Din or Hayrettin Pasha (called Barbarossa) was victorious in the confrontation with the Spanish, Venetian and Papal forces, led by the Genovese Andrea Doria, at Prevesa (28 September 1538), on the coast of Greece.<sup>7</sup> Although, after this defeat, during the recoup, the Christian fleet took the Venetian fortress-port of Castelnuovo on the Dalmatian coast (re-conquered later by the Turks in August 1539), the moment would mark, for a number of decades, the Ottoman hegemony and the withdrawal of the European forces. In the following years, through the armistice between Ferdinand of Habsburg and the Sultan (1539), as well as through the peace treaty between the Ottomans and Venice (1540) the preponderance of the Turks has been strengthened.<sup>8</sup>

**V**enice has been closely involved in these anti-Ottoman events, but also in the dialogue and understanding with the Turks, because it

had important interests, especially commercial ones all over the Levant and in many of the continental areas ruled by or disputed by the Habsburgs and Süleyman the Magnificent.<sup>9</sup> From the annexed document one can see how interested the *Serenissima* was in the events north of the Danube, in the campaign from "Bogdania," but also in other events in the Balkan Peninsula, from south-eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire. The following account belongs to a certain Iacomo Verganalli from Pisa, who "having arrived yesterday [18 November 1538] in this city" of Venice, having left Constantinople on 4 October is immediately interrogated concerning all he had found out and seen in the capital of the Ottoman Empire and on the road. The itinerary followed by the man from Pisa through the Balkans is a usual one, from Constantinople, through Adrianopolis, to Sophia and then to Černica, and then Trebinie and Ragusa, to Venice. The details are sometimes extremely exact and important. The first piece of evidence it provides comes from Adrianopolis, from 12 October: the Sultan Süleyman had returned from the expedition in Moldavia (constantly called Bogdania or Bogdan), had already crossed the Danube and was expected in eight-ten days in Adrianopolis, where preparations were made for his reception and that of the pashas and other officials of the Porte, as it was rumoured that they would all winter there that year. Then, riding to Ragusa (today Dubrovnik, in Croatia), the Pisan shows that, from the envoys on the way

and from the letters of the Christian merchants, from 16 October in Adrianopolis he understood that Süleyman and his suite were only two days away from the town. He adds that from Adrianopolis to Sophia he has met many *sipahis* and other soldiers from the Sultan's army who were returning to their homes and who were in great disorder and were walking home with a heavy heart, because they had not obtained any gain and had suffered from hunger (both horses and men) in the circumstances in which, in Moldavia they had come across a lot of mud, snow and cold; he concludes that the men of the Porte have suffered a lot more in Moldavia than during the campaign in Persia (1534) and he says that in full knowledge, as he had seen the return from Persia, and now the men had seemed to him a lot more afflicted and more demoralised.

In connection with the actual development of the campaign, the Pisan talks in detail about the plan to attack Moldavia from three directions: a. 50.000 Tartars from the east; b. 30.000-40.000 Poles riding from the north, especially since it was known that a Polish envoy had come to the Porte with the mission to incite the Sultan against Moldavia; c. the massive Ottoman attack from the south. In reply – Verganalli also knew – the prince of Moldavia had taken measures of defence, to prepare the country for the great confrontation, the most spectacular fact being the cutting of some forests a distance of two-three days and the creation in this way of a bastion where 30-40 pieces of ar-

tillery were concentrated, 500 arquebusiers and 120.000-130.000 riders. The spy also said that, in order to counteract enemy attacks, Petru Rareş had sent 20.000-25.000 people on horseback against the Tartars who had been beaten and, for the most part put to the sword, while the rest had fled; for the resolution of the Polish issue,<sup>10</sup> the Romanian prince had sent envoys to the "king of the Romans" and to János Szapolyai, in order to obtain help and protection against the neighbours to the north; as a result, the Poles have not attacked, and Rareş had received help from the two sovereigns, 20.000 riders and pedestrians. Concerning the main danger, the prince of Moldavia had sent envoys to the Turks, showing himself surprised by the attack, because in fact, as he was paying tribute to the Sultan he should have been protected; however, in order to avoid the collision he offered to give a higher tribute and to send one of his sons as a hostage to the Porte. The Sultan was not satisfied, requesting the person of the prince who refused to surrender, because he feared for his life and because this act would have meant humiliating himself in rank and reputation with his people and his army.

Afterwards, the Pisan relates the first reactions of the Turks, the intention to build a bridge over the Danube and another across a river (Milcov), which separated Moldavia from Wallachia. One has to note the name of Great Bogdania, given to Moldavia and Small Bogdania, given to Wallachia, a rare thing in the context of the Venetian chancellor-

ies from Constantinople and from the Lagoon who were accustomed to use the name Wallachia for both Romanian countries<sup>11</sup> or that of Bogdania exclusively for Moldavia. The meaning of the name of Bogdania in this context is the same as in the case of the use of the name Wallachia, that is, the marking of the ethnic unity of the inhabitants of the two principalities. The first encounter between the Moldavians and the Ottomans has taken place immediately after the crossing of the Danube by the latter, surprised and struck in full, as 10.000-12.000 were put to the sword, while the bridge over the Milcov was destroyed. Only after the building of another bridge and after the retreat of the Romanians in order to organise the defence, the Turk had decided to advance without attacking directly. The details follow (found out by the Pisan traveller on his way through the Balkans) in connection with the Turkish advance through Moldavia and then with their retreat. From this account, the Venetians found out that the Ottomans have applied two consecutive plans: as long as they hoped to capture Rareş without a fight they had not attacked from a frontal location the army of the country but had launched a rumour that they had come exclusively with the purpose of installing a new prince, of the same blood with the one on the throne; the hope of the Sultan was that the son of Ştefan cel Mare would be abandoned by his army; after they had reached Suceava, the capital of the country and have seen that Rareş had not been abandoned by his

troops and as the bad weather had arrived, Süleyman and his followers had changed tactics sending envoys everywhere, who were supposed to spread the rumour that Rareş had been chased away and that another prince had been nominated in his place and that they had cut off the head of one of the sons of the former prince, sent to the Turks by his own father. Verganalli did not believe this outcome, being of the opinion that the Ottomans had launched such rumours in order to defend their honour, saying even that on the way back they had burned only some abandoned villages, without pillaging anything, animals or men.<sup>12</sup>

