

Venetian Hosts and Ottoman Guests in the *Venedik Sarayı* in Constantinople (c. 1670-1681)

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Abstract After the end of the Cretan war (1645-1669) and before the starting of the Morean war (1684-1699) Venetian diplomats settled again in Constantinople and in the Venetian Palace (*Venedik Sarayı*) that had been the embassy of the Republic for centuries. In this period *baili* and extraordinary ambassadors (*ambasciatori straordinari*) used to celebrate Venetian or Ottoman civic and religious festivals with dinners and parties. Their guests were above all other European diplomats and middle-ranking Ottoman officials. Some Turks, above all those who lived in the neighbourhood, contributed to the organisation of such events with their gifts and, in exchange, they received money or other presents. This paper aims to study the circulation of objects and commodities between Europe and the Ottoman Empire and, in particular, which kind of items were exchanged before or during official dinners held in the Venetian Palace or in the Venetian summer houses in Arnavutköy and Balta Liman. The Turks brought or sent mostly vegetables, flowers and different kind of food, while Venetians used to give to their guests not only the famous Venetian cloths but also unusual objects such as ivory boxes, gloves, brushes, glass sculptures, mirrors, fans, fake flowers and so on. The sources used for this research are the accounting books of the Venetian embassy for the years 1670-83.

Keywords Gift exchange. Venice. Ottoman Empire. Material culture. Circulation of goods.

In 1676 *bailo* Giacomo Querini (1671-1675) delivered a report in the Venetian Senate about his mission in Istanbul where he stated that “among the Turks the sweetest action is taking and giving; it is the more desirable and commended behaviour among all the nations [of the Empire]; to make a gift has a mysterious power and a powerful spell and nothing can resist and protect itself against it, even if it is made secretly”.¹


The next *bailo*, Giovanni Morosini (1675-1680), mentioned this practice and the gifts he made to the sultan's *büyük mirahor*, Süleyman ağa, to a Venetian convert who had the office of cutting the sultan's nails, to the

Paper presented to the workshop *People, Trade, Gifts and Beyond: the Circulation of Goods and Practices between the Ottoman Empire and Europe (16th-19th Centuries)*, Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin, 4-5 July 2016.

1 Firpo 1984, 932: “non v'è azione più dolce tra' turchi, più grata e applaudita tra tutte le nazioni, che quella di ricevere e pigliare, che forza occulta e potente incanto è quello del donare, al quale niuna cosa per riservato che sia può resistere e difendersi”. All translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

DOI 10.30687/AnnOr/2385-3042/2018/01/002

Submitted: 2018-01-16 | Accepted: 2018-05-14

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bostancıbaşı, to the favorite *damad* Mustafa and other members of the Ottoman élite. He also recalled that the grand vizier Kara Mustafa paşa was very rich but he used his whole wealth to make gifts to the sultan, the sultanas and the members of the court in order to keep his office. The same was repeated by bailo Pietro Civran (1679-1681): the grand vizier remained in his place thanks to gifts to the sultan who was extremely greedy, to the two favourite sultanas who all the same hated him, the to *müfti* and so on and this was the reason that made the grand vizier so greedy and grasping (cf. Fripo 1984, 1027-8, 1045-6).

Gift giving was a method and a ritual to create ties at every level of the Ottoman society. In their official reports Venetian diplomats often discuss it. According to Lorenzo Bernardo (1591-1592) it was a common practice, used to gain importance and reputation, but also a servile behaviour; thus, the diplomat had not only to give but also to negotiate and, if a gift was really necessary, it was better to give out few presents often rather than many seldom. In grand vizier Rüstem's period gift-giving became common and was widely in use in the period called *kadınlar saltanatı* (1566-1650). Later, gift-giving seems to have been in decline even if it was still mentioned in the Venetian reports at the end of the 18th century.²

The Venetians also realised that in the sultans' empire gifts were not all alike. In the Ottoman language several words were used to express this idea. *Peşkeş* (a word of Persian origin) was the tribute given by a subordinate to a high authority, for instance the gift of a Persian ambassador to the sultan or even the tributes of precious objects and animals paid by Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania. For the Ottomans, it symbolised loyalty. *Bahşiş* (Per.) was the tip given to a member of the *askeri* class. *In'am* (Ar.) was the favour that either the sultan or a high-ranking officer bestowed on people of lesser status. *Hediye* (Ar.) was the gift exchanged between persons at the same hierarchic level, even if in the North African provinces it was the tribute made by one ruler to another to obtain a favour. *Hediye* usually consisted of money, gifts and even flowers. *'atiyye* (Ar.) was the gift made by a high-ranking person to one of a lower rank and *'atiyye şahane* was the name given to gifts offered by the sultan during particular events such as the accession to the throne or a *sünnet* ceremony (i.e. on the occasion of a prince's circumcision). *Hibe* (Ar.) was a jurisprudential word, *sadaka* (Ar.) was charity and, lastly, *rüşvet* (Ar.) was the forbidden bribe (cf. Rosenthal et al. 1986; Rosenthal 1995).

