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## Building a Boundary: the First Venetian-Ottoman Border in Dalmatia, 1573-1576

The establishment of a precise borderline between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Venice on the Dalmatian mainland first became an issue as a consequence of the third Venetian-Ottoman War (1537–1540). The issue arose again after the War of Cyprus (1570–1573). The victories of the Turkish army forced the Venetians to sue for a favourable interpretation of the 1573 peace treaty, under which they envisaged a full handover of their pre-war Dalmatian territories. The lengthy negotiations involved the Grand Vizier Mehmed Sokollu and his counsellor Solomon Ashkenazi, the Venetian Senate and its ambassadors. Only once Sultan Murad III had agreed to a settlement did both the Ottoman Empire and Venice send a special commission to Dalmatia, led respectively by Ferhat Sokolovic, Sanjak-bey of Bosnia, and by the Venetian nobleman Giacomo Soranzo. The negotiations took place in pavilions erected in Biljane, near Zadar; they were later moved to Skradin and finally to Solin during the summer of 1576. The Venetian government was highly satisfied with the new borderline, which led to relatively improved relations between the two states that lasted until the War of Candia (1645–69). One major achievement of these relations was the revival of trade between Venice and the Balkan area, which resulted in the establishment of the Freeport of Split in 1590.

### *The Venetian-Ottoman frontier in Dalmatia and the wars: 1550–1573*

The establishment of a permanent border between Ottoman and Venetian Dalmatia became an issue at the end of a major expansionist campaign in the Balkans by Suleiman the Magnificent and after the third Venetian-Ottoman war (1537–1540), during which the Turkish army occupied the fortified towns of Nadin and Vrana in the Zadar district<sup>1</sup>. The controversy over the extension of the two jurisdictions was finally resolved in 1550 when a decree by the Sublime Porte, the central government of the Ottoman Empire, recognised Venetian jurisdiction over 44 villages and 9 rural districts south-southeast of the city of Zadar that bordered areas recently conquered by the Turks<sup>2</sup>. The Serenissima was extremely keen to reach an agreement and had

<sup>1</sup> IVETIC 2009: 250-251; ARBEL 1996: 951. On the medieval castle of Vrana (= La Vrana or Lavrana) and on the caravansary (*han*): DE BENVENUTI 1940: 3-27; NOVAK KLEMENCIC 2005: 55-63.

<sup>2</sup> ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 5, nn. 646-648 (in three copies), 1 July 1550 (Second ten days of Cemaziyulhair 957); another copy in: ASVe, *Confini*, b. 243bis, pp. 40-43 (the names of the localities are different in the various copies). On the peace treaty, which included the new Turkish rule over Nadin, Vrana and Klis: ASVe, *Commemoriali*, reg. 22, n. 43, c. 33t, 2 October 1540.

entrusted the negotiations to Alvise Renier, its Ambassador to Istanbul (*Bailo*). Venice realised that its armies were weak on this land front and wanted peace so that it could benefit from its new sovereign territories, given that the area had not been clearly divided before the war<sup>3</sup>. Renier, not without a certain pride, gave himself the credit for resolving this thorny affair; he also pointed out that the agreement afforded protection to a considerable number of Venice's Slav subjects from Istria, who had been called to repopulate the troubled district of Zadar, and defended the rights of the city of Šibenik to use the mills on the River Krka<sup>4</sup>.

After the agreement, tension and minor border incidents were fairly frequent, but these may have been due more to trouble-making Venetian subjects than to the Ottoman authorities<sup>5</sup>. The jurisdiction, however, remained undisputed until 1569, even though no commissioners had been sent to erect clear frontier markers after Suleiman had issued his decree in 1555, a shortcoming that weakened the agreement. The Sanjak-bey of Klis, Ferhat Sokolovic, attempted to take advantage of the situation. Sokolovic was to feature prominently in subsequent events and was cautioned by the Ottoman government for trying to stir up trouble in the Split district<sup>6</sup>. At the same time, Ferhat was also commanded to repatriate all of the Morlac families, i.e. the Ottoman Empire's Slav subjects, from some communities in the Venetian territories of Šibenik and Trogir<sup>7</sup>. In 1564, Deli Mehmet, another eminent Ottoman, was reprimanded because he had occupied the hamlet of Bicine in the Zadar district, despite having no authorisation to do so<sup>8</sup>. These incidents aside,

<sup>3</sup> ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 5, n. 637, translation of the decree of Sarajevo Cadi, Ali son of Mehmet, on the boundaries of Zadar and on the castles of Vrana and Nadin, undated (between 25 September and 3 October 1548). On the problems of the Venetian-Turkish frontier between 1470 and 1503: ORLANDO 2009: 103-178.

<sup>4</sup> *Relazioni* 1996: 52-56 and 63-64. On the depopulation of the district of Zadar and on the immigration from Istria of about a thousand *Morlacs*: ASVe, *Relazioni*, b. 72, report by Marcantonio da Mula, Count of Zadar, 1543 (v. *Commissiones* 1877: pp. 170-175); *Ibid.*, n. 77, report by Polo Giustinian, 13 February 1554 (v. *Commissiones* 1880: 48-55); Correr, *Manoscritti Cicogna*, reg. 2075, report by G.B. Giustinian, 1553, p. 21. A recent summary on the demographic weakness of Venetian Dalmatia: IVETIC 2009: 255-256. On the controversial identity of the *Morlacs* or Dinaric Vlachs: WINNIFRITH 1987; IVETIC 2004; ROKSANDIĆ 2009: 271-285.

<sup>5</sup> ASVe, *Relazioni*, b. 62, reg. 1, cc. 120r-124r, report by Antonio Michiel, 13 July 1557 (*Commissiones* 1880: 99-104); on the Turkish raids until 1540: VRANDEČIĆ 2009: 288.

<sup>6</sup> ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 6, n. 748, order of Suleiman I to the Sanjac of Klis and to the Skradin Cadi, translation date-stamped 18 March 1559 (First Decade Cemaziyülahir 966).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, nn. 740-741, Suleiman I to the Doge, 27 July – 5 August 1558 (Second ten days of Şevval 965); nn. 746-747, order of Suleiman to the Sanjac of Klis, 18 March 1559 (First Decade Cemaziyülahir 966); n. 749, dispatch of Sigismondo da Molin *Rettore* (Governor) of Trogir, 3 May 1559 (18 Morlac communities located on the heights above Trogir had refused to pay taxes to the town at the instigation of Ferhat).

<sup>8</sup> ASVe, *Commemoriali*, reg. 23, n. 112, c. 120t, in early October 1564.

Venetian-Ottoman relations in the area remained fairly peaceable for about 15 years. Turks were even allowed into Novigrad, a major Venetian fortified outpost where grain was traded, although their presence did cause considerable concern among the Zadar authorities<sup>9</sup>.

When Suleiman died leading the siege of Szigetvár in Hungary in September 1566, the usual state of uncertainty and tension surrounding his successor had an immediate impact in Dalmatia. The Venetian ambassadors to Istanbul, Giacomo Soranzo and Marino Cavalli, were accused of trying to recapture Vrana castle and of conspiring with Uskok pirates<sup>10</sup>. Giovanni Mocenigo, the *Provveditore Generale*, Venice's supreme military authority in Dalmatia, predicted "sinister disorder" in March 1567. Although insults flew at the annual meeting with the Sanjak-bey of Klis and his entourage beneath the walls of Zadar<sup>11</sup>, more worrying signs came directly from Istanbul. After the new Sultan Selim II had ratified the old peace agreements in June 1567, Venetian diplomats began to hear rumours, as well as see increasingly clearer signs, that the Turks were planning an expedition against Cyprus<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, at the beginning of 1569, Selim II accused Venice of underhand behaviour in Dalmatia, alleging that it was planning to rebuild thirty or so castles and had made repeated incursions around Klis<sup>13</sup>. These pretexts were designed to fuel a progressive deterioration in relations so that hostilities could be reopened.

The War of Cyprus (1570–1573) was quick to make its impact felt on the Dalmatian mainland as well; the Turks repeatedly attacked the Zadar district one month before they sent an ultimatum to Venice - rejected late March 1570 - and even before the imperial Turkish fleet had set sail for Cyprus in mid-April<sup>14</sup>. During the summer of 1570, the fortified towns of Zemunik and Poličnik fell to the Turks; the city of Nin (Nona), the Bishop's See, was evacuated; and a detachment of Turkish cavalry was driven back beneath the very walls of Zadar. Further south, the isolated stronghold of Omis only just managed to repel an attack<sup>15</sup>. Split was attacked by the Ottomans on the night of 31 March 1570, but withstood the

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<sup>9</sup> ASVe, *CX Rett.*, b. 283, n. 202, Zadar, 24 January 1565. On the town of Novigrad: De Benvenuti 1936: 3-44.

<sup>10</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 2, n. 15, cc. 44-47, G. Soranzo, 10 April 1567; n. 24, cc. 81-85, G. Soranzo and M. Cavalli, 28 May 1567; n. 27, cc. 97-100, G. Soranzo and M. Cavalli, 28 June 1567.

<sup>11</sup> ASVe, *Relazioni*, b. 70, 3 March 1567.

<sup>12</sup> PANCIERA 2010: 81-101.

<sup>13</sup> ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 6, nn. 802-803, 8-16 February 1569 (Third ten days of Şaban 976).

<sup>14</sup> PEDANI 1994: 162-163; COSTANTINI 2009: 51-52.

