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## XVI. Yüzyılda Yazılan Venedik Elçilerinin Raporlarında Osmanlıca İdari Terim Örnekleri

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### Öz

Bu makale, XVI. yüzyılda Venedik ile Osmanlı Devleti arasındaki kültürel ve lęgüistik ilişkileri kapsamlı bir şekilde ele almaktadır. Özellikle bu iki taraf arasındaki etkileşimlerin, diplomatik bağlamda ne gibi rollere sahip olduğu ve bu ilişkilerin kültürel aktarım üzerindeki etkileri üzerinde durulmuştur. Bu dönemde İstanbul'da görev yapan Venedik temsilcileri, düşünce ve dil alışverişini mümkün kılan bir köprü görevi görürken, dragoman adı verilen tercümanlar Türkçe kelimelerin İtalyancaya dahil edilmesinde önemli roller oynamışlardır. Kelimelerin aktarımı yalnızca bireysel bir faaliyet değil, aynı zamanda iki medeniyet arasındaki bilgi ve kültür alışverişinin daha geniş bir yansımasını ortaya koymaktadır. Türkçeden İtalyancaya geçen kelimelerin çoğunun idari, askeri ve siyasi alanlarda yoğunlaşması, bu dilsel alışverişin daha çok diplomatik gereklilikler ve devletlerarası işbirliği ekseninde gerçekleştiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Ancak bu etkileşim, yalnızca kelime transferiyle sınırlı kalmamış, aynı zamanda Avrupa'nın Osmanlı'ya dair algısını değiştirmiştir. Bu süreç, Venedik'in kültürel kimliğini şekillendiren unsurlardan biri haline gelmiştir. Osmanlı'nın güçlü kültürel etkileri, Venedik toplumunda gözlemlenebilir hale gelmiş, edebiyattan sanata kadar birçok alanda iz bırakmıştır. Makale, bu kültürel ve lęgüistik etkileşimleri, Venedik elçilerinin raporları ve diğer diplomatik belgeler üzerinden analiz etmektedir. Bu belgeler, yalnızca tarihsel kayıtlar olarak değil, aynı zamanda dönemin toplum dinamiklerini ve kültürlerarası ilişkileri anlamaya ışık tutan kaynaklar olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Belgelerde yer alan ayrıntılar, Osmanlı-Venedik ilişkilerinin ne kadar derin olduğunu ortaya koymakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda bu belgelerin tarihsel süreçte ne kadar büyük bir öneme sahip olduğunu gözler önüne serer.

Ayrıca, dragomanlar, sadece çevirmen olmakla kalmamış, iki kültür arasında anlamlı bağlar kurarak etkileşimin sürekliliğini sağlamışlardır. Dragomanların bu rolü hem kültürel hem de lęgüistik açıdan zengin bir etkileşim süreci yaratarak Osmanlı-Venedik ilişkilerini güçlendirmiştir. Bu bağlamda makalenin amacı, Osmanlı-Venedik etkileşiminin yalnızca geçmişi anlamak açısından değil, aynı zamanda kültürlerarası iletişimi ve dilin insanlar üzerindeki etkilerini kavramak açısından ne kadar kritik bir rol oynadığını vurgulamaktır.

### Anahtar Kelimeler

Osmanlıca terimleri, kültür tarihi, Venedik Cumhuriyeti, Osmanlı Devleti, İtalyancada Türkçe kelimeler.

## Examples Ottoman-Turkish Administrative Terminology in Venetian Historical Sources of the 16th Century

### Abstract

This article comprehensively examines the cultural and linguistic relations between Venice and the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century. It particularly focuses on the roles these interactions played within the framework of diplomacy and their influence on cultural transmission. During this period, Venetian representatives serving in Istanbul acted as bridges facilitating the exchange of ideas and language, while interpreters known as dragomans played a significant role in incorporating Turkish words into Italian. The transfer of these words was not merely an individual effort but also a broader reflection of the exchange of knowledge and culture between the two civilizations. Most of the Turkish words incorporated into Italian were concentrated in administrative, military, and political domains, highlighting the linguistic exchange's connection to diplomatic requirements and intergovernmental cooperation. However, this interaction was not confined to the mere transfer of words; it also reshaped Europe's perception of the Ottomans. This process became one of the defining elements of Venetian cultural identity. The strong cultural influence of the Ottoman Empire became visible in Venetian society and left its mark in areas ranging from literature to art. The article analyzes these cultural and linguistic interactions through the reports of Venetian envoys and other diplomatic documents. The details within these records not only reveal the depth of Ottoman-Venetian relations but also highlight the significant importance of these documents in the historical process.

