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THE CONTRIBUTION OF VENICE'S COLONIES TO ITS
NAVAL WARFARE IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

1. *Introduction*

Venice was a maritime economic power that was based on its maritime transportation, commercial routes and on its colonies. In the fifteenth century the Venetian Empire included Dalmatia and the Islands along its coast in the central Adriatic Sea and Albany further to the south, and consisted of Islands in the Ionian Sea at the entrance of the Adriatic, as well as of islands in the Aegean and territories in the Peloponnese. Notwithstanding the loss of Negroponte in 1470, the most important colony in the northern Aegean, the Venetian Empire extended to its maximum in this period¹. Venice's territorial expansion began, as we shall see below, in the late fourteenth century, not by conquests but as a consequence of the annexation with the local inhabitants' consent, or by the request of the local rulers. Due to defensive motives Venice answered positively, preventing the fall of these territories to the hands of her rivals. The trigger to Venice's territorial expansion came from the War of Tenedos/ Chioggia (1377-1381) that had a direct bearing on Venice's geopolitical and commercial policy till the end of the first half of the fifteenth century on one hand, and on the other, the Venice's naval power and warfare in this century.

The War of Tenedos/Chioggia was the Fourth one and the climax in the bloody conflicts between Venice and Genoa, its hereditary rival, over the control of the international trade between the Far East

List of abbreviations: Asv, Archivio di Stato di Venezia; Bnmv, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venezia.

¹ B. Arbel, *Colonie d'oltremare*, in A. Tenenti, U. Tucci (eds.), *Storia di Venezia*, V, Venezia Rinascimentale, Roma, 1996, pp. 946-985, here, pp. 948, 951-2; D.A. Zakythinis, *L'attitude de Venise face au Déclin et à la chute de Constantinople*, in H.G. Beck, M. Manoussacas, A. Pertusi (eds.), *Venezia centro di mediazione tra Oriente e Occidente (secoli XV-XVI), aspetti e problemi*, Firenze, L. S. Olschki, 1977, vol. I, pp. 62-90, here, p. 67.

and the Black Sea via the eastern Mediterranean ports to northern Italy, southern and central Europe. The war took place, as implied by its name, both in the NE Aegean and in the Adriatic Sea. In the northeast Aegean Venice fought against Genoa over the occupation of the Island of Tenedos (1377) that controlled the sea-lanes leading to Constantinople and the Black Sea through the Straits of the Dardanelles. This war spread into the Adriatic where Genoa joined forces with Hungary, the rival of Venice for the control of Dalmatia in the eastern Adriatic Sea and with the enemies of Venice in its hinterland to besiege Chioggia (1379-1380), the out post of Venice in the southern Lidi. Venice, who won the war and defeated Genoa in Chioggia, lost the peace negotiation. The Pact of Turin (1381) that ended this war compelled Venice, among other obligations, to surrender in two month the Island of Tenedos, after having evacuated the Island of its population and after the destruction of its fortifications, to a third party, to Amadeus Count of Savoy, who was the arbitrator between the two hostile communes². From naval point of view, the war of Tenedos/Chioggia aggravated the condition of Venetian naval fleet and its sea power due to two intermingled reasons.

First, there was a major monetary and economic crisis in Venice³ that affected the size and maintenance of the Venetian permanent fleet, the fleet of the Adriatic, as Venice met difficulties to finance the construction of galleys and other battle ships and to pay the salaries of the manpower⁴. In the long run, the monetary crisis after the War

² For the background of the war of Tenedos and the anti-Venetian coalition till the surrender of the Genoese and their allies in Chioggia in June 1380, see: R. Cessi, *Storia della repubblica di Venezia*, Firenze, 1981 (new edition), pp. 327-330; S. Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, Venezia, Filippi, 1972-1975, 1972, vol. III, pp. 186-214; F. Thiriet, *Venise et l'occupation de Ténédos au XIV^e siècle*, in Id., *Etudes sur la Romanie greco-vénitienne (Xe- XVe siècles)*, London, Variorum Reprints, 1977, n. II, pp. 220-228. The author's analyze of the outcomes and the conclusions needs however, revision. Ragusa joined the coalition due to independent motives: B. Krekić, *Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and the War of Tenedos/Chioggia (1378-1381)*, in Id., *Dubrovnik, Italy and the Balkans in the Late Middle Ages*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1980, n. VI, pp. 2-3; Id., *Le relazioni fra Venezia, Ragusa e le popolazioni serbo-croate*, *ibid.*, n. IV, pp. 395-8. For the complete list of clauses of the pact of Turin see: S. Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia* cit, pp. 214-216.

³ R.C. Mueller, *Effetti della guerra di Chioggia (1378-1381) sulla vita economica e sociale di Venezia*, «Ateneo Veneto», vol. 19 (1981), pp. 27-41.

⁴ C. Manfroni, *La crisi della marina militare di Venezia dopo la guerra di Chioggia*, «Atti del Reale Istituto di Scienze, Lettera ed Arte», 69, n. 2 (1910), pp. 983-99.

of Tenedos/Chioggia caused also the emptying of the treasure of the colonies for the sole benefit of the Metropolis. Consequently, the colonies could not invest resources in the building, maintenance and defense of their ports and port towns. This led to the eventual fall in the late fifteenth century of three of the most important Venetian colonies, Negroponte in 1470, Modon and Coron in 1500, into the hands of the Ottoman Turks.

Furthermore, the Pact of Turin (1381) forced Venice to implement the earlier Pact of Ragusa (1358), according to which Venice had to relinquish Dalmatia, Zara and Ragusa to Hungary. Consequently, the Venetian doge had to remove the title of the Duke of Dalmatia and Zara, which he had held since 1002⁵. Venice had also to acknowledge Ragusa, although this city was not included in the treaty of Turin, as an independent emporium. Ragusa had extensively evolved in the second half of the fourteenth century, and became a competitor to Venice on the trade between the Balkan and Europe on one hand, and on the other between the Adriatic and the ports of Sicily, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea⁶. One could safely argue that the pact of Turin (1381), which confirmed the Pact of Zara (1358), forced Venice to acknowledge officially and publicly the collapse of her political-economic and military supremacy in the Adriatic. Consequently she had to give up calling the Adriatic the Gulf of Venice, which of course she refused doing as her official documents show.

From the naval point of view, Venice lost by these territorial loss of Dalmatia and Ragusa a major source of man power, which had been indispensable especially after the Black Death (1347-1349). Dalmatia and Ragusa supplied the missing man power, especially of rowers, in both Venetian fleets, commercial and naval. Furthermore, they provided quite often a whole crew to replace the one on the galleys that became exhausted on the way back from the Mediterranean to Venice⁷. Venice's initiation in 1329 of the building of an arsenal in

⁵ R. Cessi, *Storia della repubblica di Venezia* cit., pp. 319-21; F.C. Lane, *Venice a Maritime Republic*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1973, p. 184.

⁶ B. Krekić, *Un mercante e diplomatico da Dubrovnik (Ragusa) a Venezia nel trecento*, in Id., *Dubrovnik and the Balkans in the Late Middle Ages* cit., n. V, pp. 77-80, 85-88, 101.

⁷ C. Manfroni, *La crisi della marina militare di Venezia dopo la guerra di Chioggia* cit., p. 985; F.C. Lane, *Venetian Seamen in the Nautical Revolution of the Middle Ages*, in B.G. Kohl, R.C. Mueller (eds.), F.C. Lane, *Studies in Venetian*

Ragusa for the construction and maintenance of battle ships and that supplied every year two manned armed galleys for the Venetian fleet⁸ points, undoubtedly, to the important role Ragusa that played in Venice's naval warfare and in the defense of the Adriatic. Only after Venice's re-annexation of Dalmatia, partly by purchase partly after military victories, that was contemplated in the third decade of the fifteenth century, did the port towns along this coast arm again galleys to the Venetian naval fleet. These galleys were named after their providers⁹. Moreover, by the loss of Dalmatia in 1358 that was ratified in 1381 Venice lost essential naval bases for its naval fleet and anchorages for its commercial fleet, mainly in Ragusa, that provided them along with information, water and biscuits. Till 1358 Ragusa was the last port of call for the Venetian naval and commercial fleets before leaving the Adriatic, and the first one when entering this water zone. The fact that even after Venice had relinquished in 1358 Ragusa to Hungary, the Venetian fleet that left Venice in 1364 for Crete to suppress the local revolt (1363-1365) anchored in Ragusa to provide with food makes the point very clear¹⁰. In the war

Social and Economic History, London, Variorum Reprints, 1987, n. VII, p. 422; B. Krekić, *Le relazioni fra Venezia, Ragusa e le popolazioni serbo-croate* in Id., *Dubrovnik, Italy and the Balkans in the Late Middle Ages*, Variorum Reprint cit., n. IV, p. 392. Corfu, could not replace Dalmatia in this field. Only after Venice had resumed in the fifteenth century the control on Dalmatia, this area re-contributed again to the Venetian naval fleet, as is discussed below. J.-Cl. Hocquet, *Gens de mer a Venise: diversite des statuts, conditions de vie et de travail sur les navires*, in R. Ragosta (ed.), *Le genti del mare Mediterraneo*, Napoli, Pironti, 1983, pp. 103-168, here, pp. 140-141.

⁸ R. Cessi and P. Sambin, *Le Deliberazioni del Consiglio dei Rogati (Senato)*, Serie "mixtorium", Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Venezie, Venice, 1960, vol. I, p. 279, n. 414: March 1324; B Krekić, *Dubrovnik (Raguse) et le Levant au moyen age*, Paris, Mouton, 1961, p. 34 and p. 185, n. 122: 24 March 1324; G. Giomo, *I Misti del Senato della Repubblica Veneta 1293-1331*, Amsterdam, A. M. Hakkert, 1970 (rep.), p. 41, Oct. 1326; A. Tenenti, *Venezia e la pirateria nel Levante: 1300 c.-1460 c.*, in A. Pertusi (ed.), *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV*, Firenze, L. S. Olschki, 1973, vol. I/II, pp. 704-771, here, p. 717.

⁹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 49, f. 20v: 1 September 1412; reg. 58, f. 50r: 21 April 1430; f. 54v: 23 May 1431; f. 98v: 28 February. 1431; Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 2, ff. 113v-114r: 16 December 1445; reg. 3, f. 187v: 17 May 1450; reg. 10, f. 126v: 15 June 1477; f. 157r: 17 March 1478 and *passim*. M. N. Mocenigo, *La Dalmazia veneta*, «Ateneo Veneto», Anno CXXXIII, 129, nn. 4-5-6 (1942), pp. 65-71, here, pp. 56-66. Regarding the annexation of Dalmatia, see below.

¹⁰ B. Krekić, *Le role de Dubrovnik (Raguse) dans la navigation des mudae vénitienes au XIV^e siècle*, in Id., *A Mediterranean Urban Society, 1300-1600*, Variorum Collec-

of Chioggia (1380), on the other hand, the naval bases along the Dalmatian coast were used by the Genoese fleet¹¹.

Due to the crisis suffered as a result of the war of Tenedos/Chioggia, Venice forced its colonies to take, from the late fourteenth century, an extensive part in the defense system of its maritime empire and of its maritime commerce. The aim of this study is to examine the contribution of the Venetian colonies in the Ionian and Aegean Seas to Venice's naval fleet and naval warfare in the fifteenth century. I will focus on the Island of Crete in the SW Aegean, on the Island of Negroponte, in the northern Aegean, till its conquest by the Ottomans in 1470, on Coron and Modon in the SW Peloponnese and on the Island of Corfu in the northern Ionian.

2. Conflicts of interests and naval warfare in the Eastern Mediterranean

In the fifteenth century Venice had to confront different political powers that endangered her maritime commerce and that threatened her maritime empire. The first of them was Genoa, the hereditary rival of Venice, over the control of the international exchange between the Far East, the Black Sea, the Eastern Mediterranean and northern Italy and central and southern Europe. Genoa made enormous efforts till the end of the first half of the fifteenth century, in spite of the coups d'état she suffered that caused her submission to foreign powers, in 1396 to France and in 1426 to Milan¹², to revenge her defeat in Chioggia, which failed her to destroy Venice and to get the whole control over the above-mentioned international trade. Furthermore, Genoa's frustration grew due to Venice's successes, by using sophisticated and scheming diplomacy, to continue, contrary

ted Studies, Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 1997, XII, pp. 248-250; Id., *Trois fragments concernant les relations entre Dubrovnik (Raguse) et l'Italie au XIV^e siècle*, in Id., *Dubrovnik, Italy and the Balkans in the Late Middle Ages* cit., London, 1980, n. II, pp. 23-27.