<sup>15</sup> BRAUDEL 1986: 1155; PRAGA 1954: 168; ASVe, *Relazioni*, b. 66, n. 13, report by Giovanni Da Lezze, 10 February 1571 (*Commissiones* 1880: 249-267).

assault. The summer of 1571, however, was a dramatic time for the entire Split district: Solin and Vranjic surrendered to the Turks without a fight, but Kaštel Sućurac was successfully defended by its garrison. The Ottoman advance only halted because the city of Split was struck by plague on the eve of 15 August<sup>16</sup>. The victory at Lepanto in October put paid to the Turkish advance, and the Venetians sacked the Turkish city of Skradin in 1572<sup>17</sup>. The hostilities had resulted in the Ottomans occupying a broad swath of the districts of Zadar and Split; they had also made a little headway towards Šibenik. Only the small district of Trogir had not been invaded.

The peace treaty signed in Istanbul on 7 March 1573 seemed extremely favourable to Venetian influence in Dalmatia because the terms envisaged a return *in statu quo ante*, i.e. the restoral of full Venetian sovereignty over its territories in Dalmatia and Albania<sup>18</sup>. At least this was how the Venetians interpreted it. The complex negotiations were conducted between the *Bailo* Marcantonio Barbaro and the Grand Vizier Mehmed Sokollu, with Solomon Ashkenazi<sup>19</sup> and François de Noailles, the French Ambassador and Bishop of Dax, as mediators. During the negotiations, the Sultan declared that he was contrary to handing over the territories that had been captured for Islam by the sword, as it would be dishonourable and blasphemous. Nevertheless, the Vizier agreed to include a handover clause covering Venice's pre-war territories, as long as the Venetians renounced sovereignty over the fortresses of Bar (Antivari) and Ulcinj, and paid the Turks an annual tribute for the island of Zakynthos<sup>20</sup>.

Venice, however, quite rightly feared that the Turks would not withdraw from the recently occupied Dalmatian territories. Consequently, the Serenissima ordered Mocenigo not to negotiate with Ferhat Sokolovic because it wanted the Turks to return all of the territories under Venetian influence before the war<sup>21</sup>. The matter was to be dealt with at the highest diplomatic levels to avoid the risk of sparking futile attrition. Ferhat quickly demonstrated his complete unwillingness to

<sup>16</sup> ASVe, *Relazioni*, b. 72, n. 138, report by Andrea Michiel, 1573 (*Commissiones* 1964: 127-136).

<sup>17</sup> PRAGA 1954: 173-174.

<sup>18</sup> ASVe, *Commemoriali*, reg. 24, n. 2, 1r-2r, 7 March 1573 (Third ten days of Zilkade 980), translation by the interpreter Hurem; n. 7, 20t, declaration of Marcantonio Barbaro on the peace with Selim II, 8 March 1573.

<sup>19</sup> On Ashkenazi, Jewish doctor-merchant-diplomat born in Udine: PEDANI 1994: 25-26; ARBEL 1987; ARBEL 1991. On Barbaro: Gaeta 1964; the Tintoretto portrait housed in the Wien Kunstmuseum shows Marcantonio Barbaro overlooking the Bosphorus, holding in his hand the peace specifications of 1573 marked with the initials of Mehmet Sokollu: *Palladio* 2008, n. 25b.

<sup>20</sup> ASVe, *Dis. Costantinopoli*, reg. 6E, n. 6, 18-23, Marcantonio Barbaro, 29 January 1573; n. 8, 28-31, 1 February 1573 (30r); n. 11, 38-43, 10 February 1573 (39v).

<sup>21</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 4, 23v, 8 May 1573.

withdraw from the recently conquered territories<sup>22</sup>. He indignantly rejected the observation by an emissary from the city of Zadar that Zemunik, today the name of Zadar airport, was merely a farm and not a fortified town, as Ferhat had described it to the Sultan<sup>23</sup>. As Ferhat Sokolovic was the nephew of the Grand Vizier and “his most favoured one”, as well as the brother of the Pasha of Damascus<sup>24</sup>, his standing could not be ignored. From the outset of the negotiations, the French ambassador Noailles was extremely doubtful that the territories could be returned, and language complications made the peace clauses difficult to interpret<sup>25</sup>.

### *The complex boundary negotiations until the death of Sultan Selim II*

Initially, the Venetian noble Andrea Badoer was appointed Special Ambassador to deal with the delicate negotiations over applying the peace treaty. Badoer had been given strict instructions not to leave Istanbul until the Dalmatian borders had been established once and for all. The outgoing *Bailo*, Marcantonio Barbaro, had also been ordered to stay in Istanbul until the arrival of his successor Antonio Tiepolo<sup>26</sup> to help settle the issue. The negotiations, however, stalled despite numerous meetings between Venetian diplomats and the Grand Vizier Mehmed Sokollu over the summer. It was difficult for the Grand Vizier to agree to hand over the conquered territories when his nephew Ferhat had already issued a decree establishing that the territories had become part of the Ottoman Empire. For their part, the Venetians proposed the appointment of a bilateral borders commission on a number of occasions in order to settle the dispute<sup>27</sup>. In October 1573, Barbaro sought the Venetian Senate’s counsel in light of the Sultan’s imminent return to Istanbul, which, it was hoped, would settle the matter. The Venetian government recommended that Barbaro handle the matter with the due tact and skill. He was to avoid speaking of “restituzione” (handover) and treat it as a ‘swap’ so that the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 33r-v and 34v-35r, 23 May 1573.

<sup>23</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 8, n. 48, 367-374, Giacomo Soranzo, Beyoğlu 18 August 1575. Zemunik was a fortified property of the Venetian family Venier, but it was in a bad state of repair and in a poor strategic position; its small garrison surrendered to the Turks without a fight: DE BENVENUTI 1938: 4-9; JAKŠIĆ 1997: 27-49.

<sup>24</sup> On the Sokolovic family: ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 8, n. 48, 367-374 and n. 61, 20 September 1575, 424 r (424-431).

<sup>25</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 6, 1-11 and 37-40, dispatches of Marcantonio Barbaro, 7 and 13 March 1573.

<sup>26</sup> ASVe, *Del.Costantinopoli*, reg. 4, 36v-37r and 36r-39v, decrees 9 June 1573 (the second contains the orders (“commissioni”) of the Venetian Senate to Badoer); HENZENBERGEN 2006: 245 and 272.

<sup>27</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 6, 94-96, 116-119, 120, dispatches of 12 August, 28 and 29 September 1573.

Vizier would stand by his pledge not to use the word “castelli” (fortifications) in the official documents, a term that had appeared in several versions of the Turkish treaty<sup>28</sup>.

The Venetian government believed it important to hold on to the sliver of Dalmatian coast they had possessed before the outbreak of hostilities<sup>29</sup>. Over the following months, both the return of Barbaro (who stayed in Istanbul for more than six years!<sup>30</sup>) and the discharge of the Special Ambassador Badoer were delayed. The only possible concession at that time was the consent of the Grand Vizier to send his trusted advisor Solomon Ashkenazi on a fact-finding mission to Venice and Dalmatia. This move made Ashkenazi the real mediator behind the negotiations, as he had been for the peace treaty. The proposal to settle the dispute with an annual tribute of 2,000 ducats to the Sublime Porte was frustrated by a Turkish counterproposal of 20,000 sequins, an unacceptable amount. The Venetians eventually gave up the idea of keeping Badoer in Dalmatia to conclude the border negotiations. Badoer finally left Istanbul on 27 February 1574; Barbaro left on 8 May 1574<sup>31</sup>.

As mentioned above, the Venetians attempted to speed up negotiations by suggesting the appointment of a borders commission, a solution to which the Grand Vizier was not adverse. As part of this plan, the Venetians appointed Alvise Grimani as the new *Provveditore Generale* in Dalmatia and gave him the task of ensuring that all of the occupied territories were handed over<sup>32</sup>. Mehmed Sokollu's commissioners were the Sanjak-bey of Klis, a kadi, and his nephew Ferhat Sokolovic, who had become Sanjak-bey of Bosnia in the meantime. The Venetians were well aware that any negotiations involving the influential Ferhat would prove difficult and tried in vain to have him excluded from the commission. Furthermore, the Grand Vizier sent one of his oldest and most skilled messengers, the *Chiaus* Lufti Cogia, to Dalmatia. Cogia was also one of the Grand Vizier's few incorruptible servants, as the new *Bailo* Antonio Tiepolo discovered when he attempted to give him 100 gold ducats. Cogia left Istanbul on 8 May 1574,

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 148, 14 October 1573; ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 4, 52r-53v, 19 October 1573.

<sup>29</sup> Giacomo Soranzo wrote later: «affair so important and much-desired by your Distinguished Lordships» (*Relazioni* 1996: 204).

<sup>30</sup> Barbaro left Istanbul for Corfu on 8 May 1574 aboard a Turkish galley: ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 7, n. 13, 103-108, 9 May 1574.

<sup>31</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 6, 165-168, 187-198, 226-228, 243-245, 280-288, 310-317, 345-348, 473-479, dispatches of 23 and 28 October, 8, 20 and 29 November, 14 and 29 December 1573 and 26 February 1574; filza 7, n. 12, 91-102, 3 May 1574; ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 4, 1v, 57v-58v, 59r, 59v-60r, “sommario della materia delli confini” and decrees of 4 and 21 November 1573 and 19 December 1573.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 67v-68v and 71v-72v, decrees 24 March and 20 April 1574.



the same day as Barbaro<sup>33</sup>. Under these circumstances, the Venetian Senate had high hopes that its Dalmatian territories would soon be returned; they misjudged the situation completely<sup>34</sup>.