Dragomans were not only translators but also established meaningful connections between the two cultures, ensuring the continuity of interaction. Their role created a rich process of cultural and linguistic exchange, strengthening Ottoman-Venetian relations. In this context, the article aims to emphasize the critical role of Ottoman-Venetian interactions not only in understanding the past but also in comprehending intercultural communication and the impact of language on people.

### Keywords

Ottoman Turkish terminology, cultural history, Republic of Venice, Ottoman Empire, Turkisms in Italian.

## 1. Introduction

The period between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries represents a crucial phase in the history of relations between Venice and the Ottoman Empire, marked not only by political and economic interactions but also by significant cultural and literary interconnections. Diplomatic relations and intensified trade exchanges contributed to the formation of a complex mosaic of mutual influences that shaped both Venetian and Ottoman cultures. The impact of these ties extended beyond economic aspects; they also facilitated the exchange of ideas, languages, and literary traditions, enriching and diversifying the cultural heritage of both traditions.<sup>1</sup>

Venetian representatives residing in Constantinople during this period played a crucial role in this cultural interaction. Their presence was not solely aimed at economic development and strengthening trade ties. They became key intermediaries between different cultural spheres, fostering the mutual interpenetration of Ottoman and European traditions. Given that Venice was one of the most significant trade centers in Europe at the time, its diplomatic and economic mission in Constantinople significantly influenced the maintenance and development of complex cultural and linguistic relations, allowing for the formation of specific styles and forms of literary expression within both societies.<sup>2</sup>

The foundation of these cultural interconnections was laid by diplomatic relations between Venice and the Ottoman Empire, established in the early decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The first diplomatic missions date back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when the Venetian envoy Giacomo Bragadin arrived in Constantinople on a mission that marked the beginning of diplomatic engagements between the two states. Such diplomatic cooperation was not merely an expression of Venice's interest in further developing trade and political ties with the Ottoman Empire; it was also driven by strong economic incentives and efforts to establish a stable economic system that would allow both states to develop their economies more freely through trade exchanges. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, more than 300 agreements had been signed between Venice and the Ottoman Empire, covering trade, diplomatic relations, and military activities. This diplomatic cooperation was also

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<sup>1</sup>Alvise Zorzi, *La Repubblica del leone: storia di Venezia*, Bompiani, Milano 2012, p. 10-11.

<sup>2</sup>Eric Dursteler, "The Bailo in Constantinople: Crisis and Career in Venice's Early Modern Diplomatic Corps", *Mediterranean Historical Review*, Abingdon-on-Thames 2001, vol. 16, no. 2, p. 1-8.

characterized by the exchange of representatives that Venice sent to Constantinople.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.1. The Influence of the Venetian Diplomatic Office on the Development of Ottoman-Venetian Diplomacy

The office of the Venetian representative, the Bailo in Constantinople, played a significant role in the development of Ottoman-Venetian diplomacy. It served as the central hub for managing diplomatic relations between Venice and the Ottoman Empire and was responsible for drafting documents that formed the foundation of diplomatic communications. In the early decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Venetian diplomatic office became the core of diplomatic communication between the two states. Its operations were marked by high professionalism and organization, contributing to the effectiveness of diplomatic work and its significance in Ottoman-Venetian relations.

Venetian envoys within this office possessed exceptional rhetorical skills and adhered to the formal rules of drafting official documents (*ars dictaminis*). They also studied Oriental languages, leading to the formation of the first translators, or *dragomans*. These individuals played a crucial role in the creation of office documents and reports, which remain valuable sources for the study of literature and culture.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.2. Venetian Chancery Production and Its Significance for the Study of Literary and Historical Sources

When classifying sources produced within the framework of Venetian chancery production, it is essential to note that these sources can be divided into two primary types: official and unofficial reports. This classification facilitates a better understanding of the purpose, context, and content of the sources generated by the office of the Venetian diplomatic representative in Constantinople.

