

# Hacı Murad (Agi Morato): An Elusive Dignitary Active in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century

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*Hacı Murad (Agi Morato): 16. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Ele Gelmez Avuca Sığmaz Bir Kodaman*

Öz ■ Bu yazı 16. yüzyılın ortalarında Osmanlı sultanının hizmetine giren Dalmaçyalı muhtedi Hacı Murad'ı konu alıyor. Siyasî, toplumsal ve kültürel sermayesini kullanarak kısa sürede Akdeniz'in Doğu ve Batı kıyılarını durmadan arşınlayan bir devletler arası ilişkiler uzmanı olan bu eyleyici, hizmetlerini sadece Osmanlı padişahlarına, Cezayir-i Garp beylerbeylerine sunmakla kalmaz, Fas sultanları, İspanya Kralı II. Filip ve onun vekilleriyle de yoğun ilişkilere bazen murahhas elçi bazen de aracı olarak girer. Bu çok-kimlikli ve becerikli aracının kolaylıkla yeniden inşa edilemeyen yaşam öyküsü örüntüsü, 16. yüzyıldaki devletler-aşırı kimlik oluntuları bağlamında üzerinde durulmaya değer bir örnektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Erken çağcıl dönem dış-ilişkileri, Osmanlılar ve komşu devletler, Garp Ocakları, devletler-aşırı kimlikler, Cervantes çalışmaları.

## Introduction

Studies on the cervantesque *persona* Agi Morato are conducted mostly by the historians of literature which focus on the Algerian culture and its representation in the Spanish Golden Age or on Don Quixote's authors' own experience in captivity.<sup>1</sup> After the publication of a seminal article by Oliver-Asín, historians

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1 Barbara Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam, and European Identities*, (Cambridge Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 158-163; María Antonia Garcés, *Cervantes in Algiers: A Captive's Tale*, (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2002), pp. 51-54; 204-216; Marina Brownlee, "Zoraida's White Hand and Cervantes' Rewriting of History," *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, LXXXIII/5 (2005), pp. 569-586.

of literature revisited the case of Agi Morato and her daughter Zoraide in order to analyze the relationship between fact and fiction in the masterpiece of Cervantes.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the historicity of this fictional character is quite well assessed: A recent biographer of Cervantes, Jean Canavaggio, revealed the puzzling political stance of Agi Morato, by relying on files from the General Archive of Simancas.<sup>3</sup> María Antonia Garcés dwelled anew on the matter and emphasized the nature of Morato's relations with Spanish and Maltese high officers.<sup>4</sup> But, neither these researchers nor the Ottomanists, did draw on a larger documentation in order to reveal mist-shrouded aspects of his trajectory. New findings from the archives in Istanbul, Simancas, Paris, Venice and Vienna, as well as some neglected published sources, help not only to clarify the biography of Agi Morato, alias Hacı Murad, the Ottoman governor of Médéa (in Arabic, al-Madiyyah; Turkish Midye) located roughly 80 km south of Algiers, but also to grasp the nature of multi-faceted diplomacy in the Mediterranean in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Spanish documents already used by Oliver-Asín, Canavaggio and Garcés leave us with an image of Agi Morato as a wealthy notable residing in Algiers (*rico y de quien se haze mucha cuenta en Argel*). He is a renegade of Ragusan origin, probably around his fifties (*dize que renegado Raguçés ... que será de cinquenta años poco más o menos*) according to report written in 1573.<sup>5</sup> He is also known in Spanish milieus to have been Selim II's (1566-1574) *çavuş* and favorite (*chaut del Turco y su privado*).<sup>6</sup> He married his daughter to the pretender to the Moroccan throne, 'Abd al-Malik – the king of Morocco between 1576 and 1578.<sup>7</sup> The latter, when he was an exiled prince in Algiers, constantly negotiated for Ottoman and Spanish support in order to gain his throne. After

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2 Jaime Oliver-Asín, "La hija de Agi Morato en la obra de Cervantes," *Bulletin de la Real Academia Española*, XXVII (1947-1948), pp. 245-339.