Lufti Cogia reached Dalmatia much later than expected - between late July and early August-which irked the Venetians. Furthermore, the treaties that he delivered to the Turkish commissioners were kept secret from both delegations until the very last moment<sup>35</sup>. In the end, no real negotiations took place in Zadar because Grimani soon discovered that the Grand Vizier's orders were not to return the territories. Grimani therefore refused to meet Ferhat, who in turn sent an indignant report to the Sultan, saying that he had arranged to meet Grimani at the gates of Zadar so that he could examine the Venetians' requests, but Grimani did not show up. In actual fact, there was no margin for negotiation and Ferhat's real intention was to obtain confirmation of the current Ottoman-established borders. After the negotiations had collapsed, the Venetian government considered sending a new Special Ambassador. In the meantime, the *Bailo* did his utmost not to let the issue fall from the agenda<sup>36</sup>.

The Turkish envoy Solomon Ashkenazi was welcomed to Venice with the highest honours and given 1,000 sequins on his arrival. His mission, however, did not settle the matter, although it did help to keep the negotiations open. It may also have helped to soften the Grand Vizier's approach, as he held Ashkenazi in high regard<sup>37</sup>. Furthermore, Ashkenazi hoped to make an agreement with Ferhat Sokolovic himself, even though the *Bailo* was trying to have him excluded from the negotiations<sup>38</sup>. Around 15 September 1574, Ashkenazi, Zadar citizen Simone Mazzucco, and Venetian Captain Giacomo Cedolini made a cursory inspection of Zemunik, Novigrad and Poličnik; the inspection, however, raised a series of misgivings about the authoritativeness of Ashkenazi, who seemed to be excessively cautious towards the local Muslim communities. Although the Venetian Senate had been meticulous in its preparations and orders for the inspection, very little was resolved. In Zemunik, for instance, Ashkenazi found only a couple of Turkish

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<sup>33</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 7, 1, 4, 7, 8, 13, cc. 1-4, 14-23, 45-57, 63-76, 103-108, 119-120, 14 May, 6, 17 and 29 April, 9 and 19 May 1574.

<sup>34</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 4, 75r-76r, 21 May 1574.

<sup>35</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 7, nn. 18, 21 e 31, 150-158, 170-175, 241-248, 23 June, 5 July, 8 August 1574.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 34, 267-275, 18 August 1574; ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, file "1574", 170-171 and 195-197, report by Vincenzo Alessandri, 13 February 1575 and dispatch of G. Soranzo, 3 August 1575.

<sup>37</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 4, 80v-81r, 84r, 84r-85v, decrees 14 August, 1 and 2 September 1574.

<sup>38</sup> ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, file "1574", report by Marc'Antonio Barbaro, 6 September 1574 (from Venice, after a confidential meeting with Ashkenazi).

burial sites, but not the place of worship that Ferhat had insinuated; Ashkenazi was also able to see for himself that Zemunik was of little strategic importance<sup>39</sup>.

Once Ashkenazi had returned to Istanbul at the beginning of September, he set up a secret meeting with the *Bailo* Tiepolo, a man unsympathetic towards Muslims, in order to find some common ground. He soon discovered, however, that the Venetian government had not sent the *Bailo* the two letters addressed to the Sultan that Ashkenazi had recommended it write: one letter was supposed to take an official, gentler approach; the other was to be in a more decisive, firmer tone and shown to the Grand Vizier alone so that he would be forced to evaluate the consequences should Turkish policy harden<sup>40</sup>. Negotiations were now in the hands of "Rabbi Solomon", wrote Tiepolo, who had managed to reopen talks with Mehmed Sokollu; Sokollu, however, was still determined not to hand over Zemunik. In the meantime, these events intertwined with the mixed results of the Turkish conquest of Tunisi and an illness that had afflicted the Sultan, combined with the usual concerns about disorder and violence against foreigners should he die<sup>41</sup>. At the end of November 1574, Ashkenazi suggested that Tiepolo offer a gift of 10,000 ducats to the Grand Vizier, who was eager to avoid the arrival of a new Special Ambassador from Venice. The negotiations also involved Agha Fereydon, who was owed 3,000 sequins by the Venetians for his role in the peace treaty and had offered his services to smooth its application<sup>42</sup>. Meanwhile, the health of Selim II had deteriorated rapidly and consequently all negotiations were suspended. On 22 December, 10 days after the Sultan had died, Tiepolo sent word to Venice that Selim II's eldest son Murad had been enthroned in peaceful circumstances. The Grand Vizier Sokollu had retained his firm hold on government, and his loyal *Chiaus* Mustafa was ready to leave for Venice to announce the succession officially<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> ASVe, *Del.Costantinopoli*, reg. 4, 84r-85r, two decrees date-stamped 2 September 1574; ASVe, *CX Rett.*, b. 302, S. Mazzucco, Zadar, 15 September 1574: they were threatened by the Commander (*Dizdar*) of Zemunik accompanied by 40 men and 6 knights.

<sup>40</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 7, n. 49, 389-395, 10 November 1574; ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, file "1575", 217-227, 26 August 1575, report by Giacomo Soranzo on a meeting with Ashkenazi: according to Ashkenazi, it would be sufficient to offer a yearly pension of 500 ducats to secure the territories desired.

<sup>41</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 7, nn. 49, 50, 52, 389-395, 397-400, 408-419, 10, 15 and 24 November 1574. The *Bailo* wrote on 10 November that the Jewish and Christians merchants were preparing to barricade themselves at home «for fear of these beasts».

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, nn. 53 and 56, 420-429 and 440-446, 26 and 30 November 1574; ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, file "1574", 143-149 and 150-152, 27 and 30 November 1574.

<sup>43</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 7, 57 and 60, 448-462 and 475-478, 18 and 22 December 1574.



*The appointment of the Special Ambassador Giacomo Soranzo*

The enthronement of Murad III set the complex mechanisms of diplomacy back in motion. Murad was the son of the powerful Nur Banu, who is traditionally believed to have been a Venetian noblewoman, although she may also have been an ex-Venetian subject, probably from Corfu<sup>44</sup>. On 25 January 1575, nobleman Giacomo Soranzo was appointed as the new Special Ambassador and given the task of paying homage to the recently enthroned Sultan; Soranzo was an expert in Turkish affairs and in the Sokollu family, in particular. He was also entrusted with restarting negotiations over the Dalmatian borders. All this was happening while Solomon Ashkenazi was still soliciting Venice to send the two missives and to pay the Grand Vizier his gift, which had been reduced to 10,000 sequins in the meantime<sup>45</sup>. Before providing Soranzo with instructions, the Senate called off all other forms of negotiation. The Council of Ten authorised a secret gift of 1,000 sequins and six silk robes for Casnadar Bassi, a close friend of the Grand Vizier. Mehmed Sokollu announced his delight at the arrival of the Special Ambassador and expressed renewed interest in negotiating<sup>46</sup>.

The Venetian Senate, however, was unable to agree on the instructions to give Soranzo over the Dalmatian borders; some were in favour of appeasing the Turks and others were determined to put forward Venice's case. In the end, Soranzo was ordered to proceed with caution and authorised to pay a maximum of 2,500 sequins in accordance with the extent of the lands recovered. From this point, Soranzo was the sole intermediary authorised to negotiate the Dalmatian borders; consequently, the new *Bailo*, Giovanni Correr, was given no orders on the issue<sup>47</sup>. Soranzo's aim was to negotiate with the Grand Vizier, Ashkenazi and Agha Fereydon to obtain clear-cut orders from the Sultan.

Giacomo Soranzo di Francesco (1518-1599) was chosen as Special Ambassador for his undisputed skills; he also wrote a fascinating series of despatches from

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<sup>44</sup> Her real name was probably Kalé Kartánou, certified by the statements of the Ambassador Badoer and of the *Bailo* Soranzo: QUINN 1910: 248-249; Arbel 1992: 241-259. A summary of various testimonials and a doubt on this version: CARRETTO 2007: 24-26.

<sup>45</sup> See, for example, the Soranzo's accurate portrait of Sokollu: *Relazioni* 1996: 209-210.

<sup>46</sup> ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, fasc. "1574", 154-157 and 166-168, 7 January and 10 February 1575; ASVe, *Segretario alle voci, Elezioni in Senato*, reg. 4, 92v, 25 January 1575; ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 7, nn. 67, 69 and 70, 539-546, 559-562 and 564-571, 1, 4 and 10 February 1575 (Tiepolo took leave of the Sultan on 8 February with a short speech on peace, without mentioning the problem of the boundaries); ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 4, 99r, 99r-100r, decrees 3 and 18 February 1575.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 102r-107r, 14 April 1575; cc. 107v-111r, 16 April 1575. On Correr (1533-1583), «one of the finest exponents of the great Venetian diplomacy of the 16 century Venetian diplomacy»: BAIOCCHI 1983: 493-497.

Dalmatia, which he sent regularly to the Venetian Senate between 13 March and 29 November 1576<sup>48</sup>. Soranzo had covered a number of roles in the upper echelons of Venetian diplomacy in a long career that began in 1548. In 1570, he was made an envoy to Emperor Maximilian II in a bid to form an anti-Turkish alliance; he had been Special Ambassador to England between 1550 and 1554, and was envoy to the court of Emperor Ferdinand I in Rome in 1563; he had also been *Bailo* to Constantinople in 1565. His visit to the court of Suleiman the Magnificent in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, in May 1566 was his first meeting with the Grand Vizier Mehmed Sokollu, who complained to him about the instability in the mouth of the River Neretva, Dalmatia caused by Uskok pirates<sup>49</sup>. During his office, Soranzo also met the Vizier's nephew Ferhat Sokolovic in Istanbul<sup>50</sup>. Before the War of Cyprus, he had been given strategic and military roles, including Commissioner to the Friuli border (1558), *Savio di Terraferma* and then Captain of Brescia (1561-62), and *Podestà* of Padova (1569). In March 1567, he was appointed as a *Savio del Consiglio*, a member of the highest council in the Republic of Venice<sup>51</sup>. During the War of Cyprus he was appointed *Provveditore Generale da Mar* on 20 October 1571, succeeding Agostino Barbarigo, who had died several days earlier at Lepanto. Soranzo reorganised the war fleet and took part in the unsuccessful attempt to retake the Peloponnese town of Methoni. He did, however, manage to lead a fleet of thirty galleys to destroy a new Turkish fortification a short distance from Hrgec Novi in Dalmatia<sup>52</sup>.