In the Ottoman Empire those who converted to Islam received a customary gift that, at the end of the 16th century, was made up of 50 *akçe* in cash, one length of turban cloth and a skull-cap. In the Islamic world

2 Pedani-Fabris 1996, 381-3 (1590), 461 (1600), 603 (1627), 818 (1706); Fripo 1984, 112, 138-9, 145-7 (1592), 278-9, 306 (1594), 873-6 (1641).

the headgear symbolically expressed the quality of the person who used it. Thus, it is clear that to give a kind of skull-cap and a piece of cloth to be wrapped around it was symbolic of welcoming a person into the Muslim community (cf. Graf 2017, 2-3). The importance of gift-giving is stressed also by the following 17th century Ottoman proverb: "if you go to a gate empty handed, they say 'the master is sleeping'; if you go with a gift in your hands they say 'come in, the master orders'"³

On studying Ottoman-Venetian relations it is possible to find many records about the different kinds of gifts made by Venetian diplomats to the sultan and to members of the Ottoman élite. The presentation of gifts was often discussed during official meetings of the Venetian Senate. In the 14th century gifts included huge dogs, cloth, even shoes and also, from 1409 onwards, money for bribing Ottoman officials (*mançaria*). In the following period, besides cloths and money, there were luxury items such as books written in Arabic, lamps for mosques or caiques, small bolognesi toy dogs for the women of the imperial harem, clocks, mirrors, window glasses, spectacles, boxes made with rock crystal and silver, glass feathers for turbans, world maps and also pieces of parmesan cheese (cf. Fabris 1992; Fabris 1991).

In recent years many scholars have become interested in the concept of gift-giving. They have begun to study diplomatic gifts, their artistic value, the influence they had on international negotiations, on consumption and fashion, and also how gift-giving was used in Ottoman society.⁴ Some papers deal also with Venetian-Ottoman relations due to the ancient links existing between Venice and Istanbul (cf. Raby 2007; Curatola 2010; Vitale D'Alberton 2010). Little is known, however, about gifts made by Venetian diplomats to members of the Ottoman élite during informal meetings or to low-ranking people in Istanbul. The account records of the Venetian embassy for the years 1670-1681 give a glimpse into this practice. In fact, besides official meetings in the Topkapı Palace with sultans and grand viziers, there were many other occasions when it was necessary to give gifts. First of all there were Muslim and Christian holidays, the former based on the lunar calendar of Hijra and the latter on the solar calendar. According to the Venetian custom the year began on the 1st of March but this did not prevent Venetians from celebrating also the 1st of January. On this occasion the bailo gave the so-called *bonamano*, that is to say a sum of money, to the servants of the embassy and all those who worked for it: the clerk, the physician, the barber, the apothecary, the baker, the

3 Donado 1688, 68-9: "Eli boş bir kapıya varsın 'efendi uyur' derler, elinde bir güzar olsa 'gel, efendi buyur' derler".

4 Cf. Reindl-Kiel 2005, 2009, 2010; Howard 2010; Muhanna 2010; Ajmar-Wollheim, Molà 2011; Komanoff 2012; Reindl-Kiel 2012, 2013a, 2013b; Talbot 2006.

washerwoman, the bricklayer, the interpreters, the embassy's janissaries, the students who were learning Ottoman and Turkish and their teacher (the *hoca*). Other money was given also to some Ottoman officials such as the *kapıcı* of the Pera gate, the "*makadam* of the messengers"⁵ and the janissaries of other embassies such as that of France, England, Netherlands and Genoa. On an occasion of this kind money was given also to the violin and viola players of the French embassy who went to play for the bailo, to the friars of St. Francis who went to bless the house, to the priests of the three churches of St. Peter, of the Holy Land and of St. Mary Draperis and to some poor people and slaves. The sums delivered were about one or two reals for each person. For instance the *hoca* and the servants received 1 real, the barber and the apothecary 2.60, the *makadam* 0.60 and the washerwoman 2.00.⁶ The *riyal gurus* or Spanish eight-real coin contained close to 25.6 grams of pure silver. In the period we are studying its exchange rate was 110 (in 1672), 125 (1676) and 130 (1683) compared with the Ottoman coin called *akçe*. In the same years, 300 *akçe* equalled one Venetian gold ducat (cf. Pamuk 2000, 144).

