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## Detrás de las apariencias Información y espionaje (siglos XVI-XVII)

Emilio Sola Castaño, Gennaro Varriale (coords.)

En los últimos años los espías han vuelto a los titulares de las grandes portadas, el descubrimiento de escándalos y escuchas han puesto en el centro del debate los límites de nuestra privacidad. Una narrativa de años en torno a la sociedad de la información abierta, hija de las nuevas tecnologías, ha chocado bruscamente contra la realidad del ajedrez mundial, tanto que la opinión pública se ha sentido traicionada por sus propios garantes. No obstante, los medios de comunicación enfatizan la excepcionalidad de la época en que vivimos, la captación de información por parte del poder no es en absoluto una prerrogativa del siglo XXI; al contrario, la adquisición de noticias reservadas está en los cimientos mismos de la Europa moderna. Igual que en el presente, también en la Edad Moderna la parte más sensible de la información –la geográfica de los descubrimientos, la comercial de nuevas mercancías o la militar de las innovaciones tecnológicas– está muy protegida y reservada, en principio, a las cortes y a los círculos financieros. Entonces las vidas de los espías están entrelazadas de forma especial con las necesidades económicas y militares de dos grandes poderes, la Monarquía Hispánica y el Imperio Otomano, que rigen el destino del Mediterráneo. Fronteras territoriales y hegemónicas, religiosas y culturales, económicas y sociales hacen que la información sobre el colindante, diferente y a menudo enemigo, se convierta en vital para su propia subsistencia. En efecto, los soberanos de la Casa de Austria y los sultanes de Constantinopla invierten sumas estratosféricas de dinero, a través de “cajas B”, sólo para anticipar las maniobras del adversario.



Hartmann Schedel, *Las Crónicas de Núremberg*, 1493, fol. 198r

Detrás de las apariencias. Información y espionaje (siglos XVI-XVII)

MONOGRAFÍAS  
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## Detrás de las apariencias Información y espionaje (siglos XVI-XVII)

Emilio Sola Castaño  
Gennaro Varriale  
(coords.)

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# Detrás de las apariencias. Información y espionaje (siglos XVI-XVII)

*Emilio Sola Castaño  
Gennaro Varriale  
(eds.)*



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<b>ADA</b>	Archivo Ducal de Alba
<b>ADP</b>	Archivio Doria Pamphilj
<b>AGN</b>	Archivo Real y General de Navarra
<b>AGS</b>	Archivo General de Simancas
<b>ASF</b>	Archivio di Stato di Firenze
<b>ASV</b>	Archivio di Stato di Venezia
<b>ASVa</b>	Archivio Segreto Vaticano
<b>BOA</b>	Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri
<b>BNE</b>	Biblioteca Nacional de España
<b>BNN</b>	Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli
<b>CODOIN</b>	Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España
<b>CSP</b>	Calendar of State Papers



# Eating bread together: Hapsburg Diplomacy and Intelligence-Gathering in Mid Sixteenth-Century Istanbul<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Introduction

Resident embassies were becoming increasingly common in sixteenth century Christian Europe, although by 1550 direct contacts between states were still mostly conducted through multiple official and unofficial agents, supplemented with consuls in some instances, and by occasional, formal embassies when important matters arose. The benefits of permanent representation in terms of information and intelligence gathering, and ease of negotiation, were understood, but there were also disadvantages and dangers, not least the cost of maintaining resident embassies and the vulnerability of ambassadors to undue influence or dishonour. The Ottoman sultan was not unique in his use of temporary diplomatic missions, but with an increasing number of resident embassies and agents in Istanbul, the divergence was striking, and there was a perception that the avoidance of resident Ottoman legations was deliberate, and intended to demonstrate “Turkish” superiority. The distance maintained by the sultan, who seldom saw ambassadors other than in the ceremonies of welcome and departure, contributed to this impression. The language used in diplomacy at the Ottoman court confirmed this. States could not propose negotiations, but must approach as suppliants and request talks. This was the case even in 1545 when the most powerful princes in Christian Europe – the King of France, the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of the Romans – joined

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<sup>1</sup> The title was inspired by Mohammed Pasha’s comment to Gerard Veltwyck in 1545, in NEHRING K. et al. (eds.), *Austro-Turcica 1541-1552. Diplomatische Akten des habsburgischen Gesandtschaftsverkehrs mit der Hohen Pforte im Zeitalter Süleymans des Prächtigen*, Munich 1995, p. 88. See below note 24.

forces and sent a combined embassy to the Ottoman court.<sup>2</sup>

None of this had prevented a number of Christian states from establishing resident embassies at the Ottoman court by 1550, but their inferior treatment, and the enduring perception of the Turks as the arch-enemies of Christendom, meant that their existence was not publicised or widely known in Christendom. In the anonymous *Viaje de Turquía* the fact that France, Hungary, Venice and Florence had resident embassies at the Ottoman court is greeted with astonishment. The French, it is claimed, had one because of their friendship (*amistad*) with the Ottoman sultan; the resident ambassadors of Venice and Florence regulated commercial affairs, while Ferdinand, King of Hungary, maintained an embassy as part of his treaty of peace with Suleyman.<sup>3</sup> This subtle distinction was probably intended to minimise damage to the reputation of Ferdinand I of Habsburg, better known as King of the Romans and emperor-elect, who presented himself as the scourge of the Turks.

Giovanni Maria Malvezzi was Ferdinand I's ambassador at the time the main character of the *Viaje de Turquía* was a slave in Istanbul. Appointed in 1547, Malvezzi was imprisoned in 1551 on the outbreak of war. In 1553 sultan Suleyman released him to facilitate a new peace treaty. Malvezzi was on his way back to Istanbul with the treaty when he fell gravely ill and another envoy was sent. These facts can be verified, but what follows in the *Viaje de Turquía* cannot be corroborated. According to the author, Suleyman refused to finalise the treaty unless Malvezzi returned. Since Malvezzi could not travel and the new envoy had the requisite rank and experience, the viziers found the sultan's attitude incomprehensible as well as dangerous, because they needed peace on this front. Lamenting that he was surrounded by such unintelligent ministers, Suleyman asked:

Tell me: do you think it is a good thing that a man who is so knowledgeable about our affairs, who has lived for so long among us, and who knows our affairs better than we do, should be a member of my enemy's council? There, he will be able to guide them: do this or that; for this or that reason; because the Turks are like this; because that is their custom.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> LANZ K., *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V*, Leipzig 1844-6, vol. II, pp. 446-7. Diego Hurtado de Mendoza and Veltwyck to Charles V, Venice 7 June 1545.

<sup>3</sup> *Viaje de Turquía*, GARCÍA SALINERO F. (ed.), Madrid 1980, pp. 458-461.

<sup>4</sup> *Viaje de Turquía*, p. 460: «El Gran Turco respondió: “Pésame que tenga yo en mi Consejo gente tan neçia como vosotros y que ignore una cosa semejante y que tanto me va. ¿Parésçeos, dezid, que es bien que en el Consejo de mi enemigo haya un hombre tan plático en nuestros negoçios que ha estado tanto tiempo entre nosotros y sabe mejor todos los negoçios de acá que nosotros mesmos, y de allá guiará hágase la cosa desta manera y desta, por tal y tal inconveniente, porque los turcos son desta suerte y tienen esta costumbre?”».

Even if this is apocryphal, it raises important issues that inspired this paper. How well informed were Christian ambassadors in Istanbul in the mid-sixteenth century, and how did they get this information? Was Malvezzi exceptional? Was it plausible that he could have directed Ferdinand's policy towards the Ottomans only when resident at court but not from Istanbul? After all, ambassadorial dispatches were used precisely "to guide" monarchs and their advisers and help them devise policy.

Recent research has greatly added to our knowledge of the spies and informers who "came and went" between the Ottoman empire and the Habsburg lands; there have also been publications on the scholarly works that might have educated ambassadors prior to their encounter with the Ottoman court, but studies of the early Habsburg embassies are scarce and the three embassies included here have left almost no trace in the main secondary literature.<sup>5</sup> Using material from embassies in which Malvezzi served as a secretary as well as his own ambassadorial dispatches, it has been possible to identify some of the sources the ambassadors drew upon to understand Ottoman politics, and to address the question of their influence on Habsburg policy towards the Turks.

## 2. The Habsburg Embassies to the Ottoman Court, 1545

The origins of the multiple Christian embassies to the Porte in 1545 can be found in the struggle for control of Hungary and the labyrinthine politics of the Western Christian powers. Ferdinand I, Suleyman and Janos Zapolyai claimed Hungary after the death of Lajos II in 1526, but despite several wars none of them had prevailed and by 1544 the area had been partitioned into three distinct principalities. Zapolyai's death in 1540 left an infant son under the tutelage of his widow and chief adviser, George Martinuzzi, and prompted Ferdinand I to intensify his

<sup>5</sup> On the Spanish Habsburg-Ottoman front SOLA CASTAÑO E., *Los que van y vienen. Información y fronteras en el Mediterráneo clásico del siglo XVI*, Alcalá de Henares 2005, and MARCOS RIVAS J. & CARNICER GARCÍA C., *Espías de Felipe II*, Madrid 2005, remain essential. Among more recent works with references to the growing literature: SOLA CASTAÑO E., *Uchali: El Calabrés Tiñoso, o el mito del corsario muladí en la frontera*, Barcelona 2010; GÜRKAN E. S., *Espionage in the 16th century Mediterranean: Secret Diplomacy, Mediterranean Go-Betweens and the Ottoman Habsburg Rivalry*, Ph.D. Diss., Georgetown University 2012; VARRIALE G., «El Marqués de Atripalda y su red de espías», at: <www.archivodelafrontera.com>, last accessed 20 February 2013. GRAF T., «I am still yours». *Christian-European «Renegades» in the Ottoman Elite during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries*, Ph.D. Diss., Heidelberg University 2013, is exceptional in combining research on the Austrian Habsburg ambassadors, spies and informants and the Ottoman court. I am indebted to Dr. Graf for sending me a copy. Scholarship greatly contributed to knowledge of the Turks: FICHTNER P. S., *Terror and Toleration. The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526-1850*, London 2008.