3 Jean Canavaggio, "Le 'Vrai' visage d'Agi Morato," *Les Langues Néo-Latines*, no. 239 (1981), pp. 22-38.

4 Garcés, *Cervantes in Algiers*, pp. 51-54.

5 Canavaggio, "Le 'Vrai' visage," p. 26; Garcés, *Cervantes in Algiers*, p. 35.

6 Garcés, *Cervantes in Algiers*, p. 35.

7 They had a son, Mawlay Ismail. On 'Abd al-Malik see among others Mercedes García Arenal, "Textos españoles sobre Marruecos en el siglo XVI : Fr. Juan Bautista y su Crónica de Muley Abdelmelech," *Al-Qantara*, II (1981), pp. 168-92; Güneş Işıksel, "Ottoman Suzerainty over Morocco During Abdulmelik's Reign (1576-1578): A Reassessment," in Marinou Sariyannis et al. (eds.), *New Trends in Ottoman Studies : Papers presented at the 20th CIÉPO Symposium Rethymno, 27 June – 1 July 2012*, (Rethymno: University of Crete, 2014), pp. 568-577.

the death of ‘Abd al-Malik during the Battle of Three Kings (1578), she was remarried to Hasan Pasha, “the Venetian”, governor-general of Algeria and later, *kapudanpaşa*.<sup>8</sup>

As the extant Spanish sources reveal, Agi Morato had good relations with Spanish emissaries, thanks to his relations with the Corso family who ran a trading company spread over western Mediterranean, which operated as a spying network as well. Although intriguing at first sight, Mami Corso, their kinsman, was one of the most influential corsair-entrepreneurs in Algiers.<sup>9</sup> As Gürkan demonstrated recently, there were indeed several agents who operated on the margins of inimical political spheres: Under the cloak of negotiating the ransom of captives, or as mere tradesmen, these actors were conducting an intense low-level diplomacy between Madrid, Naples, Algiers and Istanbul.<sup>10</sup> The Corso enterprise had even tried once to introduce Agi Morato to Philip II (r. 1556-1598), contending that this Algerian notable is inclined to serve for the interests of Hapsburg Monarchy.<sup>11</sup> Be that as it may, this heap of information does still not help to reconstruct his trajectory in as much as many details of his life in Algiers and İstanbul remain obscure.

### *Giving Flesh and Blood to Hacı Murad*

Although the early phases of Hacı Murad’s career in the Ottoman realm is unknown – particularly, circumstances of his recruitment and entry to the service, initial status in the administration as well as subsequent promotions he obtained –, the Registers of Important Affairs (*Mühimme Defterleri*, abbr. *MD*) give us a most accurate information about the rank, dignity and the fortune of Hacı Murad.<sup>12</sup>

8 On Hasan Pasha, see Antonio Fabris, “Hasan ‘Il Veneziano’ tra Algeri e Costantinopoli,” in *Veneziani in Levante. Musulmani a Venezia, Quaderni di Studi Arabi*, suppl. XV (1997), pp. 51-66.

9 Chantal de la Véronne (ed.), *Les sources inédites de l’histoire du Maroc, Ière série, dynastie sa’dienne (1539–1560), Archives et Bibliothèques d’Espagne, Tome III (1560–1578)*, (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1961), pp. 157-165 (abbr. *SIHM*, Espagne); Emrah Safa Gürkan, “My Money or Your Life: Habsburg Hunt for Uluc Ali,” *Studia historica. Historia moderna*, XXXVI (2014), pp. 121-145.

10 Emrah Safa Gürkan, “Mediating Boundaries: Mediterranean Go-betweens and Cross-Confessional Diplomacy in Constantinople, 1560-1600,” *Journal of Early Modern History*, 19, 2-3 (2015), pp. 107-128.

11 Canavaggio, “Le ‘Vrai’ visage,” p. 31.

12 *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Mühimme Defteri MD X*, n° 10, 12, 14, 20, 253, 256, 347, 359. Although extant western sources do not hint at his official position, i. e. sancakbey, the absence of any other Hacı Murad having a similar reputation and status in Algeria both in these and Ottoman sources, lead us to identify Agi Morato as Hacı Murad, the governor of Medea.