**T**he next details which Verganalli offers concern events during his voyage through the Balkans: the fact that he was accompanied upon his departure from the Ottoman capital by two gentlemen from Naples, from the house of the French ambassador in Constantinople and by one of their serfs; the fact that he has travelled through insecure places, ravaged by thieves (especially from Sophia to Ragusa), who had pillaged and burned the area, ruining ten hamlets and attacking two caravans with merchandise; the enforced lay-over at Černica, where they had been detained and led away and then stopped for three days at Trebinje (a day's distance from Castelnuovo, a port on the Dalmatian coast), at the local *sangiac*, who had his court with 100 horsemen and 100 pedestrians. The presence of these pedestrians is significant, as they are of Wallachian origin, that is Romanians from the Balkans,

also called "Maurowallachians," who had gradually mingled with the Slavs.<sup>13</sup> They are often mentioned in Venetian documents of the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. On October 31 the Pisan was in Ragusa.

Other news given to the Venetians, in reply to the questions asked, regard the military operations from this period, from the area of the Balkans and of the Levant, as well as the preparations for war. For example, the conquest by the Christians of the port Castelnuovo had taken place while the Pisan was at Trebinie, from whence the *sangiaco* had sent envoys through the country for help, as the Christian army was approaching; also, from the ranks of the first Christians who had landed, the *sangiaco* had taken four prisoners, two of whom had been killed at Trebinie in the presence of the storyteller, while the other two had been sent to the Porte; at Ragusa there was great fear of the Christian armies, the authorities built fortifications, while tearing down the houses and the palaces located outside the walls of the fortress; on the road from Ragusa to Venice (which he had started from Ragusa on November 6), Verganalli found out about the admiral Doria, who was in old Ragusa with his armies, about the papal forces, of Spanish forces and of those of the *Serenissima* from Castelnuovo, led by Ferrante Gonzaga (allegedly 5-6 thousands Spaniards were to remain there), about Barbarossa, who had left Prevesa after the victory, although his destination was unknown. The Pisan had also found out that the Turks worked half-heartedly for the arsenal in Cons-

tantinople, for the artillery, that no new galleys were being made in the capital, but rather in other Mediterranean ports, that, at Pera big artillery pieces were being melted to make new, "modern" ones. Asked about the Ottoman army for Suez, prepared against the Portuguese, he did not know what details to give.

The authorities from the lagoon were also interested by the fate of the officials (bailiffs) and of the Venetian (and Christian) merchants from Constantinople and from the rest of the empire, but also in the political and military milieu of Constantinople, in the struggle for power, in the rivalries and the intrigues, which troubled the Turkish elites. In this sense, the Pisan was aware of details concerning the bailiffs and the Venetian merchants locked in the fortresses from the "mouth" of the Black Sea, whom he had visited three days before the departure from Constantinople, and from whom he had secretly received letters and whom, with the exception of the bailiffs were in chains with fettered feet; they had all been incarcerated and had not been liberated, with the few exceptions who had agreed to work for the Turks. Verganalli also says that the people and the Turkish merchants looked askance upon the war with the Venetian, that the Sultan and those of the Porte hated the Venetian, whom they considered guilty of starting the war and the Christian alliance against them. Nor was the French ambassador (a country allied with Turkey) enjoying a lot of sympathy, while all the Christians were considered traitors and enemies of the Turks. Other details concerning the

Levantine environment consisted of: the galleys of the merchants of Alexandria had been led to Rhodes, with 30 light galleys, the latter destined to become a part of Barbarossa's army; the merchants of Alexandria had been left in Rhodes, where – some said – Barbarossa had sent his army or seafarers and other people from the heavy galleys; the merchants of Syria (according to the vague news received from a servant of the monks from Mount Sion, who had come to Constantinople to see the French ambassador) and even monks had been imprisoned, the above-mentioned ambassador being asked to request their release; the goods confiscated from the Venetian were untouched in sealed warehouses; the counts Bibiena and Mocenigo – as the Pisan had found out from the Ragusans – had died, the first from his wounds, and the second, after he had jumped into the sea, being hurt by an arquebuse.

The political and military environment of Constantinople seems, in the eyes of the Italian storyteller, sufficiently troubled: in the absence of the Sultan (who was in Adrianopolis), the authority in the Ottoman capital belonged to a *sangiac*, whose name Verganalli did not know, but Mahmud Celebi did everything in his power to remain *defterdar* himself, as well as governor; the dignitary who was enjoying above all others the favour of the Sultan was Aias Pasha, followed closely by Lufti Pasha; the man questioned did not know what the Sultan would do in the following year, other than that he would winter in Adrianopolis, in order to ensure the country, as he had left the affairs of Moldavia as he

had left them and he had found out about the preparations of the Christians. He had added that Barbarossa was very badly seen by the pashas. Upon his departure with the army he had been charged to fight directly with the Christian army and to avoid robbing any poor and defenceless island, hoping thus to compromise him and to disgrace him in front of the sultan. It is obvious from this account that Barbarossa was aware of all this, but willing to keep up appearances; although, in secret, before his departure from Constantinople, he had sold almost all his goods and had transformed them in precious stones and other things that were easy to carry, taking them with him on the galley; it was said that he had conspired with Doria to agree with the emperor of the Christians and it was known that he had two light galleys from Bibiena and Mocenigo and that he had found out in Sophia, by way of Thessaloniki, from some Jews, that he had sent his son and his men from the two galleys ashore to the Sultan in order to prove that he had met the Christian army, thus counteracting the intrigues of the pashas.