One of the most significant types of official reports is the epistles, which include dispatches and *relazioni* (relations, reports). These documents were frequently used to convey official messages between the Venetian authorities

<sup>3</sup> Maria Pia Pedani, "Elenco degli diplomatici veneziani presso i sovrani ottomani", *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies*, Utrecht 2002, vol. 5, no. 4, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Mariarosaria Zinzi, "La comunicazione diplomatica tra Istanbul e Venezia nel XV e XVI sec.: fenomeni di contatto interlinguistico e comportamenti pragmatolinguistici", *Atti Del Sodalizio Glottologico Milanese*, Milano 2021, vol. 2020, no. 15, p. 149-150.

and their diplomatic mission in the Ottoman Empire. Dispatches typically contained brief, concise information on specific matters, whereas *relazioni* provided more extensive and detailed analyses of political, economic, social, and cultural conditions. The *relazioni* were particularly important as they offered valuable insights into everyday life, customs, and culture in the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, they often contained personal reflections of Venetian envoys, making them an important primary source for understanding the complex social and political dynamics of the time. Additionally, this type of source contributed to shaping European perceptions of the Orient, highlighting both differences and similarities between Venetian and Ottoman cultures.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, travel accounts or travel *relazioni* and travel journals constitute another significant segment of Venetian chancery production. These sources document the personal experiences and observations of Venetian travelers, merchants, and diplomats who journeyed through the Ottoman Empire. Travel accounts frequently included rich descriptions of locations, customs, cuisine, and even languages and dialects. As unofficial sources, they play a crucial role in understanding the cultural exchanges between Venice and the Ottoman Empire. These writings emerged in direct response to the need for information about unfamiliar or exotic destinations and often served as guides for future travelers. Interest in travel accounts can be seen as part of a broader phenomenon in European literature and culture, where depictions of distant lands gained increasing popularity, opening new perspectives and avenues of knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

The scholarly interest in studying these sources arose in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. During this period, prominent Italian Orientalists such as Ettore Rossi and Eugenio Alberi began collecting, analyzing, and editing this material, thereby contributing to the establishment of a critical approach to these sources. Their work facilitated the expansion of knowledge on Venetian-Ottoman relations and laid the foundation for further research into the complexity of their interactions. This process not only enriched Italy's cultural heritage but also contributed to a broader understanding of global history and cultural exchanges.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Марија Митић, “Неки важнији млетачки извори за Србију – од средњег до новог века”, *Лесковачки зборник LXI*, Лесковац 2021, p. 21-23.

<sup>6</sup> Marija Mitić, *Pisma iz Tripolija*, Centar za istraživanje i proučavanje kulturno-istorijske baštine juga Srbije, Leskovac 2023, p. 15-16.

<sup>7</sup> Ettore Rossi, *Gli Studi Di Storia Ottomana In Europa Ed In Turchia Nell'ultimo*

The contributions of these Orientalists were particularly significant in raising awareness of the value of these documents, demonstrating that they could be used to study not only political and economic aspects but also broader cultural and social contexts. Their research illuminated the importance of Venetian chancery production as a crucial resource for understanding interactions between East and West, as well as for enriching the European literary tradition.

## 2. Dragomans and Their Role in the Penetration of Turkisms into the Italian Language

Dragomans were educated translators, often responsible for translating administrative, legal, and commercial documents. Their education in Constantinople, which began with the establishment of the first school in 1551, highlights the importance of expertise in Oriental languages. These educated individuals influenced not only linguistic aspects but also broader cultural practices, acting as bridges between conflicting civilizations. The school for *dragomans* in Constantinople was a significant step in formalizing training in translation skills, reflecting the growing demand for professionals who could manage the increasingly complex linguistic and cultural interactions between Europe and Asia.