¹¹ Id., *Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and the War of Tenedos/Chioggia (1378-1381)*, *ibid.*, n. VI.

¹² The coups d'état in Genoa between 1390-1394 caused to the rise and fall of ten Doges: E. P. Wardi, *Le strategie famillari di un Doge di Genova. Antoniotto Adorono 1378-1398*, Scriptorium, Turin, 1966; the submission to France and Milan: E. Jarry, *Les origines de la domination française à Gênes (1392-1402)*, Paris, 1896; J. Heers, *Gênes au XV^e siècle*, Paris, Flammarion, 1961; G. Pistarino, *La capitale del Mediterraneo: Genova nel Medioevo*, Gênes, 1993, Collana Storica di Fonti e Studi italo-ellenici diretta da Geo Pistarino e Andreas Mazarakis, serie studi, 1.

to the Pact of Turin, to hold the Island of Tenedos officially for two years and five month¹³, and unofficially till its fall to the Ottomans in the 1450s. Not even the refusal of the Byzantine Emperor, the original owner of the Island of Tenedos, to renew, between 1381 and 1405, the treaty with Venice, which had run its five-year course, changed Venice's mind¹⁴. Due to rumors in March 1406, that turned to be false, that the Emperor had intended, in collaboration with the Genoese of Pera, to fortify Tenedos, the Venetian Senate ordered to send the captain of the Adriatic with the fleet of the Adriatic to take over the Island overtly. Eventually, Venice's determination won, and the treaty with Byzantium was renewed in 1406, and it included a clause that said: «regarding the Island of Tenedos, nothing will be said at present, but the issue will be detained as long as the treaties between us persist»¹⁵. Furthermore, Venice continued to make the Island a port of call for her merchant galleys on their way to the Black Sea or on their way back, in spite of the explicit prohibition to anchor in the Island, compelled by the Pact of Turin on both Genoa and Venice. In 1415, The captain of the convoy returning from Tana, wrote to the Metropolis on the Ottomans' preparations of a big fleet in Gallipoli in the Dardanelles for attacking Venetian ships. Two copies of the letters were sent to Venice, carried by two commercial ships of *navis* type, one of which arrived at Candia, Crete¹⁶. In 1425 the Island of Tenedos was mentioned explicitly in relation to Genoese

¹³ Asv, reg. 38, f. 113r: 14 April 1384. The discussion on that day dealt with the requirement from Genoa for a formal document that dismissed Venice and her guarantors from their obligations regarding the issue. Three month earlier, in January, the inhabitants of Tenedos had been transferred to Crete and Negroponte: F. Thiriet, *Venise et l'occupation de Ténédos au XIV^e siècles* cit., p. 236 and n. 2.

¹⁴ Regarding the Byzantine claim to the Island and the emperor's refusal to renew the pact with Venice, see: F. Thiriet, *Venise et l'occupation de Ténédos au XIV^e siècle* cit., pp. 238-239; D. M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and Sydney, 1988, pp. 322, 328-329. During this period the pact was renewed only once, in 1390, due to special circumstances, *ibid.*, p. 329.

¹⁵ F. Thiriet, *Venise et l'occupation de Ténédos au XIV^e siècle* cit., The English translation is mine.

¹⁶ Asv, Duca di Candia Lettere Ricevute, b1, n. 6, ff. 27v-28r: 28 November 1415. Stöckly indicates, without pointing to the exact document, that the Island of Tenedos was a port of call for the merchant galleys of Roomania only in 1387. She, however, refers to this example as an exception; according to her the Island was marginal along the navigation route: D. Stöckly, *Le Système de l'incanto des galées du marché à*

threat. The Venetian *naves* going to Romania had to sail to Modon or Coron in SW Peloponnese, to expect there for the instructions of the Captain General of the Venetian fleet, and to sail from there in a convoy, accompanied by a special *navis* armed against pirates to Tenedos, thence to Gallipoli, due to the presence of Genoese galleys in the NE Mediterranean¹⁷. Six years later, the Island of Tenedos was mentioned again in a direct relation to the Genoese. It was in 1431, when the Venetian naval fleet attacked the Island of Chios, in the frame of the war between Venice and the Duke of Milan, of whom Genoa was subordinate at the time. Genoese government of Chios, the *Mahonesi*, had to prevent Venice to take advantage of this new situation to build any fortified construction on the Island of Tenedos, that will be an overt declaration of Venetian occupation of the Island¹⁸.

The success of Venice's manipulative maneuvers to hold the Island of Tenedos lead the Genoese to invest efforts that eventually failed to hit Venice again close to her home, starting in the Ionian Sea, by taking over two locations, which Venice aimed to possess also at possessing. These were the Island of Corfu in the northern Ionian and Navarino (medieval Zonchio), in the SW. The struggles for these two places that started on the morrow of the Pact of Turin and that intermingled till they ended in the 1420s, spread into the southern Adriatic to Durres (medieval Durazzo). The outcomes of these events had important implications on the geopolitical condition in the Adriatic and the Eastern Mediterranean during the fifteenth century. The

Venise (fin XIII^e milieu XV^e siècle), E. J. Brill, Leiden-New York-Köln, 1995, p. 111. It should be, however, pointed out that the resolution of the Venetian Senate, referring to the incanto of the merchant galleys sailing to Romania in 1387 does not mention any ports of call along en route: Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 40, ff. 153v-154r: 1 July 1387. It should be also noted that according to navigation conditions in the NE Aegean, the Island of Tenedos was an obligatory port of call for a shelter against strong prevailing winds both with provisioning with water. Unfortunately this important issue is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is in process of publication by the present author.

¹⁷ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 55, f. 107r: 2 April 1425. *Navis* is a general term to a cargo sailing ship: R. Gertwagen, *Characteristics of Mediterranean Sea Going Ships of the 13th-15th Centuries*, in J. Alemany et als (eds.), *Mediterranean. Splendour of the Medieval Mediterranean 13th-15th Centuries*, Lunwerg editors, Barcelona, 2005, pp. 543-561, here, p. 546; on the *naves*, in the fifteenth century of the cog type against pirates, see below.

¹⁸ On this war, see below and n. 61.

significance of the effects will be, however, blurred, unless they will be followed according to their happening.

The strategic importance of the Island of Corfu, situated in the northern Ionian along the crossroads of sea-lanes connecting both basins of the Mediterranean and those that connect the Adriatic with these both basins is conspicuous. For Venice, the possession of the Island was crucial due to several combined defensive motives. Strategically, to compensate for the conclusive loss to Angevine Hungary of Dalmatia and Ragusa as naval bases. In another words, the Island of Corfu was to provide the Venetian naval fleet, the fleet of the Adriatic, with a base to enable it to impede the entrance of hostile fleets into the Adriatic and in particular, to prevent a new collaboration – economic and military – between Genoa and Hungary. Such a permanent base was essential for the Venetian Adriatic fleet for logistic purposes and for provisioning of water, needed in the long Adriatic dry summer¹⁹.

One has to bear in mind that Genoa had succeeded by the pact of Milan (1355) that ended her Third War with Venice, the War of the Bosphorus (1352-1355), to regulate the navigation of the Genoese mercantile marine in the Adriatic to Dalmatia, where it received the goods, brought from the Mouth of the Danube in the Black Sea via Hungary. During this war the Genoese had conquered the former Byzantine ports in the mouth of the Danube, including Kilia, rich with vast fertile wheat fields, while the Hungarians conquered in 1355 the territories of the Mongols of the Golden Hord along the Danube in the Black Sea. These conquests enabled the Hungarians to control the route that lead from the Black Sea to Transylvania along the Danube. The Genoese, who cut the Venice off an important source of wheat in the Black Sea, took advantage of their ties with the Hungarians for the transportation of the Far Eastern luxurious goods and the local commodities of the Black Sea by Genoese merchants from the port of Kilia in the mouth of the Danube to Hungary. After the conquest of Dalmatia by Hungary in the 1350s, these commodities were brought into the Adriatic. Thus Genoa challenged and threatened Venice at its thresholds as the reloading port in the northern Adriatic for the international trade between the Far East, the Black Sea and northern Italy and central and southern Europe.

¹⁹ Later on, I'll refer to the exact location in the Island of Corfu for provisioning of water.

Genoa's achievement in the Adriatic undoubtedly sharpened Venice's awareness to its loss of economic hegemony in this zone, known for years, as above-mentioned, as the "Gulf of Venice". Papacostea claims that this Genoese-Hungarian collaboration was the essential factor that connected the Third Genoese war with the Fourth one, The War of Tenedos/Chioggia (1377-1381)²⁰. If the Genoese and the Hungarians had continued this activity after this Fourth War, they would have inflicted a deadly blow on Venice, albeit their defeat in Chioggia. One has also to keep in mind that the pact of Turin forbade both Venice and Genoa to sail for two years to Tana in the Sea of Azov, the important reloading port in the NE of the Black Sea, for the Far Eastern and south Russian commodities. As the Genoese accomplished in 1380 the conquest of the shore of the Mongol peninsula of Crimea, including the Venetian quarters in the local port towns, they could have bypassed this interdiction and could trade with Tana through their colony in Caffa, whereas the Venetians were excluded completely from this region. In fact, the Pact of Turin enabled the Genoese to achieve their goal since the 1270s, to prevent Venice to reach the important port of Tana²¹. The only ports in the Black Sea Venice could frequent were Bulgarian Varna and Anchiolos in the west, and Trebizond in the south²². By holding the Island of Corfu, Venice could give the Genoese-Hungarian economic collab-

²⁰ S. Papacostea, *De Vicina à Kilia. Byzantines et Genoïis aux bouches du Danube au XIV^e siècle*, «Revue des Etudes sud-est Européennes», vol. XVII, n. 1 (1978), pp. 65-79, here, pp. 73-9; Id., *Quod non iretur ad Tanam: un aspect fondamental de la politique génoise dans la mer Noire au XIV^e siècle*, *ibid.*, XVII, n. 2 (1979), pp. 201-21, here pp. 215-6; Id., *De la guerre du Bosphore à la guerre de Ténédos: rivalités commerciales et alignements politiques dans le sud-est de l'Europe dans la seconde moitié du XIV^e siècle*, in M. Balard, A. Ducellier (eds.), *Coloniser au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1995, pp. 341-348, here, pp. 345, 344-345, and n. 16; A. Niculescu, *Vénitiens et Génois, acteurs de la colonisation dans les Pays roumains et aux bouches du Danube aux XIV^e-XV^e siècles*, in M. Balard, A. Ducellier (eds.), *Le partage du monde, échanges et colonisation dans la Méditerranée Médiévale*, Paris, A. Colin, 1998, pp. 233-258, here pp. 237-241; 247-248.

²¹ M. Balard, *Gênes et la mer Noire (XIII^e - XV^e siècles)*, «Revue Historique», vol. 270, n. 1 (1983), pp. 31-54, here, pp. 44, 47-49; Id., *La Romanie génoise*, (XII^e – début du XV^e siècle), Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, Gênes-Rome, 1978, 2 vols., here, vol. I, pp. 150-162; S. Papacostea, *Quod non iretur ad Tanam: un aspect fondamental de la politique génoise dans la mer Noire au XIV^e siècle* cit., pp. 201-203 and n. 3, pp. 214-215.

²² S. Karpov, *L'Impero di Trebizonda Venezia Genova e Roma 1204-1461, rapporti politici, diplomatici e commerciali*, Veltro, Roma, 1986, p. 108.

oration and the Genoese mercantile marine, entering and leaving the Adriatic, a hard time. Certainly Venice could impede the Genoese naval fleet to enter the Adriatic and to use Dalmatia again as a front base to attack Venice as it did in the War of Chioggia (1379-1380). Moreover, Venice could blockade also the movement of the Hungarian fleet in the central and southern Adriatic, where it was quite free since 1348. Venice's efforts to purchase the Island in that year unfortunately failed²³. Undoubtedly, by occupation of Corfu Venice could keep its trade routes, leaving and entering the Adriatic, free.