Particularly, a document from 1571, explicitly refers to him as “*Cezayir-i Garb’a tabi’ Midye sancağı beyi olan Hacı Murad*”.<sup>13</sup> As the further data confirm, he seems to be an officer deeply involved in the elaboration of a common strategy between the center and North African periphery in order to push further the Ottoman presence in Western Mediterranean and Maghreb, while pursuing different sets of goals, serving both personal and “public” interest.

The first references to Hacı Murad go back to the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520-1566).<sup>14</sup> In 1565, he was dispatched to Bayonne by the sultan to meet with the Queen-Regent Catherina de Medici and discuss a financial litigation settlement involving two monarchies regarding to an alleged debt of Henry II (r. 1547-1559) to Joseph Nasi, a rich banker and the courtier of prince Selim.<sup>15</sup> In the sixteenth century, the Ottoman chancery did not provide envoys with letters of credence as well as written instructions which weaken any attempt of interpretation concerning the nature of diplomatic missions, when other types of sources also lack. In the French sources, there is scanty information on the escort of this Ottoman envoy, his trajectory from Marseilles to the Bay of Biscay and measures taken by Blaise de Monluc and other French authorities in order to hide the presence of this “infidel” from the Spanish court during the meeting

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13 *Mühimme Defteri MD X*, n° 20. In this order (*hüküm*), Selim II solicits Hacı Murad to collect as many volunteers as possible to his two galleys which must re-join the Ottoman navy for the operations in the Eastern Mediterranean in summer 1571. Since notices concerning Algeria are often absent in *ru’us* and *tahvil* registers, we do not have clear information on the administrative and fiscal substance of Midye *sancakbeyliği*. Suffice to say that, its first appearance is indeed in the orders related to Hacı Murad.

14 There are some mentions to a Tergo Morato in Spanish sources dating back to 1550’s who acted, just like Agi Morato, as an Ottoman official specialized in the Western Mediterranean: Simancas, *Estado, Legajo* 1123, doc. 106, (20 novembre 1555). I shall thank anew Emrah Safa Gürkan for his indications and supply of *inédit* documents from Simancas archives.

15 For a brief summary of this issue see Güneş Işıksel, “A letter to Shahzade Selim to Charles IX of France on the ‘Nassi Affair’,” *Cadernos de Estudos Sefarditas*, VII (2007), pp. 247-254. Joseph Nasi, alias Joao Micquas, a Marano, had been a focus of interest for the historians from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. A comprehensive biography had been prepared by Cecil Roth, *The House of Nasi: The Duke of Naxos*, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America), 1948. For a good synthesis in French see Pierre Grunebaum-Ballim, *Joseph Nasi: Duc de Naxos*, (Paris: Mouton, 1968). Cecil Roth complemented his study by insisting on Nasi’s activity just before the Cyprus War in 1570, *id.*, “Joseph Nasi, Duke of Naxos, and the Counts of Savoy,” *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, New Ser., Vol. 57 (1967), pp. 460-472. See also, A. Arce, “Espionaje y ultima aventura de José Nasi (1569-1574)”, *Sefarad* XIII (1953), pp. 257-286. For his trading activities, cf Benjamin Arbel, *Trading Nations. Jews and Venetians in the Early Modern Eastern Mediterranean*, (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

of the new Queen of Spain, Elisabeth de Valois (1559-1568) with his brother, Charles IX, the King of France (r. 1561-1574).<sup>16</sup> In Perpignan, seemingly without the knowledge of French ministers, Hacı Murad negotiated also with Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, the Duke of Alba.<sup>17</sup> Although the subject of their talks and the unfolding of the meeting are unknown today, the recent Spanish conquest of Peñón de Vélez de la Gomera (September 1564) and the Ottoman expedition on Malta, which was in course, were probably among the issues discussed.