efforts to annex the principality of Transylvania. His only hope of success was to get aid from his powerful brother, the emperor Charles V. Early in 1544 Charles V promised he would send forces as soon as his war with France was over. In the treaty of Crépy of September 1544, Charles V and Francis I made peace and France was required to sever its alliance with Suleyman and participate in a campaign against the Turks. Hoping to get the duchy of Milan for his son, the duke of Orleans, Francis I agreed; but to avoid this unwelcome commitment, he offered to mediate a general peace between Christendom and the Ottomans. Charles V accepted because his priorities had changed. He now wanted to use his forces and those of Ferdinand I to destroy his enemies in the Holy Roman Empire and this required peace with Suleyman. Too weak to act alone, Ferdinand I reluctantly accepted his brother's policy. The three Christian embassies sent to negotiate a general peace were profoundly divided. Jean de Montluc and Gabriel de Luitz, baron d'Aramon, who represented France, spent much time fighting each other and were hostile to the Habsburgs; Gerard Veltwyck did not trust them and put the interests of Charles V first, to the detriment of Ferdinand I, who was represented by Hieronimo Adorno, Nicolò Secco and Giovanni Maria Malvezzi. The situation was further complicated by the death of the duke of Orleans during the negotiations, prompting Francis I to reverse his policy and instruct his ambassadors to secretly impede the peace and renew the alliance with Suleyman.

Although initially alarmed at the apparent unity of the Christian states, Suleyman had welcomed the proposed peace in Europe and the Mediterranean. Ottoman advances in both regions were proving costly and slow. Moreover, success against the Habsburgs required effective Christian allies, and the French and Transylvania were weak and untrustworthy; the Venetians and the Poles neutral. He was also facing grave internal problems in the rich province of Egypt, and unrest in court and empire as his sons struggled to secure the succession. Tensions with Shah Tahmasp threatened a new war in the East. There was also the added attraction that Charles V was sending an ambassador, which was widely regarded as a diplomatic coup. Although the international situation changed rapidly in the course of the negotiations, there was sufficient support for peace to encourage and facilitate information exchange at the Ottoman court. Indeed the very complexity of the situation intensified the prevailing thirst for «fresh news».<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ottoman policy was analysed in depth in the ambassadors' reports. Useful background to these complex events in: FAROQHI S. N. & FLEET K., (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey, vol. 2, The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453-1603*, Cambridge 2013; FICHTNER P. S., *Ferdinand I of Austria: the politics of dynasticism in the age of the reformation*, New York 1982; SETTON K. M., *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, 4 vols, Philadelphia 1984, vol. III and IV; URSU J., *La politique orientale de François Ier (1515-1547)*, Paris 1908. The Index of *Austro-Turcica* identifies many of those involved.

## 2.1. Information, Intelligence and Informants in Gerard Veltwyck's first embassy, 1545

In the instructions for Veltwyck written in May of 1545, Charles V stressed the importance of being informed promptly and in detail about the Ottoman court «so as to know how to conduct ourselves with the said Turk». Veltwyck must win over individuals close to the sultan to «obtain intelligence» and to help him secure a peace treaty, as well as to present Habsburg policy in a positive light. He reiterated how important it was for the ambassador to send frequent and full reports by whatever means necessary.<sup>7</sup> At first all went according to plan, but when Veltwyck crossed into the Ottoman Empire, his letters became scarce and uninformative. On 7 September 1545 he excused himself «for writing so seldom, but it has been impossible for me to understand how this matter will progress, or to find secure means to send my letters».<sup>8</sup> Charles V never received the information he required.

It was not surprising that Veltwyck could not predict the outcome of the talks, but it was not for lack of information or a sound understanding of the situation. As usual, an Ottoman dragoman acted as the principal intermediary and occasional interpreter between the ambassador and the Ottoman court. Yunus Bey was a Greek-born, Venetian subject; a Christian convert to Islam and a dragoman who had carried out frequent missions to Christian states. He was well versed in the culture and diplomacy of Christian courts. Foreign affairs were under the control of the first vizier, Rüstem Pasha. A Bosnian-born ex-captive, he was irascible and sometimes rude, but an intelligent and efficient minister.<sup>9</sup> Every encounter with them entailed an exchange of information, and it is evident from his reports that Veltwyck gained great insights into Ottoman politics and attitudes in the course of his conversations with these two officials.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> LANZ, *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V*, II, pp. 435-8 open instructions; pp. 439-5 secret instructions, both Worms 22 May 1545, cites: «afin de selon ce nous conduire en lendroit dudict Turcq», p. 438; «[...] gaigner quelque gens alentour dudict Turcq, dont lon se peut aider [...] et pour prendre intelligence avec ledict Turq» pp. 444-5; «Vous serez soingneux de nous faire scauoir de voz nouuelles le plus souuent et amplement que pourrez, et sercherez tous moyens», p. 445.

<sup>8</sup> «Vre. mte me pardonne, que iay escript si peu [...] que ne ma este possible ne dentendre, quel chemin les affaires prendront, ne denuoyer asseurement mes lettres», LANZ, *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V*, II, p. 466, Istanbul, 7 September 1545.

<sup>9</sup> For Rüstem Pasha, see CHESNEAU J., *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon, Ambassadeur pour le Roy en Levant*, ed. SCHEFER C. H. A., Paris, 1887, pp. XVIII-XXI. In 1545 Malvezzi described him as «satis arroganter et superbe», NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 51, but later acknowledged «la suficientia et diligentia» of the man, p. 268. Yunus Bey: MATUZ J., «Die Pfortendolmetscher zu Herrschaftszeit Süleymans des Prächtigen», *Südost Forschungen*, 34 (1975), pp. 26-60, this at pp. 42-5; KRSTIĆ T., *Of Translation and Empire. Sixteenth-century Ottoman imperial interpreters as Renaissance go-betweeners*, in WOODHEAD C. (ed.), *The Ottoman World*, London 2012, pp. 130-142, this at pp. 132-4.

<sup>10</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 86-96, s. d., c. 1545; pp. 108-112, s. d. 1546. Veltwyck's letters before reaching Istanbul show he also learnt a good deal from Montluc, LANZ, *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V*, II, pp. 445-450; pp. 453-5; pp. 456-9; pp. 459-60; pp. 460-1; pp. 462-66.

Other Ottoman dragomans and viziers were involved occasionally in the negotiations, including the dragoman Hassan Bey who had been closely involved with Ferdinand I's earlier embassy.<sup>11</sup> Montluc asserted that Yunus Bey and Hassan Bey spoke with Veltwyck every day.<sup>12</sup>

Christian embassies had their own dragomans whose linguistic skills and contacts made them ideal intelligence-gatherers as well as interpreters. The French had several dragomans (literally sworn officials: «qui ont le serment à S. M.») with whom the ambassadors discussed their instructions. They followed the dragomans' advice on tactics and much else. Montluc was shocked when he discovered that three French dragomans were among Veltwyck's informers and saw him daily. He later realised that one of them was also an informant for other Christian ambassadors as well as a secret agent for Rüstem Pasha.<sup>13</sup> In these circumstances, it was impossible to maintain secrecy, yet this is what the French required of the Ottoman government once the sultan agreed in October 1545 to their secret proposal to withdraw the peace treaty. Suleyman offered instead a suspension of hostilities for a year during which they would all discuss the draft treaties for a truce, thereby securing a year's peace with Christendom while retaining the French alliance. The French wanted this kept secret so that Francis I could personally transmit the documents to the Habsburgs and appear as the sole intermediary between Christendom and the Ottomans, placing the Habsburgs in his debt. The strategy also diminished Suleyman's role, which may explain why within two hours of Montluc receiving the documents, the news spread all over Istanbul. Rüstem Pasha informed Veltwyck in person, albeit in confidence. When the French ambassadors complained, Ottoman officials said they should be pleased the secret had not been revealed by one of their own staff, and Montluc learnt the valuable lesson that where intelligence was concerned, it was better to give what could not be sold.<sup>14</sup>

## 2.2. *Transmission*

Even if the dragomans and viziers had been Veltwyck's only sources of information, they provided ample and valuable data. The crux of the problem was that he had no safe means to transmit it to Charles V. Even before his arrival, Veltwyck

<sup>11</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 51, Malvezzi's account, s. d. [after 23 April 1545]; MATUZ, «Die Pfortendolmetscher», p. 52, mentions Hassan as a dragoman 1541-66.

<sup>12</sup> CHARRIÈRE (ed.), *Négociations de la France dans le Levant*, Paris 1848, vol. I, p. 614, Montluc's second report; NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 86-96, Veltwyck's report, s. d. [end of 1545].

<sup>13</sup> CHARRIÈRE (ed.), *Négociations dans le Levant*, I, Montluc's second report, pp. 614-615.