The *küçük bayram* festival, also called *şeker bayram* (sugar holiday), immediately following the end of the fasting month of *ramazan*, occupies the first three days of *şevval*. In Istanbul people used to eat together for the end of fasting and gifts, candies and cakes were exchanged. The *büyük bayram* or *kurban bayramı*, the festival of the sacrifice, is celebrated on the 10th of the month of *zilihicce* and recalls the willingness of Abraham/İbrahim to sacrifice his son. It lasts three days and people share part of the meat of the sacrificed animal with friends and the needy. In these days helping the poor by giving food, money, meat and clothes in the name of *zakat* was also important. At this time Venetian diplomats used to give only Ottoman silver coins (*akçe*) and only to Muslims. There were Imperial Palace *kapıcıs* of the third gate (50 *akçe*) and of the second gate (1.20), imperial *çavuşes* (3), *sakas* (30), *solaks* (30), *bostancıs* (? *moslangi/molangi* in the Venetian text) (60), *peşkircis* (30) *peyks* (30), members of the *mehter* (50) and guardians of lions (60); *kapıcıs* (1.20), *çavuşes* (1.57), *mütercims* (0.60) and *peyks* (1.57) of the *kaymakam*; drummers (1.57), *mütercims* (0.60) and *çavuşes* (1.57) of the *kapudanpaşa*; *çavuşes* of the imperial arsenal (60), *kapıcıs* of the Pera gate (60, but they often refused to take them and asked for cloth), *segban* janissaries (70), the *kasapbaşı* and *kasaps* of Pera (1.80), the *müşürbaşı* and *müşürs* of Galata (1.50), *kapıcıs* of the Pera Sarayı (0.60), the "*makadam* of the dead"⁷ (? *beytömalcı*) (0.60), Venetian embassy janissaries (Venetian sequins 2 and

5 Venezia, Archivio di Stato (ASVe), *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313, reg. 493, cc. 4-4v.

6 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 388, reg. 5, cc. 89v-90 (1679); cf. also c. 43 (1677).

7 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313, reg. 493, c. 5v.

reals 5) and, lastly, the janissaries of the embassies of France, England, Flanders and Genoa (1.57).⁸

In the bailo's registers other Islamic festivals were recorded: the *donanma* of 23rd April 1679 (12 *rebiyülevvel* 1090), i.e. the *mevrit kandili* when the Prophet's birthday was celebrated. That year the Venetian embassy celebrated it for three days with rockets and candles and in the end the whole feast cost 113.30 riyals but it seems that gifts were not delivered on this occasion but only meal and drinks.⁹ On the contrary no reference is made to two festivals linked with the beginning of spring: *nevrüz*, celebrated on 20th March, the day of the vernal equinox, and *Hidrellez*, celebrated on 6th May when the Ottoman fleet used to leave Istanbul for the summer campaign.

Christian festivals included Candlemas, when charity was given to the priests who went to the embassy with candles and to the Christian galley slaves of the *banyol* and the Ottoman fleet, and Easter, when lambs and eggs were given to the Venetian embassy's interpreters and janissaries, and to the priests of the churches of St. Francis, St. Peter, St. Mary, St. George and of the hospital of St. John. For Venice another important moment was the day of the patron saint of the city, the Evangelist St. Mark, celebrated on the 25th of April. Then, the bailo used to give charity to the poor and invited Venetians living in Constantinople to eat and drink a toast in honour of the Republic. In 1679 there was also another feast organised by the bailo Giovanni Morosini, when he ascended to the dignity of *procuratore di San Marco*, but this time no expense is recorded in the official account register of his embassy, that is to say that he probably paid for the event out of his own money.¹⁰

In the Ottoman Empire there were also civic festivals used to stress the strength of the state and the longevity of the dynasty. The most important event of this kind was the circumcision of princes (*sünnet*) often celebrated together with the marriage of imperial princesses. It was a public event recorded also in books of miniatures. Important *sünnets* took place in 1439, 1457, 1472 (in Edirne), 1530, 1582, 1675 and 1720. In order to organise the 1675 *sünnet* for Prince Mustafa and the marriage of Princess Hatice, the Ottoman authorities asked Venice to send actors and singers to perform an Italian opera. Bailo Querini succeeded in avoiding this expensive task, saying that it was too difficult to find them and it required too much time to be ready for the festival. Moreover, he as well as the other foreign

8 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313, reg. 493, cc. 4-4v (11 Feb. 1671); 5v (17 Apr. 1671).