Of course, the main subject of the account is the Sultan's campaign in Moldavia, shortly after it had taken place. What one needs to note is the glory-less light in which the event is described. The text does not mention any change in the status of Moldavia in relation to the Porte, or any territorial loss (as it was probably too early to perceive it), nor about any spectacular military operation of the Ottoman army north of the Danube. On the con-

trary, the sultan wished that everyone would know that he had gone to the “Bogdanians” only in order to replace a Romanian and Christian prince with another, of the same blood, a fact achieved with great difficulties. The army, upon its return was in a pitiful state as if it was returning from an unhappy operation. Moreover, when asked about future plans of the sultan, Verganalli revealed the concern of the latter, the wish to ensure the protection of his country, not only in fear of the great preparations for war of the Christians, but also because of the worry over the Moldavian “business,” which had been left unresolved. Petru Rareș is not presented at all as a desperate prince, but rather as a sovereign and as a reasonable politician, capable of defending his country, with a well-conceived plan, preoccupied by his honour and by his prestige in front of the army and of the subjects. This fact is in agreement with other opinions, from which the precise start, in 1538, of the so-called *regime of Ottoman domination* in Moldavia cannot be established.<sup>14</sup> It has to be noted that the “Turkish” in the

Italian language (the dialect from Veneto) of the sixteenth century (*carazo*, for tribute, from the Turkish *haraci*; *olachi* for envoys; *defterdaro-defterdar*, *sanzaco-sangiac*, *bassa-pasha*, *spacchi-sipahis* etc.) were, in fact similar with the ones, which had penetrated the Romanian language.

**T**he questionnaire commented above and reproduced in the appendix is important for all the news it contains, some full of local colour and previously unpublished, as well as for a complex picture of the year 1538, when the campaign in Moldavia seems framed by the general European military operations, in the context of the relations between the Christians and the Ottomans, within the network of political and diplomatic connections of the times. Of great interest is the Ottoman military and political scene, with all its rivalries, deciphered thorough the eyes of a Christian “spy,” capable of understanding more than he saw and heard in actual fact.

□

## APPENDIX

*fila 1r*: 1538 alli 19 novembre

**M**esser Iacomo Vernagalli,<sup>15</sup> pisano, gionto heri<sup>16</sup> in questa città,/ venuto da Constantinopoli, de dove parti alli 4 de ottobre, referisse/ che, attrovandosi lui in Andrinopoli<sup>17</sup> à 12 ditto,<sup>18</sup> intese<sup>19</sup> come/ el Signor Turco<sup>20</sup> ritornava

dalla impresa del Bogdan<sup>21</sup> et haveva/ già passato il Danubio con la soa persona, et aspettavasi li/ in Andrinopoli fra otto over 10 giorni, dove si facevano/ preparatione de vittuaglie per lui et per li bassa et altri/ della Porta, dicendosi che in quel loco el doveva invernare/ per quest'anno.<sup>22</sup> Et dipoi,<sup>23</sup> cavalcando

esso/ messer Iacomo alla volta di Ragusi,<sup>24</sup> inteso da diversi/ olachi che trovarono per strada et per lettere de mercadanti Christiani,/ date in Andrinopoli alli 16, come el Signor si attrovava/ apresso quella città doi giornate con la persona et la Porta/ soa et per rincontro di questo, dice che da Adrinopoli fino/ passato Sophìa<sup>25</sup> sempre ritrovano per strada molti spacchi et/ altri soldati del suo exercito che ritornavano alle case/ loro, liquali erano malissimamente ad ordine et ritorna,/ vano di mala voglia, perche non havevano fatto guadagno alcuno/ et havevano patito assai cose di vittuaglie, come perche in/ quel paese di Bogdania havevano<sup>26</sup> havuto<sup>27</sup> fangi et neve et/ freddi,<sup>28</sup> per il che li cavalli et gli homini havevano patito assai/ soggiogando, posso dir con verità, per iudicio mio, havendo ancho visto l'essercito del Signor quando ritornò di Persia,<sup>29</sup> che al/ presente li soldati soi dalla Porta in fuori che hora non hò veduto/ habbino molto più patito, et sian più consumati et di peggior// *f. 1v*: animo che quando ritornorno di Persia. Domandato quello sà/ dire della impresa del Signor Turco contra il ditto Bogdan,<sup>30</sup> dice/ che in Constantinopoli si ragionava et si haveva per più rincontri<sup>31</sup> / che il Bogdan fo assalito prima da forsi 50 milla Tartari et intese che l/ Re di Polonia<sup>32</sup> doveva etiam moversi contra di lui con<sup>33</sup> 30 milla/ in 40 milla cavalli, li quali s'intendeva che l'haveva in esser et/ apresso che nel medesimo tempo il Signor Turco li veniva adosso/ col suo exercito, mosso à questa impresa per molte cause et ancho per