Alternatively, for Genoa, occupation of the Island of Corfu, meant blockading the Venetian trade routes to both basins of the Mediterranean, mainly to the eastern one that was the major scene of the international commerce with northern Italy, southern and central Europe, and therefore of the conflicts between the two communes. It should be noted that Venice tried to soften the blow it suffered by the Pact of Turin by initiating heavy investments in Mamluk Syria and Egypt, where the Genoese had already been well established, by demanding in 1382 from the Mamluk Sultan to set up a colony in Damietta in Egypt. In fact, the number of the merchant galleys sailing to Alexandria and especially to Beirut and the rate of their leasing exceeded those sailing to the Black Sea²⁴. As we shall see below, the issue of the commerce in the Mamluk Levant was another important cause for the intensification of the strained relations between the Genoese and the Venetians that ended in 1403 in other violent confrontations between the two republics. By holding the Island of Corfu the Genoese would have blockaded the Venetian trade route to the Mamluk Levant both with forcing Venice to deliver the Island of Tenedos, as this latter was compelled to by the Pact of Turin, to a

²³ R. Cessi, *Storia della repubblica di Venezia* cit., p. 305. Regarding Venice's efforts to buy the Island in 1348, see: B. Krekić, *Dubrovnik (Raguse) et le Levant au moyen âge* cit., p. 35; F. Thiriet, *Les interventions vénitienes dans les îles ioniennes au XIV^e siècle*, in Id., *Études sur la Romanie greco-vénitienne (Xe-XVe siècles)*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1977, n. X, p. 384; Spyros, N. Asonitis, *Mentalities and Behaviours of the Feudal Class of Corfu during the Late Middle Ages*, «Balkan Studies», vol. 39, n. 2 (1998), pp. 197-221, here pp. 203-5.

²⁴ E. Ashtor, *The Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1983, pp. 111-126; Pavan, who uses erroneously Ashtor, indicates wrongly that the Black Sea trade, specially the spice trade, dwindled in the late fourteenth century and therefore it was shifted to Syria and Egypt: E. Crouzet-Pavan, *Venice Triumphant, the Horizons of a Myth*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 2002, p. 75 and n. 66.

third party, Amadeus, the Count of Savoy, the arbitrator. Then, however, the Genoese themselves would have occupied the Island. This danger was substantial due to the arrogant declaration in January 1382 of the Genoese delegate, Benedetto della Torre, to the Venetian governor of the Island, Mudazzo, that the moment the Venetians evacuate the Island the Genoese would occupy it²⁵. In another words, with Corfu in her hands, Genoa could have accomplished the goal she failed to gain by her defeat at Chioggia, to inflict a fatal blow on Venice mercantile activity in the eastern Mediterranean, and thus to force Venice to retreat to a mere ordinary north Italian city state.

Zonchio, situated along the western coast of the Peloponnese, was another site of a great strategic importance. It enjoyed two crucial advantages that both Corfu and Modon, the Venetian colony in SW Peloponnese, south to Zonchio, lacked. Zonchio possessed a natural bay that provided protection against the prevailing stormy winds, adequate depth of water for the draft of all kinds of ships and abundance of running water²⁶. If the Genoese had taken over Zonchio, they might have threatened Venetian Modon and Coron, Venice's "two eyes" in the Peloponnese. Moreover, even without Corfu, the

²⁵ Benedetto's declaration was quoted in Mudazzo's letter to the Senate in January 1381 (1382): F. Thiriet, *Venise et l'occupation de Ténédos au XIV^e siècle* cit., p. 231 and n. 1.

²⁶ For the natural advantages of Navarino, see: *Mediterranean Pilot*, London, 1957, (8th edition), III, 50-2; for Provisioning there with water, see: G. Airaldi, *Roger of Lauria's Expedition to the Peloponnese*, «Mediterranean Historical Review», n. 1-2, vol. 10 (1995), pp. 14-23, here, p. 17; for Modon and the deficiency of the place and its port see: R. Gertwagen, *Venetian Modon and its Port, 1358-1500 in Mediterranean Urban Culture*, ed. A. Cowan, Exeter Univeristy Press, Exeter, 2000, pp. 125-48, 148-54, here, pp. 132-8; on lack of water in Modon, see: Ch. Schefer (ed.) *Le voyage de la Sainte Cyté de Hierusalem avec la description des lieux, portz, vilees, citez et aultres passages fait l'an 1480*, Philo Press, Amsterdam, 1970, p. 147; C.D. Hassler (ed.), *Fratris Felicis Fabri Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem*, vols. I-III, Stuttgart, 1843, Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins, vol. III, p. 332; for the lack of water in the town of Corfu; see: M. M. Newett (ed.), *Canon Pietro Casola's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, Manchester University press, Manchester, 1907, p. 184; for this reason, the Venetian Senate instructed in 1495 to build a well of 8000 *botti*: Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 14, f. 85r: 5 Decembre 1495; running water in Corfu was in the natural haven of Cazzopli (Cassiopo) in NE of the Island. The anchorage in the Canal of Corfu and in front of the town is exposed to the Prevailing strong winds that increase, accordingly, the sea currents: *Mediterranean Pilot*, 1988, 10th edition, III, p. 14, n. 1.23, p. 152, n. 5.82; *ibid.*, 1957, 8th edition, p. 11. The discussions in the Venetian

Genoese might have cut off the Venetian sea-lane from the Adriatic Sea to the eastern Mediterranean as well as the Venetian ships from important source of water. In another words, for Genoa, the possession of Zonchio might have compensated the inability to occupy the Island of Corfu. By holding Zonchio they might have also forced Venice to retreat to a mere ordinary north Italian city state.

The “first round” in the contest between Venice and Genoa over strategic posts in the Ionian, started with Corfu in 1382, continued with Zonchio at the end of 1384 or early 1385, and terminated in 1386 with important achievements for Venice, albeit Genoa’s great advantage over Venice. Karlo III, the King of Naples, the pretender to the possession of the Island of Corfu that became its lord after the death in 1382 of Prince of Tarent, the legitimate lord of the Island, had been a former ally of the Genoese in the War of Chioggia that ended the war of Tenedos (1337-1380)²⁷. Nevertheless he did not give Corfu to the Genoese. Another advantage that Genoa enjoyed but that at the end of the day did not give her any positive results was Venice’s avoidance to surrender, as above-mentioned, the Island of Tendeos to Amedeus Count of Savoy. Saying that, lets keep in mind that the Island of Corfu was along the sea lane connecting the Western basin of the Mediterranean to the eastern one. The Genoese would not have, therefore, risen any suspicion of planning ahead the conquest of the Island by passing by it nor by landing in Cassiopo Bay at the NE of the Island. Cassiopo Bay was an obligatory port of call to all sort of vessels and sailors of what ever origin who passed in this water zone due to the local well and to the existence of a church dedicated to the Lady of Cassiopo, which sailors used to frequent and to thank for their safe voyage so far and for asking further protection to reach their ports of destination²⁸. If the Genoese had used the bay of Cassiopo as a base for invasion inside Corfu and conquered the Island, they could have justified their action in the

Senate in April 1387 referred to the possibility to construct a port north to the town of Corfu: Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 40, f. 78r: 22.4.1387. The construction operation of the port began, however, after long discussions, only in 1401 and was completed in the 1430s. Even after its construction, the artificial port of Corfu could not accommodate the merchant galleys and the *naves*, but only the war galleys. The port of Corfu is in process of publication by the present author.

²⁷ E. Bacchion, *Il dominio veneto su Corfù (1386-1797)*, Altino, Venezia, 1956, p. 17.

²⁸ *Fratri Felicis Fabri Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem* cit., vol. III, p. 352; Bnmv, Cristoforis Buondelmonti, *Isolario*, Ital., Class. VI,

aftermath – only to force the Venetians to obey the Pact of Turin regarding the Island of Tenedos. In another words, the Venetians were quite aware that if the Genoese had occupied Corfu, Venice's protests would have fallen on Amadeus' Count of Savoy and on other European “powers” deaf ears, as Venice had not yet handed over Tenedos. Furthermore due to the crisis that the Venetian naval power had suffered as a result of the war of Tenedos/Chioggia, Venice would have met difficulties to handle successfully another violent conflict with Genoa. In fact, such a Genoese threat regarding the Island of Corfu happened three times, in April 1383, in 1390 and in April 1403. No violent confrontation was, however, eventually reported in either event.

The danger of Genoese attack in 1383, lead the Venetian Senate to discuss for five successive days, since the twenty third of May 1383, Venice's reaction and the way of taking over Corfu, even by “snapping it away” from its legitimate lord, Karlo III²⁹. Indeed, after the attempt on Karlo III's life that ended with his death, the Venetians conquered in June 1386 with their local supporters the Old town of Corfu, built with two castles, the Castel a Terra and the Castel a Mare, on Cape Sidhero, more or less at the center of the eastern coast, as well as the Castle of Cassiopo with the church and the well, both, as above-mentioned, with special importance for all the mariners, using inevitably the sea lane through Corfu. Furthermore, the Venetians conquered also the castle Buthrinto, along the Albanian coast, opposite more or less to the NW end of the Island of Corfu. In Septembre 1386 the Venetians acquired Sajata that is located along the Albanian coast, more or less opposite the town of Corfu. By holding Buthrinto and Sajata along the Albanian coast, the Venetians broadened their defensive front further in the Albanian hinterland and ensured their control of Corfu canal and its northern access that were the sea lane from both the Western Mediterranean and the Adriatic to the Eastern Mediterranean. Both places were put therefore under the jurisdiction of the Venetian *bailo* of Corfu³⁰.

Cod. XIX (=6087), secolo XVI, f. 2r; W. Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, New York, 1908, p. 545 and n. 2.

²⁹ R. Gertwagen, *The Island Corfu in Venice's policy in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Early Modern Period (the 14th and first half of the 15th Centuries)*, «International Journal of Maritime History» in press in vol. 1.9, n. 1 (June 2007).

³⁰ Regarding the attempt on Karlo's III life and his death, see: S. Romanin, *Storia documentata di Venezia* cit., vol. III, p. 225. On the various arguments regarding the

Undoubtedly Genoa's annoyance grew due to its failure to occupy Zonchio a year earlier in 1385. The failure of Venice as well to purchase the place did not mitigate Genoa's frustration³¹. Due to the fear of Genoese retaliation, the Venetian Senate ordered since August 1386 to take various steps to protect Venice's achievements in the Island of Corfu, mainly by acquiring from the locals strategic places that she had not yet possessed, or by destroying those that were an easy access to Venice's enemies, like the castle of Cassiopo in NE end of the Island³². Since not all the Island had submitted to Venice, the Venetian Senate ordered in April 1387 to excavate a ditch at the east of the Castel a Terra, to separate the town that was the Venetian administrative centre from the rest of the Island, the major part of which was still at the hands of its legitimate ruler, Ladislas, King of Napoli³³.

A year after a new 'round' of contest between Venice and Genoa over strategic posts began. This time it spread into the southern Adriatic, to Durazzo. In 1387, Thopia, the Senior of Durazzo, asked the Genoese to take over the place, to protect it against the Ottomans, after Venice had previously declined his plea³⁴. By annexing Durazzo Genoa could have compensated herself for the loss

Venetian way to occupy Corfu see: E. Bacchion, *Il Dominio Veneziano su Corfu* cit., pp. 26-29. In April and May 1387, the Venetian Senate discussed the maintenance and fortification of the castle of Buthrinto, see: Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 40, f. 78r: 22 April 1387, f. 79v: 20 May 1387. It should be noted that Bacchion ignored these texts; V. Valentini, *dell'amministrazione veneta in Albania*, in A. Pertusi (ed.), *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV* cit., vol. I/II, pp. 843-910, here, p. 844 and n. 2; p. 847 and n. 3; for the importance of Cassiopo Bay with the church and the well from maritime point of view, see above, and n. 28.