9 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313, reg. 493, cc. 3v (2 Feb. 1671), 5 (28 Mar. 1571); b. 388, reg. 5, c. 96v.

10 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313/494, c. 32v (25 Apr. 1680); b. 388, reg. 5, c. 96v (25 Apr. 1679); *Relatione delle allegrezze* (quoted in Hammer 1831, 47).

ambassadors present in Istanbul decided to decline the invitation to the ceremony in order to avoid the precious gifts they were expected to present. Thus, the only ambassadors who took part to the event were those of the principalities of Transylvania, Moldavia and Walachia and of the Republic of Ragusa that were subject to the Ottoman Empire's authority and could not avoid it.¹¹

Another important event that took place during Morosini's period was the festival organised for the Ottoman conquest of the Cossack hetmanate capital of Čyhyryn (21 August 1678) during the Russian campaign. The celebration lasted three days and began on 18th of September. The bailo's spring residence near the Belgrad forest was lit up with candles and rockets. The expenses amounted to 91.40 reals but this time too no special gift was made. The same happened on 26th December of the same year when the Venetian embassy was lit up for the birth of a son to the sultan. This time the expenses reached 106.10 reals.¹²

It is interesting to note that meals were organised in the Venetian palace above all for the members of other embassies, while very few Ottomans were invited to lunch or dinner. Some exceptions can be found: on 1st December 1670, İbrahim Bey and Turgut Bey had a meal with the bailo, while on 22nd December 1675, some 'Turks' took part in a banquet while the *kaymakam's* drummers and the trumpeters played for the whole day. On 12th September 1678 the *bostancıbaşı* arrived with some of his men and they all received almonds, cinnamon, pine nuts and *confetti* (almonds or anise or coriander seeds covered with sugar or hardened honey). Turks were, however, usually received in the bailo's house. Otherwise there was no reason to perfume the palace with aloe wood "to make it more comfortable for the Turks who arrived".¹³

The diplomatic gifts given by the bailo at the moment of the official reception in the Topkapı Palace were usually decided in Venice and paid directly by the office of the Rason Vecchie. Ordinary gifts, however, were paid for by the embassy. In the account registers a special place is reserved to the gifts given to other Europeans. It is noteworthy the list of the presents for the members of the French embassy on 19th January 1680, at the arrival of the new bailo Pietro Civran (1689-1681). The ambassador de Guilleragues received confectionary, a velvet basket with 4 bottle of scented water, 2 velvet boxes embroidered with golden flowers, 6 pairs of gloves in the Roman style, 2 little brooms with the handle covered by velvet, 1

11 Özkan 2004, 91-6; Terzioğlu 1995; Özkan 2013; Procházka-Eisl 1995; Atasoy 1997; Firpo 1984, 134.

12 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 388, reg. 5, cc. 81, 89-89v.

13 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313, reg. 493, c. 1v (1 Dec. 1670); b. 313, reg. 494, c. 10v (12 Dec. 1679); b. 388, reg. 5, cc. 12, 78v.

mirror with a velvet frame, golden and coloured flowers, 2 golden boxes with soap, 8 glass objects (*bizzarri*), 3 glass compositions made of 3 dishes one over the other (*fontane in tre soleri*), 2 golden lanterns, 24 glasses, 24 small carafes. His wife too received 1 mirror with a velvet frame and doors, a velvet box with perfume, 1 pair of embroidered golden gloves, 4 gloves in the Roman style, 2 boxes of golden musk soap, 6 golden and coloured flowers, 2 little velvet brooms, 4 bottles covered with silk and straw, 4 big combs, 4 ivory boxes, 4 ivory penholders, 2 glass dishes, 4 glass objects (*bizzarri*), 2 cups, 4 sherbet cups with lids (*sultanine coperte*), 4 flower vases. For both guests there were also four baskets to bring away all these objects. Another banquet was made for the members of the Venetian nation on 23rd December 1675, and on this occasion too there was a gift of cakes, almonds, confectionary, velvet round boxes (*bossoli*), women's gloves, mirrors with velvet frames, golden and silk flowers, glass objects (*burriani* and *fontane in tre soleri*), golden lanterns, glasses and so on. In particular the silk flowers were those made in Bologna by the nuns of the so-called 'Convento dei fiori di seta', while mirrors, spectacles, magnifying glasses and glass objects came from the island of Murano.¹⁴