questa molto sollicitato<sup>34</sup> dal ditto Re di Polonia,/ il quale, avanti il partir del Signor da Constantinopoli, haveva mandato uno suo/ ambassator al ditto Signor Turco,<sup>35</sup> quale poco dappoi si mosse,/ per la quale ragione il ditto Bogdan si fortificò nel suo paese, et/ fece tagliar doi in tre giornate di boscaglia per longezza/ che li servivano come per bastioni, et lassò solamente da una/ banda aperto, nel qual loco haveva 30 in 40 pezzi d'artegliaria/ da campo, et circa 500 archibusieri et<sup>36</sup> dentro/ di questo forte fece<sup>37</sup> congregare tutte le gente del Paese suo,<sup>38</sup> / che s'intese essere da 120 in 130 milla cavalli da/ combattere, et ben ad ordine, et homini fortissimi<sup>39</sup> et fortificandose à questo modo, esso Bogdan/ mandò da 20 in 25 milla cavalli contra li Tartari, li quali/ li combatterò, et ne tagliorno la maggior parte et il resto/ de ditti Tartari si posero in fuga. Mandò etiam in questo mezzo/ ditto Bogdan soi ambassatori al Re de Romani<sup>40</sup> et al Re Zuanne,<sup>41</sup> / domandandoli aiuto, et che lo dovessero difender dal Re/ di Polonia, li quali doi Re operorno tanto col predetto Re di Polonia,/ facendoli intender che se 'l molestasse il Bogdan, loro li sariano// *f. 2r*: contro et sariano in aiuto di esso Bogdan, che 'l esso Re di Polonia non si mosse, et si dice che ditti Re di Romani/ et re Zuanne mandorno al Bogdan circa persone 20 milla tra/ à cavallo et à piedi, per aiuto contra il Turco/, al qual Turco ditto Bogdan mandò etiam soi ambassatori, dicendoli che l' si maravigliava che l' venisse nel suo Paese contra di lui, essendo<sup>42</sup> / suo carazaro, offerendoli etiam di darli



maggior carazzo et de piui che li mandaria<sup>43</sup> per obstaggio uno suo figliolo. Ma/ che 'l Turco non si contentò, dicendo che voleva la persona soa; il che il Bogdano non volse fare, dicendo temere di lui/ et che poi andandovi mancherebbe di grado et reputatione con li populi et essercito suo; per il che il ditto Turco fece<sup>44</sup> far li ponti sul Danubio/ et sopra un altro fiume<sup>45</sup> che divide la Bogdania Grande<sup>46</sup>/ dalla Piccola,<sup>47</sup> et havendo securamente passato il Danubio/ con l'essercito et la persona soa, quando l'antiguarda soa volse/ passar l'altra fiumata,<sup>48</sup> fù assalita da una/ bona banda di cavalli bogdani, liquali ruppero li Turchi/ et ne tagliorno da circa 10 in 12 milla et facendosi/ questo, il Signor sopra ditto fiumata, ad un altro passo fece/ butar un altro ponte et liberamente, tra il primo et secondo/ ponte, passò; et li Bogdani si retirorno nel suo forte,/ aspettando l'essercito turchescò che andasse ad assalirli/ nel ditto loco. Et mandorno à dir al Turco che l'aspet/tavano et erano pronti à difendersi. Ma ditto Turco/ non fece questo, ne<sup>49</sup> andò per il Paese che 'l Bogdan haveva/ abandonato et dete voce come lui<sup>50</sup> era venuto per poner/ un altro Signor in quel Paese, il qual fosse del medesimo sangue,<sup>51</sup> et/ fece cride che alcuno del suo exercito, sotto pena del/ pallo, non facesse danno alcuno nel Paese, ne facesse schiavi,/ ma che 'l tutto fosse libero et sicuro, perche lui non era/ andato li saluo per mutar il Seniore et esser contra la/ persona del Bogdan. Et cavalcò con questa voce fino in// *f. 2v*: un loco che si chiama Succhi-

ava,<sup>52</sup> dove sol far residentia/ el Bogdano. Et non reuscendo al ditto Signor Turco questo/ disegno perche<sup>53</sup> l'exercito non/ abandonò il Bogdan et sopravvenendo li tempi cattivi, che per/ esser sotto la tramontana de li commincia il freddo molto per/ tempo et fanno grandissimi fangi,<sup>54</sup> dete volta/ et mandò per tutto olachi, facendo intendere che l'haveva/ descazato l'innimico suo et posto un altro in quel stato et/ tagliato la testa ad un<sup>55</sup> figliolo del Bogdano, il quale/ dicevano che 'l padre li haveva mandato. Laqual cosa/ per riscontro di alcun Christiano non se intende esser vera,/ ma che Turchi, per honor loro, habbino levato questo nome,/ dicendo etiam che nel ritorno del exercito per il paese havevano/ brusato alcuni villaggi abandonati,<sup>56</sup> ma non hanno fatto perhò preda,/ ne di roba, ne di animali, ne d'homini. Domandato/ quando l'arivò à Ragusi et quel che l'intese per la strada/ et se la strada era sicura et à che modo l'hanno lassato/ partir da Constantinopoli, dice che è partito da Constantinopoli in compagnia/ de doi gentilhomini napolitani, che erano in casa del ambassator de/ Franza, liquali hebbero un comandamento dal sanzaco de Constantinopoli/ et uno schiavo che li accompagnasse et che la strada è mal/ sicura, massime da Sophia in qua, perche molti ladri del paese/ si sono levati et vanno brusando et sacchigiando, che hanno/ ruinato da 10 casali et furono assaltato doi caravane// *f. 3r*: di robe. L'una veniva à Raghusi con forsi 60/ some, la piu parte specie di raggione de Ragusei et/ Fiorentini la maggior