*Dragomans* were often compelled to use Turkish terms when suitable Italian equivalents were lacking. This necessity led to the enrichment of the Venetian language with Turkish loan words, which subsequently spread to other dialects of Old Italian. This linguistic interaction was not merely lexical but also involved structural, stylistic, and rhetorical shifts in communication. Turkish loan words, originating from Ottoman Turkish, began entering Old Italian from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onward, largely due to intense political, economic, and cultural exchanges between Venice and the Ottoman Empire. Many of these words are still present in modern Italian. In Turkish linguistics, the term “Turkish loan words” refers not only to Turkish words but also to words from Arabic and Persian that entered European languages through Ottoman Turkish.<sup>8</sup>

Beyond their linguistic impact, the penetration of Turkish loan words into Venetian Italian can also be seen as a phenomenon reflecting broader cultural encounters. Through trade, diplomacy, and daily life, these influences

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Venticinquennio (1900–1925), *Oriente Moderno*, Roma 1926 vol. 6, no. 8, p. 452.

<sup>8</sup> Ella Natalie Rothman, “Dragomans and ‘Turkish Literature’: The Making of a Field of Inquiry”, *Oriente Moderno*, Roma 2013, no. 93, p. 400-405.

became normalized and an integral part of Venetian identity. This interaction serves as a reminder of the complexity of cultural exchanges and the way language functions as a tool of identity and social relationships.

In the following section of this study, we will analyze selected excerpts from the reports of Venetian envoys in Constantinople. This corpus includes literary and historical accounts, primarily *relazione*, published in the collections of the orientalist Eugenio Alberi in 1844 and 1855.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Turkish Loan Words in Administrative Terminology

Turkish loan words, as words borrowed from the Ottoman-Turkish language, played a significant role in administration and military-political terminology. These terms began to be introduced into Old Italian from the 15<sup>th</sup> century due to intense political, economic, and cultural interactions between Venice and the Ottoman Empire. In administration, Turkish loan words often included words related to governing structures, such as titles for various functions, institutions, and legal terms. These words facilitated more efficient communication and administrative operations in contexts where Venetian and Ottoman authorities interacted.

In military-political terminology, Turkish contributed to the enrichment of the language with terms for military ranks, strategies, and combat units. These words reflected not only military terminology but also the broader context of military cooperation and conflicts between the two civilizations. The use of these terms allowed for better integration of Ottoman military concepts into Venetian practice, thus enabling smoother communication during conflicts or alliances.

One of the most significant documents is the report of Bailo Pietro Bragadin, dating from the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Here, we cite an excerpt from Bragadin's report, which contains vocabulary from military-political terminology:

*Sono due bilarbei, uno della Grecia, ch'è Ebraim bassà ed ha sotto di sè 35 sangiacchi, ed uno della Natolia, qual ha etiam sangiacchi 35; è unghero, vecchio. [...]*

*Disse d' ciaùs, capigi, solachi e salitari, che son certi officj; item dello agà de gianizzari e che il signor ha gianizzari 10,000 in piedi tutti. [...]*

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<sup>9</sup> See source: Eugenio Alberi, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al senato*, Serie II, Società editrice Fiorentina, Firenze 1844 and Eugenio Alberi, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al senato*, Serie III, Società editrice Fiorentina, Firenze 1855.

*Poi disse del caso delle fuste prese per il nostro proveditor dell' armata Busdam Rais qual scrisse una lettera dolendosi molto. [...]*<sup>10</sup>

In this part are noticed Turkish loan words which have been incorporated into Sebian language in the following form: beglerbeg, paša, sandžak, čauš, kapidžija, solak, silahdar, janičarski aga, reis.

Very similar examples could be found in the report written by Venetian representative Bernardo Novagero dated 1553:

*È poi stimata dignità maggiore essere beilerbei di Grecia che di Natolia. Sotto questi beilerbei così di Europa come di Natolia, sono molti sangiac, e, per quello che ho potuto intendere, in Europa son tanti che posson fare quaranta mila cavalli da guerra, e nell' Asia ottanta mila. Li sangiac hanno da ventimila sino aa quaranta mila ducati l'anno di provvisione, che si pagano del danaro dei dazje del caraz, e sono obbligati tener prima uno alaibei, che è luogotenente del sangiac, poi timargi ovvero spai, li quali sotto il governo dell' alaibei sono con lui insieme sottoposti all' obbedienza del sangiac. L' alaibei ha la metà della provvisione del suo sangiac, e li timargi per il più quaranta mila aspri', e per il manco tre o quattro mila; benchè per la tirannide loro le rendite delle decime sono stimate ottavio sesti, sì come si dirà quando si parlerà particolarmente di questo capo. [...]*