Members of the Ottoman élite received gifts when the bailo went to their official residences to meet them or when they attained or changed office. On these occasions the presents are the same as those mentioned above. For instance on 24th December 1675, former *kaymakam* İbrahim paşa received several cloths, mirrors with velvet frames, ivory combs, ivory tobacco boxes, spectacles, combs for lice, silk and golden flowers, stone fruits; while on 14th January 1676, the new *kaymakam* Osman paşa received an octagonal mirror, a box full of perfumes and creams, velvet boxes with soap, combs for lice, spectacles with their boxes, ivory combs, ivory knives, ivory tobacco boxes, silk and golden flowers, bottles with perfumes, ivory ink bottle (*caramal*), and ivory hourglasses (*hore*).¹⁵

Also an official journey to Edirne to meet the court gave the opportunity of showing the magnificence of the embassy and the importance of Venetian precious items. For instance, in 1676, several members of the court, from the *valide* to the *kızlar ağası*, the imperial *kilerci*, the grand vizier Ahmed, his secretary, the *müfti* and many other officials received Murano mirrors, cloths, little velvet brooms, ivory telescopes, golden and silk flowers, ivory combs, boxes and small flasks, soaps, confetti, almonds, sugar, parmesan cheese called *piacentino*, clocks, embroidered gloves, fans with miniatures, glass objects, spectacles and even Italian *savonarola* chairs (*sedie da campagna*) with velvet, fringes and golden knobs. Gift were usually delivered taking into account the qualities of the persons: for instance

14 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313, reg. 494 cc. 17v-18v; b. 388, reg. 5, c. 12.

15 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 388, reg. 5, cc. 12v-15.

the woman's gloves and the fans were for the *valide*, cheese and chairs for the grand vizier, a big mirror for the *kızlarağa* and spectacles and cheese for the *müfti*. Among the items delivered to Ottomans in other occasions there were flint stones, sharpening steels, combs for lice, ivory knives, tobacco boxes, golden candles, pillows, perfumes, beard combs, glass bottles (*inghistere*), flower pots, glass washing basins with jugs (*imbrici*), glasses (*bardache*, from the Turkish word *bardak*), huge cups with the crescent, cloths, glass carafes, sherbet cups with their cover (*sultanine coperte*), glass mugs (*mastrapani* from the Turkish *maşrapa*, today *maşrafa*) with or without their covers, glass bowls for oil and vinegar (*gagiandre*), fruit bowls, lorgnettes, perfumes and rose water, lanterns and hanging-lamps (*feriali* and *cesendeli*), bags for bows and arrows, strange glass objects (*bizzarie* and *burle*), glass animals and also bedpans and urinals.¹⁶

The recipients were not only members of the Ottoman élite but also their relatives and the neighbours of the Venetian palace. For instance, on 22nd March 1678, the grand vizier's interpreter's mother received glasses, cups, glass bottles and other presents while on different occasions Mustafa çelebi who lived in a house near the Venetian embassy received several gifts: on 8th December 1678, he got the Venetian famous *teriac* (medicine against every kind of illness) he was longing for and on the following 22nd September on the occasion of the *ramazan* the bailo gave him 4 big round pieces of grana cheese, 50 hanging lamps, 6 carved wax candles (*maggioli*), 2 glasses (*bardachi*), 6 spectacles (*occhiali da naso*), 2 boxes for spectacles, 2 ivory lorgnettes (*occhiali da pugno*), and several sweets.¹⁷

Members of the Ottoman élite sometimes also asked for peculiar items they were not able to find elsewhere and the bailo often gave them as a gift. For instance on 17th August 1677, a *çavuş* arrived to ask for glass window-panes for a new building ordered by the sultan and other sheets were asked for by the grand vizier's *tezkire-i evvel* on 13th September 1678. The same official looked for a velvet chair on 28th September 1679, while on 15th July 1679 the sultan's *tezkereci* asked for grana cheese (*pia-centino*). On 15th November of the same year the *kızlarağa* asked for dogs for the sultan's son and the *reis efendi* looked for glass window-panes; on 17th January 1680, the sultan's *tezkereci* again asked for a table clock; on 5th May 1681, a Venetian renegade called Hasan ağa, the grand vizier's pageboy, asked for a wax doll and a microscope; in the following August the Galata voivode asked for flower vases, small carafes (*inghisterole*) and carafes (*inghistere*). On 30th April 1681, the sultan's *damad* and *musahip*

16 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313/494, cc. 7v (20 May 1671), 9-9v (15 Nov. 1679), 9v (19 Nov. 1679), 10v (12 Dec. 1679), 11-11v (17 Jan. 1680), 13-13v (20 Dec. 1680), 23v-24 (12 Feb. 1681), 43v (5 May 1681); b. 388, reg. 5, cc. 18-37v, 51 (10 Jun. 1677).