<sup>14</sup> «Devions estre contens que cela eust esté divulgué par autres que par nous; et pour cete cause fusmes d'avis de donner ce que nous ne pouvions vendre», *Ibidem*, I, p. 604.

had experience of the efficacy of Ottoman controls. One of his couriers had been briefly imprisoned and his letters to Ferdinand I's ambassador seized and read. He was convinced that Yunus Bey had been ordered by Rüstem Pasha to get close to Ferdinand I's ambassador to get information out of him.<sup>15</sup> On arrival in Istanbul, Veltwyck informed Charles V that the Ottoman government controlled all routes and dispatches could not be sent securely. Even the French, who were old allies of the Ottomans, communicated important information to their king only by word of mouth. This prompted Veltwyck to write infrequently and to avoid including sensitive materials.<sup>16</sup> He entrusted at least two letters to French envoys which were forwarded to the emperor from Venice on 12 October and 17 November respectively.<sup>17</sup> Suleyman refused permission for the Habsburg ambassadors to send envoys until the negotiations ended and they were on their way home. Consequently, Veltwyck sent his first summary of the negotiations on 10 November 1545 from Edirne, and did not risk a detailed dispatch until he was out of Ottoman-controlled territory.<sup>18</sup> Even then he held back information to give in person.<sup>19</sup>

The combination of Ottoman controls, French secrecy and Veltwyck's auto-censorship was a near information black-out in which rumours flourished.<sup>20</sup> Trustworthy news of the suspension of hostilities appeared around 20 November when details of the bailo's letters to the Venetian government were leaked. Secco soon disseminated further information.<sup>21</sup> Veltwyck delivered his report in Vienna in mid-December, but Charles V did not inform his leading officials of the accord until February 1546. By then the Habsburgs were engaged in a full-scale war in German lands and eager for peace with the Ottomans. Drawing on the detailed counsel that Veltwyck, Malvezzi and Secco provided –which substantiates the notion that returning ambassadors influenced policy– Charles V and Ferdinand I accepted the treaties Suleyman offered in principle and prepared a new embassy

<sup>15</sup> LANZ, *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V*, II, p. 463, Veltwyck to Charles V, Plovdiv 6 August 1545.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, II, p. 466, Veltwyck to Charles V, September 1545.

<sup>17</sup> Diego Hurtado de Mendoza to Charles V from Venice: AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 39, 12 October 1545; f. 43, 3 & 4 November; f. 48, 6 November; f. 47, 3 November; f. 44, 17 November.

<sup>18</sup> LANZ, *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V*, II, p. 476, Veltwyck to Charles V, Edirne 10 November 1545. AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 45. Veltwyck to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, Istanbul 22 October 1545; AGS, *Estado, Estados pequeños de Italia*, Legajo 1461, ff. 201-202. Veltwyck to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza and Charles V, 23 October 1545. Secco also sent his summary to Ferdinand I from Edirne on 10 November 1545: NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 76-81.

<sup>19</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, s.d. [end 1545], pp. 86-96.

<sup>20</sup> AGS, *Estado, Roma*, Legajo 872, f. 71. Juan de Vega to Prince Philip, Rome 20 October 1545.

<sup>21</sup> SETTON, *Papacy and the Levant*, III, pp. 489-90; Secco p. 493.

to finalise them.<sup>22</sup> French mediation was politely rejected.<sup>23</sup> A single embassy was dispatched, with Veltwyck as ambassador setting out in June 1546, followed soon after by Malvezzi as secretary and Justus de Argento as an aide.

### 3. Veltwyck's Second Embassy, 1546-7

When Veltwyck took leave of Mehmed Pasha in 1545, the vizier expressed his hope for peace and said: «You have eaten bread with us [...] I hope we will be friends and will visit each other».<sup>24</sup> Veltwyck must have hoped the goodwill would last and was heartened by the honourable welcome he received on his return. But international circumstances were not so propitious. The Ottomans feared a Habsburg victory in Germany might turn into an attack on Ottoman Europe and d'Aramon was sent to consult with Francis I on how to contain Habsburg expansion. D'Aramon encountered Veltwyck in Sofia and predicted that the Ottomans would not conclude the treaty until his return.<sup>25</sup> Rüstem Pasha swore, hand on heart, that this was not true, but that was the intention.<sup>26</sup>

D'Aramon was expected back before January 1547, but did not return until April, and soon after, news of Francis I's death ended his mandate. Henry II's envoy did not arrive until the end of June.<sup>27</sup> These unexpected delays caused grave difficulties for the sultan and for Veltwyck, although pressure from the Shah, internal unrest, and opposition to war in Hungary ensured that some Ottoman ministers remained in favour of peace.

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<sup>22</sup> AGS, *Estado, Alemania*, Legajo 642, f. 185, copy of the agreement, s.d.; f. 109, Charles V to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, 7 February 1546; f. 177 Summary for the Comendador Mayor, s. d. NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, Malvezzi's report of 23 April 1545, pp. 51-55; Memoranda of May 1545 on pp. 56-9; and s. d. (early 1546), pp. 97-8; from Secco, pp. 76-81 and pp. 83-6; from Veltwyck pp. 86-96. LANZ, *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V*, II, pp. 467-478.

<sup>23</sup> CHARRIÈRE (ed.), *Négociations dans le Levant*, I, note pp. 633-4. Mesnage (ambassador at the imperial court) to Francis I, 16 January 1547.

<sup>24</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 88, Veltwyck's memorandum of c. end 1545 «Vous avez mangé le pain avec nous [...] J'espère que nous serons amys et que nous pourrons visiter l'ung l'autre».

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Sofia 3 September 1546, pp. 112-3; 9 October and 5 November 1546, p. 114; AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 128, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza to Charles V, Venice 5 October 1546.

<sup>26</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. 177. Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 20 February & 10 March 1547.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. XXII-XXIII; XXV-XXXIII and pp. 17-9. SETTON, *Papacy and the Levant*, III, p. 483, n. 138 explains that they did not know Francis I was dead until May, but see below n. 55.

### 3.1. *Information, Intelligence and Informants, 1546-7*

Before long, the Ottoman government mistrusted the mission. Charles V had refused to name Veltwyck as his ambassador. Veltwyck declared that he remained Charles V's servant but had come as Ferdinand I's ambassador, although he had credentials from both monarchs. This was confusing, and left his status unclear; more importantly, it raised doubts about Charles V's commitment to the peace.<sup>28</sup> A strong guard was placed around the embassy, and Veltwyck was informed that he was not allowed to receive or send letters until formal negotiations started.<sup>29</sup> Veltwyck thought that this was intended to prevent him from getting good news that might strengthen his hand in the negotiations. Since Rüstem Pasha was eager to begin the talks, the prohibition was not necessarily intended to be long-lasting, but Veltwyck fell seriously ill and could not negotiate for two months. He occasionally saw Yunus Bey and the sultan's physicians during this period, but formal negotiations did not begin until he recovered and was formally accepted by the sultan on 14 December 1546. By then, Suleyman had sent military reinforcements to Hungary and was fitting a fleet for the Mediterranean. Some thought this was to allow «the Turk to negotiate with more reputation»; the Venetians thought it a prelude to war. Veltwyck did not hazard an opinion.<sup>30</sup>

Habsburg agents slipped through the security cordon and delivered dispatches which gave Veltwyck news up to 19 October. He kept this secret, both to retain the advantage and because he did not want to provoke the Ottomans to increase security. Almost the first thing Rüstem Pasha asked him in their first audience was what news he had. Veltwyck replied that he had none as the guards had deterred visitors and prevented him from getting information, and he reiterated this when questioned by Yunus Bey. Both Ottoman ministers suspected that he was lying, and may have realised that limiting the ambassador's access to information was demonstrably detrimental for them also.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 115-6, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Istanbul, 9 October & 5 November 1546; Edirne 18 December 1546, pp. 125-6 and CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. 181, Edirne 20 February & 10 March 1547.

<sup>29</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 116 & p. 118, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 9 October & 5 November 1546.

<sup>30</sup> AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 147, Secretario Montesa to Charles V, Venice, 24 January 1547. Veltwyck informed Ferdinand of his illness and reception from Edirne 18 December 1546, NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 124-8. CHARRIÈRE (ed.), *Négociations dans le Levant*, I, p. 627, Morvilliers to Francis I, 2 & 15 November 1546.

<sup>31</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne, 18 December 1546, p. 124; «non haveva nova alchuna, perché mi serava con tanti janizeri chi'io non posseva intendere niente»; his fears of reprisals, Edirne 20 February & 10 March 1547, CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. 191.

It is worth noting how many of those involved in diplomacy at the Ottoman court in these years were sensitive to the role of news. As Morvilliers, the French ambassador in Venice admitted, the circulation and interpretation of news were crucial. From his vantage point in one of the great news hubs, he frequently accelerated or hindered their circulation in favour of France, but became alarmed by the use of similar tactics by the Ragusans. He believed they undermined French interests by diligently reporting and exaggerating Charles V's successes at the Ottoman court. To counter this, he decided to send the French ambassador in Istanbul «true news» regularly.<sup>32</sup> D'Aramon certainly needed his help. Ottoman ministers berated and sometimes ridiculed him because he received such few letters, making him of little use to them as a source of information, which (as other allies) the French were expected to provide.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, the imperial embassy in Venice sent information to «arm» the ambassador in Istanbul –an interesting term– to counter «French ploys».<sup>34</sup> It was a war of words based on news, and news had a direct impact on negotiations. Early in 1547 the French disseminated news that the Habsburgs were weaker than their Lutheran enemies; «nove fresche» for the sultan sent from Transylvania and Ragusa contradicted this, as Ottoman dragomans informed Veltwyck. To resolve the confusion, dispel the impression of Habsburg weakness and publicise their victories, Veltwyck had to make public information from letters he had received from Venice and Austria. He later urged Ferdinand I to write frequently to the ambassador in Istanbul because such information was crucial to countering what he termed French falsehoods, as well as bolstering the ambassador's authority.<sup>35</sup>

Despite being surrounded by guards, Veltwyck continued to have access to information from Ottoman officials. The dragoman Yunus Bey was again his primary go-between with the Porte. Whenever the negotiations became conflictive, both the ambassador and the first vizier used the dragoman to communicate informally and resolve or shelve problems, moving the negotiations on. Yunus Bey also transmitted messages from the other viziers and raised issues on their behalf

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<sup>32</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. XXV, Morvilliers to Constable Montmorency, 27 May 1547.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 186, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 20 February & 13 March 1547.

<sup>34</sup> Juan Hurtado de Mendoza to Prince Philip: «hele armado desta consideration; por q[ue] con effetto veo q[ue] françeses se ayuda[n] mucho de semejantes ardjdes», Venice 6 October 1548, AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 278.