While the Ottoman envoy's first mission passed nearly unnoticed by European observers in Istanbul, his second mission to France two years later, after the enthronement of Selim II (r. 1566-1574) is mentioned both in Hapsburg and Venetian sources. Adamus de Franchi, the *explorator secretus* of Maximilian II, Holy Roman Emperor (r. 1564-1576), gave some details about the nature of this second mission. The information he provided is quite valuable since de Franchi is a spy from the circle of the Duke of Alba<sup>18</sup> :

*[E]l Turco ha ordinato che parta fra XV giorni Chaggia Morat Spagnolo rinegato et se nè vadi in Barberia condotto sopra le galea d'Uligali sangacco (sic !) di Tripoli et li pigli tutti li schiavi francesi, et conduca il tutto in Francia. Questo rinegato spagnolo fù altre volta in Francia per chiaus nel tempo, che la Regina s'abboccò con quella di Spagna già due anni et dice d'haver parlato col Duca d'Alva in Parpigliano. [The Turk had ordered so that Hacı Murat, a Spanish renegade, go for, in 15 days, to Barbary (Coasts) with the galley of Uluc Ali, *sancakbey* of Tripolitania, take all the French slaves there and carry them out to France. This renegade had been otherwise in France as a *çavuş* where he accompanied the Queen (of France) during her meeting with the Queen of Spain already two years ago and had supposedly a parley with the Duke of Alba, in Perpignan].<sup>19</sup>*

This second mission caught also the attention of the Venetian *bailo*, Giacomo Soranzo, who at that time was negotiating intensely with the Sublime Porte in order to renew the *'abdnâme* after Selim II's recent enthronement:

16 Blaise de Monluc, *Commentaires (1521-1576)*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), p. 561.

17 Arturo Segre, *Emmanuele Philiberto e la Repubblica di Venezia (1548-1580)*, (Venezia: Deputazione di storia patria per la Venezia, 1901), p. 190; Grunebaum-Ballin, *Joseph Naci*, pp. 111-116; Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, (Paris : Armand Colin, 1985), Vol. II, pp. 327-329.

18 Simancas, *Estado, Legajo* 1052, doc. 13.

19 Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs (HHStA), Wien, *Turcica* XXIII, Konv. I, fol. 87 r. (27 January 1567).

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IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

*Havendo inteso come questo Magnifico Bassa designato di venir à tregue col Serenissimo Re di Spagna, espedia un huomo per questa trattatione et intendo che questo era Caggia Murat, chegai d'Uluciali che erà sanjacco di Tripoli.... sera andata cosi sotto pretesto di raccordarli la liberationi di schiavi [I've heard that Great Pasha bear an intention to come to a truce with the most Illustrious King of Spain and had sent an agent for this deal. I've heard that latter is Caggia Murat, intendant of Uluc Ali, governor (*sancakbey*) of Tripolitania. He will be sent under the pretext of liberation of slaves].*<sup>20</sup>

These scattered pieces of information on the second mission of Hacı Murad to France trigger some remarks. Adamus de Franchi, claims that Murad was a Spanish renegade. This information, in its formal sense, is false since many sources, especially those from Spain, qualify him either as a Ragusan, or, in a general fashion, from the Dalmatian Coasts. This however may hint at least to Spanish affinities of Hacı Murad. On the other hand, both informants assert that he is an associate of Uluc Ali Pasha, then the governor-general of Tripolitania.<sup>21</sup> The Venetian *bailo* points out that Murad is his chief intendant (*chegai=kahya*). Indeed, he is a client of Uluc Ali, who after holding the provinces of Tripolitania (1567-1569) and Algiers (1569-1571), became the admiral of the Ottoman fleet after the battle of Lepanto in October 1571. We see Hacı Murad working with him during the early phases of the Ottoman-Venetian War (1570-73) as a messenger between Istanbul and Algiers.<sup>22</sup> The absence of any relation in these reports between two missions which were to be undertaken by same agent is nevertheless intriguing. According to the first report, Hacı Murad is told to go to France and on the second to the Hapsburg political space. Considering the “Cold War” between Charles IX and Philip II at that time<sup>23</sup>, one cannot but ask the relevancy and accuracy of reporters’ data sources. Was Hacı Murad, just as he had done two

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20 Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASVe), *Archivio Proprio Costantinopoli V*, filza 1, fol. 467 r. (letter dated 25 January 1567, *more veneto* 1566).