17 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313/494, c. 9-9v (15 Nov. 1679); c. 48 (22 Sep. 1681); b. 388/5 c. 71 (22 Mar. 1678); c. 84v (8 Dec. 1678); c. 103v (27 Aug. 1679).

Mustafa looked for two chairs with velvet, fringes and studs because he had invited the sultan to go to see him in his house – on this occasion the bailo bought them paying 40 sequins each.¹⁸

Sometimes members of the Ottoman élite invited Venetian diplomats to *sünnets* or marriages. They too were the occasion of gift-giving. On 16th October 1677, the Venetian account registers record expenses for a vizier's sons' marriages and, on 22nd October 1678, for the *kaymakam's* son's *sünnet*, while on 28th July 1679, the grand vizier sent his *bayraktar* with a candle to invite the bailo to his marriage.¹⁹

A peculiar practice used in Istanbul and testified by Venetian documents is also that of knocking at the Venetian palace gate with presents for the bailo in order to get money in exchange. It appears to be a way of selling goods made by poor people or also servants. The records make reference to gardeners and *bostancıs* with fruits, vegetables and flowers, cooks with cakes, Turks with fish, slaves with wooden candlesticks, servants with napkins, milk, butter, bread, *poğaças* (from the Ven. *fugaza*, It. *focaccia*), hares, jam. The servants of the embassies of France, England and Netherland too used to bring wine, muscatel, rosolio and partridges, besides the very famous big strawberries of the garden of the French palace. They were not the usual *fragaria vesca*, present from the Alps to Persia, but a new sort coming from America, probably the *fragaria virginiana* that arrived in France in the 17th century and at the sultan's table in 1682 thanks to a custom official who asked expressly for them for the imperial palace.²⁰

Even if wine and alcohol was officially prohibited for Muslims, members of the Ottoman élite often appreciated it. On 12th December 1670, Turgut reis sent to the bailo some muscat he had on his galley while, on 27th March 1676, the bailo sent two boxes of French *rosolio* to the grand vizier and, on 30th November 1679, he bought two boxes of *rosolio* from a French, monsieur Greasque, to make gifts to the *nişancı*, the *mirahor*, the *tezkire-i evvel*, the *tezkire-i sani*, and other important officials.²¹

Gift-giving was important in the Ottoman Empire. It was a means to immediately obtain something in exchange but also to make friends with people who could be useful in the future. An interesting example of this practice dates to bailo Morosini's period (1675-1680) when the imperial interpreter Marc'Antonio Mamuca della Torre befriended the young Yeğen

18 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 388/5 cc. 57, 58, 102, 107; b. 313/494, cc. 9-9v, 11-11v; 38v; 46v; 74v.

19 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 388/5 cc. 61, 82, 103.

20 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 388/5, c. 52 (12 Jun. 1677); c. 77 (29 Jul. 1678). Today huge strawberries are an hybrid formed by the *fragaria virginiana* and the *fragaria chiloensis* that arrived in France about 1750 (cf. Pedani 2012, 57).

21 ASVe, *Bailo a Costantinopoli*, b. 313/494, cc. 2, 10; b. 388/5 c. 20v.

Hüseyin Bey, Mehmed Köprülü's nephew. This Muslim liked wine but he did not dare to drink it fearing his father's reproaches and those of his brother-in-law Kara Mustafa paşa. His secretary was Mamuca's friend and Mamuca was also a friend of Morosini who, during the summer of 1678, lived in a holiday house near the Belgrad forest just outside the capital. There the bailo had built a small lodge on a huge tree where he went to enjoy the cool and he began to lend it to the interpreter's friend. Hüseyin told his father and Kara Mustafa paşa that he went hunting hawks in Belgrad forest but, instead, he climbed on that tree to drink wine and to listen to the playing of ney flutes. About twenty years later Hüseyin Bey became Amcazade Köprülü Hüseyin paşa and was the grand vizier who reorganised the Ottoman army and fleet at the end of the Morea War and negotiated the peace of Karlowitz (1699) with both Vienna and Venice.²²

As it is self-evident on studying Venetian documents in the modern era, ambassadors sent to Istanbul used gift-giving as a diplomatic strategy to get favours and information from the élite of the government and to be welcomed by the common people. Precious items were used also to show the magnificence of the rulers and the excellence of the goods of a country. In a period in which artists were considered only skilful artisans, art was not so important as it is today but diplomatic gifts were also promoters of artistic fashions and shapers of consumption habits. Besides those given to the sultan and the grand vizier in official meetings, diplomatic gifts dispensed to low level members of the ruling class and common people were important to establish the reputation of a foreign state. As bailo Giacomo Querini wrote: "To negotiate with the Turk, gifts are always required".²³