parte et fù assaltata questa apres-  
so/ Niz Bazar,<sup>57</sup> et questa se disese  
et è venuta/ fino à Cerniza<sup>58</sup> à sal-  
vamento, che è giornate 3 presso/  
Ragusi, dove la è stà retenuta in-  
sieme con molte/ altre some del  
sanzaco di Cherçego. L'altra/ cara-  
vana andava à Belgrado<sup>59</sup> et erano  
de circa/ 70 some de pani et altre  
merce, la piu parte de/ Giudei et di  
uno Turco et questa fu presa, mor-  
ti/ delli homini et presa parte della  
roba. Seguendo, giongessimo à  
Cerniza et fossemo etiam noi rete-  
nuti li, non/ obstante il commanda-  
mento et fossemo condutti à Tre-  
bigne,<sup>60</sup> / loco distante una giornata  
da Castel Novo,<sup>61</sup> dove/ era el sanz-  
zaco con la soa corte solamente, con  
forsi/ cavalli 100 et altratanti Mur-  
lachi<sup>62</sup> pedoni, il quale/ ne retene li  
tre giorni, tamen dicendoli<sup>63</sup> che  
erano/ homini di Franza et donan-  
doli etiam qualche presente, ni<sup>64</sup>  
liberar/ no et gionsemo à Ragusi  
all'ultimo del passato.<sup>65</sup> / Dom-  
dato dove l'intese della presa de  
Castel Novo, dice/ che essendo li à  
Trebigne, Castel Novo fu preso; do-  
mandato/ se l sanzaco sapeva del  
venir dell'armata et se li/ mandò  
soccorso, dice che l non li mandò  
soccorso altro,/ perche non haveva  
da mandarli, ma che l mandò ben  
olachi per/ il paese con coman-  
damenti per far adunar gente per  
questo soccorso. // f. 3v: Et che  
essendo loro li à Trebigne, forono  
condutti 4 homini/ dell'armata delli  
primi che erano smontati in terra,/  
che forono fatte prigioni, delli quali  
doi, in presentia del<sup>66</sup> / ditto rela-  
tor,<sup>67</sup> el sanzaco<sup>68</sup> fece morire et li  
altri doi mandò alla/ Porta à dar  
nova al Signor di questa cosa. Di-

mandato/ quello si faceva à Ragusi,  
dice che stavano con/ gran paura  
dell'armata christiana et stavano  
tutti in/ arme et fortificavanosi  
dalla banda di mare, et/ da terra,  
buttavano a terra le case et palazzi/  
che sono fuora della città, et che lui  
si parti/ da Ragusi alli 6 del pre-  
sente da sera.<sup>69</sup> Dimandato quel che  
l/ sà delle armate de Cristiani, et  
quello si diceva di Barbarossa,<sup>70</sup>/  
dice che l P. Doria<sup>71</sup> con l'armata  
delle galee et nave di/ ponente era  
à Ragusi Vecchio<sup>72</sup> et la armata del/  
Papa et della Illustrissima Signoria  
era à Castel Novo col Signor/  
Don Ferante Gonzaga,<sup>73</sup> et che si diceva/  
che lassariano in Castel Novo fanti  
circa 5 in 6 milla spagnoli. / Et di  
Barbarossa s'intendeva che era  
uscito della/ Prevesa, ma non si  
sapeva che camino havebbe fino  
all'hora/ tenuto. Domandato quello  
che l sapeva delli Magnifici Bayli et  
mercadanti nostri di Constanti-  
nopoli, dice che al suo partir/ li  
lassò in prigione nelli castelli alla  
bocca di Mar Maggior,/ cioè li bayli  
in persone senza ferri et tutti li altri  
con li/ ferri a i piedi et che avanti el  
suo partir tre giorni<sup>74</sup> li vide la mag-  
gior// f. 4r: parte, perche li andò à  
visitar et<sup>75</sup> hebbe da molti/ di loro  
secretamente letere; dimandato se  
alcun è liberato,/ dice che de quelli  
che furono retenuti non s'è libe-  
rato/ alcuno, ma solamente alcuni  
se hanno fatto carazzari,/ et questi  
non sono stà retenuti, liquali sono  
Vicenzo di/ Scudi, Pierro dalla Vec-  
chia, Zuan Onardo dall'Crose,/ An-  
zolo Beretaro, uno che fà facende  
per alcuni, Dolphin/ Spicieri, Fran-  
cesco di Mazi,<sup>76</sup> et altri che non si  
racorda. Dimandato quello/ se di-

ceva da Veniti, dice che il populo et<sup>77</sup> li/ mercadanti turchi mal volentiera vedevano guerra/ con Venitiani, ma che per quanto si dice del Signor et de quelli/ della Porta che questi hano (sic!) malissimo animo contra Venitiani/ et à loro pare che essi Venitiani li habbino tirata adosso/ questa guerra et union de Christiani contra di loro./ Dimandato se l'ambassador di Franza era ben veduto,/ rispose che dapoi se ha inteso della tregua delli Christi/ani et etiam altre nove venute dapoi per altra via,/ che questa tregua era convertita in pace, ditto ambassador/ era mal veduto da tutti<sup>78</sup> et che Turchi/ dicevano che tutti li Christiani erano traditori et inimicii/ del Turco. Dimandato chi governa Constantinopoli, dice:/ l'è uno sanzaco, che io non so il nome, ma Mahmut Celebi fa il tutto per esser restato defterdaro et governor,/ come è stato delle altre state quando il Signor e stato absente./ / f. 4v: Domandato se l' sà chi sia in favor del Signor, rispose/ che Aias Bassa è in favor grandissimo piu che mai/ sia stato, et che Lutfi Bassa è etiam in favore et/ riputatione, ma non si pò comparare con Aias Bassa;/ dimandato<sup>79</sup> se l' sà ò se l'ha inteso quello che/ sii per far il Signor l'anno futuro, dice non haver inteso/ cosa alcuna salvo, come l'ha detto di sopra, che l' Signor/ deve invernar in Andrinopoli,<sup>80</sup> dicevassi per assi/curar piui il suo paese, havendo lassate le cose del/ Bogdano nel termine che l'ha lassato, et intendendo delle/ gran preparation de Christiani.<sup>81</sup> Domandato se à Constantinopoli si lavora de artigliarie/ et de galee, dice: nel