*Il numero dei sangiac, perquel che si è inteso, è da sessanta in settanta in Europa, li quali l'uno con l'altro, con i loro alaibei e timargi, ponno dare da quaranta mila cavalli. Nell' Asia dicono veramente essere cento cinquanta sangiac, oltre li quattordici beilerbei sotto il governo del primo beilerbei di Natolia, e possono fare in tutto, per quel che si dice, da ottanta in cento mila cavalli. Il proceder dei sangiac in tempo che fanno residenza nel loro sangiaclic è questo; che per sgravarsi di tanta spesa distribuiscono tutti questi loro uomini nel paese, così nei luoghi assegnati a loro per la loro provvisione, come dell' alaibei e dei timargi, con grado di subasci, ovvero ministri della giustizia; li quali oltre al riscuotere le decime, condannano anco i villani per ogni poca cosa molto crudelmente, ed hanno introdotto che la villa alla quale il subasci con li suoi uomini arriva, è obbligata per tre di di fargli le spese, di modo che anche per questa via il sangiac ne consegue utilità. Se occorre alli sangiac per altra occasione partirsi dal paese, lasciano alle volte alcuni nel loro luogo, ma per il più vendono queste loro pertinenze a'particolari perfino al ritorno loro; li quali comprandole, si vogliono per ogni via avvantaggiare con estremo danno dei miseri sudditi.*<sup>11</sup>

In this report the usage of larger number of Turkish loan words could be noticed, since some of them differs in writing in comparison with the

<sup>10</sup> Eugenio Alberi, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al senato*, Serie III, Società editrice Fiorentina, Firenze 1855, p. 106-108.

<sup>11</sup> Eugenio Alberi, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al senato*, Serie II, Società editrice Fiorentina, Firenze 1844, p. 40.



previous examples, such as *beylerbeyi* and *sanjak*. Also, two varieties of writings of the Turkish loan word *subashi* can be found.

Similar examples are found in Jacopo Ragazzoni's report dated 1571:

*Fui incontrato per strada dal boluchasci e alquanti altri Turchi, e condotto finalmente ad una stanza non molto buona, vicina al palazzo del magnifico pascià, preparatami da Cubat ciaux per ordine di sua magnificenza. Il qual Cubat venne a visitarmi, e fecemi intender che il magnifico pascià era uscito di casa per andar a veder l' armata, e che però non era possibile, che gli parlassi per quella mattina, Fece venir poi anco, li miei servitori, che erano rimasti al Ponte Piccolo, e mi pose in guardia del detto Boluç con giannizzeri e alquanti Turchi.*<sup>12</sup>

Analyses of the examples excerpted from the text:

**agà** (in some sources as *agha*, Tur. *ağâ*) – agha. The original meaning encompassed “great” and “elder”, later evolving to include “gentleman”, “champion”, and “landowner”. Furthermore, this term was used to designate all military commanders within the Turkish mercenary army, such as azab-*agha* and beshli-*agha*, and it is appended as a title after a name (e.g. Ahmet Agha).<sup>13</sup> In the Balkans, we have derivatives such as *agabeg*, *aginică*, *agorati*, *agovanje*, *Aganlija*.

**aga de gianizzeri** (Tur. *yeniçeri ağası*) – Agha of the Janissaries, Janissaries commander.

**alaibei** (Tur. *alaybeyi*, derived from *alay* “regimental” + *bey* “governor”) – alaybey, commander of the spahi in the sanjak or commander of a gendarmerie regiment in the late period of the Ottoman Empire. In the Balkans, the phrase *alaybey's straw* (*alajbegova slama*<sup>14</sup>) originated from this term and signifies a property without an owner, implying that anyone can take and use it.<sup>15</sup>

**bassà** (in some sources as *bascià*, Tur. *paşa*, while the original form was *baş*) – pasha, the title used for high-ranking dignitaries and military personnel, with the exception of those in the religious hierarchy. This title is always stated after the name.<sup>16</sup> From the term *pasha* in the Balkans we have

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>13</sup> Abdullah Škaljić, *Turcizmi u srpskohrvatskom-hrvatskosrpskom jeziku*, Svejtlost, Sarajevo 1985, p. 72.