22 ASVe, *Senato, Dispacci Ambasciatori, Germania*, filza 178.249, cc. 229-231 (all. 12 Oct. 1697).

23 Firpo 1984, 968: "con turchi si negozia sempre con doni".

Glossary

<i>akçe</i>	(Ott.)	silver coin, asper
<i>askeri</i>	(Ott.)	military, pertaining to the army
<i>atiyye şahane</i>	(Ott.)	bounty granted by the sultan during particular events, such as accession to the throne or princes' circumcision
<i>atiyye</i>	(Ott.)	gift from a superior to an inferior
<i>bahşiş</i>	(Ott.)	tip for a member of the <i>askeri</i> class
<i>bailo</i>	(Ven.)	Venetian officer in Constantinople with the competences of a consul and a residential ambassador
<i>banyol</i>	(Ott.)	bagnio, prison of the galley slaves
<i>bardaca</i>	(pl. <i>bardache/bardachi</i> , Ven. from the Tur. <i>bardak</i>)	glass, cup, mug, goblet
<i>bayraktar</i>	(Ott.)	standard bearer
<i>beytömalcı</i>	(Ott.)	officer concerned with the canonical distribution of the inheritances
<i>bizzarro</i>	(pl. <i>bizzarri/bizzarie</i> , Ven.)	glass objects of an unusual shape
<i>bonamano</i>	(Ven.)	tip for the New Year given to the employers of the Venetian embassy
<i>bossolo</i>	(pl. <i>bossoli</i> , Ven.)	round boxes
<i>bostancı</i>	(Ott.)	imperial guard
<i>bostancıbaşı</i>	(Ott.)	commander of the imperial guards
<i>burla</i>	(pl. <i>burle</i> , Ven)	glass objects of an unusual shape
<i>burriano</i>	(pl. <i>burriani</i> , Ven.)	glass objects
<i>büyük bayram</i>	(Ott.)	Muslim religious festival, cfr <i>kurban bayramı</i>
<i>büyük mirahor</i>	(Ott.)	master of the imperial horses
<i>caramal</i>	(Ven.)	ink bottle
<i>çavuş</i>	(Ott.)	messenger
<i>cesendelo</i>	(pl. <i>cesendeli</i> , Ven.)	hanging-lamp
<i>confetto</i>	(pl. <i>confetti</i> , It.)	almonds or anise or coriander seeds covered with sugar or hardened honey
<i>damad</i>	(Ott.)	son-in-law, man married into the imperial family
<i>donanma</i>	(Ott.)	Muslim religious festival, cfr <i>mevlit kandili</i>
<i>feriale</i>	(pl. <i>feriali</i> , Ven.)	lantern, table-lamp
<i>fontana in tre soleri</i>	(pl. <i>fontane in tre soleri</i> , Ven.)	glass compositions made of 3 dishes one over the other
<i>gagiandra</i>	(pl. <i>gagiandre</i> , Ven.)	glass bowls for oil and vinegar, turtle
<i>hediye</i>	(Ott.)	gift exchanged between persons at the same hierarchic level
<i>Hidrellez</i>	(Ott.)	the 40th day after the spring equinox (6 May), popularly considered as the beginning of summer