21 İdris Bostan, “Kılıç Ali,” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. Basing on a *Ruus* register, Bostan dates his appointment to the governorship of Tripolitania on December 1566, a statement that is also confirmed by a dispacci of Soranzo, ASVe, *Archivio Proprio Costantinopoli V*, filza 1, fol. 28 r (28 December 1566). For his biography see, Emilio Sola, *Uchali: El Calabres Tinoso, o el mito del corsario muladi en la frontera*, Barcelona: Bellaterra, 2011.

22 *MD X*, n° 20; *MD XII*, n° 646; María Antonia Garcés-Diana de Armas Wilson (ed.), *An Early Modern Dialogue with Islam: Antonio de Sosa's Topography of Algiers (1612)*, (Notre Dame (Indiana): University of Notre Dame Press, 2011), pp. 129-130.

23 Robert J. Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion 1559–1598*, (New York: Longman, 2007), p. 40

years ago, going officially to France to discuss there also with a Spanish emissary or doing two missions one after another? In any case, it seems that both options are plausible and the choice will have to be made after new empiric data.

*Hacı Murad as a connoisseur of France*

It can however be safely assumed that, at that time, Hacı Murad was already a cunning actor in Western Mediterranean environment, not only as an experimented navigator but also as an accomplished negotiator. Nevertheless, as it is the case for his first mission to France, there is not any relevant Ottoman document concerning his negotiations. Agrippa d'Aubigné, chronicler of the French Wars of Religion, mentions the presence of an Ottoman envoy in the court of Henri, Duke of Anjou, in the day of battle of Saint-Denis, fought on November 10, 1567. In his second mission, Murad doubtlessly had to deal there anew with the unresolved "Nasi Affair" which was to create a serious crisis between the two partners two years later.<sup>24</sup> The liberation of the enslaved French knights who had participated in the defense of Malta and of Zsigetvar (1566) must have been negotiated at that time as well.<sup>25</sup>

It was also at that time that the Morisco leaders, in rebellion after the perseverance of Spanish regulations, sought the assistance of the Ottomans.<sup>26</sup> A spy report transmitted to Philip II by his viceroy of Naples, Per Enríquez-Afán de Ribera, informed the king on Hacı Murad's return to the Ottoman capital in summer 1568 and his eventual secret mission to the Spanish coasts in order to contact the Moriscos and encourage their initiative.<sup>27</sup> It was also exactly at that time that Uluc Ali, the new Governor-General of Algeria and the patron of Hacı Murad,

24 Michel Lesure, "Les Relations franco-ottomanes à l'épreuve des guerres de Religion (1560-1594)", in Hamit Batu –Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont (eds.), *L'Empire ottoman, la république de la Turquie et la France*, (Paris : Association pour le développement des études turques ; Istanbul : Éditions Isis, 1986), pp. 37-57.

25 Charles IX, concomitantly with the mission of Hacı Murad to Paris, sent a solemn embassy in autumn 1567 for this reason. HHStA, Wien, *Turcica* XXIII, Konv. III, fol. 22 r-23 r. (18 October 1567).

26 Gilles Veinstein, "Autour de la lettre de Selim II aux andalous et des origines de la guerre de Chypre," in Encarnación Sanchez, García Pablo Martín Asuero & Michele Bernardini (eds.), *España y el Oriente islámico entre los siglos XV y XVI. Imperio Otomano, Persia y Asia central*, Istanbul: ISIS, 2007, pp. 271-281.

27 Simancas *Estado, Legajo*, 1056, doc. 191.

began to negotiate with Andrea Gasparo Corso, Philip II's unofficial agent. The two discussed the possibility of the Algerian neutrality during the suppression of the Morisco revolt.<sup>28</sup> As it is known, neither Istanbul nor Algiers was to provide substantial support to Morisco rebels. Instead, the next year Uluc Ali deployed his forces to capture the city of Tunis from the Hafsides, without confronting any reaction from the Spanish garrison in nearby Goleta.<sup>29</sup>

Hacı Murad's third mission to France in the spring of 1571 took place in a sharply different context. The resolution of the financial litigation between two courts in 1569 in favor of the French King, and the preparation of the first Ottoman-French "capitulations" again that year are the clear signs of a recovery.<sup>30</sup> By that time, the Ottomans were strongly isolated from the Western Europe and the king of France's help to disintegrate this anti-Ottoman alliance was desired in Istanbul more than ever.<sup>31</sup> Charles IX informs his ambassador François de Noailles in his way to Istanbul in these terms:

*Monseigneur d'Acqs, ces jours passez est arrivé devers moi un ambassadeur turc nommé Sr Murat Begon [sic!] gouverneur de la ville de Beludinab [sic!] que le Grand Seigneur m'a envoyé avec ses lettres qui sont de bien vieille date, étant passé par le Royaume d'Alger en venant ici [Mr d'Acqs, recently, a Turkish ambassador named Mr. Murat Begon, governor of the city of Beludinab, sent by the Great Signor with some outdated letters arrived to my court. Whilst coming here, he had passed from the Kingdom of Algiers].<sup>32</sup>*

There are unfortunately not sufficient documents concerning the third mission of Hacı Murad to France apart from a letter which Noailles wrote to his king

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28 *SIHM*, Espagne, tome III, p. 160.

29 H.-D. de Grammont (ed.), *Histoire des rois d'Alger, par fray Diego de Haedo*, Alger: Adolphe Jourdan 1881, p. 148.

30 Gilles Veinstein, "Les capitulations franco-ottomanes de 1536 sont-elles encore controversables ?," in Vera Costantini et Markus Koller (eds.), *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community. Essays in honour of Suraiya Faroqhi*, (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 71-88.

31 For the political context of the Ottoman-Venetian War in 1570-1573, see Güneş Işıksel, *La diplomatie de Selîm II: paramètres et périmètres de l'Empire ottoman dans le troisième quart du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, (Louvain-Paris-Walpole: Peeters, 2016), p. ix *et passim*.

32 Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre (SHAT), Vincennes/Paris, A<sup>1</sup>4, fol. 34 r. (letter dated 10 May 1572). For the mission of François de Noailles: Antoine Dégert, "Une ambassade périlleuse de François de Noailles en Turquie," *Revue Historique*, CLIX/2, (1928), pp. 225-260 et Güneş Işıksel, *La diplomatie de Selîm II*, p. xvi *et passim*.

on the trivial details of the meal that he offered to Murad Beg and to his company in Lyon.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, we have an *ex post* information on his three missions to France. In his travelogue, celebrated diplomat Philippe du Fresne Canaye, then a young Huguenot aristocrat returning from a visit to the Ottoman lands, met in Modon in May 1573 with a certain “*Aschlit [!] Murath, bey de Barbarie, avait été trois fois l’ambassadeur du Grand Seigneur en France. Comme il avait fait le voyage de Bayonne avec le Roi, il connaissait bien tout le royaume de France*” [Aschlit Murat Bey from the Barbary (Coasts) had been for three times to France as the ambassador of Great Signor. Since he had made a travel to Bayonne with the King, he had a good knowledge of all the realm of France].<sup>34</sup> It seems that in 1577 Hacı Murad was sent for a fourth time to France to discuss the issue of Catherine de’ Medici’s Muslim ladies-in-waiting along with the ransoming of some other captives<sup>35</sup>.

*The elusive dignitary and his manifold missions*

Even if the new data found in French sources may now make us believe that Hacı Murad is the specialized Ottoman negotiator on the French issues, he was also, as we have already hinted at, deeply involved in the Porte’s relations with Tunisia and Morocco. The letters of *istimalet* in Arabic addressed to the notables in Tunisia, after its conquest by Uluc Ali in 1570, suggest that their conveyor, Hacı Murad, was the main negotiator during the discussions for the peaceful adhesion of the local notables to the Ottoman regime.<sup>36</sup> In 1572, Hacı Murad was commissioned by Selim II to discuss with the adverse Moroccan sultan al-Ghalib (r. 1558-1574)<sup>37</sup> and to convince latter to participate to an anti-Spanish alliance, while Uluc Ali, *kapudanpasha* of Ottoman navy and patron of Hacı Murad, was

33 SHAT, A<sup>14</sup>, fol. 34 v.

34 Charles Schefer and Henri Hauser (eds.), *Le Voyage du Levant de Philippe du Fresne Canaye*, Paris: E. Leroux, 1897, pp.182-183. On this French dignitary see Sylvio Hermann De Franceschi, “La diplomatie henricienne et les ambitions françaises de suprématie temporelle sur la république chrétienne,” *Annales, Histoire, économie et société*, XXIII/4 (2004), pp. 551-585.