arsenal si lavora freddamente/ et in Constantinopoli non fanno galee da novo, ma che si diceva/ che in Mar Maggior et in altri lochi ne facevano, ma/ di artellarie<sup>82</sup> in Pera<sup>83</sup> lavoravano/ continuamente che rompevano certe artellarie grosse/ vecchie et le facevano alla moderna. Dimandato/ quello se diceva à Constantinopoli al partir suo del Suffi, dice/ che si raggonava che l'haveva dato una rota ad/ alcuni sanzachi del Turco lassati à quelle frontiere/ che erano morti da 20 milla et piu Turchi.// f. 5r: Dimandato dell'armata dal Sues contra Portoghesi/ quello si sapeva, dice che<sup>84</sup> lui non ha mai inteso cosa alcuna. Dimandato che l' di chi/ quello l'ha inteso delle galie et mercadanti de/ Alexandria et delli mercadanti che erano in Soria,/ dice delle galee che quelle forono condute à Rhodi/ con 30 galee sotil<sup>85</sup> per compagnia, lequal 30 sotil andarono/ poi nell'armata di Barbarossa et dicevassi che hanno/ lassato li à Rhodi tutti li mercadanti, se ben altri/ dicono che Barbarossa ha<sup>86</sup> mandato à tuor<sup>87</sup> sù la soa armata/ delli marinieri et altre persone delle ditte galee grosse./ Et che delli mercadanti de Soria non sa dir cosa alcuna/ salvo che per un servitor delli frati de Monte Syon,/ venuto in Constantinopoli all'ambassador di Franza, se ha/ inteso che tutti li mercadanti di quelli paesi et etiam li/ frati sono in prigione et dimandava per mezo de l'ambassador/ preditto la liberation de i frati, laqual non ha possuto otte/nere per non vi esser la Porta à Constantinopoli. Dimandato/ quello è sta fatto delli denari et robe che furono tolte/ alli nostri quando

furono fatti prigioni, rispose: tutte le/ robe sono in quelli lochi dove forono poste, non è sta' toccò ne venduta alcuna cosa, ma li magazeni sono/ anchor bollati, come forano il primo giorno che fù retenuiti li// f. 5v: mercadanti.<sup>88</sup> Dimandato se 'l sà dir altro/ et se 'l<sup>89</sup> paese<sup>90</sup> di Constantinopoli è sano, dice che 'l paese è sano/ et che altro non sa. Soggiungendo ex se.<sup>91</sup> non voglio già/ tacer che la Illustrissima Signoria non sappi questo che Barbarossa/ è molto mal voluto dalli bassa, liquali al partir suo con/ l'armata li feceno dar commissione dal Signor che 'l dovesse ad/ ogni modo andar à combatter l'armata delli Christiani et/ non andar à pigliando qualche povera isola che non si/ poteva difender et questo<sup>92</sup> feceno, accio che per questo/ mezo<sup>93</sup> potessero trovarli occasione adosso di farlo/ intrar in desgratia del Signore, non facendo esso Barbarossa/ cosa notabile et che dapoi partito et che fù ribatuto di/ Candia el mandò à dimandar gente et che non ge la/ volseno dare, rispondendoli che lui haveva tagliata/ la radice di gli homeni, havendo conduto via tanta gente/ sopra la sua armata, per il che da ogniuno si cognosceva/ il mal<sup>94</sup> animo<sup>95</sup> che havevano ditti bassa contra di lui./ Ilqual Barbarossa, havendo anche gelosia et temendo di l'odio/ di questi bassà, anchor che avanti el suo partir fra loro,/ in segno di amicitia, se havevano fatto molti pasti insieme;/ al partir suo da Constantinopoli vendete quasi tutte le cose/ soe di mer-

cantie et altre cose grosse et contrattole in/ zoglie et altre cose sotile et le portò sero in galea, // f. 6r: per qual si giudica, et menò etiam suo figliol sero/ et dapoi intesosi à Constantinopoli che 'l ditto Barbarossa/ haveva certo maneggio col Doria, per mezzo/ di uno Hieronimo Alarconè, si teniva da molti che/ esso Barbarossa potesse far qualche novità et accordarsi/ con<sup>96</sup> l'Imperator de Christiani. Tamen che/ dapoi prese che hà esso Barbarossa le doi galee sotil/ del Bibiena et del Mocenigo,<sup>97</sup> il che hà<sup>98</sup> inteso in/ Sophia per via de Salonichi da Giudei, hà mandato/ suo figliolo con tutte le gente vive delle ditte/ doi galee per terra al Signor per dar fede/ che se è ritrovato con l'armata de Christiani,<sup>99</sup> per il che potria esser che l'animo delli bassa contra di/ lui non potesse molto operare. Dimandato se 'l sà/ certo della morte delli ditti doi sopra comiti,/ dice haverlo inteso à Ragusi da Ragusei che 'l/ Bibiena fù morto da ferite et el Mocenigo da/ una archibusata et che poi ricevuta quella, si butò/ in mare.

[On the reverse, another contemporary handwriting:] 19 noiembris 1538/ Relatio Iacomi Vernagalli/ reversi ex Constantinopoli, conti/nente molta nova de/ exercitu Turcarum reverso/ ex Moldavia, de Sophi/ etc., Barbarossa et classibus/ Christianorum.