³¹ R. Gertwagen, *The Island Corfu in Venice's policy in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Early Modern Period (the 14th and first half of the 15th Centuries)* cit.

³² *Ibid.* The author analyzes the whole defensive steps taken by Venice.

³³ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 40, f. 78r: 22 April, 1387.

³⁴ Regarding Durres (Durazzo) strategic importance due to its topographic location and features see: *Mediterranean Pilot*, vol. III, pp. 169-70. For the subject matter under discussion, only the strategic location of Durres, not its economic advantages, is emphasized. Thopia, the local Senior, was titled, since 1386 "the Prince of Albania and the Senior of Durazzo". On Thopia's appeal to Venice and Venice's evasion to annex Durazzo see: A. Ducellier, *Genesis and failure of the Albanian State in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries*, in Id., *L'Albanie entre Byzance et Venise, Xe-XVe siècles*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1987, n. XII, p. 12; Thopia's appeal to the Genoese was discussed by the Venetian Senate as introduction to the resolution to Venice's reaction: Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 40, f. 63v: 31 March 1387; the document, howe-

of Corfu to Venice and her failure to take over Zonchio. Durazzo would have enabled the Genoese to blockade at the southern Adriatic the Venetian sea lane to both basins of the Mediterranean. The hard navigation conditions through the Straits of Otranto, due to the topography of the coast of present southern Albania emphasizes the strategic importance of Durazzo. Furthermore, from a logistic point of view, Durazzo, unlike Corfu, had good forests with plenty of wood for the construction of ships and running water, two basic conditions for a permanent naval base and for a port of call for all types of ships. Venice, who saw the immediate danger of being suffocated by Genoa in the southern Adriatic, succeeded the same year to fail the deal between Genoa and Thopia. Venice herself won Durazzo in 1392, after Thopia's death, taking thus on herself the protection of the place against the Ottomans³⁵. Furthermore, with the purchase of Alessio (modern Lesh) in 1393, Scutari and Drivasti in 1396, due to their strategic location along the caravan rout leading to Durazzo from Dalmatia and Serbia as well as from Kosovo, that had already been at the time under Ottoman rule³⁶, Venice compensated herself

ver, does not indicate that Thopia approached the Genoese but "others" (than Venice). Valentini presumes that the "others" were either Napoli or Hungary: V. Valentini, *Dell' amministrazione veneta in Albania in A. Pertusi (ed.), Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV cit.*, vol. I/II, pp. 843-910, here, 850, n. 2; as the above-mentioned poisoning of Karlo III in June 1386 caused in both Hungary and Napoli to anarchy: S. Romanin, *Storia Documentata di Venezia cit.*, vol. III, pp. 224-7, it is, therefore, very unlikely that the Senior of Durazzo would have appealed to them. It is more reasonable that the "others" were the Genoese. Taking over Durazzo was part of Genoa's effort to control the sea lanes in the area. Venice herself refused Thopia's appeal as she tried at the late fourteenth century to avoid direct confrontation with the Ottomans. However, after Venice had failed the Durazzo-Genoese negotiation, she offered Thopia help against the Ottomans. In July 1388 the Venetian Senate instructed Venice's ambassador that was dispatched to the Ottoman Sultan to discuss the Ottomans' attacks in 1387 on Methoni and Corone how to handle Venice's military aid to Durazzo: Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 40, ff. 126-7: 24 July 1388, in J. Chrysostomides (ed.), *Monumenta Peloponnesiaca: Documents for the History of the Peloponnese in the 14th and 15th Centuries*, Porphyrogenitus, Athens, 1995, pp. 93-95, n. 44; Venice's annexation of Durazzo and its territories: V. Valentini, *Dell' amministrazione veneta in Albania cit.*, p. 844 and n. 4. My explanations for Venice's motives are in contrast to B. Doumerc, *La difesa dell'impero*, in G. Armaldi, A. Tenenti, G. Cracco (eds.), *Storia di Venezia, III, La formazione dello Stato Patrizio*, Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, Roma, 1997, pp.237-250, here, p. 247.

³⁵ V. Valentini, *Dell' amministrazione veneta in Albani cit.*, p. 844 and n. 4.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 850, n.1, pp. 851-852, n. 4, p. 903 and n. 1-3; A. Ducellier, *La façade maritime de la principauté des Kastriote, de la fin du XIV^e siècle à la mort de Skander-*

for the loss of Dalmatia that had been confirmed in the Pact of Turin (1381).

Four months after the failure Genoa's negotiation with Thopia, Venice signed in August 1387 a pact with Peter Bordo de Saint Superan, the new leader of the Navarese group, the holder of Zonchio. It was agreed, among other clauses, that in case Zonchio was put to sale, the Venetians would have the right to be the first, before the Genoese, to purchase the place. Although there was no guarantee that such agreements would have been carried out, and quite often then not they were cancelled, both Venice's pacts, regarding Durazzo in the southern Adriatic and Zonchio in the southern Ionian were a brilliant diplomatic victory with strategic implications over the Genoese. These, however, did not tarry for their counter reaction.

In Decembre 1389 the Genoese signed an alliance with Carlo Tocco, the count of the Island of Santa Maura or Lefcas, in the SW Ionian sea, bestowing him with Genoese citizenship. Carlo Tocco, however, contradicted by this alliance his Venetian hereditary citizenship since 1361. Indeed Tocco was no a great devotee of Venice, and previous to his alliance with the Genoese he had already given in 1383 hard time to Venetian commerce in his territories. Disliking the Venetian 'snapping' of important sections of Corfu in 1386, Tocco decided to provide the Genoese with a naval base. For the Genoese this alliance undoubtedly could compensate for the failure to purchase Durazzo and Zonchio, as the Island of Lefcas enabled them to control the sea lane between Corfu and Methoni. Due, however, to Venice's economic-commercial pressure, Tocco broke in 1395 his alliance with the Genoese³⁷. It is completely obscure how the Genoese took advantage of this opportunity till 1395, even in 1390 when their fleet left for the Levant instead of Mahdia in Tunis. The fear of this fleet lead the Venetian Senate to discuss the protection of Venice's colonies in the Ionian, Corfu, Modon and Coron, and of Crete, in the SW Aegean as well as of the Venetian ships and mer-

beg, in Id., *L'Albanie entre Byzance et Venice, Xe-Xve siècles cit.*, n. VIIa, pp. 121-125; Id., *Genesis and failure of the Albanian State in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries cit.*, p. 12.

³⁷ F. Thiriet, *La Romanie Vénitienne au moyen Age, le developpement et l'exploitation du domain colonial vénitien (XII^e-XV^e siècles)*, E. de Boccard, Paris, 1975, p. 358; W. Haberstrumpf, *I Tocco, Duchi di Leucade, e il Principato D'Acacia (secoli XIV-XVI)*, in *Venezia e le isole Ionie*, a cura di Ch. Maltezos, Gh. Ortalli, Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, Venezia, 2005, pp. 57-70, here, pp. 63-64.

chants in the Adriatic. Furthermore, the captain of the Adriatic was instructed to head for Corfu to guard the Island. No violent fight was, however, recorded³⁸.

It should be pointed out that Genoa was not the only power Venice had to confront after “snapping away” the Island of Corfu. Although a considerable part of the Corfiot aristocracy delivered in 1394 the Island to Venice in a formal ceremony, Venice did not acquire it formally from its legitimate owner, the Kingdom of Napoli. Moreover, in Septembre 1391 the Venetian Senate had succeeded cleverly to evade the discussion on the Island with the Queen's of Napoli delegates, who arrived especially for this matter to Venice. The fear, however, of a combined retaliation of both Napoli and Genoa, lead the Venetian Senate to intensify the defense of the Old Town of Corfu and the castle of Buthrinto³⁹. Eventually, Genoa did not enjoy such a collaboration, as it was only at the end of the fourteenth century, after the coronation of Ladislas, Karlo's III son and heir, did the Kingdom of Napoli react to Venice's seizure of Corfu, during Ladislas' efforts to conquer Hungary in 1399. The fear of his fleet urged the Venetian Senate in Septembre 1399 to discuss the construction of an artificial port in Corfu, for the safety of the town and the Venetian ships arriving there. The place of construction, however, was not mentioned. At the same time, the garrisons in the castle in the Island were strengthened⁴⁰. The discussion in September 1401 proves that the construction of the port has not yet started. On that occasion the Senate ordered that the port will be built north to the Old City, where the present yacht port is located today. To ensure further protection against raids from the sea, the resolution of Septembre 1401 also

³⁸ Regarding the Crusade of the Genoese and their allies against Mahdia, see: K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 1976, vol. I, pp. 332-340. Eventually the Genoese attack in the Levant was on Tripoli in Syria: E. Ashtor, *The Levant Trade in the Later Middle Ages* cit., p. 130 and n. 146. For the protection means of the Venetian colonies that the Senate instructed, see: Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 41, f. 88v: 10 June 1390, f. 89v: 17 June 1390 (x2); J. Chrysostomides, *Monumenta Peloponnesiaca: Documents for the History of the Peloponnese in the 14th and 15th Centuries* cit., p. 164, n. 82: Asv, Senato Secreta E, f. 58v: 24 July 1390, Ind. XIII;

³⁹ R. Gertwagen, *The Island Corfu in Venice's policy in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Early Modern Period (the 14th and first half of the 15th Centuries)* cit.

⁴⁰ E. Bacchion, *Il dominio Veneziano su Corfu* cit., pp. 29-31; Bacchion ignored, however, the fear from Ladislas' fleet and its effect on the construction of the port, indicated in: Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 44, f. 125v: 26 Septembre 1399.

ordered to encircle the *burgus*, that part of the town that extended at the northern side of the Old Town and between it and the two castles, with a wall along the coast. These resolutions were taken as defense measures against Ladisla's galleys that continued to sail in the Adriatic between 1400-1402, while threatening the Venetian vessels and the Island of Corfu. At the end of 1402 and the beginning of 1403, however, Venice bought officially Corfu from Ladislas⁴¹.

With Durazzo and Corfu in her hands, Venice ensured her control of the sea lanes leading from the Adriatic to both basins of the Mediterranean. In the NE Mediterranean Venice tried to gain, however, without success, similar strategic achievements by occupying Gallipoli along the European shore of the Dardanelles. Due to navigation conditions in the Straits of the Dardanelles and owing to running water, Gallipoli was an obligatory port of call. It was the only place along the European and Asiatic shores of the straits that provided shelter against the prevailing *Meltemi* or *Etesian* winds, which reach the force of 5-6 knots between Novembre and early March and at noontimes of autumn and spring. The force of the winds determine the force of the currents. Due to the narrow width of the Straits the power of the currents is very strong. With a *Meltemi* of moderate force of 2-4 knots the currents in the Dardanelles reach the force of 1.5-3 knots and with a strong *Meltemi* of 5-6 knots, the currents reach the force of five knots⁴². In the fifteenth century the *naves* and the galleys, mainly the war galleys but also the merchant galleys, met difficulties to sail against the prevailing winds and adverse currents, in spite of the improvements, since the fourteenth century, in their hull design and rigging. Galleys could indeed make their way

⁴¹ R. Gertwaen, *The Island Corfu in Venice's policy in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Early Modern Period (the 14th and first half of the 15th Centuries)* cit., and *Asv*, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 45, f.28v: 16 August 1400, f. 30v: 7 August 1400, f. 87v: 23 June 1401; reg. 46, f. 35v: 30 July 1402, f. 44v: 22 Septembre 1402; on the purchase of the Island from Ladislas, see: E. Bacchion, *Il dominio Veneziano su Corfu* cit., p. 31.