<i>hibe</i>	(Ott., law)	gift, present, donation
<i>hoca</i>	(Ott.)	teacher, a person who knows how to read and write
<i>hora</i>	(pl. <i>hore</i> Ven.)	hourglass
<i>imbrico</i>	(pl. <i>imbrici</i> Ven.)	glass washing basins with jugs
<i>in'am</i>	(Ott.)	favour or gift to an inferior
<i>inghistera</i>	(pl. <i>inghistere</i> Ven.)	carafe, glass bottle
<i>inghisterola</i>	(pl. <i>inghisterole</i> Ven.)	small carafe
<i>kadınlar saltanatı</i>	(Ott.)	'the sultanate of women', period of Ottoman history, about 1566-1650
<i>kapıcı</i>	(Ott.)	door keeper, superintendent of the imperial ushers
<i>kapudanpaşa</i>	(Ott.)	High Admiral responsible for the Ottoman fleets (from 1567 onwards)
<i>kasap</i>	(Ott.)	butcher
<i>kasapbaşı</i>	(Ott.)	superintendent of the butcher's guild and director of the sheep tax
<i>kaymakam</i>	(Ott.)	head official of a district
<i>kızlar ağası</i>	(Ott.)	chief black eunuch of the imperial harem
<i>kilerci</i>	(Ott.)	butler
<i>küçük bayram</i>	(Ott.)	Muslim religious festival, cfr <i>şeker bayram</i>
<i>kurban bayramı</i>	(Ott.)	the festival of the sacrifice, celebrated on the 10th of the month of <i>zilihicce</i> , also called <i>büyük bayram</i>
<i>maggiolo</i>	(pl. <i>maggioli</i> Ven.)	carved wax candle
<i>makadam</i>	(Ott.)	head official, leader
<i>mançaria</i>	(Ven.)	money given as a bride
<i>mastrapano</i>	(pl. <i>mastrapani</i> , Ven. from the Ott. <i>maşrapa</i> , Tur. <i>maşrafa</i>)	glass mugs
<i>mehter</i>	(Ott.)	military band
<i>mevlit kandili</i>	(Ott.)	festival for the Prophet's birthday (12 <i>rebiyülevvel</i>)
<i>mirahor</i>	(Ott.)	ostler, stableman
<i>musahip</i>	(Ott.)	gentleman-in-waiting of the sultan
<i>müfti</i>	(Ott.)	mufti, official expert in Islamic law
<i>müşür</i>	(Ott.)	field marshal
<i>müşürbaşı</i>	(Ott.)	head of the field marshals
<i>mütercim</i>	(Ott.)	interpreter
<i>nevruz</i>	(Ott.)	the day of the vernal equinox, festival of the beginning of spring
<i>nişancı</i>	(Ott.)	officer whose duty was inscribing the sultan's imperial monogram over the documents
<i>occhiali da naso</i>	(Ven.)	spectacles
<i>occhiali da pugno</i>	(Ven.)	lorgnettes
<i>peşkeş</i>	(Ott.)	tribute or gift brought to a superior

<i>peşkirci</i>	(Ott.)	servant who had charge of the imperial table napkins
<i>peyk</i>	(Ott.)	messenger
<i>piacentino</i>	(Ven.)	parmesan cheese
<i>poğaçça</i>	(Ott. from Ven. <i>fugaza</i> , It. <i>focaccia</i>)	cake of very fat pastry
<i>procuratore di San Marco</i>	(Ven.)	dignity given to honour very important Venetian noblemen
<i>ramazan</i>	(Ott.)	ninth month of the Islamic calendar
<i>rebiyülevvel</i>	(Ott.)	third month of the Islamic calendar
<i>reis efendi</i>	(Ott.)	reisülküttab, head of the imperial chancellery
<i>riyal guruş</i>	(Ott.)	Spanish eight-real coin
<i>rosolio</i>	(It.)	light liquor
<i>rüşvet</i>	(Ott.)	forbidden bribe
<i>sadaka</i>	(Ott.)	charity
<i>saka</i>	(Ott.)	water carrier, corporal of the janissaries
<i>sedia da campagna</i>	(pl. <i>sedie da campagna</i> , It. <i>savonarola chair</i>)	Florentine Renaissance chair that could be closed to carry it
<i>segban</i>	(Ott.)	keeper of the sultan's hounds (later incorporated with the janissaries)
<i>solak</i>	(Ott.)	guardsman in attendance on the sultan in processions
<i>sultanina coperta</i>	(pl. <i>sultanine coperte</i> , Ven.)	sherbet cup with lid
<i>sünnet</i>	(Ott.)	circumcision, imperial princes' circumcision festival
<i>şeker bayram</i>	(Ott.)	'sugar holiday', holiday following the end of the fasting month of <i>ramazan</i> (the first three days of <i>şevval</i>)
<i>şevval</i>	(Ott.)	tenth month of the Islamic calendar
<i>teriaca</i>	(It.)	medicine against every kind of illness
<i>tezkereci</i>	(Ott.)	official charged with the duty of writing official memoranda
<i>tezkire-i evvel</i>	(Ott.)	the grand vizier's first secretary
<i>tezkire-i sani</i>	(Ott.)	the grand vizier's second secretary
<i>valide</i>	(Ott.)	mother of the sultan
<i>Venedik Sarayı</i>		'Palazzo Venezia', the Venetian embassy in Constantinople, to-day the office of the Italian general consulate and of the Italian ambassador in Istanbul (Beyoğlu, Tomtom Kaptan Sokak, No. 5)
<i>zilihicce</i>	(Ott.)	twelfth month of the Islamic calendar

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