<sup>35</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. 181 and in Veltwyck's memorandum, NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 198: «Itaque esset quotidie scribendum ad J. Mariam de omnibus rebus – partim, ut autoritas conservetur illius [...] partim, ut rumoribus et mendaciis Gallorum obviam eatur, qui non sunt cessaturi».

with Veltwyck.<sup>36</sup> The dragoman took advantage of his position to get information from Veltwyck, especially about the war in German lands. In turn he supplied a great deal of information, save on what the Ottomans knew about the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>37</sup> The ambassador trusted and believed him, valuing the quality and quantity of the information he received, although he was aware that Yunus Bey was afraid of, and controlled by, Rüstem Pasha, and at times constrained in what he could disclose. Veltwyck simply applied the well-tested method for validating information, which was to compare this intelligence with information from other sources.<sup>38</sup> Yunus Bey was also transmitting details of Veltwyck's mission to the French,<sup>39</sup> prompting Francis I to acknowledge and praise the valuable services of the «magnifique seigneur le sr. Janus-Bei» at the end of 1546.<sup>40</sup> He was also close to, and probably an informant for, his Venetian compatriots. None of this reduced the value of the information he gave Veltwyck. In fact, the French attributed the success of the Habsburg mission to the substantial bribes he paid Yunus Bey and Rüstem Pasha.<sup>41</sup>

Another dragoman who played a key role was Mahmud Bey, a Bavarian noble captured as a youth who converted to Islam. As an Ottoman dragoman he served on a number of diplomatic missions to Christian states and was among the best-informed Ottoman officials about the situation in central and eastern Europe. Crucially, at this juncture he was the only one sharing this information with Veltwyck. Ferdinand I thought him a traitor, but Veltwyck argued that unlike others, Mahmud Bey was helping them out of conviction, not greed—which is not to say he was not paid. Veltwyck bribed («corrotti») the three Ottoman dragomans at court. Among the valuable intelligence they provided were letters from the French to Suleyman and Rüstem Pasha. He accepted that sometimes they withheld information—the would not admit they were using delaying tactics, for example—but he was confident that he was getting state secrets from them: «mi confessano molti altri secreti».<sup>42</sup>

<sup>36</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 125-6, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 18 December 1546; CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. 195, Edirne 20 February & 10 March 1547.

<sup>37</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. 192 etc., Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 20 February & 10 March 1547.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 203, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 3 & 13 April 1547: «io non credo a ogni parola de Jonus beyk, per esserli stato fatto paura dal Bassa, perchò confrontassi con molti altri»; p. 216, Pontegrande 22 June 1547: «benche l'hanno defeso strettamente a Jonusbey che non me lo dica».

<sup>39</sup> CHARRIÈRE (ed.), *Négociations dans le Levant*, I, p. 623, Jean Jacques de Cambray to Francis I, 4 July 1546.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 632-4.

<sup>41</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. XXXIV: «corrumpuz de presens et d'argent».

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 169-200, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, [Edirne] 20 February & 10 March 1547; cits: corrotti, p. 180; secrets, p. 184. Examples of information they gave him at p. 181, p. 186, p. 190; on Mahmud

Among his other informants were the embassy chiaus who controlled the embassy guard, and one of the janissaries who had connections to the navy.<sup>43</sup> He also got news from the Jews who visited him, including the embassy physician who was a close friend of Yunus Bey. Veltwyck once boasted in front of them that he would pay Rüstem Pasha a larger bribe than the French, and they relayed this to the French embassy secretary, who informed Rüstem Pasha. To Veltwyck's surprise, the first vizier declared himself dishonoured and threatened to imprison him; he had Yunus Bey and the embassy chiaus interrogated and forced them to reveal who was visiting the embassy and whom Veltwyck had bribed –as two Ottoman dragomans informed the ambassador. Although the vizier soon changed course and purported to believe it was all a lie, the repercussions were grave. The investigation had revealed «that I received information (avisi) from every part», and Rüstem Pasha decided to put a stop to this.<sup>44</sup> Veltwyck and his household were placed under house arrest. The courtyard giving access to the embassy was closed off and the windows facing the street boarded up. No one but the victualler was allowed out of the house, and no one else was allowed in. Ottoman dragomans were strictly forbidden from visiting without orders. Veltwyck thought these measures of no benefit to the Ottoman government, unless it was to prevent him from receiving news of Habsburg victories, which they believed would undermine their negotiating position. Ironically, for him this confirmed that things were going well; had it been otherwise, he argued, the vizier would have sent visitors to the embassy every day with details of Habsburg defeats.<sup>45</sup>

Psychological games were an integral part of negotiations everywhere, but by incarcerating Veltwyck the Ottomans went too far, making it impossible for him to act as an ambassador. He wrote to Rüstem Pasha and Yunus Bey daily, demanding either an audience or dismissal. He was denied both, but the dragomans continued to pass on secret information to him, including details of the French king's correspondence, and Veltwyck was able to disseminate false information to Rüstem Pasha.<sup>46</sup> He was still well served by some Christian agents, especially Francesco Zanchano, a Genoese captive and surgeon of Ahmed Pasha whom Veltwyck de-

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Bey, p. 183 and pp. 198-9, Veltwyck wrote: «il modo che ho di possere intendere le particularitate certe, si è per il dragomano Maumetto [...] Benchè la Maestà Vostra lo [...] habi per traditore, como l'ho anche io, però queste cose si fano da simile gente per denari ». Also MATUZ, «Die Pfortendolmetscher», pp. 49-51.

<sup>43</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 20 February & 10 March 1547, the chiaus p. 188, the Janissary, p. 197.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 187-9: «quella delatione, ch'io riceveva avisi d'ogni canto, fece pur qualche effetto, più presto fastidioso per me, che utile per i Turchi»; p. 198 he mentions «quel giudio ch'è medico della mia famiglia e grande amico de Jonus Beig».

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 188.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 190.

scribed as highly intelligent and diligent, «and if I did not have him, I would remain ignorant of many things». Crucial also were Father Zaharija, a Croatian priest and sometime agent for Ferdinand in Ragusa; and the courier Veit Ugrinović.<sup>47</sup> Blasio di Brena, Veltwyck's dragoman the previous year had clearly resumed his previous occupation as a spy, since he succeeded in entering the embassy secretly in January 1547 with letters from the imperial court dated 28 November 1546. Veltwyck ordered him to go and spy on the arsenal and gather intelligence.<sup>48</sup> Reassured that the Habsburgs were still in a strong position, he resisted Rüstem Pasha's attempt to get him to accept the treaties without conditions.<sup>49</sup>

News that an impressive French embassy was approaching stirred the Ottoman ministers into action. Yunus Bey was ordered to discuss the truce with Veltwyck shortly before d'Aramon's arrival. Someone provided Veltwyck with details of d'Aramon's reception and Francis I's proposals for a joint military campaign with Suleyman against the Habsburgs, prompting Veltwyck to comment that his mission had become even more difficult.<sup>50</sup> It also intensified the information war. When news arrived from Hungary about Charles V's recent victories, the French produced information that suggested the opposite.<sup>51</sup> Veltwyck decided to take a risk: he notified Rüstem Pasha on 24 April 1547 that he had received dispatches from Charles V giving details of the war in Germany and ordering him to transmit the news to the sultan and to reaffirm the emperor's commitment to peace. He offered to show the documents to the vizier.<sup>52</sup> Rüstem Pasha's first response was to tighten up on security, as it had clearly been breached. Significantly, he reiterated the prohibition on unauthorised visits from Ottoman dragomans. He had the chiaus imprisoned and threatened with impalement, and strengthened the guard. Father Zaharija, who was identified as Ferdinand's spy by an Austrian exile, was imprisoned, and Ugrinović went underground. On 1 May 1547, when Zanchano left

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 208, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 1 May 1547; Zacharija Schiavon to Ferdinand, Edirne s. d., c. June 1547; pp. 210-212. NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 98-100, Ferdinand I's instructions for Veit Ugrinović, Vienna 19 March 1546. Details of Ivanić Zaharija, p. 681; Ugrinović, p. 736.

<sup>48</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. 197, Veltwyck to Ferdinand, Edirne 20 February & 10 March 1547: «Blasio di Brena, che soleva essere spia de don Diego et mio dragomano l'anno passato».

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 169.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 201-4, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 3 & 13 April 1547; Chesneau's account, pp. 14-18.

<sup>51</sup> SERVANTIE A., *Charles Quint aux yeux des Ottomans*, in RUBIERA MATA M. J. (ed.), *Carlos V. Los Moriscos y el Islam*, Alicante 2000, p. 303 also in <<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/carlos-v-los-moriscos-y-el-islam>> [last accessed on 16 July 2014].

<sup>52</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp.153-4, Veltwyck to Rüstem Pasha, Edirne 24 April 1547.

Istanbul after securing his release from captivity, Veltwyck felt totally isolated.<sup>53</sup> But the next day Zaharija reappeared, having got out of prison, and successfully smuggled another packet of letters he had been given into the embassy. They contained news from December 1546 and January 1547.<sup>54</sup>

After so many delays and inactivity, things accelerated and converged in May 1547. News of Francis I's death reached the Ottoman court on 22 April which meant the French alliance could no longer be counted upon.<sup>55</sup> Henry II's failure to inform Suleyman of his succession or to send an ambassador caused grave offense and made the Ottomans doubt him.<sup>56</sup> News of Charles V's spectacular victories over the Schmalkaldic league reached Istanbul around mid-May, prompting angry outbursts against d'Aramon who was accused of not keeping the Porte informed and even of deliberately withholding information. Then there was the rebel brother of the Shah, whose arrival at the court made it more likely that Suleyman would support his bid for the throne and so provoke a civil war against his great rival.<sup>57</sup>

On 7 June 1547, a day after getting further news of Habsburg victories, the Ottoman government formally resumed negotiations for peace. Despite the continued restrictions—«mi tengono anchor strettissimamente»—Veltwyck knew that Charles V and Ferdinand I were in a strong position, but his powers had not been revoked nor had his instructions been changed.<sup>58</sup> The Ottoman government was putting enormous pressure on him for a rapid conclusion to the negotiations. He was made to believe that an agreement for a joint military campaign with France was imminent, and that Suleyman was poised to invade Hungary and Croatia, where he had recently sent reinforcements. Veltwyck decided it was imperative to act quickly and accepted the treaties on 19 June 1547 although they did not contain many of the conditions Ferdinand I had wanted. As Veltwyck noted, his decision was not irrevocable since the king had three months to decide whether to accept or reject the

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<sup>53</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, pp. 208-209, Veltwyck to Ferdinand, 1 & 2 May 1547.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 209; Zacharija Schiavon to Ferdinand I, s. d. s. l., post 25 May [1547], p. 210.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 212-3, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 7 June 1547.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. XXVI-XXVIII, d'Aramon warned Henry II of the serious consequences of his silence, 15 June 1547; pp. XXXII-XXXIV, Morvilliers to Marillac, 27 September 1547. NEHRING et al (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 167, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 6 July 1547 on the arrival of Fumetta (sic.) on 23 June, three days after Veltwyck had left.