⁴² *The Black Sea Pilot*, Hydrographic Department, Misnity of Defense, Taunton, somerset, 1969 (eleventh ed.), vol. VI, pp. 85-86; R. Heikel, *Turkish Waters Pilot*, St. Ives, London, 1992 (2 ed.), p. 34; J. Pryor, *Geography Technology and War: Studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean 649-1571*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988, p. 99. In 1985, N. Shmueli experienced the force of the currents in the straits from the Dardanelles towards Constantinople with a small boat propelled by a square sail, shaped as an archaic one. He aimed at following the sailing of the ancients in order to face the difficulties they had met on the way to the NE Mediter-

by rowing, but then they were in danger of swept over by waves and sinking. This danger was attributed to their low freeboard, which prevented them from heeling too far. The galleys would have found the waves of 0.5-1 meters challenging and waves of 1.2 meters beyond their capabilities. A heel more than ten degrees put the leeward oars of the galleys in danger of being smashed by the wave crest, an event that would have made them unmanageable. Furthermore, as their speed with oars was three knots during daytime and 1.5 knots during the night, the galleys found it very hard to maintain stability and advancement with proper space against strong contrary currents⁴³. If Gallipoli had been occupied by wrong hands regarding Venice, Venice's sea lane towards Constantinople would have been blockaded. Not even the Island of Tenedos would have enabled the Venetians to overcome the problem. Alternatively, with the Island of Tenedos and Gallipoli in her hands, Venice ensured herself an opened access to Constantinople and the Black Sea, as well as counter balancing the powerful Genoese colonies in the Aegean, Chios and Lemnos on the one hand, and on the other the Genoese colony of Pera. One could safely claim that in this respect the strategic importance of Gallipoli with the Island of Tenedos for Venice resembled to that of Corfu in the northern Ionian and of Durazzo in the southern Adriatic.

By early fifteenth century Gallipoli had been occupied for fifteen years consecutively by the Ottomans, who fortified the place and

ranean: I. Malkin, N. Shmueli, *The 'City of the Blind' and the Founding of Byzantium*, in I. Malkin, R.L. Hohlfelder (eds.), *Mediterranean Cities Historical Perspectives*, F. Cass, London, 1988, pp. 21-36, here p. 24.

⁴³ Regarding the changes in the hull designs and rigging of the various vessels, see: F.C. Lane, *Navires et Constructeurs à Venise pendant la Renaissance*, S.E.V.P.E.N., Paris, 1965, pp. 6-11, 35-41, 48-49; J. Pryor, *Geography Technology and War: Studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean 649- 1571 cit., passim*. For the difficulties met by sailing against the winds and adverse currents, see: Id., *Geographical conditions of Galley Navigation in the Mediterranean in The Age of The Galley, Mediterranean Oared Vessels since Pre- Classical Time*, R. Gardiner (ed.), Conway Maritime Press, London, 1995, pp. 206-216, here, pp. 209, 213. The Detailed description of the ambassador Roy Gonzales de Clavijo of his journey in 1403 with a *navis* propelled by sails to Samarkand through the Aegean and Constantinopolis, against the prevailing meltemi and northern currents, reflects very well the difficulties met by such vessels: *Narrative of the Embassy of Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo to the Court of Timour at Samarcand A.D. 1403-6*, C.R. Markham, F.R.G.S. (trans.), B. Franklin, New York, 1970, pp. 25-28.

made it a naval base with an arsenal for construction of battle ships. For ten years, between 1392-1402, Bayezid I, the Ottoman Sultan, did not respect the pact he had signed with Venice and refused to exchanged ambassadors. Although Venice and the Ottomans were not in a state of war, and Bayezid did not blockade the Venetian shipping, Gallipoli, was a base of Ottoman sea raids on Venetian colonies in the Aegean. That was another motive to Venice's aspiration to occupy the place. To achieve her goal, Venice tried to take advantage of the Mongols' attack, headed by Timur, on the Ottomans in 1402, to purchase Gallipoli; first in May 1402, and again in September 1402, two months after the Ottomans' defeat to the Mongols in Ankara. Venice intended to precede the Genoese of Pera, who might have seized the same opportunity to take over Gallipoli. Eventually, the Venetian Senate cancelled on the 23rd of September the resolution regarding the purchase of Gallipoli made the previous day⁴⁴.

The Venetian Senate should had been aware of the fact that Genoa did not miss Venice's initiative regarding Gallipoli as part of her efforts to recover her losses and to consolidate her position after the War of Tenedos/Chioggia. "The affair" of Gallipoli and especially Venice's purchase formally of Corfu from Ladislas, at the end of 1402 and at the beginning of 1403 caused to her fear of the Genoese fleet, under Marshall Boucicaut, the governor of Genoa on behalf of the French King, that went to attack Cyprus in April 1403. The rumors about the preparations of this fleet that reached Venice much earlier lead to the Venetian Senate's instruction in January 1403 to reinforce the garrisons in Corfu as well as in Modon and Coron. Two months later the Senate ordered the captain of the Adriatic to concentrate in the Ionian, between Corfu and Modon, a fleet, reinforced with man power recruited in emergency from Crete and Negroponte, and to prepare for a war against the

⁴⁴ H. Noiret, *Documents inédits pour servir a l'histoire de la domination vénitienne en Crée, de 1380 a 1485*, Thorin, Paris, 1892, pp. 129-131: 20 May 1402, pp. 138-139: 22 Septembre 1402, p. 140: 23 Septembre, 1402. On Ottoman arsenal in Gallipoli, see: I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr, *L'approvisionnement de l'arsenal de Gallipoli en goudron, bois e fer en 1516*, in E. Zachariadou (ed.), *The Kapudan Pasha His Office and His Domain*, Crete University Press, Crete, 2002, pp. 71-86; on Ottoman sea raids from Gallipoli on Venetian colonies, see the Synthesis of C. Imber, *Before the Kapudan Pashas: Sea Power and the Emergence of the Ottoman Empire*, *ibid.*, pp. 49-59. On the relations between Bayezid I and Venice, see below and ns. 64, 65.

Genoese. Nevertheless, the captains of the Venetian fleet had to make efforts to avoid as much as possible an overt conflict with the Genoese and the Hospitallers (the Order of St. John of Rhodes), their allies⁴⁵. It was the first time after the War of Tenedos/Chioggia that the Venetian Senate used the term “war”, although Boucicaut himself, it should be emphasized, did not declare overtly a war on Venice. One should keep in mind that both Republics were under the observance eyes of Amadeus, the arbitrator, responsible of the Pact of Turin. Not even Genoa would have wanted to be the one who violated overtly and violently the Pact of Turin, despite Venice's avoidance to carry out her obligations by surrendering the Island of Tenedos. Saying that, Marshall Boucicault was also notorious of his bellicose character⁴⁶, and Venice feared that he might have taken initiative to force her to surrender the Island of Tenedos, first by invading the Island of Corfu as well as by attacking other Venetian colonies, thus also revenging fiercely Genoa's failures against Venice since the pact of Turin up to his time. Therefore, the Venetian Senate instructed also the regimen of Crete to increase the defense means against the Genoese fleet⁴⁷. The fear of

⁴⁵ J. Chrysostomides, *Monumenta Peloponnesiaca: Documents for the History of the Peloponnese in the 14th and 15th Centuries* cit., p. 508, n. 262; Bucicaut's voyage to Cyprus was the second fleet going there. The first left in 1402. On the circumstances for the attack of Cyprus by the Genoese in 1402 and in 1403, see: J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIV^e siècle*, E. Thorin, Paris, 1886, 2 vols, here vol. I, pp. 409-411; Le Roulx's argument regarding Venice's fear of the arrival of the Genoese fleet commanded by Buccaut is not convincing: *ibid.*, p. 422; Dennis' argument that the Venetian Senate's instructions to the captains of the Venetian fleet to avoid an opened conflict with the Genoese and the Hospitallers their allies due to the events on the morrow of the Ottomans' defeat by the Mongols in Ankara in 1402 is not convincing: T.G. Dennis, *The Byzantine-Turkish Treaty of 1403*, in Id., *Byzantium and the Franks 1350-1420*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1982, n°VI, p. 73. It should be noted that the author ignores the connection between the Senate's instructions to the captain of the Venetian fleet and these events.

⁴⁶ Regarding the bellicose character of Buccicault, see, for example, N. Housely, *One man and his wars: the depiction of warfare by Marshal Boucicaut's biographer*, «Journal of Medieval History», vol. 29, n. 1 (2003), pp. 27-40. For a laconic description of his character, based on the same sources, see: F. Albrecht, *Prelude to a stronger Involvement in the Middle East: French Attacks on Beirut in the Years 1403 and 1520*, «Al-Masāq», vol. 17, n. 2, September 2005, pp. 171-192, here, pp. 173-175; unfortunately, the author ignored the motives that lead to Venice's fears of the arrival to Boucicaut: *ibid.*, p. 176.

⁴⁷ F. Thiriet, *Duca di Candia, Ducali e lettere ricevute, (1358-1360; 1401-1405)*, Il Comitato, Venezia, 1978, pp. 32-33, n. 34, pp. 37-38, n. 41.

this fleet caused also to the Venetian Senate's resolution to detain the exit of the *mudua* to the Levnat⁴⁸.

A war did not break out on this occasion and neither the Venetian colonies in the Ionian, but Aegean Seas were attacked by Boucicaut on his way to the Levant. Following Boucicaut's moves, one can tell that he acted according to a planned strategy that negated a violent confrontation with the Venetians before he had accomplished his mission in Cyprus. Instead, he attempted unsuccessfully devious tactics to take over Gallipoli in order to fail Venice's efforts consolidate her position in the NE Mediterranean and worse, in order to blockade hermetically Venice's sea lane inside the Straits of the Dardanelles. The moment was right due to Bayezid's death in early 1403 and of the fight between his sons over the heritage. To reach his goal, Boucicaut displayed generosity towards the Byzantine Emperor to escort him from Modon to Constantinople instead of Venice that had formerly avoided the Emperor's plea. Boucicaut rised the suspicion of the Venetian supreme commander of the fleet when he decided at the last moment to dispatch four galleys of his fleet, instead of three as he had planned at first, to escort the Byzantine Emperor. The Venetian commander, therefore, decided on his own to dispatch also four galleys to join those of the Genoese. On the 10th of July 1403 the Venetian Senate confirmed the Venetian Captain's smart move that made the Genoese attempt to achieve their aim unsuccessful⁴⁹. The complicated situation in the Dardanelles due to the anarchy born of Bayezid's death and of the Mongol presence, could have been used formally as a motive for Venice's change of attitude and for a sort of collaboration with the Genoese. It was the false collaboration that was exposed shortly afterwards, when Venice turned

⁴⁸ In contrast to: E.A. Congdon, *Datini and Venice: News from the Mediterranean Trade Work*, in D.A. Agius, I.R. Netton (eds.), *Across the Mediterranean Frontiers Trade, Politics and Religion, 650-1450*, Selected Proceedings of the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 10-13 July, 1995, 8-11 July 1996, Turnhout, Brepols, 1997, pp. 157-171, here, p. 164 and n. 17.

⁴⁹ Asv, Senato Secreti, I, f. 102; The explanation of J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIV^e siècle*, vol. I, pp. 435-436 and of J. W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick and New Jersey, 1969, pp. 228-231, 235-237, to the motive behind the Venetian captain's initiative is forced and unconvincing. Albrecht ignored completely Boucicaut's allotment of galleys to escort the Emperor as well as the motives of Venice's assignment of galleys to escort with the French galleys the same Byzantine Emperor to Constantinople: F. Albrecht, *Prelude to a stronger Involvement in the Middle East: French Attacks on Beirut in the Years 1403 and 1520* cit.

down Bucicaut's appeal to join him to "a crusade", against the Moslems and to attack Mamluk domains in the Levant and Egypt: Tripoli, Bayreuth and Alexandria. In fact, if Venice had joined Boucicaut, she would have damaged by her own hands the fate of her commercial future in the SE Mediterranean. Giving the condition of her status in the NE Mediterranean, as above-mentioned, joining forces with Boucicaut might have doomed to calamity Venice's function as a Mediterranean commercial power, thus enabling Genoa to accomplish her goal to get the whole control of the international commerce between the Eastern Mediterranean and southern Europe and northern Italy. Venice did not fall into the trap, but instead she failed Boucicaut by informing the Mamluk Sultan of his intentions⁵⁰, thus bringing the strained relations between the two maritime Republics to another climax of fierce hostility, that burst into a violent confrontation in September 1403.