<sup>14</sup> More about this phrase, see: Milan Šipka, *Zašto se kaže?*, Prometej, Novi Sad 2013

<sup>15</sup> Abdullah Škaljić, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 511.

the derivatives *pašaluk*, *pašalija*, *Pašan*, *pašovit*. Some surnames derived from the title pasha in the Balkan region are: *Pašagić*, *Pašalić*, *Pašić*, *Zulfikarpašić*.<sup>17</sup>

**bilarbei**, **beglierbei** (Tur. *beylerbeyi*, derived from *beyler* (pl.) + *bey* (sing.)) – commander-in-chief, military and administrative commander-in-chief of the larger region or province, consisting of several *sanjaks*. In regions where the Serbian language is spoken, this term has been adopted as *beglerbeg*, leading to the formation of the surname *Beglerbegović*.<sup>18</sup>

**bolucbasci** (Tur. *bölükbaşı*, derived from Tur. *bölük* “company, squad” + Tur. *baş* “head”) – boluk-bashi, an officer rank in the Ottoman Empire equivalent to elder, commander, captain.

**capigi** (Tur. *kapıcı*, derived from Tur. *kapı* “door” + *-cı*, a suffix employed to signify the performer of an action or the holder of an occupation) – doorman, gatekeeper, attendant. In Serbian, the *-cı* suffix has been adapted to *-džija* when incorporating Turkish loanwords (e.g. *kapidžija*).

**caraz** (Tur. *haraç* < Ar. *kharāj*) – fiscal imposition, a tax collected by the state from the non-Muslim population.

**chaüs** (Tur. *çavuş*) – chaush or chiaus. In the Ottoman Empire, a chaush was an officer, specifically a lower-ranking military commander within the Janissary corps. Additionally, the term *chaush* refers to a member of the Turkish military band, the *mehter*, who carries the chaush scepter (Tur. *çöğür*) as the lead of the band. In the Balkans, this term led to the derivation of the surname *Čaušević*.<sup>19</sup>

**gianizzeri**, sing. *gianizzero* (in some sources as *iannizzero*, Tur. *yeniçeri*, derived from *yeni* “new” + *çeri* “solder”, “army”) – Janissary, denotes the famous order of the Turkish army, which was filled from the ranks of boys

<sup>17</sup> Kenija Aykut, “Türkçe’nin Sırp Dilinde Kullanılan Soyadları Üzerindeki Etkisi”, *Uluslararası “Türkçe’nin Balkan Dilleri Üzerine Etkisi” Sempozyumu Bildirileri*, Üsküp 2009, p. 87.

<sup>18</sup> In the Serbian spoken territories the Turkish loan words for military ranks, as well as high state functions, beside the fact that they are Turkish loan words in the general vocabulary from the linguistics point of view, they are also kept as nouns or they composed forms. For more details, see: Kenija Aykut, “Türkçe’nin Sırp Dilinde Kullanılan Soyadları Üzerindeki Etkisi”, *Uluslararası “Türkçe’nin Balkan Dilleri Üzerine Etkisi” Sempozyumu Bildirileri*, Üsküp 2009, p. 83-93.

<sup>19</sup> Kenija Aykut, “Türkçe’nin Sırp Dilinde Kullanılan Soyadları Üzerindeki Etkisi”, *Uluslararası “Türkçe’nin Balkan Dilleri Üzerine Etkisi” Sempozyumu Bildirileri*, Üsküp 2009, p. 87.

and young men from the conquered territories through practice of Devshirme, i.e. blood tax (Tur. *devşirme*). This standing army was established by Sultan Orhan in 1328 and was disbanded by Sultan Mahmud II in 1826 due to the perceived threat they posed to his rule.<sup>20</sup>

**rais** (Tur. *reis* < Ar. *ra'īs*) – reis, religious commander, captain, leader.

**salitari**, sing. *salitaro* (in some sources as *salatari*, Tur. *silahdar* < Tur. *silah* < Ar. *silāh* “wepon”, “arms” + Persian suffix *-dar/tar*, a suffix employed to signify the performer of an action) – silahdar, an official of the Vizier or Pasha, responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of weapons.