<sup>57</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, Veltwyck to Ferdinand, Edirne 1 & 2 May 1547, p. 209; Zacharija Schiavon to Ferdinand, s. d., after 25 May, p. 210; Veltwyck to Ferdinand, Istanbul 7 June, pp. 212-3; and Pontegrande 22 June, pp. 215-6; clash with the French p. 216.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 211-4, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 7 June 1547. AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 219, Navagero reported his release on 10 June 1547.

preferred truce.<sup>59</sup> The strenuous efforts made by Henry II to prevent its ratification vindicated Veltwyck's decision.<sup>60</sup>

### 3.2. *Transmission, 1546-7*

Since he knew he could not send dispatches until the negotiations started, Veltwyck did not write for a time. He considered all the Christian merchants in Istanbul as enemies, save a Ragusan who was being closely watched, so the only safe means to get his letters to Venice from where they would be safely forwarded, was to have an «homo fidatissimo». He explained to Charles V and Ferdinand I that he could not be expected to function as other ambassadors and send regular dispatches, but hoped they would forgive him and write, since he needed their letters and there was a chance he would receive them.<sup>61</sup> He only wrote when he had a trustworthy courier, such as on 9 October 1546 –although this was not sent until 5 November or later. A letter of 11 November had reached the imperial court by 22 December.<sup>62</sup> On 18 December, with the negotiations underway, he was allowed to send a dispatch which reached Venice on 16 February 1547 and the imperial court on 2 March, but that was the final one until the departure of Blasio di Brena to whom he gave letters written in during February and mid-March.<sup>63</sup> Some of these had reached the imperial court by early April when it was known that Veltwyck was under house arrest.<sup>64</sup> Brena arrived in Venice at the end of May 1547 in the company of one of Suleyman's chiaus whom he had encountered in Ragusa and

<sup>59</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, pp. 215-8, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Pontegrande 22 June 1547.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 219-225, Instructions for d'Huyson, s. d. NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 181-2, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 6 November 1547.

<sup>61</sup> «Hor, Sire, vorei havere commodità di avisare Vostra Maestà cose certe, et haver licentia di expiare, como fano tutti li ambasciatori», CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. 199, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 20 February & 10 March 1547.

<sup>62</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 116 & p. 118, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 9 October and 5 November 1546. TURBA G. (ed.), *Venetianische Depeschen vom Kaiserhofe*, Vienna 1892, vol. II, pp. 126-7.

<sup>63</sup> On 16 January 1547 the French ambassador reported that Charles V had received Veltwyck's letters from Edirne, CHARRIÈRE (ed.), *Négociations dans le Levant*, I, p. 633. From Venice Montesa forwarded a letter of December, AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, ff. 191-2. The imperial agent in Ragusa warned Charles V on 18 February 1547 he had received nothing since, AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 190.

<sup>64</sup> AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, ff. 180-2, Montesa to Charles V, Venice 22 March 1547 with news from Edirne of 23 February; f. 230 s. d. Avisos, confirmed that Veltwyck was held «[con] gran guardja». The Venetian ambassador at the imperial court reported on 20 March and on 9 April the arrival of letters from Veltwyck written in late February. TURBA, *Venetianische Depeschen*, II, pp. 200-201 and p. 216.

from whom he had got further information!<sup>65</sup> Zanchano smuggled out Veltwyck's letter of 1 and 13 May on his return home.<sup>66</sup> After resuming negotiations in June, the Ottoman government again refused to allow Veltwyck to send an envoy until the truce was signed, so on 7 June he sent a brief, secret letter with a captive fleeing from Istanbul informing Ferdinand I that negotiations had resumed.<sup>67</sup> The sultan gave permission for a courtier to depart only when Veltwyck had signed the treaty and left the court. He sent a summary of the negotiations on 22 June, but still uncertain how safe it was, Veltwyck kept it brief. It arrived at the imperial court sometime before 23 July.<sup>68</sup>

#### 4. Malvezzi's Embassy, 1547-1553

Despite his reservations, Ferdinand I dissimulated over the dishonourable treatment of his ambassador and accepted the truce. On 20 September 1547 Justus de Argento arrived back in Istanbul to ratify the treaty and announce Malvezzi's appointment as ambassador.<sup>69</sup> Malvezzi had given ample proof of his capacity to negotiate and to give sound advice over the previous years, and had twice acted as temporary ambassador.<sup>70</sup> As Veltwyck predicted, Charles V refused to accredit Malvezzi as his ambassador, so his status was reduced.<sup>71</sup> He represented an Ottoman tributary state, since Ferdinand I renewed his payment of an annual subsidy. On 5 October 1547 Rüstem Pasha expressed the sultan's acceptance of the appointment, praising Malvezzi's skill and prudence; sentiments echoed by Argento who judged him the best for dealing with Ottoman ministers.<sup>72</sup> Besides his long experience and excellent negotiating skills, Malvezzi had many contacts. He also

<sup>65</sup> AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 236, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza to Charles V, Venice 27 May 1547; and f. 230, s. d., Avisos.

<sup>66</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, pp. 208-209 (cit. p. 208), Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Edirne 1 & 2 May 1547.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 211-4, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 7 June 1547. The Venetian bailo reported his release on 10 June 1547: AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 219, Avisos.

<sup>68</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, pp. 215-218, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Pontegrande 22 June 1547. TURBA, *Venetianische Depeschen*, II, p. 313.

<sup>69</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 184-90. Report, s. d. c. end November 1547.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 51-55, Report of 23 April 1545; Memoranda of May 1545 on pp. 56-59.

<sup>71</sup> CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*, p. 216, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, Pontegrande 22 June 1547.

<sup>72</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, Argento to Ferdinand I, s. d. [c. 9 November 1547], pp. 184-90: «et subiunxit ipse Bassa in laudem ipsius *Malvetii* multa verba dicens, ipsum esse prudentem virum, et huiusmodi homines esse aptos ad talia negotia [...] adeo quod non posset meo iudicio invenire M. tas V. hominem accomodatorem pro illis gentibus», p. 187.

took over at a relatively quiet period, with a confirmed peace and, soon after, the long absence in the East of the sultan and his leading officials, as well as the French ambassador who accompanied them. The situation changed dramatically and for the worse in 1550 due to Charles V's conquests in North Africa and Ferdinand I's intervention in Transylvania.<sup>73</sup>

#### 4.1. *Information, Intelligence and Informants, 1547-1553*

Veltwyck urged Ferdinand to increase Malvezzi's salary and give him sufficient resources to enable him to get good quality information and secure transmission of dispatches.<sup>74</sup> Malvezzi had made similar recommendations in 1545. In November 1547, not long after he had assumed his office, he failed to obtain a copy of an important French document due to lack of funds and used the occasion to argue forcefully once again that unless he was given enough money he would not be able to provide important intelligence in the future either.<sup>75</sup>

Early-modern states accepted that contingency funds were an essential part of diplomacy, but wanted ambassadors to keep expenditure on spies, couriers «and other essential measures» to a minimum, not least because it was exempt from regular accounting procedures. The ambassador's conscience or the monarch's personal intervention were often the only controls.<sup>76</sup> Allocating pensions and gifts when new embassies were sent or treaties concluded can be seen as a way of pre-empting the need for contingency funds to win favour and predispose individuals to share information. Pensions and gifts were distributed at the start of Malvezzi's embassy based on his advice as well as that of Veltwyck and Argento. As always, the largest pension was for the first vizier and the other viziers were normally included, but not all the dragomans were selected. In 1545 Malvezzi had recommended pensions for Yunus Bey, Hassan Bey, and Haydar Bey, Suleyman's Latin secretary.<sup>77</sup> In 1547 both he and Veltwyck requested a pension of 200 ducats for Mahmud Bey, who was still in charge of the sultan's correspondence with Ferdinand I. Veltwyck had come to dislike the dragoman, but thought the pension necessary to avoid problems: «et est alioqui mala persona, quae possit nocere ne-

<sup>73</sup> I have focused on the correspondence 1545 – December 1548 and from late 1550 to 1553.

<sup>74</sup> See the memoranda, c. 7 December 1547, NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 196 and pp. 197-199.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, 6 November 1547, p. 183; memorandum, May 1545 p. 58.

<sup>76</sup> AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, ff. 162-3, Instructions for don Juan Hurtado de Mendoza, 3 March 1547: «los gastos despías estafetas y otras diligencias q[ue] conuierna hazer [...] debaxo de v[uest]ra conçien[cia]»; f. 110, s. d. [1545] Veltwyck's funds were spent: «en cosas q[ue] son neçessarias por el seru[ici]o de V[uest]ra M[ajest]at los q[ua]les el alcança a v[uest]ra M[ajest]at».