On the thirteenth of September 1403, the Senate discussed the information received from the castellans of Modon and Coron regarding the possibility that the Genoese fleet under the command of Marshal Boucicaut might attempt to seize Zonchio and other strategic places in the Peloponnese (Morea) on his way back from the Levant to Genoa. The castellans' fears were well-founded, as Boucicaut himself stated that he intended to provision his fleet with water in Zonchio. The Venetian admiral, who had been originally ordered to hit Boucicaut only if he assaulted Venetian commercial ships returning from Romania to Venice, attacked, therefore, and defeated the Genoese fleet near the Island of Sapienza south of Navarino and at the SW mouth of the bay of Modon. The pretext was the protection of Modon. The Venetians could excuse their so called suspicion of Genoese attack on Modon as Bucicaut's retaliation for Venice's failing his efforts to attack Mamluk domains in the Levant and Egypt. The fears of the Genoese retaliation lead Venice herself to invest diplomatic efforts to convince Adriatic port towns to side with her and

⁵⁰ J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIV^e siècle* cit., vol. I, pp. 426-428; K. M. Setton, *The Papacy and The Levant* cit., vol. I, pp. 392-395. Both authors ignore the significance of Venice's deliberate avoidance of joining Bucicaut. Overlooking the geopolitical conditions in the Eastern Mediterranean following the pact of Turin (1381) and Venice's commercial situation as a result of it, Albrecht misinterpreted the significance of Venice's avoidance of Bucicaut's crusade against the Manluks and its failing; F. Albrecht, *Prelude to a stronger Involvement in the Middle East: French Attacks on Beirut in the Years 1403 and 1520* cit., pp. 177-178.

not to let the Genoese fleet to anchor. On the other hand, the Venetians could not openly attack the Genoese in Zonchio, if Bucicaut had anchored there to provision with water, as Venice did not own the place. Such a Venetian initiative might have certainly given the Genoese the pretext to take over the place with the 'European' support, because the Venetians had not yet evacuated the Island of Tenedos, as they had been obligated to do by the Pact of Turin (1381). Furthermore, Venice might have also risked an open war against France, the Lord of Genoa. The Venetians attacked therefore the Genoese at Sapienza and won the battle⁵¹. Notwithstanding the battle of Sapienza, Venice's evasion to hand over the Island of Tenedos, and her deterioration of Bucicaut's efforts to attack the Levant and Egypt, the pact of Turin between Venice Genoa was renewed in March 1404 and June 1406⁵². One can safely claim, that Venice achieved for the first time after the war of Tenedos/Chioggia a double victory over Genoa, military and diplomatically. She repeated her success mainly diplomatically, by failing during the next seventeenth years Genoa's efforts with the help of third parties to occupy both places, Zonchio and the Island of Tenedos. The third parties were either the Order of St. John, who collaborated in 1403 with the Genoese both in the Morea for the Order's interests and in NE Mediterranean where they tried in 1405 in vain to occupy cunningly the Island of Tenedos for the Genoese; either the Byzantine Emperor, or local forces in the Morea of Genoese origin - Centurione the prince of Achaia, since 1404. Venice diplomatic success in making the Genoese efforts unsuccessful and culminating with her purchase in 1423 of

⁵¹ J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIV^e siècle* cit., vol. I, pp. 426-28, 449-54, 458-59. My interpretation of the battle of Navarino (Zonchio) in 1403 is different from Delaville le Roulx whose claim, *ibid.*, p. 450 that Bucicaut did not mean any harm is unconvincing; K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. I, pp. 389-340, 394-95; R. Gertwagen, *The Venetian Colonies in the Ionian and the Aegean Seas in Venetian Defense Policy in the Fifteenth Century*, «Journal of Mediterranean Studies», vol. 12, n. 2, 2002, pp. 354-345. Due to the peculiar Ionian weather system, the Island of Sapienza and Modon were obligatory port of call on leaving the Ionian to the Aegean and vice versa: Ead., *Venetian Modon and its Port (1358-1500)* cit., pp. 129-31; F. Surdich, *Genova e Venezia fra tre e quattrocento*, Bozzi, Genova, 1970. The fight over Zonchio between the Venetians and the Genoese including the years between 1403-23 with implications in both the Ionian and the eastern Mediterranean deserve a separate discussion.

⁵² J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIV^e siècle* cit., vol. I, pp. 467-68.

Zonchio from Centurione⁵³, were accompanied by two other essential strategic achievements in the area, her possession in July 1407 of Lepanto, and of Patras in August 1408⁵⁴. Venice's occupation of Zonchio in addition to Corfu, on one hand, her annexation of Lepanto and Patras, and on the other, enabled her to control the sea lanes in the eastern Ionian sea and those that lead from Patras to Modon in the south, and from Patras to Corfu in the north. Undoubtedly, Venice consolidated her position in the Ionian sea to a degree which she had not enjoyed before.

Furthermore, Venice succeeded to regain her position again in the Adriatic, while defeating Hungary, her local rival, that had been a close ally of the Genoese. In 1409 Venice acquired territories in Dalmatia from Ladislas, king of Napoli, who realized his failure to seize the throne in Hungary instead of Sigismund, whom the Hungarian nobility wished to overthrow after his defeat in the Crusade of Nicopolis (1396). The Hungarian reacted in two ways to Venice's acquisitions in Dalmatia. First, they conducted two unsuccessful wars against Venice, starting by attacking Friuli in 1409-1412 and 1418-1420; the second war was in 1420-1422. The victories enabled Venice to occupy Istria and Friuli in the NE Adriatic with other

⁵³ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 46, f. 166r: 31 January 1405/6; F. Thiriet, *Venise et l'occupation de Ténédos au XIV^e Siècle* cit., p. 242, ns. 1, 2, p. 243, n. 1. Venice suspected an alliance between Centurione and the Genoese, first with Bucicault already in 1403. The Senate, therefore, ordered in August 1403 the Captain General to foil the efforts of Centurione, then the baron of Arcadia, to marry Senior's of Lepanto daughter in order to get both Zonchio and Lepanto: Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 46, f. 97r: 11 August 1403; On the purchase of Zonchio: D. Jacoby, *La féodalité en Grèce Médiévale, les "Assises de Romanie" sources, application et diffusion*, Mouton, Paris-La Haye, 1971, p. 232.

⁵⁴ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age*, Ekdoseis V. N. Grigoriades 1880-1890, Athènes-Paris, vols. I-III, here, vol. II, p. 180, n. 415. The discussions by the Senate show that it had already been ordered in 1401 to purchase Lepanto, in order to prevent its fall to the Ottomans. However, the Ottoman piracy in the Gulf of Patras declined temporarily due to the Ottomans' defeat to the Mongols in 1402, and due to Bayezid's death in 1403. The fact that Centurione wished to occupy Lepanto made Venice uneasy due to his close contacts with Buccicault and the Genoese. My view contradicts Doumerc's, who claims that Venice's annexation of Lepanto only was against the Ottomans: B. Doumerc, *La difesa dell'impero*, Roma, 1997, pp. 237-250, here, p. 248; Venice received Patras, in a lease from the Bishop of Patras; Venice paid the Ottomans for their recognition her possession of both Lepanto and Patras: P. Topping, *The Morea, 1364-1460* in H.W. Hazard (ed.), *A History of the Crusade, The fourteenth and fifteenth Centuries*, The University of Wisconsin Press, Wisconsin, 1975, vol. III, pp. 141-166, here, pp. 161-163.

strategic locations with islands along the Dalmatian coast, which she held until 1797⁵⁵. The other way Hungary reacted was political and economic-commercial. In 1416, Sigismund blamed Venice of treason and collaboration with the Ottomans, and he spread it among various governments in Europe. In 1418 Sigismund renewed the economic-commercial rapports with Genoa, which aimed to divert merchants and commodities of Germany to arrive at Venice, but instead to go directly to Genoa⁵⁶. Indeed, on 14 January 1413 the Venetian Senate discussed the idea, which eventually failed, to collaborate with the Ottomans against Hungary. Nevertheless, Venice protested loudly against Sigismund's accusation, and used her attack on Gallipoli to prove her innocence⁵⁷.

Sigismund's accusations could not overshadowed Venice's rejoice of her victory, which was undoubtedly justified. Venice succeeded to regain, after half a century, her control over the eastern Adriatic, by possessing harbors and naval bases, despite the harassments of Hungary's vessels, against which Venice's fleet of the Adriatic had to protect Zara and Dalmatia⁵⁸. It is also true that since 1417 the Ottomans had occupied Valona. They, however, have not yet had a substantial naval force to threaten Venice, and the Senate appointed in 1418 the *bailo* of Corfu to check with local vessels, *barche*, on the Ottomans' of Valona movements and to verify the rumors of their construction of *fuste*⁵⁹. Although Venice's achievements were due less to naval operations and more due to a scheming and cunning diplomacy that took advantage of a successful combination of circumstances, she undoubtedly merited the exaltation of defeating, for the first time after the War of Tenedos/Chioggia, her hereditary rivals, Hungary and

⁵⁵ K.M. Setton, *the Papacy and the Levant* cit., vol. I, pp. 403-404 and n. 130; J. Tadić, *Venezia e la costa orientale dell' Adriatico fino al secolo XV*, in A. Pertusi (ed.), *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV* cit., vol. I/II, pp. 687-704, here, 698-699.

⁵⁶ K.M. Setton, *the Papacy and the Levant* cit., vol. II, p. 6; S. Papacostea, *De la guerre du Bosphore à la guerre de Ténédos: rivalités commerciales et alignements politiques dans le sud-est de l'Europe dans la seconde moitié du XIV^e siècle*, in M. Balard, A. Ducellier (eds.), *Coloniser au Moyen Age*, A. Colin, Paris, 1995, pp. 341-348, here, p. 345.

⁵⁷ C. Manfroni, *La battaglia di Gallipoli e la politica veneto-turca (1381-1420)*, «Ateneo Veneto», vol. XXV, n. 2, 1902, pp. 129-169, here, p. 133, n. 2, p. 136 and n. 1.

⁵⁸ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, p. 226, no. 473: 25 July 1409; Asv Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 48, f. 96r: 25 August 1409, f. 157r: 28 June 1410.

⁵⁹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 52, f. 97v: 13 June 1418.

Genoa, and of controlling the sea lanes leading from the northern Adriatic through the Ionian Sea to both basins of the Mediterranean.

The next and last confrontation in the fifteenth century between Venice and Genoa took place in the 1420s and 1430s, then Genoa was Milan's subordinate. This time it was Venice who started naval belligerence, although she was not the one to declare war. Genoa used the war that broke out between the Duke of Milan and Venice and Florence, her ally in 1426, to announce her reluctance to maintain any rapports, what so ever, with Venice. The Venetian Senate informed in April 1426 the regimen of Crete, the *Signoria*, about the new situation and instructed it to take defensive measures and to fight back accordingly in case of an attack by Genoese fleet⁶⁰. The Duke of Milan on his side initiated in 1429 and 1430 diplomatic relations with the Ottomans, encouraging them to attack Venetian colonies in the Aegean and supported their occupation of Thessalonica in 1430. Venice reacted by initiating, the first time after the Pact of Turin (1381), an aggressive move attacking Genoa and its area, to retaliate her naval defeat in 1431 to the Duke of Milan on the river of the Po. This act lead to the transfer of the war the same year once again to the eastern Mediterranean, where the Venetian naval fleet attacked unsuccessfully the Island of Chios, aiming at subdue the Island permanently to Venetian rule. It was after a successful Genoese naval retaliation on Venice Aegean colonies that eventually a peace agreement was signed in April 1435 between the two rivals⁶¹. Regarding actual naval operations, one has to admit

⁶⁰ Asv, Duca di Candia Ducali Lettere Ricevute, b. 1, n. 11, f. 7: 20 April 1426; The evidence provided by this document contradicts the argument that Genoa was reluctantly pulled into a war situation with Venice as was claimed, for example, by: E. Basso, *De Bucicault à Francesco Sforza, persistance et changements dans la politique orientale des seigneurs étrangers de Genes au XVe siècle*, in M. Balard, A. Ducellier (eds.), *Le partage du monde, échanges et colonisation dans la Méditerranée Médiévale* cit., pp. 63-77, here, p. 68.