Giacomo Soranzo's offices, assignments and experience made him one of the most important men in the Venetian government of the mid-to-late 16<sup>th</sup> century, as well as one of Europe's most veteran diplomats. He played a major role in Venice's oligarchy (*Procuratore di San Marco* in 1575), and after the events detailed in this paper he returned to Istanbul in 1581 to attend the circumcision ceremony (*Sunnet*) of the future Sultan Mehmet III<sup>53</sup>. At the end of a distinguished career, however, Soranzo betrayed Venice; in exchange for a position as cardinal, he handed over State secrets to the Grand Duke of Tuscany Francesco I and to his

<sup>48</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 10.

<sup>49</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 1, cc.143-147, G. Soranzo from Plovdiv, 25 May 1566.

<sup>50</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 2, n. 3, cc.5-7, 8 March 1567, G. Soranzo from Pera; n. 29, cc. 103-105, 1 July 1567, G. Soranzo and M. Cavalli from Pera.

<sup>51</sup> RETTORE 1904: 3-8; ASVe, *Segretario alle voci, Elezioni in Senato*, reg. 3, cc. 5v, 7v, 63r, 71r and 72r; reg. 4, c. 89r; ASVe, M. Barbaro, *Arbori de' patritii veneti*, reg. VII (31), c. 50.

<sup>52</sup> RETTORE 1904: 9-17; *La Dalmazia monumentale* 1917: 55-56; PARUTA 1605: 227, 295, 300-301.

<sup>53</sup> ASVe, *Segretario alle voci, Elezioni in Senato*, reg. 5, c. 143v, 28 August 1581, running the Senato decree 26 August 1581. On this mission Soranzo left an interesting report and a travel diary (*Le relazioni* 1844: 209-253) and a new report in 1584 (*Relazioni* 1996: 286-290).

brother Cardinal Ferdinando. As a result, he was banished from Venice in 1584 and exiled to Koper. His sentence was annulled a couple of years later when he bought a pardon known as “voce liberar bandito”<sup>54</sup>. The long epitaph on his funeral monument in the Church of Sant’Angelo on the island of Murano, where he spent his final years, includes among his achievements: “designato Dalmatiae finium soli arbitro”<sup>55</sup> (Appointed Sole Commissioner for the Dalmatian Border).

*Wide-ranging negotiations: the Vizier, the Interpreter and the three Ambassadors*

While Soranzo was preparing to leave for Istanbul, a parallel diplomatic initiative was set in motion via an interpreter, Michele Membrè, who met Ferhat Sokolovic in Banja Luca a little before 13 February 1575; Membrè brought robes, a clock, sugar and candles as gifts. Ferhat said that he was open to negotiating with Venice and bemoaned the failure of the meeting with Grimani the previous summer. He claimed that he was doing his best to establish a permanent border and to foster good relations with Venice. He was, however, evasive as to how much territory would be returned, but recognised the Šibenik mills as Venetian and stated that they would be rebuilt. At the end of their talks, Ferhat revealed his greed by practically ordering Membrè to have a series of costly gifts sent to him immediately from Zadar<sup>56</sup>. Membrè was then ordered to test the mood of Mustafa, the Ottoman envoy to Venice, who had arrived to make the official announcement of the new Sultan. The two men had known each other for years, as they were both from Circassia<sup>57</sup>. The elderly Mustafa was shocked by Ferhat’s brashness, but noted that he was well protected by his uncle, the Grand Vizier. He recommended that Venice write to the Grand Vizier himself and provide the documentation that proved Venice’s rights over the Dalmatian territories. Membrè told Mustafa about Suleiman’s 1550 decree on the “ville” (villages) in Zadar, and spoke of the reciprocal advantage of peace and repopulating the area to boost trade. He also

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<sup>54</sup> RETTORE 1904: 21-24; PRETO 1994: 59; ASVe, *Consiglio dei dieci, Parti criminali*, reg. 14, c. 93r, 23 July 1584; DONÀ 1865.

<sup>55</sup> See the Giacomo Soranzo’s funerary monument carved by the renown artist Alessandro Vittoria (Martin 1998: 146-147, record card 44, picture n. 133; RETTORE 1904: 24), and two portraits both attributed to Tintoretto: Rossi 1974: 113-114 and 130, figures nn. 45-46 and 159; *Jacopo Tintoretto* 1994: 90-95, figures n. 9 e n. 10.

<sup>56</sup> ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, file “1574”, sheets 170-171, report by 13 February 1575; as gifts: Membrè received a carpet, while Ferhat asked for two sets of clothes and some Turkish language books.

<sup>57</sup> ASVe, *Collegio, Esposizioni Principi*, reg. 3, cc. 54-56r, 26 March 1575; PEDANI 1994: 29 and 44.

mentioned that Venice had agreed to forego the “castles” conquered by the Turks (he probably meant Tin) and was prepared to pay an annual tribute for Zemunik<sup>58</sup>.

Giacomo Soranzo arrived in Istanbul at the end of June 1575 and was greeted with great pomp by the Grand Vizier himself<sup>59</sup>. His initial talks with Mehmed Sokollu in July 1575 reassured him of the Ottomans’ goodwill, although the Sultan did not want to hear talk of a “handover”<sup>60</sup>. Soranzo obtained Murad III’s confirmation of the previous peace treaties on the same day that he was appointed *Procuratore di S. Marco “de supra”*, the second highest position in the Republic of Venice after Doge<sup>61</sup>. In August, Soranzo attempted to convince a placid, even good-natured Sokollu with 2,500 ducats, but Sokollu refused, hinting that they needed to appoint commissioners and that his nephew Ferhat Sokolovic was to be among them<sup>62</sup>. Towards the end of the month, Soranzo sought the mediation of Solomon Ashkenazi, who advised a combination of threats and corruption to convince the Grand Vizier. Sokollu, however, seemed offended by the offer of a “pension”, but he was perturbed by Ashkenazi’s argument that a slight to the Serenissima, which was at peace with the Ottomans, but humiliated in the application of the peace terms, would lead the other Christian leaders to take serious action<sup>63</sup>. Venice’s new diplomatic offensive involved both the governors of Dalmatia, who were told to give suitable gifts to the Sanjak-bey of Klis, and Soranzo, who strove to keep talks alive, although at times he despaired at the results, which were partly due to the long silences by the Venetian authorities. On 3 September, however, Soranzo and the two other ambassadors (the new *Bailo* Giovanni Correr and Antonio Tiepolo, who was still in Istanbul) wrote to the Venetian government asking permission to appoint a bilateral commission in Dalmatia, including Ferhat, in accordance with the old proposal pushed for by Agha Fereydun, among others<sup>64</sup>. On 14 October, the Venetian Senate finally replied directly to the Grand Vizier and its diplomats, suggesting that both parties agree to send commissioners; it

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., reg. 3, cc. 58v-61v, report by M. Membrè, 21 April 1575.

<sup>59</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 8, nn. 27 and 28, cc. 245 e 247-250, 26 June and 4 July 1575.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., nn. 29, 31 and 35, cc. 251-1260, 269-273, 299-307, 6 11 and 19 July 1575.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., n. 47, cc. 329-331, 10 August 1575; ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 6, n. 827, “Capitoli della pace fra l’imperio de’ turchi et il ser.mo dominio...” (translation of Matteo Marucini, 10 August 1575 (1 decade Cemaziyülevvel 983); ASVe, *M. Barbaro, Arbori de’ patritii veneti*, reg. VII (31), c. 50 (he was elected Procuratore di San Marco on 21 July).

<sup>62</sup> ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, file “1575”, sheets 202-203 e 205-206, 13 and 14 August 1575.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., sheets 217-227 e 230-243, 26 and 30 August 1575; these are two important reports that contain very interesting reviews of Ashkenazi on Mehmet Sokollu, on Venice government and on the Murad’s pacifist position.

<sup>64</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, c. 19r, 15 July 1575; ASVE, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 8, nn. 48, 50, 54, 63, 67, cc. 347-360, 367-374, 387-390, 436-442, 461-464, 13 and 18 August, 3 and 22 September, 10 October 1575.

expressed satisfaction with the negotiations and authorised Correr and Soranzo to leave Istanbul once negotiations had finished, but not before they had been given leave to do so by the Sultan, as was the custom<sup>65</sup>.

These orders reached the Turkish capital on 23 October and the negotiations to obtain the Vizier's and the Sultan's consent resumed apace. Soranzo called once again upon the mediation skills of Ashkenazi to win over the Vizier, who was somewhat weary of the affair. On 1 November, the Vizier pledged that he would send a rescript to the Sultan (*arz*) that would meet the approval of the Serenissima, without compromising Ottoman interests<sup>66</sup>. The Vizier kept his promise and on 24 November Murad III appointed his commissioners: the two Sanjak-bey of Bosnia and Klis, the two Kadi of Klis and Sarajevo, as well as his *Chiaus* Jaffar. The current Dalmatian borders were recognised as they had been unilaterally established by the Turks<sup>67</sup>. The Venetian diplomats put pressure on Fereydon, Ashkenazi and the Grand Vizier so that the borders commission would start work immediately. The Grand Vizier had asked for Soranzo to be discharged on several occasions, but Soranzo insisted on remaining in a plague-ridden Istanbul, as he feared that the word "chisar" (*hisar*), i.e. "castle" or "walled city", would appear in the treaty alongside the words "ville" and "territori" (territories), and this would have seriously compromised any handover<sup>68</sup>. Ferhat and Soranzo would later base their moves around this stubborn use of language. Soranzo and Tiepolo officially took their leave from the Sultan on 4 December 1575 without receiving as much as a "farewell" from a solemn Murad; nor were they given the customary refreshment, as the Ramadan of 983 had just begun. Soranzo left for Venice, via Corfu, on 16 December and was rewarded with "extraordinary signs of honour and esteem". Before he left, however, he discussed the Šibenik mills with the Vizier and received a reminder from Ashkenazi about the gifts for the Sanjak-beys. Jaffar left the capital on 26 January, planning to arrive in Dalmatia around 10 March<sup>69</sup>.