<sup>77</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, May 1544, pp. 57-58.

gociis M.tis Vestrae, si non intertenetur». Ferdinand I's officials halved the sum and made it conditional on performance —«satis essent 100 si bene serviet». <sup>78</sup> By June 1551, inadequate remuneration combined with his opposition to Ferdinand I's annexation of Transylvania had turned Mahmud Bey into their worst enemy at the Porte. <sup>79</sup> Ferdinand I did accept their advice to employ the French dragoman, Jacques or Jacobo Bondorius who could provide valuable information about French and Ottoman politics, given his close relations with the viziers, Yunus Bey and other Ottoman officials. <sup>80</sup> Bondorius chose to stay with the French embassy but accepted a pension from Ferdinand I, and it is likely he provided intelligence for Malvezzi. <sup>81</sup> Yet the ambassador was often frustrated in his efforts to obtain French documentation and plans. <sup>82</sup>

Even those allocated pensions expected favours when called upon to act, and gifts were also necessary on certain occasions, such when congratulating Rüstem Pasha on the birth of a daughter, and on major festivities. <sup>83</sup> Celebrations for Süleyman's victories, which Malvezzi organised with the Venetian ambassador, could not be avoided. <sup>84</sup> The ambassador had to keep an «honourable» house and table —generous entertainment attracted visitors, helped gain information, and was a reflection of the monarch's power and respect for the sultan. <sup>85</sup> Finding himself ridiculed by the French and criticised by the Ottomans for failing to meet standards, Malvezzi purchased a grand house in Istanbul in March 1548 and increased the size of his household without authorisation. Ferdinand I eventually covered the costs, but prohibited such unauthorised expenditure in future. <sup>86</sup>

Unable to function without money to cover unexpected contingencies, or as he called it «servitio urgente», Malvezzi borrowed 3,000 Hungarian ducats in

<sup>78</sup> *Ibidem*, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, s. d. [c. 7 December 1547], p. 199; his recommendations: pp. 196-9. Malvezzi's promise to Mahmud, p. 249.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 22 May 1551, p. 590; 10 June 1551 p. 597. MATUZ, «Die Pfortendolmetscher», pp. 49-50 stresses Mahmud's commitment to Zapolyai.

<sup>80</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, Veltwyck argued this in 1545 and 1547, p. 92, p. 196, and pp. 198-9.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibidem*, Argento's memorandum, s. d., c. April/May 1548, p. 249.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul June 1547, p. 169; February 1548, p. 218; 16 February 1551, p. 554; to Carl, 8 March 1548, p. 223; to Ferdinand, 16 February 1551, p. 554; to Ferdinand, 16 May p. 587.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand, 26 August 1547, p. 178; 6 November 1547, p. 183.

<sup>84</sup> AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1318, f. 312, Juan Hurtando de Mendoza to Prince Philip, Venice 6 February 1549.

<sup>85</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 197. Memorandum for Malvezzi, s. d. c. 7 December 1547.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 234-5, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 29 March; Ferdinand to Malvezzi, 15 July 1548, p. 264.

September 1548, justifying this on the grounds that it was unavoidable in a court where constant vigilance was of the essence and no one could be trusted, and where the French paid larger bribes. He reminded Ferdinand I that obtaining copies of secret documents and secret intelligence was a dangerous and at times fatal business that required an appropriate reward. Ferdinand I accepted the arguments but urged Malvezzi to avoid «superfluas impensas».<sup>87</sup> To Malvezzi, however, this was essential expenditure. By February 1551 the ambassador had debts of over 4,000 ducats and warned that unless they were paid and he was given money to meet contingencies «as before», he would not be able to acquire or transmit intelligence: «io restarò al siutto e in secho per conto de posser haver le bene et secur' intelligentie delle cose che occorreato alla giornata, per dare gli certi et sicuri avisi a V[ost]ra M[aes]tà».<sup>88</sup> His inability to get information on French plans or of Polish negotiations until after they had a public audience substantiated his claims.<sup>89</sup>

Paradoxically, while we have more documentation for Malvezzi's embassy, we know less about his sources. He was careful not to name his informants in dispatches, using vague phrases to indicate their importance or trustworthiness.<sup>90</sup> As a resident ambassador he enjoyed greater freedom than his predecessor and had more frequent and better opportunities to meet Ottoman officials, including audiences with Rüstem Pasha. Their mutual interest in maintaining the peace may have facilitated the relatively good relations they had at first, which favoured the exchange of information.<sup>91</sup> The first vizier always demanded news of the Habsburgs and questioned Malvezzi so as to understand Christian politics better. It was normal for them to discuss contemporary events, sometimes at depth, and both sides gained valuable information and insights as a result.<sup>92</sup>

They often pitted their wits against each other, and at times Malvezzi succeeded in making Rüstem Pasha laugh.<sup>93</sup> On one occasion, after Malvezzi had dismissed Martinuzzi as unimportant, Rüstem Pasha commented that mosquitos were small, but they could bite. Malvezzi responded that they could also be easily squashed.<sup>94</sup> Rüstem Pasha's confidences, usually about French negotiations and plans, were

<sup>87</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 20 September 1548, p. 283; 26 September, p. 289; Ferdinand's reply, 22 November, p. 306.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Edirne 9 & 10 February 1551, p. 553.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Edirne 16 February 1551, pp. 554-5.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 6 June 1547, p. 168.

<sup>91</sup> This is brought out well in Malvezzi's letters of 8 and 29 March 1548: *Ibidem*, p. 223 and pp. 230-6.

<sup>92</sup> Two examples: *Ibidem*, pp. 190-1, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, 30 November 1547; Argento's report, s. d. April/May 1551, pp. 245-7. SERVANTIE, *Charles Quint aux yeux des Ottomans*, esp. pp. 302-305.

<sup>93</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 181-2, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 6 November 1547; p. 224, to Adam Carl, Istanbul 8 March 1548.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 246, Argento to Ferdinand I, s. d. April/May 1548.

intended to divide the Christian powers –but it was still valuable information.<sup>95</sup> After 1550 Rüstem Pasha became abusive and violent, and Malvezzi came to dislike him, once describing him once as a perfidious, evil dog who controlled both the sultan and the court.<sup>96</sup> Their audiences became conflictive and sterile, the result of circumstances rather than personal failure.

The Ottoman dragomans continued to provide information for Malvezzi.<sup>97</sup> He had particularly close relations with Yunus Bey, partly because of the latter's commitment to the peace.<sup>98</sup> In April 1551, following a harrowing encounter with Rüstem Pasha, Malvezzi delayed the next audience until the dragoman was at court hoping he would help –«spero de haver bon aiuto da Jonusbey».<sup>99</sup> Unfortunately, illness and loss of favour often kept the dragoman away from the court before his death in June 1551.<sup>100</sup> Malvezzi established good relations with the Polish-born Ibrahim Bey, appointed dragoman in March 1551. Prior to his captivity and conversion, Ibrahim had served one of Ferdinand's daughters and later one of his officials. Malvezzi thought him a virtuous man, and favourable to Ferdinand I. He could be the source of Malvezzi's information about the Polish negotiations and about Suleyman's attitude towards Charles V. He was almost certainly the one to give him details of the arrival of the French embassy in September 1551, whom he welcomed and served on the vizier's orders. A Latin translation of Henry II's instructions to d'Aramon in Ibrahim Bey's handwriting reached Vienna.<sup>101</sup>

Malvezzi had frequent dealings with unnamed «turchi, amici del Bassa [Rüstem Pasha]», who transmitted information between them and provided news.<sup>102</sup> They may have been the ones who gave him copies of the sultan's instructions to the beylerbeyi of Greece «molto secretissimamente» and who reported what Rüstem Pasha had told «certi soi amici» about attacking Malta in June 1551.<sup>103</sup> It is plausible they were the same men that Malvezzi described elsewhere as three friends and important advisers of the first vizier –«con li quali Sua Excellentia conferisse molto circa le cose de Stato»– whom he persuaded to raise the issue of ceding

<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 186-7, Argento to Ferdinand I, s. d. [c. 9 November 1547].

<sup>96</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, pp. 548-9, Edirne 24 January 1551, on p. 548: «è un gran cane perfidio maligno, et tien suffucata tutta la corte del Signor»; see also Edirne 29 March 1551, pp. 565-6.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Adam Carl, Istanbul 8 March 1548, p. 224.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 224, and Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 22 July 1548, pp. 270-1.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Edirne 17 April 1551, p. 575.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 19 June 1551, p. 608.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Edirne 11 March 1551, p. 560; 21 March, p. 562; 10 June, p. 597. CHESNEAU, *Le Voyage de Monsieur D'Aramon*: reception, 21 September 1551, p. XLIX; the Latin letter persuaded Scheffer he was Ferdinand I's informer, p. XXXV.

<sup>102</sup> An example in Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, 17 April 1551, NEHRING et al (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 577.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 19 June 1551, p. 607 cit.; p. 608 Malta.

Transylvania to Ferdinand I with Rüstem Pasha as if it was their idea. They complied, but without a positive result.<sup>104</sup> The vizier Ahmed Pasha, whom Malvezzi liked greatly and who was good to him on the rare occasions he was at court, was not one of them, however. The Albanian-born noble and convert to Islam favoured Christians but refused to get involved in Ferdinand I's negotiations over Transylvania.<sup>105</sup> Perhaps Haydar Pasha, who became a vizier in 1549 and appears a number of times in the the dispatches, might have been one of them. Malvezzi obtained a valuable small, chiming clock for him.<sup>106</sup>

The sheer quantity, range, and quality of the information Malvezzi sent Ferdinand I about Ottoman policies and attitudes; about military and naval preparations; and about their foreign affairs suggests that he had multiple sources of information and intelligence besides such senior Ottoman officials.<sup>107</sup> He certainly had secret agents, such as the four men he sent to infiltrate the Ottoman army in Iran to gather intelligence,<sup>108</sup> and at least two dragomans: a member of the Greek community in Pera and an Italian, both of whom had good Turkish and Italian and who doubtless contributed information as well.<sup>109</sup> He might have tapped into Venetian intelligence through the five Venetians he employed.<sup>110</sup> Unfortunately, his dispatches have not yet yielded precise data on these informants.