35 Susan Skilliter, “Catherine de’ Medici’s Turkish Ladies-in-Waiting: A Dilemma in Franco-Ottoman Diplomatic Relations,” *Turcica*, 7 (1975), pp. 188–204: 198-199.

36 *Mühimme Defteri MD X*, n° 253 and 256.

37 For the nature of adversity between Istanbul and Marrakesh in the third quarter of 16th century, see Chantal de la Véronne, “Relations entre le Maroc et la Turquie dans la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle et le début du XVIIe siècle (1554-1616),” *Revue de l’Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* XVI (1978), pp. 391-401 et Işiksel, “Ottoman Suzerainty over Morocco”.

concentrating all his efforts to repel Don Juan of Austria from the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>38</sup> According to the Spanish sources, al-Ghalib not only declined the Ottoman offer but rejected the ambassador as well.<sup>39</sup>

An order addressed to Ali Pasha in the first months of 1574, points toward Hacı Murad again as the governor of Midye and as the chief mediator of a Ottoman-Moroccan rapprochement before the renewed Ottoman expedition to Tunis which had to take place in the summer of that year.<sup>40</sup> This time the conjuncture was, however, different. After the death of al-Ghalib in January 1574, his son Mohammed al-Mutawwakil (r. 1574-1576) was not willing to show outright hostility to the Porte, knowing that his uncle in Istanbul, Abd al-Malik, could conspire to dethrone him, thanks to the favor he enjoys in the Ottoman court. This precarious situation made al-Mutawwakil send a mission to Ottoman capital while Abd al-Malik was in constant negotiations both in Istanbul and Madrid in order to secure the throne. Both of these courts were eager to give support to this convenient candidate, since their common political objectives was to predominate in Morocco. Spain needed at least to control the Atlantic littoral of the country, especially Larache, in order to assure the safe return of Spanish ships from America, while Murad III was eager to extend his sovereignty as far as the Atlantic, or at least to neutralize the only possible contestant to his authority in the region.

Abd al-Malik's access to throne in 1576 with the support of Madrid and Istanbul created the conditions of a general accord between the three powers whilst his son Ismail, from his marriage with Hacı Murad's daughter, became the heir apparent. In effect, Abd al-Malik dethroned his nephew al-Mutawwakil, after a field battle in which both Ottoman and Spanish soldiers were engaged. A year later, in August 1577, Hacı Murad was negotiating in Algiers with Philip II's envoy for a treaty between Murad III (1574-1596) and the King, while at the same time, Ramazan Paşa, the Governor-General of Algeria, hostile to a truce between Madrid and Istanbul, was deposed, seemingly after Abd al-Malik's request.<sup>41</sup> The

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38 *MD* XII, n° 665. See also the report of Andrea Gasparo Corso to Philip II dated 13 July 1572, *SIHM*, Espagne, vol. III, pp. 184-185.

39 *SIHM*, Espagne, vol. III, pp. 184.

40 *MD* XXIV, n° 278. For this mission see also Jean Canavaggio, "Le 'Vrai' visage," pp. 26-29.

41 *SIHM*, Espagne, tome III, pp. 327-335. For the subsequent phases of the negotiations: Susan Skilliter, "The Hispano-Ottoman Armistice of 1581", in: Clifford E. Bosworth (ed.), *Iran and Islam: In Memory of the Late Vladimir Minorsky*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1971, pp. 491-515.

détente was, however, temporary. Next year on August 4, the allied forces of Sebastian, the King of Portugal and al-Mutawwakil attacked Abd al-Malik near Larache, outside the fortress of Ksar al-Kabir. All perished during the battle – thence its name, the Battle of Three Kings.<sup>42</sup> After Abd al-Malik's death, Hacı Murad seems to be no longer implied in great politics. All the same, he was, at the time, still one of the richest notables of Algeria, as Cervantes suggested in his *opus magnum*. Cunningly, he remarried his daughter to Hasan Paşa, the new Governor-General of Algeria (1577-1580; 1582-1587).