Whenever diplomatic negotiations reached a difficult point, both sides, but the Turks especially, embarked upon a series of actions in order to gain the upper

<sup>65</sup> ASVe, *Del.Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, cc. 4r-5v, three decrees on 14 October 1575 (the first contains the text of the dispatch for Mehmet Sokollu).

<sup>66</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 8, nn. 75, 77, 78, cc. 505-512, 513-519, 521-528, 24 and 29 October, 1 November 1575; on 29 Ashkenazi said that Sokollu was busy with Ferhat.

<sup>67</sup> ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 7, nn. 829, 830, 831, 832, Third ten days of Şaban 983; on Giafar (or Cafer): PEDANI 1994: 39.

<sup>68</sup> ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 8, nn. 78, 82, 87, 91, 94, 95, 98, cc. 529-533, 545-548, 563, 569, 585-590, 600-607, 608-614, 621-623, 1, 4, 8, 15, 18, 19 and 23 November 1575. On the postponement of discharge and on the plague, see Soranzo: *Relazioni* 1996: 218-219.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. p. 219; ASVe, *Disp.Costantinopoli*, filza 8, nn. 99, 100, 101, 104, 108, 113, 118, cc. 625-638, 640-647, 654-664, 678-683, 709-712, 1, 2, 4, 8, 18 December 1575, 17 January and 6 February 1576; ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, file "1575", sheet 264, 14 December 1575.

hand on the ground. The Turks in Vrana and Obrovac encroached upon the land surrounding the Venetian villages of San Filippo e Giacomo and Posedarje by ploughing it; the Venetians responded by destroying the crops. The Turks also made forays into Ljubač and Primošten, near Šibenik, and the Venetians did their utmost to prevent the Turks building a tower on the outskirts of Posedarje<sup>70</sup>. Correr persuaded the Sublime Porte to issue orders to the Sanjak-bey of Klis that would stop raids and land-grabbing<sup>71</sup>. The situation was nevertheless tense, but it was not the predictable, fairly bloodless raids by local Turkish worthies causing the problems. The main problem was the steady stream of raids by Uskok pirates from Segna (Senj) who reached the mouth of the River Neretva and attacked both Venetian and Turkish lands<sup>72</sup>. In accordance with the peace terms, however, it was the Venetians' responsibility to police the Adriatic; their failure to keep the pirates in check risked compromising their political and military credibility, and may have led to a deterioration in diplomatic relations<sup>73</sup>.

### *The negotiations for the district of Zadar*

Giacomo Soranzo reached Zadar via Corfu late February 1576. Here, he received orders from the Venetian Senate to stay in Zadar as a borders commissioner; he was unenthusiastic about this position and argued against it on the grounds of ill health and his well-known friendship with the Sokolovic family<sup>74</sup>. The Senate rejected his arguments and ordered him to reach a clear, formal agreement with the Turks. In the meantime, the Senate sent the Council of Ten notary, Vincenzo Alessandri, who spoke fluent Turkish and was skilled in Ottoman affairs, to seek Ferhat Sokolovic<sup>75</sup>. There were immediate obstacles regarding the date and location for a meeting with the Turkish commissioners. Consequently, Alessandri went to Banja Luca in March, where Ferhat pledged that the negotiations would start in May. In April, Alessandri travelled to Klis, where he met the Sanjak-bey

<sup>70</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, cc. 9r-10v, 12r-v, 14v-15r, decrees 1 and 7 December 1575 and 4 February 1576.

<sup>71</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 8, n. 121, cc. 739-744.

<sup>72</sup> ASVe, *CX Rett.*, b. 280, n. 73, Vincenzo da Canal, Count of Šibenik, 23 May 1576; ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, file "1575", sheets 266-267, Giovanni Correr Bailo, 28 December 1575.

<sup>73</sup> On Uskok piracy: BRACEWELL 1992; IVETIC 2008: 389-397.

<sup>74</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 8, n. 123, cc. 754-755, 25 February 1576; the Soranzo's appointment: ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, cc. 15v-16r e 16v-17r, decrees on 4 February 1576; see also *Relazioni* 1996: 220.

<sup>75</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, cc. 19v and 19v-20r, decrees on 3 and 15 March 1576. On Alessandri: BERENGO 1960: 174. Soranzo wrote he was unhappy to stay in Dalmatia until October, although Venice had been hit by plague: *Relazioni* 1996: 220; ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 10, nn. 55 and 56, cc. 256r and 262r, 7 and 24 October 1576 (from Poreč).



Ali, and to Livno, where he was later joined by the *Chiaus* Jaffar. Ferhat joined them in Livno around mid-May. Alessandri succeeded in organising the first round of talks with Soranzo in the Biljane countryside, halfway between the Turkish castle of Karin and the Venetian castle of Novigrad. Alessandri returned to Banja Luca in June and to Bosansko Grahovo with Michele Membrè in early July; they followed Ferhat Sokolovic, who had finally decided to go to Zadar via Knin<sup>76</sup>. Ferhat had postponed his arrival as he was uncertain how to act; his orders left him little room for manoeuvre, and only later was he authorised to handover part of the district<sup>77</sup>. He was also embarrassed by his initial stance, which saw him contrary to returning any land to the Venetians. This was because he had already sold much of the land the Turks had captured during the war, and it was only once he had been threatened by the *Chiaus* that he started to reconsider his stance<sup>78</sup>.

Once this initial stage was over, Soranzo, Membrè and Alessandri left Zadar on 7 July for the fjords of Novigrad aboard the galley of Girolamo da Canal. Soranzo ensured that there would be abundant food, wine and fruit at the meeting place; he also brought merchants of fabrics and other goods sought by the Turks<sup>79</sup>. Membrè and Alessandri met Ferhat Sokolovic on 9 July, but they were disappointed to discover that his orders were dated 12 January, a whole month after Soranzo had left Istanbul. His orders were also slightly different to the ones that had been agreed, as they still spoke of “*rocche*” (“strongholds”) and “*castelli*” (“fortifications”) when describing areas that had come under Turkish control, terms the Venetians did not want included in the treaty. “Full of grief and sorrow” because the orders he himself brought from Istanbul had been changed, Soranzo sent his secretary Gerardo to Ferhat with a copy of the original orders. Soranzo later decided to meet Ferhat himself, as he had shown signs that he was willing to negotiate<sup>80</sup>.

On 12 July, Soranzo reproached Jaffar for what he called the “false” content of the Sublime Porte’s orders, after which he finally set out for Ferhat’s camp at Biljane. He was escorted to the camp by a large Turkish detachment and by 100 Venetian cavalry and halberdiers; he was met on the last leg of his journey by a

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., nn. 2, 6, 11, 16, 19, 24, cc. 3r, 17v-18v, 36r-40r, 54r-v, 66r, 86r-89r, 19 march, 17 and 27 April, 18 May, 26 June and 6 July 1576.

<sup>77</sup> ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 5, file “1576”, Giovanni Correr Bailo, 14 July 1576.

<sup>78</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 10, nn. 10, 11, 20, cc. 32r, 36r-40r, 64r-v, 10 and 27 April, 18 June 1576.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., nn. 25 e 26, cc. 90r-92r and 94r-95r, 6 and 9 July 1576 (the last written on a galley in Novigrad gulf).

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., nn. 26, 27 and 28, cc. 94r-95r, 96r, 99r-101r, 103r-104v, 9 and 10 July 1576. Giafar reproached Ferhat for having shown the order to the Venetians; Giafar also told the interpreter he was not able to read and so he didn’t know the contents of the document. The word “*calà*” (kale), translated as “rock”, had been added to the word “castle” (hisar).

crowd of people who had come to see this exceptional summit, which started on the morning of 14 July. The Ottomans had already held two meetings (*divani*) among themselves. During the talks, Soranzo protested vociferously about the orders that had come from Istanbul and he was taken aback when an amenable, even jocular Ferhat agreed with him. Ferhat was quick to reassure Soranzo that negotiations would take place on the basis of his original documents and said: “We must cook the roast so that it does not burn with the spit”<sup>81</sup>. His culinary metaphor hinted that both sides needed to respect the other’s position, but that a reasonable compromise should be reached. The talks, which were held on 16 July, were suspended after three hours. Soranzo noticed that the areas Ferhat wanted for himself comprised the “fortified” areas conquered during the war, including Zemunik, which Sokolovic insisted on calling *hisar*, a “walled city” or “castle”. The Venetians, however, considered Zemunik a fortified home used to fend off thieves and pirates. In separate talks, both Jaffar and the Kadi of Sarajevo, who was linked to the Sokolovic clan, said that they were prepared to return villages and lands, as long as they did not contain fortified areas; Zemunik was once again included among these<sup>82</sup>. Soranzo knew that the list Suleiman had made in 1550 included neither Zemunik nor Tin, but did contain Posedarje and its tower, which had also been occupied by the Turks. He therefore decided to insist that the Turks return more than Ferhat said he was prepared to, and he presented a list of 51 villages on 19 July. In truth, Ferhat found himself in an embarrassing situation: that very day, he had been besieged by a group of Turks who had been given land on Soranzo’s list, and Jaffar was pressing for a solution that did not overly displease Venice<sup>83</sup>. Soranzo himself was also torn between the Senate’s instructions to claim back at least half of the Zadar district and his own annoyance at the negotiating tactics of the Turkish commissioners<sup>84</sup>.