⁶¹ Ph. Argenti, *The Occupation of Chios by the Genoese and their Administration of the Island, 1346-1566*, Cambridge, at the University Press, 1958, 2 vols, here, vol. I, pp. 174-188, vol. II, pp. 414-416, doc. 21; L. Balletto, *Chio dei Genovesi tra rivolta Maonese, corsari catalani ed attacchi veneziani*, «Annuario de Estudios Medievales», vol. 24 (1994), pp. 485-489, here pp. 486-487. The Duke's pro-Ottoman policy contradicted the common attitude in Genoa, and became eventually one of the motives to the Genoese mutiny against him in 1435 and to the expulsion of his people from Genoa: E. Basso, *De Boucicault à Francesco Sforza, persistance et changements dans la politique orientale des seigneurs étrangers de Genes au XVe siècle* cit., pp. 67-70.

that at the end of the day Venice could not achieve a real victory. Nevertheless, Venice did not suffer the same humiliation and losses as she did by the Pact of Turin. Furthermore, Venice's initiation of aggressive moves, reflect the change from a hesitant conduct that characterized Venice up to the third decade of the fifteenth century, to the assertiveness, which she began against the Ottomans.

The Ottoman Turks were the other power that Venice had to confront since the late fourteenth century and through the fifteenth. Since their conquest of Negroponte in 1470 the Ottomans brought to the gradual collapse the Venice's maritime power that ended at the end of the fifteenth century with their conquest of Modon in 1500 and the surrender of Coron, right afterwards. Venetian colonies in the Aegean had suffered since the late fourteenth century constant raids of Turks of the Aegean Emirates of Aydin and Mentesche and mainly of the Ottoman Turks. The raids of these in 1387, 1390, 1391, 1392, 1394 and in 1401 on Negroponte, Nauplia, in Romania, Coron and Modon, were either ordered by political-economic powers in the Peloponnese, who attempted the expulsion of the Venetians from that region, or as punishing expeditions against the Byzantines that were at the time the Vassals of the Ottomans⁶². Albeit the facts that Bayezid I, the Ottomans Sultan, preferred the Genoese with whom he signed a treaty in 1389⁶³, on one hand, and his violation of the pact he signed in 1392 with the Venetians, by not exchanging ambassadors for ten years⁶⁴ and his prohibition to export grains from Asia Minor⁶⁵, on the other, Venice refused to see these raids only but as piratical and corsairing. This attitude gave her two important advantages. To demand compensations from those who sent those gangs with avoiding violent confrontations with the Ottomans, which she could not allow herself, because of

⁶² R. Gertwagen, *The Venetian Colonies in the Ionian and Aegean Seas in Venetian Defense Policy in the fifteenth Century* cit., pp. 351-384, pp. 353-354 and n. 8.

⁶³ M. Balard, *La Romanie génoise (XII^e-début du XV^e siècle)* cit., vol. I, pp. 96-100.

⁶⁴ A. Fabris, *From Adrianople to Constantinople: Venetian-Ottoman Diplomatic Missions, 1360-1453*, «Mediterranean Historical Review», 7/2 (1992), pp. 154-199, here, pp. 164-165.

⁶⁵ E. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade. Venetian Crete and The Emirates of Mentesche and Aydin (1300-1415)*, Venice, [s.n.], 1983, p. 78; J. Chrysostomides (ed.), *Monumenta Peloponnesiaca: Documents for the History of the Peloponnese in the 14th and 15th Centuries* cit., p. 138, n. 68, n. 2.

the weakness of her naval fleet after the war of Tenedos/Chioggia and because of the conflicts she had at the time with Genoese. On account of the last two motives, Venice evaded her participation in the Battle at Kossovo (1387) against the Ottomans, and she tried, however, unsuccessfully to avoid in 1396, at the eve of the Battle at Nicopolis, (1396) to take part in the Christian League against the Ottomans. Venice excused herself in 1396 by her good relations with Bayezid, although, as above-mentioned, he overtly violated in the Pact he had signed with them two years before⁶⁶. In order to avoid violent confrontations with the Ottomans, Venice declined the approach of small powers to annex them, in order to protect them against the Ottomans. Therefore, she declined Thopia's, the Senior of Durazzo, plea, but, as above-mentioned, she eventually redraw from her refusal, in order to prevent the Genoese to replace her. Although Venice, eventually, assisted in 1387 Thopia against the Ottomans, the Venetian Senate instructed in July 1388 the ambassador to Murad I, who originally had to discuss with the Sultan the Ottoman raids in 1387 on Coron and Modon, how to explain Venice's aid to Durazzo⁶⁷. In April 1394 Venice declined Emanuel's II, the Byzantine Emperor, plea to buy the Island of Lemnos and in April 1397, after the Battle at Nicopolis to annex, under certain conditions this Island with the Island of Imbros. Venice also refused to take Constantinopolis, if the Emperor left the capital to seek aid in the West. In the same month of April 1397 Venice refused also Theodore, the Byzantine Despot to annex Corinth in return for her help against the Ottomans. Eventually, Theodore approached the Hospitallers of Rhodes, which accepted his offer⁶⁸.

⁶⁶ A. Fabris, *From Adrianople to Constantinople: Venetian-Ottoman Diplomatic Missions, 1360-1453* cit., p. 160; H. Inalcik, *The Ottoman Turks and the Crusades, 1329-1451*, in H.W. Hazard, N.P. Zacour (eds.), *A History of the Crusades, VI*, The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1989, pp. 222-275; K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant* cit., vol. I, pp. 344-346.

⁶⁷ See above, n. 34.

⁶⁸ J. W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship* cit., pp. 124-125, 146; D.A. Zakythinios, *L'attitude de Venise face au decline et à la chute de Constantinople* cit. p. 69; P. Topping, *The Morea, 1364-1460*, in H.W. Hazard (ed.), *A History of the Crusade, The Fourteenth and fifteenth Centuries* cit., vol. III, p. 59; A. Luttrell, *The Hospitallers at Rhodes, 1306- 1421*, in Id., *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes and Greece and the West, 1291-1440*, London, Variorum Reprints, 1979, n. I, p. 307.

It is true that in March 1397 Venice applied to Genoa to accept her suggestion to fortify the Island of Tenedos against the Ottomans, in order to prevent them to conquer the Island. Venice, however, only tried a scheming policy to declare overtly her possession of the Island and to prevent a league between the Genoese and the Ottomans. The use of the Ottomans' threat was logical, especially after the defeat of the Crusade at Nicopolis in 1396. Venice's effort to take advantage of the internal unstable political situation in Genoa that lead to her subordination to France a year later, failed⁶⁹. It is also true that the Senate in Venice instructed in May 1402 the commander of the fleet to attack the Ottomans, however, then the Ottomans were in a very bad shape because of the Mongols' invasions into their territories. Furthermore, the Venetian commander was instructed to act only after it had been well ratified that the Mongols had already been established in the Ottomans' territories. Furthermore, the Venetian captain should have then joined the Genoese of Pera to set in fire the Ottomans' ships in Gallipoli and to prevent them to invade Greece. In case the Mongols had not yet been established in the Ottomans' territories, the captain of the Venetian fleet had to join the fleets enlisted in the Island of Chios, Rhodes and the Duchy of the Aegean Sea, in order to inflict damage to the Ottomans' territories, to frighten and expel them. Nevertheless, the Captain of the Venetian fleet, had at the same time to try, as above-mentioned, to purchase Gallipoli⁷⁰. Indeed, in 1416, Venice attacked successfully Gallipoli. Nevertheless one has to keep in mind that Venice intended to attack the Ottoman fleet outside the Straits as a retaliation of the Turk's raids a year earlier on Negroponte and on Venetian merchant ships. The Venetian fleet had in 1416 to attack only if the Ottomans will repeat their aggressiveness. At the same time, however, the Venetian ambassador had to invest enormous efforts to persuade the Ottomans to sign on a peace treaty. The eventual attack on Gallipoli was a result of combination

⁶⁹ F. Thiriet, *Venise et l'occupation de Ténédos au XIV^e siècle* cit., p. 241 and n. 3. My interpretation differs from that of Thiriet and from that of: D.A. Zakythinis, *L'attitude de Venise face au déclin et à la chute de Constantinople* cit., p. 67; Surdich is right to claim that Venice ignored deliberately the logical Genoa's counter offer to deliver the Island of Tenedos to the Pope; he however, did not explain why: F. Surdich, *Genova e Venezia fra tre e Quattrocento* cit., p. 41, n. 46.

⁷⁰ H. Noiret, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire de la domination vénitienne en Crète de 1380 à 1485* cit., pp. 129-131: 20 May 1402.

of different circumstances⁷¹. In order to avoid war with the Ottomans, the *bailo* of Corfu, who was instructed, as we shall see below, to deliver help to Valona in the southern Adriatic against the Ottomans, ordered the marines to do it only on the sea and forbade them to land.

Francesco Foscari's election in April 1423 to Doge in Venice led to Venice's change of her policy regarding both her territorial expansion in the Mainland in Italy with those overseas, in the Aegean Sea, Morea and Albany, while risking violent fights. Foscari represented the school of thought that believed that such a vigorous policy was right, and the accepting of Thessalonica, when it was offered to Venice, was the first major decision taken during his office. Whereas Foscari's change of attitude brought in the mainland a confrontation with Milan, in the Aegean it led to a confrontation with the Ottomans, by his readiness to annex territories, starting in September 1423 of Thessalonica. By this Foscari's accepted the Byzantine's Despot plea, even if not expressly confirmed by the Byzantine Emperor, in return of Venice's aid to liberate the town off the Ottoman siege. The decisions approved by the Senate regarding treating the Ottomans on the subject proves to a strong determination to hold the place at all costs⁷². As the Ottomans regarded Thessalonica as their own territory, because it had been under their authorization between 1387-1407, they considered Venice's annexation of the place as a declaration of war. The efforts of the Venetian ambassador to sign with the Sultan a peace pact and to pay the Ottomans tribute for the city was doomed to failure. The Ottomans retaliated in 1428 by raids on Negroponte, Coron and Modon, as a result of which Venice declared formally a war. In 1430, the Ottomans conquered Thessalonica⁷³. At

⁷¹ C. Manfroni, *La battaglia di Gallipoli e la politica veneto-turca (1381-1420)*, «Ateneo Veneto», vol. XXV, n. 2 1902, pp. 129-169, here, pp. 140-147, 158; in contrast to H. Inalcik, *An outline of Ottoman-Venetian Relation* cit., p. 85

⁷² J.R. Melville-Jones, *Venice and Thessalonica 1423-1430: The Venetian Documents*, Unipress, Padua, 2002, pp. 25-49. Regarding negotiation with the Ottoman Sultan *Ibid.*, pp. 41-50. Regarding the wars in the mainland: M.E. Mallett, *Part I: c. 1400-1508* in M.E. Mallett, J.R. Hale (eds.), *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State, Venice c.1400-1617*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984, pp. 1-210.

⁷³ J. W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425): A Study in Late Byzantine State-ship* cit., pp. 355-360 and n. 10, p. 372, and n. 129, p. 373; K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant* cit., vol. II, pp. 20-30, p. 37 and n. 114; H. Inalcik, *The Ottoman Turks and the Crusades, 1329-1451* cit., pp. 257, n. 103, p. 37 and n. 114; J.R. Melville-Jones, *Venice and Thessalonica 1423-1430: The Venetian Documents* cit., pp. 147-175.

the same time, one has to keep in mind, Venice was deeply involved in the war with Milan and Genoa. Whereas this latter was ended in 1435, the war with the Ottomans went on and off through the whole fifteenth century.

The bloody struggles between Venice and Genoa were those that contributed to the rise of the Ottomans both with the disintegration of the Byzantine Empire which ended with the occupation in 1453 of Constantinople by the Ottomans. The political balance in the eastern Mediterranean that was thus disturbed was aggravated by the wars between the Ottomans and Venice. This situation was taken advantage of by the Genoese, Neapolitan, Catalan and Aragonese corsairs and pirates, who obstructed the navigation in the Adriatic and Aegean Seas, as well as Ottomans who extended their piratical raids to the Gulf of Patras⁷⁴.

Due to the intense naval conflicts in which Venice was involved from the late fourteenth century till 1500, it established a policy in which the various key roles were assigned to its colonies in the Ionian Sea, and in the Aegean Sea. This paper, however, will deal only with aspects regarding the reinforcement of the Venetian naval fleet in its naval warfare.