**sangiacchi**, sing. *sangiaccio* (in some sources *sançacco*, Tur. *sancağ*) – sanjak, 1) flag, banner; 2) a district or subdivision in the Ottoman Empire.

**solachi**, sing. *solaco* (Tur. *solak*) – solak, a member of a special janissary archer squad.

**spai** (in some sources as *spachidi*, Tur. *sipahi* < pers. *sipāhi*) – spahi, soldier, holder of a fief of timar/spahilik. In the Balkans, surnames *Spahić* and *Spaho* are recorded as derived from the term *spahi*.

**subachi** (Tur. *subaşı*, derived from Tur. *su* “water” + *baş* “leader”, “administrator”) – subashi, estate supervisor, city water distribution supervisor. In the Balkans, the surname *Subašić* is derived from the said form.

**timargi** (Tur. *timar* < Pers. *tīmār*) – timar, feudal estate, fief, spahilik.

Beside the Turkish loan words used in the quoted parts of original documents, it should also be mentioned that some Turkish loan words were in frequent use in correspondence of the Venetian envoys. Those are:

**patisciah** (Tur. *padışah* < Pers. *pādeshāh* < Pers. *pād* “grand”, “abiding” + *shah* “ruler”) – padishah, sultan, ruler, emperor, almighty leader.

**seraglio** (in some sources as *sertagli*, Tur. *saray* < Pers. *sarāy*) – saray, court, palace. In the Balkans, this word had given the derived forms, such as Saraj-Bosna, Sarajevo, Sarajlija.

The provided examples demonstrate that a significant percentage of Ottoman-derived words in Italian texts appear in multiple different forms. This variation reflects the uncertainty faced by the authors of these texts

<sup>20</sup> Ahmet Yüksel, “Yeniçeri Ocağı, Bozulma ve Casusluk – The Janissary Corps, Corruption and Espionage”, *Journal of History Studies*, 2017, vol. 9, no. 2, p. 292.

when adopting terms from a language entirely unrelated to the Indo-European morphological and phonetic structure. The Ottoman language, a variant of Turkish written in a modified Arabic script, posed challenges for adoption and facilitated phonetic assimilation based on auditory perception. This, in turn, led to modifications that varied depending on the recipient and the specific period in which new words were incorporated.

In the Serbian language, most of the aforementioned Turkish loan words are commonly used and hold an equal status in everyday speech due to the shared historical experience under the Ottoman Empire and the significant linguistic influence exerted by Turkish. A deeper examination of the various forms in which Turkish loan words appear in the Balkans allows for a more precise analysis of their presence in Italian, where their number is considerably lower.

### **Conclusion**

Venetian envoys, during their service in Constantinople, encountered numerous new terms in all spheres of life. Lacking equivalents in their native language, they adopted these terms in their original forms and attempted to integrate them into Italian. This process was complicated by the phonetic and morphological differences between Ottoman Turkish, a language belonging to the Turkic linguistic group, and Italian. Consequently, these terms appeared in multiple variations, sometimes diverging significantly from their original forms in Ottoman Turkish.

This variation in adaptation indicates that the process of adopting foreign words in Venetian Italian differed from the conventional ways in which Turkish loan words were integrated into the languages of Balkan nations under Ottoman rule. The adaptation of these terms to the Italian phonetic system resulted in multiple versions of the same word, all of which were simultaneously in use. The significance of military and administrative terminology in Serbian, Bosnian, and Croatian sources, as well as in the anthroponymy of Slavic and other Balkan peoples, has left a profound impact on vocabulary still used today. While this influence is less pronounced in Italian, it remains crucial for studying historical texts and the cultural history of both nations.

The process of borrowing loanwords has now concluded, and the adopted Turkish loan words bear witness to the historical and cultural interactions between speakers of both Italian and Turkish.

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