The negotiations reached their most difficult stage on 20 July. That morning, Ferhat and Soranzo had a private meeting, during which Soranzo obtained a personal pledge that Posedarje would be ceded to Venice. In the afternoon, however, Alessandri was confronted by a group of petitioning Turks and was forced to appease those from Posedarje with gifts and to promise additional ones to Mustafa, the greedy Sanjak-bey of Klis<sup>85</sup>. The following day, however, Ferhat Sokolovic

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., nn. 29 e 30, cc. 106r-111v and 121r-125v, 12 and 14 July 1576.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., nn. 31 e 32, cc. 127r-131r and 133r-138r, 16 July 1576.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., nn. 35, 36 e 38, cc. 154r-162v, 164r-171v, 177r, 179v, 19 and 20 July 1576 (the list of the villages; c. 162).

<sup>84</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, cc. 30r-v, 13 July 1576 (the decree was approved with 78 ayes, 19 abstentions and 40 blackballs). Soranzo’s irritation often appears in his letters; his judgment on Ferhat was very hard: *Relazioni* 1996: 220-221.

<sup>85</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 10, nn. 36, 39, 40, 41, cc. 164r-171v, 181r-187v, 189r-192r, 193r-v, 20 and 21 July 1576.

looked ready to backtrack on his pledge. He was highly irritated that the Venetians had not accepted a clause stating that handing back the land would settle all Venetian claims in the area; the Venetians had also hinted at the traditional horse-ride to recognise the boundaries, which it had been agreed would not take place. The same evening, Ferhat changed his mind yet again, but justified his actions to a perplexed Soranzo by saying that he had to put on a brash front for the benefit of the other Turkish commissioners and that it was just an act<sup>86</sup>.

Although the talks were punctuated with tension, the two full delegations reached an agreement on Zadar, unquestionably the thorniest issue, on Sunday 22 July. The agreement was to be based on a legal document (“cozetto” = *hüccet*) drawn up by the Turks that listed the 51 returned “ville”, including Posedarje and its outbuildings, as well as the two small towers that stood nearby on the modern-day sites of Ražanac and Vinjerac. The erection of border markers was postponed to a later date. Although Soranzo wrote that he enjoyed the Turks’ company very little, he concluded that the Serenissima could be extremely satisfied with the agreement, as approximately 10,000 fields would return under Venetian control, i.e. two-thirds of the pre-war Zadar district, which was now also completely uninhabited<sup>87</sup>. At the last moment, Soranzo attempted to win back “several towers” by sending Ferhat 3,000 ducats and by promising generosity once the negotiations for Split and Šibenik had been completed. Ferhat initially accepted the money, saying that he could cede nothing else, but he later returned it, fearing that the other Ottoman leaders might complain<sup>88</sup>.

The commissioners bade one another farewell and agreed to meet at Skradin to negotiate the boundaries of Šibenik; Soranzo also promised to offer Ferhat another lunch of mullet “because red fish most pleased him”<sup>89</sup>. The legal document covering the return of territory in Zadar was dated 20 July, i.e. the last ten days of Rebiyülahir 984<sup>90</sup>, and a number of copies and translations were later made. The first draft, of which we have a translation by Membrè in Nin dated 24 July, was revised during the Skradin talks because the list of the 51 “ville” did

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., n. 42, cc. 195r-200v, 21 July 1576.

<sup>87</sup> 87 = Ibid., n. 43, cc. 201r-213v, 22 July 1576. Ten thousand “Venetian fields” is the equivalent of 3,860 ha (Padua measurement), or 5,200 ha (Treviso measurement). The fortified villages of Zemunik, Tinj, Vrčevo, Poličnik and “Cucagli” (a small tower in the Kukul or Cuchag wood, near Karin) remained under Ottoman rule: CORONELLI 1696, I, cc. 108v-109r, “Contado di Zara”, signed “Cuchag Torre rovinata”; FORTIS 1987: 26-27). Fifty-four villages in the Zadar district were returned to Venetian rule: cfr. ASVe, Commemoriali, reg. 24, n. 18, cc. 47r-v.

<sup>88</sup> ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 5, file “1576”, c. 9, G. Soranzo from Bjlhane, 22 July 1576.

<sup>89</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 10, nn. 44, 45, 46, cc. 215r-v, 217r, 219r, 220r-221r, 22 and 23 July 1576.

<sup>90</sup> ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 7, nn. 840-846, with the lists of the places.

not fully match the one that had been agreed. Two were missing, and others had remained under Venetian influence during the war, including Visočane in the north and Pakoštane in the south. The definitive list was drawn up on the morning of 27 July after “a long talk” between Ferhat Sokolovic and Soranzo, who agreed to send two envoys and Soranzo’s secretary Gerardo to establish the boundaries and return the land to the Venetians<sup>91</sup>.

*The agreement for the districts of Šibenik and Split*

Giacomo Soranzo arrived in Šibenik via Zadar on 25 July. From here, he travelled to Ferhat’s camp, which had been erected in an “almost deserted valley” near Skradin, at the mouth of the Krka. The Venetian commissioner once again asked for the entire Šibenik district to be returned to Venice, including its seven half-destroyed towers: Vrpolje, Zaton, Raslina, Slosella (Pirovac) and Parisotto, which had been successfully defended by the Venetians, plus Dazlina and Rachitniza, which had fallen to the Turks. The talks opened with negotiations over Dazlina and Rachitniza, as well as over the return of all of the mills on the left bank of the Krka. Ferhat announced that he had received no precise orders regarding the mills, which was true, but he acknowledged that they belonged to the Serenissima<sup>92</sup>. The issue of the mills remained unresolved, as the commissioners decided only to inform their respective rulers that the problem had arisen; there was no room for negotiation, however, over the towers conquered by the Turks. Soranzo did manage to convince Ferhat that the Venetian territory south of Šibenik had two “real boundaries”, namely the Trtar hills to the east and the sea to the west<sup>93</sup>. The complexity, comprehensiveness and precision of these diplomatic negotiations placed them well-ahead of their time, as they contained an early example of “natural boundaries”<sup>94</sup>, a concept only introduced for national borders between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Indeed, it was not until the height of 18<sup>th</sup> century Rationalism that establishing linear boundaries became common practice throughout Europe and reached the levels of detail and map-drawing that characterised the Venetian-Turkish negotiations<sup>95</sup>. It is also noteworthy that the work of the commissioners and surveyors was drawn up on detailed boundary maps, which were rare at that time. It is unknown when these maps were lost. This innovative practice once

<sup>91</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 10, cc. 224r-226r, Membre’s translation was finished on 24 July 1576; nn. 47, 49, cc. 228r-230r, 233r-234v, 24 and 27 July; cc. 241r-244v, translation of the final “arz” on 29 July.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., nn. 50, 51 cc. 236r-237v, 239r-v, 27 and 28 July 1576.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., nn. 51 e 53, cc. 239r-v and 248r-250r, 28 July and 1 August 1576.

<sup>94</sup> On the concept of “natural boundary” for the French case: NORDMAN 1998: 63-66 and 88-122.

<sup>95</sup> SERENO 2007: 61-64.

again proves that the techniques and cultures of eastern Mediterranean civilisations in the mid-to-late 16<sup>th</sup> century were highly advanced<sup>96</sup>.

On 1 August, the negotiations moved to an area near Solin, but an interruption in Soranzo's correspondence until 10 September means that we do not know exactly what went on. What is certain, however, is that negotiations proceeded apace and that a fairly rapid solution was also found for the remaining Dalmatian territories. The *hüccet* for the Šibenik and Split borders were issued from Solin on 3 and 4 August, but they did not name the areas that had been restored to Venetian control. Instead, they gave the geographical references for the borders; the same was done for the Trogir district, which had not been invaded by the Turks and was undisputed<sup>97</sup>. Soranzo later observed that the eastern part of the Šibenik district was now 12 miles deep and 25 miles long, which meant that the Venetians had gained four miles on the pre-war boundaries. The two sides, however, were unable to find an arrangement over Split, and consequently none of the surrounding land was returned. Talks broke down because the Venetians controlled only a sliver of land, leaving them little room for negotiation, and because tension was high between the inhabitants of Split and their Ottoman neighbours<sup>98</sup>.

The Venetian Senate was highly satisfied with the manner in which Soranzo had sealed the negotiations, although it only allowed him to return to Venice once he had ensured that all of the disputed territories had been handed back<sup>99</sup>. The agreements covering Split and the Šibenik district were put in place by the end of August, following the establishment of a new Turkish border<sup>100</sup>. The borders for Zadar, however, still needed to be set, but a fairly amicable agreement was reached by 26 September<sup>101</sup>. Tension only arose in Vrčevo when the commander of the Venetian cavalry insisted on overseeing the ploughing of the returned land, an act that symbolised the official handover<sup>102</sup>. Soranzo finally left Dalmatia around

<sup>96</sup> Correr, *mss. Cicogna*, reg. 3557, file XII, «1599 9 novembre. Nota dei disegni, che sono nell'ufficio de confini non compresi alcuni pochi inclusi nelli processi» (list of the maps in the Boundaries Office).

<sup>97</sup> ASVe, *Commemoriali*, reg. 24, nn. 21 and 23, cc. 53v-54v and 56r-57r; ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 7, n. 849, "hüccet" for the borderline of Trogir, First ten days of Cemaziyülevvel 984 (during the same days: between 27 July and 5 August 1576).