#### *4.2. Transmission, 1547-1553*

Malvezzi knew from the outset that Rüstem Pasha had planted spies in his household, but still managed to find ways to send dispatches in secret.<sup>111</sup> Ferdinand I ordered him to use the regular Venetian postal system and arranged for the correspondence to be securely forwarded from Venice. Officially, this gave their dispatches the same immunity that the Ottomans offered their Venetian allies, although it could not protect them from being intercepted by Venice. Sensitive information was encrypted, providing further security but couriers were reserved

<sup>104</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 16 May 1551, p. 587.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Edirne 21 March 1551, p. 562; Edirne 17 April 1551, p. 576.

<sup>106</sup> For example: *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Edirne 8 April 1551, p. 571.

<sup>107</sup> Some examples: *Ibidem*, pp. 240-1, 14 April 1548; pp. 559-60, 11 March 1551; pp. 589-91, 22 May 1551.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 234, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 29 March 1548 and 22 July 1548, p. 267.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 249, Argento's memorandum, s. d. c. April/May 1548.

<sup>110</sup> AGS *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1319, f. 154. Domingo de Gatzelu to Prince Philip, Venice 2 September 1551.

<sup>111</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 234, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 29 March 1548: «el Bassa me teneva continuamente le spie in casa mia».

for extraordinary occasions.<sup>112</sup> Initially all was well, but in March 1548 there were some problems and Malvezzi responded to the insecurity like his predecessor, by limiting what he wrote –in this instance he omitted a report of his recent audiences with Rüstem Pasha and conflicts with the French envoys– and by sending letters «alla ventura».<sup>113</sup> He also requested the appointment of a dedicated agent in Ragusa who would speed up delivery.<sup>114</sup> Serious problems arose when Bernardo Navagero took over the Venetian embassy. He did not inform Malvezzi of the arrival of post until he had given the merchants their letters, and at times did not alert him when the courier was leaving, so that Malvezzi missed the post or was left with insufficient time to write. On one such occasion, he was forced to send a courier at a cost of 40 ducats (one way). Despite repeated complaints, Ferdinand I ordered him to continue using the Venetian couriers and dissimulate.<sup>115</sup> The damage Navagero inflicted was considerable. For example, when a courier arrived from Venice in May 1551, Navagero read his own dispatches and distributed letters for the merchants, doubtless gaining further information from them. He then requested an audience with Rüstem Pasha and was able to provide fresh news for him and other Ottoman officials, and to discuss his government's business before other ambassadors could intervene. It was only after his audience that he informed Malvezzi that a package had also arrived for him. By the time Malvezzi had his audiences, some of his information would be of little value, and Rüstem Pasha would be better informed and prepared for negotiations.<sup>116</sup> Malvezzi continued to demand his own postal network through Ragusa and later Fiume, to no avail.<sup>117</sup> Trusted couriers such as Ugrinović, Giovanni di Brena and Paolo Thodt were used only for sensitive dispatches<sup>118</sup> by both king and ambassador, and Argento made periodic visits to Istanbul to settle important matters.<sup>119</sup> Unlike Malvezzi, Ferdinand was content with this hybrid structure.

Although ambassadors could ask the sultan for permission to use the regular Ottoman postal route to Buda, Malvezzi avoided it as he assumed his dispatches would be intercepted and read.<sup>120</sup> On one occasion in February 1548, Rüstem Pa-

<sup>112</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 197-8, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, s. d. [c. 7 December 1547]; Ferdinand I to Malvezzi, Augsburg, 7 December 1547, p. 201.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 222-3, Malvezzi to Adam Carl, Istanbul 8 March 1548.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 225 and Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 4 April 1548, p. 239.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 539, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 29 December 1550; p. 571, Edirne 8 April 1551.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 1 June 1551, pp. 591-2.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I from Edirne 11 March 1551, p. 560; 8 April, p. 571; from Istanbul 7 May, p. 583; 16 May, p. 587; 1 June, pp. 591-2; and 10 June 1551, p. 596 cit. and Fiume route.

<sup>118</sup> Examples in *Ibidem*, p. 170, p. 226, p. 240 and p. 561.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Adam Carl, Istanbul 8 March 1548, p. 225.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 10 June 1551, p. 596.

sha insisted that Malvezzi must send his letter through this and the ambassador provided a deferential and flattering letter, whose contents had to be explained to Ferdinand I in another, secret dispatch sent via Venice.<sup>121</sup> In June 1551, suspecting that Ferdinand I had invaded Transylvania, Rüstem Pasha did something «new» –Malvezzi’s term. When Paulo Thodt arrived from Austria the vizier interrogated him and ordered the ambassador to open the letters in the presence of a dragoman and the chiaus. To show that he had nothing to hide, Malvezzi sent Thodt back with his reply through Buda. Again, knowing the letters would be read he wrote accordingly, this time omitting a great deal of information which he then sent through a secret route to Venice and Ragusa.<sup>122</sup>

After further reports that the invasion of Transylvania had taken place, Malvezzi was placed under house arrest and surrounded by guards. Ferdinand’s next courier, Antonio Sylviano, was imprisoned on arrival and his letters opened. Rüstem Pasha passed those in cypher to the Venetian (and later the French) embassy. Whether Christian diplomats found it impossible to break the code or thought it politic not to breach diplomatic norms, they returned them undecyphered. Sylviano was released seventeen days later, and the letters handed over to Malvezzi.<sup>123</sup> An informant claimed that Suleyman had ordered this, and reprimanded Rüstem Pasha telling him that «this is not our custom», reminding him that ambassadors had a duty to convey their sovereign’s instructions. By the time the next dispatch arrived, Malvezzi was in prison and the two states were effectively at war, and Ottoman ministers had no compunction in opening his letters.<sup>124</sup>

Ferdinand I’s annexation of Transylvania challenged Suleyman’s claim to sovereignty over the region. Malvezzi was accused of misleading the sultan by his reassurances that Ferdinand I would not break the peace. After an emergency council between Suleyman and the viziers on 1 August 1551, the ambassador and his household were imprisoned. The embassy was searched, and goods and papers seized. Venetian servants were initially sent to the Venetian embassy, but the Venetian secretary, Angelo Rachani, was arrested soon after and joined Malvezzi

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<sup>121</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 13 February 1548, pp. 216-8 and his confidential explanation to Carl and Ferdinand, Istanbul 8 March 1548, pp. 222-5, these details in p. 222 and p. 223; he mentions in a letter of 23 March, p. 229, that the secret information was sent via Venice.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 10 June 1551, pp. 595-6.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 21 July 1551, pp. 613-5.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibidem*, Angelo Rachani to Ferdinand I, s. d. [c. end November 1551], p. 623 reports Suleyman’s words: «Perché fai queste cose di tenere le lettere? Non sai che non è usanza nostra, et non sai che qui è l’imbasiatore [...] a lui apertiene render conto delli suoi negotii delli suoi principi». The later dispatch, p. 628.

in prison.<sup>125</sup> Navagero informed his government immediately of all this, and by 1 September 1551 it was public knowledge in Venice.<sup>126</sup> For over a month Malvezzi and Rachani endured appalling conditions, partially alleviated in early September. On 21 September Ibrahim Bey was sent to speak to Malvezzi, and on 26 September they were transferred to the fort of the Seven Towers, where reasonable accommodation was provided and they were free to walk in the precinct and to receive visitors. Rachani attributed this to Ali Chiaus, who had been well treated by Ferdinand I and thought such harsh treatment of the ambassador would make Ottoman rule unpalatable to the Hungarians.<sup>127</sup> Suleyman may also have been influenced by Ferdinand I's reaction. The king had written on 15 September denouncing Suleyman's breach of the law of nations (*omnium gentium iure*) and demanding redress for this injustice. In response, Rüstem Pasha summoned Malvezzi to an audience on 10 October 1551, declaring that the sultan had not breached the rights of ambassadors (an interesting variant) because Malvezzi had not been punished as an ambassador, but as a guarantor of the treaty of peace that the Habsburgs had broken.<sup>128</sup> Malvezzi could justly be held, in their view, until such time as Ferdinand I and Charles V met their treaty obligations.<sup>129</sup>

Rüstem Pasha also used the audience in an attempt to persuade Ferdinand I to pull back. Finding that Malvezzi shared his belief that a negotiated solution was both possible and desirable, he allowed the ambassador to send Rachani to transmit his advice to Ferdinand I.<sup>130</sup> Malvezzi provided a balanced and sharp assessment of the situation, and gave detailed instructions of how best to restore peace.<sup>131</sup> He also managed to pass on the intelligence he had gathered since being allowed visitors,

<sup>125</sup> *Ibidem*, Rachani to Ferdinand I, s. d. [end November 1551] gives the fullest account of these events, pp. 623-6.

<sup>126</sup> AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1319, f. 154, News relayed at once by Domingo de Gaztelu to Prince Philip, 2 September 1551.

<sup>127</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, Rachani to Ferdinand I, s. d. [November 1551], pp. 623-6.