*A career in betwixt Algiers and İstanbul*

If Algiers and İstanbul were strategic partners, it was not only due to the frequent exchanges in administrative and naval domains (technological, logistical and personnel) but also because of common foreign policy objectives. Among others, two of these are worthy of emphasis: Limitation of Spain's overwhelming power in Western Mediterranean (and objective alliance with France and further in the century, with England) and containment of Morocco in North Africa. The management of the strategic partnership was in the hands of few corsair-entrepreneur dynasties who navigated frequently between Algiers and the Golden Horn. Their large network and *savoir-faire* in both realms enabled them to negotiate the nomination and promotion of their candidates to the key positions in the various levels of administration; to conduct naval operations and to act as a strong actor in the Sublime Porte's decisions pertaining to Western Mediterranean.<sup>43</sup>

Hacı Murad was not a dignitary that one can find among the pages of chronicles, but neither was he unknown to the contemporary authors. He has been merely known as an Algerian notable inclined to the Spanish Kingdom. It is however certain that, he was by no means unique as a holder of multiple identities in this somber Early Modern Western Mediterranean.<sup>44</sup> Even if we cannot entirely reconstruct the complicated trajectory of Hacı Murad, we are certain about some facts. As a renegade from Dalmatian shores, he became an accomplished Ottoman

42 Cf. Lucette Valensi, *Fables de la mémoire. La glorieuse bataille des trois Rois*, (Paris: Seuil, 1992); Chantal de la Véronne, *Histoire sommaire des Sâdiens au Maroc*, (Paris : Geuthner, 1997).

43 Emrah Safa Gürkan, "The Center and the Frontier: Ottoman Cooperation with the North African Corsairs in the Sixteenth Century," *Turkish Historical Review*, 1/2 (2010), pp. 125-163.

44 Cf. Mercedes García-Arenal, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

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diplomat due to his several missions to France, Morocco and Tunisia. Although we cannot ascertain if he also secretly acted as a double agent, suffice to say that he maintained close ties with the Spanish court, just like Uluc Ali's right hand Memi Corso who passed on classified information about Ottomans and Algerians to the Spaniards. At the same time, he was passing information about Spain back to the Porte and to the Governor-General of Algeria. In addition to his diplomatic dealings, Hacı Murad continued his activities as a merchant, active especially in the slave trade as Cervantes copiously depicted.

His political involvements may as well be interpreted as a series of calculated acts in order to secure for himself as well as for his family a strong position in Early Modern Algiers where the access to the "throne" depended mostly on a well-balanced financial and social capital. None of the extant sources suggest Hacı Murad's feats as a corsair although he owned two galleys. They rather refer to diplomatic services he rendered to the Ottoman sultan, to the Algerian governorate and to the Moroccan pretender to the throne –later sultan– and his son-in-law, Abd al-Malik. Latter's death in 1578 coincide with the relative silence of the sources about Hacı Murad's subsequent activities. As to his grandson, Mawlay Ismail, an important instrument in the hands of Uluc Ali and Hasan Pasha to squeeze Morocco, he relentlessly fought with his paternal uncle Ahmed al-Mansur (1578-1603) in order to recuperate the throne.<sup>45</sup>

*Hacı Murad (Agi Morato): An Elusive Dignitary Active in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*

Abstract ■ This paper focuses on Hacı Murad, a Dalmatian renegade who entered to the service of the Ottoman sultan in the mid-sixteenth century. Hacı Murad mobilized his considerable talents (linguistic, nautical, social as well as political) to become an accomplished diplomat as he moved regularly between eastern and western shores of the Mediterranean. He offered his services to Ottoman sultans, to Algerian governor-generals and to the Moroccan sultan Abd al-Malik whilst negotiating with the Spanish King and his emissaries. His trajectory constitutes an example which illustrates the complexities while treating trans-"national" identity formations of the sixteenth century.

Keywords: Early modern diplomacy, Ottomans and the neighboring powers, North African Regencies, trans-national identities, Cervantes studies.

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45 *SIHM*, Angleterre. Serie I, Comte de Castries (ed.), (Paris: Paul Geuthner; London: Luzac et Cie, 1918), pp. 154-155.

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