<sup>98</sup> *Relazioni* 1996: 222-223. These problems were the prelude to the attempt to recapture the castle of Klis by the nobility of Split against the wish of Venice government (1596): PANCIERA 2009.

<sup>99</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, cc. 30v-31r, 10 August 1576.

<sup>100</sup> ASVe, *Commemoriali*, reg. 24, nn. 24 and 22, cc. 57v and 55r-v, 12 August (Split) and 27 August (Šibenik); see also: ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 7, nn. 856 and 860.

<sup>101</sup> ASVe, *Commemoriali*, reg. 24, nn. 19 and 20, cc. 48r-50r and 50v-53r; see also: ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 7, nn. 863-864.

<sup>102</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 10, nn. 54 and 55, cc. 252r and 256, 10 September and 7 October 1576; ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 7, n. 864, First ten days of Receb 984 (the translated copies are dated 26

mid-October, reaching Piran in Istria on 29 October, after being delayed by storms. An outbreak of plague in Venice, where he was supposed to take up his former government role as *Savio del Consiglio*, forced him to stop in Chioggia<sup>103</sup>. His long mission was almost over and he was surprisingly pleased with the results: he had softened Ferhat Sokolovic's original position, had done his utmost for the "poor subjects" of Dalmatia, and enhanced the prestige of the Serenissima<sup>104</sup>.

The talks were successful thanks also to major contributions by the interpreter Michele Membrè, the Istanbul-embassy secretary Vincenzo Alessandri, and Soranzo's personal secretary Gerardo. We know nothing about Gerardo apart from that he personally oversaw the posting of border markers together with the little-known Turkish delegate Mehmed Halifa, Naib of Livno<sup>105</sup>, the local judge under the kadi who wrote the legal documents that established the boundaries. Local experts also played their part, including Simone Mazzarello, a judge of the Zadar jurisdiction who was "highly informed on local affairs". He accompanied Soranzo during an initial inspection and was at the talks when Ferhat first proposed returning land to Venice; this means he may have been present throughout the negotiations<sup>106</sup>. We also know that Mazzarello kept in touch with Soranzo after his return to Venice, and we have the report he sent Soranzo on a serious border incident with the Turks of Zemunik<sup>107</sup>. Giacomo Soranzo's role in negotiations was not merely that of a figurehead; the portrait painted by the copious documentation he wrote is of a shrewd negotiator who perceived uncertainties and worked the personal divisions within the Ottoman camp. Representative of these divisions was the Sanjak-bey of Klis, Mustafa, who was lured to the Venetian cause by gifts, but also unwilling to squander his time on the men protected by his predecessor, Ferhat Sokolovic. When the

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September: ASVe, *Commemoriali*, reg. 24, c. 26); for the reconstruction of this borderline and the toponyms: Anzulović 1998: 53-150; the date of the agreement here is wrong (26 December) because the author based his work on an 18th century transcription by Gregorio Stratico: ZKZ, ms. 30/II (inv. 7527), cc. 23-27; see also TRALIJC 1973: 450-454.

<sup>103</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 10, nn. 56 and 57, cc. 262r and 264r-265r, 24 and 29 October 1576; ASVe, *Segretario alle voci, Elezioni in Senato*, reg. 4, cc. 24v and 28v-29r: Soranzo was elected for the semester September 1576 – March 1577.

<sup>104</sup> *Relazioni* 1996: 222-223.

<sup>105</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 10, appendix to n. 55, cc. 257r-v, copy of the answer to the Sanjak of Klis enclosed with a dispatch on 7 October 1576; ASVe, *Confini*, b. 245, file "Sebenico Confini 1588 III", dispatch of Alessandro Malipiero, Count of Šibenik, 7 April 1589 (this "Naib" was still alive).

<sup>106</sup> ASVe, *Disp. Costantinopoli*, filza 10, n. 6 and n. 35, cc. 17v-18v, 160r-161v, 17 April and 19 July 1576.

<sup>107</sup> ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 7, n. 865, dispatch from Zadar, 9 December 1576.



negotiations were drawing to a close, however, Mustafa proved to be an unruly, aggressive and awkward neighbour<sup>108</sup>.

### *The stabilisation of the frontier after 1576*

The boundaries drawn by Soranzo and Ferhat lasted until the War of Candia (1645–1669), after which the “Nani Line” was drawn in 1671<sup>109</sup>; these new boundaries, however, did not fully settle the dispute. The Venetians wanted to make the most of the Šibenik mills in peace and on the surface they acted as though they were mildly dissatisfied with the outcome of negotiations<sup>110</sup>. The Venetians also needed to repopulate their Dalmatian territories and were prepared to give the land to new settlers, instead of back to the previous tenants, who were disliked by the Turks. See events surrounding the Counts of Posedarje<sup>111</sup>. Border incidents quickly instigated or conducted by local Turkish leaders in Poličnik and Zemunik, as well as reprisals by Venetian subjects, contributed little towards stabilising the new boundaries, despite diplomacy by both governments tending to be amicable<sup>112</sup>. The situation was compounded by the periodic incursions of Turkish cavalry into Zadar and other areas, not to mention by the raids of Uskok pirates; although it was Venice’s responsibility to keep the pirates in check, the raids often enjoyed the support of Venetian subjects<sup>113</sup>. The area was permeated by a state of endemic, low-friction conflict that was difficult to quell, although it was not fomented by either government<sup>114</sup>. The Venetians built cavalry outposts in areas including Radovin and Posedarje in

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<sup>108</sup> In 1578 Venice obtained his removal as a warning to the new Ottoman authorities: ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, c. 77r, 5 March 1578; on the cruel behavior of Mustafâ see the story of two innocent patricians from Trogir imprisoned to obtain compensation for the murder of the voyvoda: DAZ, *Arhiv Trogira (Archive of Trogir)*, case 10, file XI.1, cc. 32v-45r, 12 October 1576.

<sup>109</sup> The Nani Line is only mentioned in PEDANI 2002: 45; it played a remarkable role in the first phase of Venetian recovery: PRAGA 1954: 187-188. The original picture of Nani Line: DAZ, *Mape Grimani*, n. 260. A clearly mapped reconstruction of 17th and 18th century boundary changes: ROKSANDIĆ 2000: 279.

<sup>110</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, cc. 34r-35r, 8 November 1576.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 35r-36r and 36v-37r, 8 November and 6 December 1576.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 37r-v, 18 December 1576: ASVe, *Turchi*, b. 7, n. 865, letter of S. Mazzarello to G. Soranzo, 9 December 1576.

<sup>113</sup> The Venetian Captain of Trogir, Tomaso Marin, was convinced that a large proportion of Venetian subjects were complicit in the Uskok pirate raids: ASVe, *CX Rett.*, b. 281, n. 229, 26 August 1581.

<sup>114</sup> PANCIERA 2006: 783-804. See, for example, the devastation of the villages of Dračevac and Gruse, close to Zadar, on 30 August 1582 as a reprisal for the killing of two Turkish men by Venetian cavalry: ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 6, cc. 79v-81r, 7 September 1582; the Ottoman investigation started with a decree in the first ten days of Şevval 990 (29 October – 7 November 1582; b. 7, n. 911): PEDANI 1994: 229.

the north-east, Brda in the north, and Malpaga/Dračevac at the gates of Zadar, but their aim was to maintain the local boundaries and to check the aggressive intentions of powerful local Turks rather than to provoke the Ottoman Empire<sup>115</sup>. Venice persuaded Istanbul to keep an eye on its representatives in Dalmatia, with the result that Mustafa Sanjak-bey of Klis was removed because he had “allowed great harm to [Venetian] subjects”. The new Sanjak-bey was greeted with gifts from all four of Venice’s Dalmatian cities (Zadar, Trogir, Split and Sibenik)<sup>116</sup>.

Diplomatic relations were characterised by growing trust and greater collaboration and, although these improvements were relative, they enabled both sides to overcome the tension and introduce renewed enthusiasm for trade. Two issues underpinned the development of a more peaceful period in Venetian-Turkish relations. The first was the need to mill grain, which was essential for supplying Dalmatian cities and the local islands. The Šibenik mills on the Krka had not returned completely under Venetian influence by 1577, and the new *Bailo* Nicolò Barbarigo was ordered to settle the matter once and for all in a manner that would also ensure advantages for Dalmatia’s Turkish subjects across the border<sup>117</sup>. Negotiations were long and drawn out, despite the willingness of the Sanjak-bey of Licca, whose stance had been softened with a range of generous gifts<sup>118</sup>. The *Bailo* had also been told to keep hold of Žrnovica (Venetian name: Xernovizza) in the Solin district. In this area, just a short distance from the sea, stood a number of fulling mills, as well as some mills that had fallen into Turkish hands in 1540 and were owned by Mihr-i Mah, Suleiman’s daughter and the wife of Rüstem Pasha, the former Grand Vizier, who was of Slav descent<sup>119</sup>. Until 1570, the inhabitants of Split and Trogir, and the islanders of Hvar and Brač, flocked to the mills to buy flour<sup>120</sup>. However, following repeated violence near the Žrnovica mills and in a bid to prevent further border incidents, Venetian subjects were banned from visiting the area once and for all in 1582<sup>121</sup>.

<sup>115</sup> ASVe, *Del. Costantinopoli*, reg. 5, cc. 72r-v and 73r-v, decrees on 21 December 1577.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 75r e 77r, 3 and 5 March 1578.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 61v, 5 September 1577.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 152r, 13 February 1580; reg. 6, cc. 32r-v, 14 January 1581.

<sup>119</sup> ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli, Cancelleria*, b. 363, n. 305, file 1582, letter of Nicolò Correr, 21 June 1582; on Mihr-i Mah: CARRETTO 2007: 21.