Archivio di Stato di Venezia, fond Collegio V, Relazioni, busta 4, Costantinopoli.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See in this respect, D. Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk. A Pattern of Alliances 1350-1700* (Liverpool: 1954).
- <sup>2</sup> Șt. Ștefănescu, C. Mureșanu, T. Teoteoi (eds.), *Istoria românilor* [The history of the Romanians], vol. IV. *De la universalitatea creștină către Europa 'patriilor'* [From the Christian universality to the Europe of the "fatherlands"] (București: 2001), p. 440.
- <sup>3</sup> L. Șimanschi (ed.), *Petru Rareș* (București: 1978); Șt. S. Gorovei, *Petru Rareș* (București: 1982).
- <sup>4</sup> E. Stănescu, 'Le coup d'Etat nobiliaire de 1538 et son rôle dans l'asservissement de la Moldavie par l'Empire ottoman,' *Nouvelles études d'histoire*, 1, 1955, pp. 241-264; M. Neagoe, 'Petru Rareș și campania din 1538' [Petru Rareș and the 1538 campaign], *Revista Arhivelor*, LIII, 1976, vol. XXXVIII, no. 4, pp. 390-398; M. Guboglu, 'Inscripția sultanului Süleiman Magnificul în urma expediției din Moldova (1538/945)' [Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent's inscription following the expedition in Moldavia, 1538/945], *Studii. Revista de Istorie*, IX, 1956, no. 2-3, pp. 107-123.
- <sup>5</sup> Ioan-Aurel Pop, 'Cu privire la domnia lui Ștefan Lăcustă' [Concerning the reign of Ștefan Lăcustă], *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie*, Cluj-Napoca, XXVII, 1985-1986, pp. 79-98.
- <sup>6</sup> I. Chirțoagă, *Sud-estul Moldovei și stânga Nistrului (1484-1699). Expansiunea și dominația turco-tătară* [The South-East of Moldavia and the left side of the Dnestr, 1484-1699] (București: 1999), pp. 47-57.
- <sup>7</sup> K. Setton, *A History of the Crusades*, 6 vols. (1955-1989): III (Madison: 1975), pp. 428-446.
- <sup>8</sup> H. Theunissen, 'Ottoman-Venetian Diplomats: the Ahd-names. The Historical Background and the Development of a Category of Political Commercial Instruments together with an Annotated Edition of a Corpus of Relevant Documents,' *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies*, I, 1998, no. 2, pp. 163-165.
- <sup>9</sup> F. Thiriet, *La Romanie vénitienne au Moyen Âge*, (Paris, 1959), passim; A. Pertusi (ed.), *Venezia e l'oriente fra tardo medioevo e rinascimento* (Firenze: 1966), passim; H. Beck, M. Manoussakas, A. Pertusi (eds.), *Venezia centro di mediazione tra oriente e occidente (secoli XV-XVI). Aspetti e problemi*, 2 vols. (Firenze: 1977), passim; Nicolae Iorga, *Veneția în Marea Neagră* [Venice in the Black Sea], 3 vols. (București: 1913-1914), passim; Chr. Villain-Gandossi, 'Contribution à l'étude des relations diplomatiques et commerciales entre Venise et la Porte ottomane au XVIe siècle,' I-III, *Südost-Forschungen*, XXVI/1967, XXVIII/1969 și XXIX/1970 etc.
- <sup>10</sup> See also I. Bidian, 'Moldova în tratativele polono-otomane într-un document din anul 1538' [Moldavia in the Polish-Ottoman treaties in a document from 1538], *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, VII, (1974), pp. 309-319; C. Rezachevici, 'Tratatul dintre Petru Rareș și Sigismund I (28-31 august 1538) din vremea campaniei lui Suleiman Magnificul în Moldova' [The treaty between Petru Rareș and Sigismund I (28-31 August 1538) from the time of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent's campaign in Moldavia], *Cercetări istorice* (new series), IX-X, (1978-1979), pp. 305-326. For the general framework see Veniamin Ciobanu, *Țările Române și Polonia în sec. XIV-XVI* [The Roumanian principalities and Poland in the fourteenth-sixteenth centuries] (București: 1985).
- <sup>11</sup> Ioan-Aurel Pop, 'Dalla Crociata alla pace: documenti veneziani riguardanti i rapporti tra le potenze cristiane e l'Impero Ottomano all'inizio del XVI secolo,' Cristian Luca, Gianluca Masi e Andrea Piccardi (eds.), *L'Italia e l'Europa Centro-Orientale attraverso i secoli. Miscellanea di studi di storia politico-diplomatica, economica e dei rapporti culturali* (Brăila-Venezia: 2004), pp. 97-98.
- <sup>12</sup> Concerning the general relations between the Romanian principalities and the Ottoman Empire see Mihai Maxim, 'Principatele Române și Imperiul Otoman (1400-