<sup>128</sup> «Perlatum est ad nos, te iussu ser.mi et potentissimi imperatoris Turcarum in carceres contextum esse; de quo plurimum et dolemus et miramur, cum nullum huius rei causam Mag.ni Suae praeberimus, publicique oratores et nuncii omnium gentium iure tuti, liberi et securi esse debeant», *Ibidem*, Ferdinand I to Malvezzi, Vienna 15 September 1551, p. 619. Rüstem's response related by Rachani, p. 627.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul 12 October 1551, p. 620: «dice che il Gran Sig[n]or non ha mai molestato orator alchuno né è per molestarli [...] Imperò che quello che Sua Alteza ha fatto hora a me che l'ha fatto non come a oratore, ma come a fideiussore delle V[ost]re doi M[aes]tà». He had to write this letter in the presence of the dragoman Ibrahim Bey, as Rachani reported, p. 629, which may explain its moderate tone.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Istanbul, 12 October 1551, pp. 620-621; also Rachani to Ferdinand I, s. d. [end November 1551], pp. 626-9.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibidem*, Rachani to Ferdinand I, s. d. [November 1551], pp. 622-632, esp. pp. 628-30 and p. 632.

at which point he had resumed contact with «quelle intelligence che lui ha».<sup>132</sup> Reluctant to relinquish Transylvania, Ferdinand I rejected his counsel. But when negotiations resumed, it was to Malvezzi that he turned. Even when he was near death, Malvezzi was asked to instruct his successor, Ogier de Busbecq, on how best to deal with the Porte, and «of the policy to be followed and the things to be avoided in one's daily transactions with the Turk».<sup>133</sup>

## 5. Conclusions

As stated in the *Viaje de Turquía*, Malvezzi played a major role in the formulation of Habsburg policy towards Suleyman and his court –but so had Veltwyck and Argento.<sup>134</sup> Posterity has largely forgotten Malvezzi, while it remembers and admires some of his more learned predecessors and successors, with whom he has been recently (and adversely) compared.<sup>135</sup> But sound scholarship does not guarantee success as an ambassador. It is impossible to prove with any precision whether Malvezzi was more knowledgeable about the Ottomans, had better sources, or was more effective. Comparing dispatches will not get us far as they were influenced –and sometimes dictated– by circumstances and perennial problems with security which are not always evident. Moreover, all ambassadors imparted their most important information and advice by word of mouth. Nevertheless, Malvezzi's dispatches do give the impression that he was a very effective negotiator and had integrated well in the Ottoman court, and despite having fewer resources, he obtained extraordinarily wide-ranging information and quality intelligence. It is plausible that he was very effective and that Suleyman appreciated this.

A striking difference between the embassies of Veltwyck and Malvezzi was the extent to which the former depended on the imperial spy network, which had been developed over decades to gather information about the Ottoman Empire in the absence of an embassy or consulate. By contrast, Ferdinand I's ambassadors were part of the diplomatic fabric and thus more reliant on contacts with the host government, as well as able to use fixed postal networks. Informants and secret services were employed, but to a lesser degree. It is worth noting that in 1545 Charles

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<sup>132</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 630. An *Aviso* of 21 October 1551 from Istanbul claimed «tenia tanta liberta q[ue] quien quiera le podia hablar», AGS, *Estado, Venecia*, Legajo 1319, f. 159.

<sup>133</sup> FOSTER C. T. & BLACKBURNE F. H., *The Life and Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq*, London 1881, vol. I, p. 81.

<sup>134</sup> Veltwyck's reports have been cited above. Some of Argento's memoranda in NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, pp. 184-190, s. d. after 9 November 1547; pp. 243-250, s. d. April or May 1548.

<sup>135</sup> FICHTNER, *Terror and tolertion*, pp. 36-40, p. 78, where he is named Giacommo Maria.

V was convinced that Suleyman wanted a general truce so as to put in place a new framework that would facilitate Ottoman contact with Christian states, and would make it easier for them to get even more intelligence and information about Christendom. Montluc assured the imperialists that Suleyman had no interest in this, and just as he predicted the Ottoman negotiators made no effort to secure a truce that entailed mutual diplomatic exchanges.<sup>136</sup> The emperor had projected his own preoccupations onto the sultan, and in the process revealed his own expectations of what normalising diplomatic relations could achieve.

Christian ambassadors complained that Ottoman ministers were often rude, as well as uniquely corrupt and venal, interested only in money, never acting out of benevolence or love, and Malvezzi was no exception.<sup>137</sup> Occasionally, they also admitted that the situation was largely of their own making: the Venetians set high standards of gift-giving and pensions, and the French were not to be outdone. Malvezzi reckoned that for every hundred ducats he spent, the French spent 1000.<sup>138</sup> Veltwyck blamed the French for corrupting Ottoman officials and turning them into the importunate creatures they had become, driving up the price of favour and information.<sup>139</sup> In other words, Ottoman ministers were no more venal than others but merely in a better position to take advantage of this due to intense competition for their services. Agoston wondered whether by taking pensions and gifts from Christian diplomats Ottoman dragomans «sold their loyalty to the Europeans and betrayed the sultan».<sup>140</sup> He was inclined to think they did not, as he found instances where they acted under the sultan's orders and might even plant false information on their Christian paymasters. We have seen that this was true on occasion, as the ambassadors realised; but not always, and perhaps not even normally. The evidence

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<sup>136</sup> LANZ, *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V*, II, p. 444, Charles V's secret instructions to Veltwyck rejecting a «communicative» truce «afin de non bailler occasion aux Turqs de continuer leurs intelligences et den acquerir des nouvelles en la chrestiente et soy informer des affaires et forces dicelle, et mesmes pour non leur en bailler plus de facilite avec France et lesdicts protestans». Montluc's comment «Les Turcs nont affaire de nostre communication» in *Ibidem*, II, p. 448, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza and Veltwyck to Charles V, 7 June 1545.

<sup>137</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 553, Malvezzi to Ferdinand I, Edirne 9 & 10 February «questio Turchi sonno venali, né fanno cosa alchuna con meco per amore né benivolentia ma solum per interesse delle donative».

<sup>138</sup> *Ibidem*, Malvezzi to Carl, Istanbul 8 March 1548, p. 223.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibidem*, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, c. 7 December 1547: «et quae habet sumptus extraordinarios multos propter impudentem mendicitatem Turchorum, maxime quod Galli suis largitionibus depravatissiman consuetudinen introduxerunt – itaque gratus esse non poterit, nisi donet», p. 196.

<sup>140</sup> AGOSTON G., *Information, ideology, and limits of imperial policy: Ottoman grand strategy in the context of Ottoman-Habsburg rivalry*, in AKSAN V. H. & GOFFMAN D. (eds.), *The Early Modern Ottomans. Remapping the Empire*, Cambridge 2007, pp. 75-103, cit. p. 86.

led Ács to argue that they acted «nearly always as double agents». <sup>141</sup> Given their multiple paymasters this too seems insufficient, and their very promiscuity as informants challenges the notion that they sold their *loyalty* to anyone. As Veltwyck rightly stressed, in the Ottoman court, good pay guaranteed good service.<sup>142</sup>

Moreover, Ottoman ministers were not alone in this. As we have seen, Christian dragomans and ambassadors also traded information and favour. When Montluc proved to d'Aramon that three French dragomans were informants for Veltwyck and Rüstem Pasha and expressed fear that they had been betrayed, d'Aramon ridiculed him for being so suspicious. The dragomans continued in French employ.<sup>143</sup> Serving multiple masters was the norm for such men. These dragomans transmitted information they picked up from their contact with Veltwyck and the vizier to the ambassadors. By the time he left Istanbul, Montluc was just as compromised. He agreed to the sultan's request to send back details of Ferdinand I's fortifications, military forces and policies, prompting Rüstem Pasha to declare gleefully that he was now an Ottoman spy: «de ma part je te fais mettre espie». <sup>144</sup> This would have been a step too far for others. At the Porte, the exchange of information was a transaction where financial reward and favour mattered more than religion or patriotism, but in view of how much remained secret there was clearly a degree of restraint; a careful evaluation of what could be revealed without alienating certain paymasters. Everyone was vulnerable to breaches in security, but the benefits from a relatively free flow of information were also evident, as Ottoman ministers found when they isolated Veltwyck and so lost a valuable source of information.

The Ottoman government protected itself from the more adverse consequences of the system. They created a near-impenetrable barrier around the sultan and policy-making. Suleyman's views and attitudes remained almost entirely a matter of speculation, and few major policy decisions or military targets were known in advance. As we have seen, they also developed very effective means to control the transmission of information. A careful watch over all major routes was maintained, which was not infallible but stringent enough to persuade Christian diplomats that their couriers could be detected and their letters intercepted and read, consequently limiting the quantity and quality of their dispatches. Given the size and diversity of the empire, this was no mean feat. Christian diplomats found it easier to get information than to transmit it. If persuaded of the gravity of the situation, Ottoman

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<sup>141</sup> ÁCS P., *Austrian and Hungarian renegades as Sultan's interpreters*, in GUTHMÜLLER B. & KÜHLMANN W., *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance*, Tübingen 2000, pp. 307-316, cit. p. 308.

<sup>142</sup> NEHRING *et al.* (eds.), *Austro-Turcica*, p. 196, Veltwyck to Ferdinand I, c. 7 December 1547: «servus autem qui gratus est, bene facit officium domini sui».

<sup>143</sup> CHARRIÈRE (ed.), *Négociations dans le Levant*, I, pp. 614-5, Montluc's second report.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibidem*, Montluc's second report, p. 618; and first report, pp. 609-610.

ministers did not hesitate to apply brutal measures of control, from surrounding the embassy with guards, to the incarceration of couriers and ambassadors. This makes it perfectly plausible, as stated in the *Viaje de Turquía*, that Suleyman could have considered Malvezzi less dangerous in Istanbul than in Vienna.

These tactics were not unknown in Christian states, but as they were increasingly bound in a reciprocal diplomatic system, their use could prompt retaliation in kind, and therefore they were best avoided. In the absence of diplomatic representation abroad, there was little chance of such retaliation against the Ottoman state. Ottoman tactics were largely successful in controlling Christian diplomats and maintaining the sultan's superiority, but this came at a cost. Charles V and the Spanish Habsburgs avoided further embassies and became ever more dependent on spies, secret agents and paid informers, making it more difficult for these two empires to secure a lasting peace. Weaker states endured and dissimulated the dishonourable treatment of their agents and ambassadors, but resented it.<sup>145</sup> Whenever possible, they downgraded their diplomatic missions, which also contributed to the reduction of the status of the Ottoman Empire and its marginalisation. The normalisation of diplomatic relations was hindered, reinforcing the impression that the Ottoman state was not merely different, but unwilling or unable to be part of the system that regulated inter-state relations in Christendom; a diplomatic structure that was increasingly regarded as a distinguishing feature of a distinct and superior civilisation.

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<sup>145</sup> See the interesting comments on by Gilles Veinstein in *Histoire turque et ottoman*, in *L'annuaire du Collège de France* [online], 108/2008, <<http://annuaire-cdf.revues.org/172>> [last accessed on 6 January 2015].