<sup>120</sup> Until 1570, there were 14 paddle wheels, two of them owned by Christian subjects in Klis; 22 wheels were operational by the early 1580s: ASVe, *Relazioni*, b. 72, n. 135, report by Antonio Pasqualigo, Count of Split, 1566 (*Commissiones* 1880: 182-189, but the date is incorrect here: 1567); *Commissiones* 1964: 338 and 343, report by Niccolò Correr, 13 June 1583.

<sup>121</sup> DAZ, *Arhiv Trogira*, case 10, file XI/13, cc. 93r-v and 93v-94v, bans were imposed by the Count of Trogir Tomaso Marin on 27 July and 2 September 1582. Aga Ismael and the soldiers of Solin tower were responsible for a series of terrible deeds. They were exiled by the Sanjak of Klis for murder and plundering: ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli, Cancelleria*, b. 363, n. 305, file 1582, letter by Nicolò Correr, 21 June 1582.

To ensure themselves a reliable source of flour, even in the event of fresh violence or all-out war, the Venetians decided to renovate eight old mill wheels in the Trogir district, build an additional eight and add two fulling mills. Engineer Paolo Del Ponte arrived from Venice to oversee the work<sup>122</sup>. The building of this extensive battery of horizontal, traditional Balkan water-powered wheels took up much of the Trogir governors' time, and the mills had still not been finished by 1584<sup>123</sup>. The finished complex was named Pantan, an area that still exists today; it stands a short distance from Split airport and has recently been converted into a holiday resort<sup>124</sup>.

The second matter was the creation of a free port in Split, an idea that came into being at the end of the war. The negotiations centred around Daniele Rodriguez, known as Rodriga, a Portuguese Marrano Jew merchant, who put forward an articulate plan for the port in 1577<sup>125</sup>. The plan was approved by the Venetian government between 1588 and 1589 with a series of decrees designed to relaunch Split's port facilities; Venice also opened diplomatic channels with the Turkish authorities in order to ensure a land route between Split and Sarajevo. Rodriguez's mediation and the involvement of Split's Jewish community led to the signing of an agreement in September 1589, thanks to which the Sanjak-beys of Livno and Klis pledged to foster a protected trade axis<sup>126</sup>. Initial customs regulations for the new free port were drawn up in the summer of 1589 and introduced on 1 July 1590, with new regulations coming into force until 1593. Goods from "Romania" travelling from Split were completely or partially tax-free on entering Venice; rice and soap leaving Venice were also tax-free; and Jewish merchants settling in Split were exempted from tax<sup>127</sup>. Spices, rice, soap and Dalmatian salt were loaded into a special merchant galley escorted by armed ships, which took the goods from Venice to Split once a year; the galleys were then loaded with products from the Dalmatian mainland, such as wool, and merchandise from Levante for the return journey to Venice. A second galley was introduced in 1593 and a ban placed on the export of salt from the island of Pag to Neretva. This system established a new

<sup>122</sup> DAZ, *Arhiv Trogira*, box 10, file XI/13, cc. 97v-98v, "ducale" (order) by Nicolò Da Ponte to Count Tomaso Marin, 23 September 1581. The Venetian government allocated an initial budget of 800 ducats to restore the mills, 2,800 to construct new buildings and 600 to construct a new canal to link the mills and the sea.

<sup>123</sup> In 1584, Trogir's new mills were still under construction: DAZ, *Arhiv Trogira*, case 75, "Registrum litterarum et proclamarum secundus", cc. 30r and 55v, bans were imposed by the Count of Trogir, Francesco Da Mosto, on 5 June 1583 and 29 April 1584.

<sup>124</sup> A late 18 century map in; DAZ, *Mape Grimani*, n. 439.

<sup>125</sup> PACI 1971; SEGRE 1996: 743; PANCIERA 2009.

<sup>126</sup> PACI 1971: 55-59; ARBEL 2001: 86-88.

<sup>127</sup> PACI 1971: 58-59; ASVE, *V Savi alla mercanzia, Serie II*, b. 162, file 114/I, copies of Senate decrees dated 20 and 27 July 1589, 20 June 1590, 10 December 1592, 18 February 1593.

basis for trade and quickly relaunched traffic between Venice and the Balkans, boosting the economy and the population of Split, which at that time covered a very small district. The re-establishment of trade gave historians “an impression of considerable stability” in Venetian-Ottoman relations, at least until the outbreak of the War of Candia<sup>128</sup>.

Another matter also reinforces the theory that the free port of Split was set up as part of the improved relations on the problematic Dalmatian frontier. Just before 24 August 1575, the Turkish *Chiaus* Mustafa dei Cordovani returned to Pera from Venice where he had been involved in difficult negotiations for the release of prisoners of war<sup>129</sup>. In Pera, he visited Correr and Tiepolo, the two ambassadors to Istanbul, and Giacomo Soranzo; he told Soranzo that the Grand Vizier wanted him to accompany him on his visit to Venice. He also told Soranzo in confidence that he thought of himself as “a creature of Ferat Sanjak-bey of Bosnia” and explained that he had told the Venetian government, on the orders of the Grand Vizier, about a plan to “lift all trade from Ancona [...], which is the city of the Pope, enemy of our Lord [the Sultan]”, thus fostering the interests of Venice<sup>130</sup>. Soranzo did not, or pretended not to understand the full meaning of this information; he replied fairly coldly that he had neither the orders nor the authority to discuss the issue in full. Their meeting, however, marked the first tentative steps towards establishing a new trade axis. Did the close ties that existed between Mustafa dei Cordovani, Ferhat Sokolovic, the Grand Vizier Mehmed and Solomon Ashkenazi also include Daniele Rodriguez, who was the same religion as Ashkenazi? Rodriguez had been part of another delegation sent to Venice in 1573 by the Sanjak-bey of Herzegovina, Hasan, to negotiate the release of some Turkish slaves<sup>131</sup>. Furthermore, the Sokolovic family were originally from Bosnia, and Ferhat Sokolovic was the leading figure in an area crossed by the road that linked Split, Livno and Travnik, a route that led to Sarajevo, then onto Prijepolje and Novi Pazar; it then branched off to Sofia, Edirne and Istanbul, or to Skopje and Thessaloniki<sup>132</sup>. The Split route was a natural alternative to the road that ran alongside the River Neretva via Mostar to Sarajevo. The main point, however, was that it competed with the road that ran from Novi Pazar to Dubrovnik and Lezha (venetian: Alessio), in Albania, two towns that had grown wealthy on trade from Venice’s great West Adriatic rival: Ancona<sup>133</sup>.

<sup>128</sup> SELLA 1961: 55.

<sup>129</sup> PEDANI 1994: 168 and 207.

<sup>130</sup> ASVe, *CX Amb.*, b. 4, file “1575”, sheets 213-216, 24 August 1575.

<sup>131</sup> PEDANI 1994: 167-168.

<sup>132</sup> PACI 1971: 16.

<sup>133</sup> See, for example: *Commissiones* 1966: 33 (report by Federico Nani, December 1591); LEONI 2004: 161.

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## Podizanje granice: prvo mletačko-osmansko razgraničenje u Dalmaciji, 1573.-1576. g.

Učvršćenje granice između osmanskih i mletačkih posjeda na dalmatinskom kopnu uslijedilo je nakon razdoblja osmanskog širenja na Balkanu. Poslije rata 1537.-1540. g. ukaz Sulejmana Veličanstvenog definirao je nadležnosti u zadarskom okrugu, ali je tek nakon Ciparskog rata (1570.-1573.), koji je također vođen u Dalmaciji, postalo je neophodno precizno odrediti graničnu crtu. Prema Mlečanima, mirovni sporazum od 17. ožujka 1573. predvidio je restituciju svih teritorija koje su Osmanlije osvojili u Dalmaciji, no Selim II. ih nije bio spreman prepustiti. Složeni pregovori, čiji su protagonisti bili mletački poslanici i veliki vezir Mehmed Sokolović, zaključeni su potkraj 1575. kad su se obje strane složile da pošalju posebne povjerenike. Za Veneciju tu je zadaću preuzeo Giacomo Soranzo, već izvanredni poslanik u Istanbulu, vojskovođa mletačke pomorske vojske tijekom rata i vrlo vješt diplomat; za Osmanlije delegaciju je predvodio nećak velikog vezira, Ferhat Sokolović, bosanski sandžakbeg. Pregovori u se odvijali u ljeto 1576., najprije u paviljonima koje su Osmanlije podigli blizu Biljana u zadarskom "contadu", potom u krajini kod Skradina, na ušću rijeke Krke, a naposljetku nadomak Solinu. Tako su razriješeni različiti aspekti spora, uključujući i proširenje mletačkog područja kod Zadra (naročito u vezi sa Zemunikom, Tinom i Posedarjem) i definiranje "prirodne granice" za šibensko područje: brda Trtar na istoku i Jadransko more na zapadu. Sporazum je zaključen povoljno za mletačku vladu koja je bila svjesna vlastite slabosti na vojnom planu, ali koja je željela zadržati minimalnu kontrolu na obalnom potezu. Razgraničenje Soranzo-Ferhat, utanačeno 1576. g., trajalo je do Kandijskog rata (1645.-1669.), a nova je granica povučena 1671. g. ("Linea Nani"). Nakon 1576. osmansko-mletački odnosi poprimili su karakter rastućeg povjerenja i povećane suradnje, što je omogućilo da se prevlada stanje sukoba. Navlastito, učvršćenje je granice bila pretpostavka za obnovu trgovačkih tijekova, zahvaljujući i stvaranju zone slobodne trgovine u Splitu, što se dogodilo 1590. g., ali je isplanirano za vrijeme pregovora o novim granicama.

*Ključne riječi:* ranonovovjekovna povijest, Mletačka Republika, granice, Dalmacija, Osmansko Carstvo

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