- 1800)' [The Romanian principalities and the Ottoman Empire, 1400-1800], St. Fischer-Galați, D. C. Giurescu, Ioan-Aurel Pop (eds.), *O istorie a românilor* [A history of the Romanians] (Cluj-Napoca: 1998), pp. 129-147; idem, 'Țările Române și Imperiul Otoman (1400-1600)' [The Romanian principalities and the Ottoman Empire, 1400-1600], Ștefănescu, Mureșanu, Teeteoi (eds.), *Istoria românilor*, vol. IV. *De la universalitatea creștină*, pp. 531-583.
- <sup>13</sup> Silviu Dragomir, *Vlahii și morlacii. Studii asupra românismului balcanic* [The Wallachians and the Morlaci. Studies on the Balkan Romanianism] (Cluj: 1924).
- <sup>14</sup> See Ioan-Aurel Pop, 'Cu privire la domnia lui Ștefan Lăcustă,' pp. 79-98.
- <sup>15</sup> Followed by *gio*, crossed out.
- <sup>16</sup> 18 November 1558.
- <sup>17</sup> Adrianopol or Edirne, in Turkey.
- <sup>18</sup> 12 October 1558.
- <sup>19</sup> Followed by a two letter word, crossed out, perhaps *et*.
- <sup>20</sup> Süleyman the Magnificent (Kannunî), Ottoman Sultan (1520-1566).
- <sup>21</sup> The Moldavians, the Moldavian prince and the land of Moldavia all appear under this name. The term comes from Turkish and is appropriated by Romanian. The Turkish custom is known of calling the countries by the name of the reigning dynasty, in this case the Bogdan family.
- <sup>22</sup> Followed by *a mandato*, crossed out.
- <sup>23</sup> Followed by *calva*, crossed out.
- <sup>24</sup> Ragusa, today Dubrovnik, in Croatia.
- <sup>25</sup> Sofia, today the capital of Bulgaria.
- <sup>26</sup> Followed by *trovato*, crossed out.
- <sup>27</sup> Overwritten.
- <sup>28</sup> Followed by *assai*, crossed out.
- <sup>29</sup> The campaign of 1534, against the shah of Persia, Tahmasp, during which Tabriz, Baghdad, southern Azerbaidjan and Persian Iraq have bene conquered.
- <sup>30</sup> Petru Rareș, Prince of Moldavia (1527-1538; 1541-1546).
- <sup>31</sup> Integrated and written on the margins of *in Constantinopoli*...
- <sup>32</sup> Sigismund (Zygmunt) I Stary, king of Poland and Great Duke of Lithuania (1506-1548).
- <sup>33</sup> Followed by 40, crossed out.
- <sup>34</sup> Overwritten from *per molte*...
- <sup>35</sup> Followed by *il*, erased.
- <sup>36</sup> Followed by *à quella*, crossed out.
- <sup>37</sup> Followed by *veni*, crossed out.
- <sup>38</sup> Followed by *lassando conp*, crossed out.
- <sup>39</sup> Followed by *fatto questo*, / *ditto Bogdan mandò*, crossed out.
- <sup>40</sup> Carolus Quintus (1519-1556).
- <sup>41</sup> János Szapolyai, king of eastern Hungary (1526-1540).
- <sup>42</sup> Followed by *lili*, corrected and then crossed out.
- <sup>43</sup> Followed by *etiam*, crossed out.
- <sup>44</sup> Followed by *il quale/ in questo mezzo havendo fatto*, crossed out. The last four lines written on the margins, parallel to the height of the page (perpendicular to the actual text), from *al qual Turco ditto*...
- <sup>45</sup> This probably refers to Milcov.
- <sup>46</sup> Moldavia.
- <sup>47</sup> Wallachia.
- <sup>48</sup> Followed by *et intrar*, crossed out.
- <sup>49</sup> Corrected word.
- <sup>50</sup> Followed by *ej*, crossed out.
- <sup>51</sup> Ștefan V Lăcustă, Prince of Moldavia (1538-1540).
- <sup>52</sup> Suceava, the capital of the country.
- <sup>53</sup> Followed by *alcuno del Paese non si mosse*.
- <sup>54</sup> Followed by *fu forzat*, crossed out.
- <sup>55</sup> Followed by *suo*, crossed out.
- <sup>56</sup> Overwritten.
- <sup>57</sup> Niš, today in Serbia-Montenegro.
- <sup>58</sup> Černica, today in Croatia.

- <sup>59</sup> Belgrad, today the capital of Serbia.
- <sup>60</sup> Settlement today in Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- <sup>61</sup> Venetian port on the Dalmatian coast, today Herceg-Novi, in Montenegro.
- <sup>62</sup> Morlaci or Maurovlahi, the Balkan branch of the Romanians.
- <sup>63</sup> Followed by *c'era*, erased.
- <sup>64</sup> Corrected word.
- <sup>65</sup> 31 October 1538.
- <sup>66</sup> Followed by *esso*, crossed out.
- <sup>67</sup> Followed by *mei*, crossed out.
- <sup>68</sup> Overwritten *et sanzaco*.
- <sup>69</sup> 6 November 1538.
- <sup>70</sup> Khair ad Din (c. 1475-1546), admiral of the Otoman Empire, former captain of pirate ship of Barbaria and leader of Algiers, known as Barbarossa by the Europeans and as Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha by the Turks.
- <sup>71</sup> Andrea Doria (1466-1560), condottiere (soldier) and Genovese admiral. Leader of the Christian fleet vanquished by the Ottomans at Prevesa in 1538.
- <sup>72</sup> Cavtat, today in Croatia.
- <sup>73</sup> Followed by *il quale se*, crossed out. Ferrante Gonzaga (1507-1557), Duke of Ariano and prince of Molfetta, an Italian in the service of the Emperor Charles V.
- <sup>74</sup> Overwritten *tre giorni*, corrected *tre*.
- <sup>75</sup> Followed by *p* crossed out.
- <sup>76</sup> Name overwritten.
- <sup>77</sup> Followed by *al* crossed out.
- <sup>78</sup> Followed by *et che el sanzaco che/ era rimasto al governo di Constantinopoli*, crossed out.
- <sup>79</sup> Followed by *quelle che*, crossed out.
- <sup>80</sup> Followed by *per as*, crossed out.
- <sup>81</sup> Followed by *Dice che vi sono alcuni che/ dicono et... che forsi per andar à veder la moglie potria,* crossed out.
- <sup>82</sup> Followed by *Constantinopoli lavo*, crossed out. Above the word *Constantinopoli* there is written *Pe*, also crossed out.
- <sup>83</sup> Genovese neighbourhood of Constantinople also called Galata.
- <sup>84</sup> Followed by *dapoi il partir del Iustiniano,* erased.
- <sup>85</sup> Overwritten.
- <sup>86</sup> Followed by *tolto*, crossed out.
- <sup>87</sup> Overwritten from *mandato*.
- <sup>88</sup> Followed by *vero è*, crossed out.
- <sup>89</sup> Followed by *laso*, crossed out.
- <sup>90</sup> Overwritten.
- <sup>91</sup> Overwritten *ex se*.
- <sup>92</sup> Followed by *per*, crossed out.
- <sup>93</sup> Followed by *che*, crossed out.
- <sup>94</sup> Corrected from *mala*. Followed by *opinione*, crossed out.
- <sup>95</sup> Overwritten.
- <sup>96</sup> Followed by *Barbaro*, crossed out.
- <sup>97</sup> Francesco, a member of the San Samuele branch of the Mocenigo family, a Venetian patrician, super count of a galley, probably born in 1511 and died in October 1538.
- <sup>98</sup> Corrected from *hano*.
- <sup>99</sup> Followed by *per il c*, crossed out.