3. *The Venetian naval fleet*

In 1301 Venice established a permanent fleet. At the heart of this force was the patrol squadron charged with policing the Adriatic, which functioned annually from the early spring till the end of autumn, then the galleys returned to Venice. Since the third decade of the fourteenth century the fleet was occupied also by escorting the Venetian commercial convoys composed of merchant galleys to their various destinations in the eastern Mediterranean⁷⁵. Since the late

⁷⁴ R. Gertwagen, *The Venetian Colonies in the Ionian and Aegean Seas in Venetian Defense Policy in the Fifteenth Century* cit., pp. 351-384, here, pp. 353-354 and n. 8.

⁷⁵ On the establishment of this fleet and its functions see: A. Tenenti, *Venezia e la pirateria nel Levante: 1300 c.- 1460 c.*, in A. Pertusi (ed.), *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV* cit., vol. I/II, pp. 704-771, here, pp. 747-748; B. Doumerc, *La difesa dell'impero* cit., pp. 240, 246; I.B. Katele, *Piracy and the Venetian State: The Dilemma of Maritime Defense in the Fourteenth Century*, «Speculum», vol. 63 (1988), pp. 865- 889, here, pp. 867-869, 878-88, 888-889; Id., *Captains and Corsairs: Distinguishing protec-*

fourteenth century and during the fifteenth, due to the increasing of violence along the sea routes in the eastern Mediterranean, the escort of the Venetian merchant convoys was more often than not essential. The contribution of the Venetian colonies in this respect was conspicuous⁷⁶. Furthermore, there was in the early fourteenth century another and separate fleet in charge of the protection of the Venetian colonies in the territories of the former Byzantine Empire, known as Romania. The Venetian Senate's resolution of the first three decades of the century show that these two Venetian fleets were under the command of two different commanders⁷⁷. Since the fourth decade of the century, the captain of the Adriatic was in charge of these two units as well as of the commercial convoys. During the crisis, the Senate nominated a supreme commander/captain general in charge of all the maritime affairs, "capitanues generalis maris", under whose authority were the captain of the Adriatic, the captains of the other maritime units and the governors of the Venetian colonies in the Ionian Sea and the Aegean Sea, regarding maritime issues. This office was created for the first time during the Third Genoese War (1350-1355), and later during the Fourth War, The War of Tenedos/Chiooggia (1377-1381)⁷⁸. In 1385 this office was established due to the Genoese threat to conquer Zonchio; in 1403, due to the arrival of the Genoese fleet under the command of Marshal Bucicaut to the eastern Mediterranean. Because of the frequent crisis that existed since the late fourteenth century and during the fifteenth century, this office functioned more often than not⁷⁹.

The permanent Venetian fleet consisted of galleys. Due, however, to the increase of piracy the eastern Mediterranean that quite often than not used vessels of *naves* type with high board, against which

tion and Aggression in K. Friedland (ed.), *Maritime Aspects of Migration*, Köln, Bohlau, 1989, pp. 88-103, here, pp. 94-95, 99-101.

⁷⁶ R. Gertwagen, *The Venetian colonies in the Ionian and Aegean Seas in Venetian Defense Policy in the Fifteenth Century* cit., pp. 351-383, here, pp. 371-373; see also below. The evidence, brought by Gertwagen, that are based on documents of Venetian archives contradict sharply Doumerc: B. Doumerc, *An Exemplary Maritime Republic: Venice at the end of the Middle Ages*, in J. B. Hattendorf, R. Unger (eds.), *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, Boydell and Brewer, Ltd, UK. and New York, 2003, p. 160.

⁷⁷ G. Giomo, *I Misti del Senato della Repubblica Veneta 1293-1331* cit., p. 38: Marzo 1303, pp. 40-41: Ottobre 1326.

⁷⁸ F.C. Lane, *Venice a Maritime Republic* cit., pp. 175, 378.

⁷⁹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 39, f. 51v; reg. 39, f. 51v; reg. 46, f. 105r.

galleys found it hard to fight, the Venetian Senate had ordered since the third decade of the fourteenth century to man also *coche* (cogs) for tracing and pursuing pirates and corsairs. Nevertheless, the high expenses for employing such ships, which Venice found hard to meet, especially with the increasing of hostility between her and Genoa that reached then its peak in the Third Genoese, War (1351-1355), forced Venice to cancel these units⁸⁰. It was only since the early fifteenth century that Venice had introduced again the use of *cogs*, which were called then *naves armata*, and that were equipped with canon of the *bombarda* type. In addition to chasing pirates, two cogs were assigned for escorting also convoys *naves* that carried the Far eastern and eastern Mediterranean precious articles, known as “havere subtils”⁸¹. The moment they finished their mission, the *naves armata* resumed their task of pursuing pirates and corsairs⁸².

4. *The Venetian colonies as providers of vessels and manpower*

The contribution of the Venetian colonies to the Venetian naval fleet was of vessels propelled mainly by oars, of the galleys type and of their man power. Only on rare occasions the contribution included also *naves*, it was, however, done, as indicated later on, only by the Island of Crete. The manning was of the staff in charge of operation of the vessels, oarsmen and fighting men, foot soldiers (*hominess de pedes*), mainly with crossbowmen (*balisterii*). The importance of these grew during the fourteenth century, because of the improvements in crossbows, which considerably enhanced their range⁸³. After Venice’s loss in 1358 of Dalmatia and Ragusa to Hungary, the

⁸⁰ B. Doumerc, *La difesa dell'impero* cit., p. 246; For the *cocha*, see: R. Gertwagen, *Characteristics of Mediterranean Sea going Ships of 13th-15th Centuries* cit., pp. 554-555.

⁸¹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 52, f. 1: 4 March 1417; f. 36v: 22 July 1417; reg. 53, ff. 86r-86v: 18 November 1420; f. 184r: 19 September 1421; Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 1, ff. 98r-98v: 24 November 1443; f. 209v: 3 March 1443; reg. 2, f. 62r: 4 March 1445; f. 63r: 5 March 1445; f. 64r: 5 March 1445; reg. 5, f. 41r: 30 June 1453 and *passim*.

⁸² Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 49, ff. 75r-75v: 1 January 1411; reg. 51, f. 185r: 31 January 1416; reg. 52, ff. 24r-24v: 9 June 1417; reg. 53, f. 183r: 9 September 1421; reg. 6, f. 22r: 13 June 1426 and *passim*.

⁸³ F.C. Lane, *The Crossbow in the Nautical Revolution of the Middle Ages*, in B.G. Kohl, R.C. Mueller (eds.), F.C. Lane, *Studies in Venetian Social and Economic History* cit., n. VI.

Island of Crete was the only colony that was included permanently in the proclamation for the annual enrollment to the Venetian fleet of the Adriatic, made by the Venetian Senate every December and January⁸⁴. Other colonies, as we shall see below, only provided manned galleys when required on special occasions. In the annual proclamation, the Senate used to declare the maximum number of the galleys it intended to man the following year in Venice and Crete, and the number of galleys that should be manned immediately in each of these places. The Senate also pointed out that if necessary, there might be in the same year an additional recruitment up to the maximum number of galleys declared in the original proclamation. These announcements were made in order to plan the budget for the manning and equipping of vessels.

After the Pact of Turin, when Venice was still leaking her wounds of the crisis she suffered as a result of the war of Tenedos/Chioggia, the Senate had ordered since 1384 to only man annually in normal times four galleys for the fleet of the Adriatic, two in Venice and two in Crete⁸⁵. In the early fifteenth century the number of galleys increased, especially when a clear danger was forecasted. The rumors in 1402 regarding the arrival in 1403 of the Genoese fleet

⁸⁴ The documents of the first half of the fourteenth century, however, explicitly indicated, in contrast to F. Thiriet, *La Romanie vénitienne au moyen âge, le développement et l'exploitation du domaine colonial vénitien (XII^e-XV^e siècles)* cit., that Crete had to provide the Venetian fleet with a certain number of galleys only when the Metropolis required it: Sp. M. Theotokes, (ed.), *Istorikà Kretikà Eggrafa: Apophaseis Meizonos Symbolioubenetas, 1255-1669*, Athenai, 1931-1933, vols. I, A/1, A/II, vol. I, p. 85, n. 23: 12.8.1316, R. Cessi and P. Sambin, *Le deliberazioni del Consiglio dei Rogati (Senato), Serie "mixtorium"* cit., vol. I, p. 232, n. 30: April 1321; G. Giomo, *I misti del Senato della Repubblica Veneta 1293-1331* cit., p. 65: March 1330; Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 28, f. 45r: 30.1358. On this occasion Crete had to provide four galleys, two to the fleet of the Adriatic and two to the Chrisitan Union against the Turks; two and eleven month later Crete had to provide three galleys: *ibid.*, f. 55v: 14 June 1358; f. 92v: 27 February 1358. Doumerc wrongly indicated that Crete continued with such enrollment in the fifteenth century as well: B. Doumerc, *An Exemplary Maritime Republic: Venice at the End of the fifteenth Century* cit., p. 155.

⁸⁵ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 38, f. 115v: 22 April 1384; reg. 39, f. 51v: 13 March 1385; reg. 40, f. 10v: 29 Decembre 1385; reg. 41, f. 52r: fourth January 1389; reg. 42, f. 38r: fourth January 1391, f. 94v: 16 January 1392; reg. 45, f. 48r: 14 January 1400/1, f. 120r: 17 September, 1401; reg. 46, f. 167v: second February 1404/5; reg. 47, f. 24r: ninth January 1406/7, f. 172: 16 February 1407/8; reg. 48, f. 55v: 28 January 1408/9, f. 123r: 11 January 1409/10; reg. 54, f. 152v: 15 October 1423 and *passim*.

under the command of Boucicaut to the eastern Mediterranean, lead the Venetian Senate to announce at the end of 1402 the enrollment of fifteen galleys for the next year. Four of them were to be manned immediately in Crete, “to defend our honor”⁸⁶. Comparing, however, this number of galleys to that recruited in Crete in other forecasted years of crisis, one can safely claim that this high number required in 1403 was due to the well known bellicose character of Marshal Boucicaut, and to the fear, as above-mentioned, that he will attack Venice’s colonies starting with Corfu, especially after the formal purchase of the Island at the end of 1402 or early 1403 from its legal owner, the King of Napoli. Venice feared that Marshal will retaliate Genoa’s failures against Venice since the pact of Turin up to his time, and will bestow Genoa the supreme control of the international trade between the Far East and the eastern Mediterranean and southern Europe and Northern Italy. The use of the term “war” by the Venetian Senate was to justify the requirement of enlarged defense means Venice took against Bucicaut’s Genoese fleet, including the augmented number of the enrolled galleys for 1403. Furthermore, as above-mentioned, the Senate renewed the nomination of “capitaneus generalis maris”. Except of such extreme danger, the usual number of galleys required from the Island of Crete, when years of crisis were expected, was three. On the 13 January 1412 it was due to the Genoese danger, which the Senate had discussed two days earlier. In December 1422 the three galleys of Crete had to sail to the Adriatic Sea, to join the fleet of the Adriatic under the command of a new captain that had been recently nominated to meet the problems created as a result of Venice’s territorial annexations in the Adriatic and Ionians Seas⁸⁷. In December 1423 the Venetian Senate ordered the regimen of Crete to provide three galleys for the protection of «our maritime territories (Stato da Mar) and of our [commercial] ships against the forces that exist, according to the rumors, in the sea». These forces were primarily the Ottomans, who considered Venice’s annexation of Thessalonica in September 1423 as a declaration of war.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, reg. 46, f. 59r: 12 December 1402 = F. Thiret, Duca di Candia, *Ducali e lettere ricevute*, (1358-1360; 1401- 1405) cit. pp. 19-20, n. 18.

⁸⁷ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 49, f. 146v: eighth January 1412; reg. 54, f. 75v: 23 December 1422; Asv, Duca di Candia, *lettere ricevute*, b.1 n. 9, f. 8r: 24 December 1422-23, February 1422. These Venice’s territorial annexations were discussed above.

Another severe problem Venice had to face at the same time was the arrival of the Genoese and Catalan fleets at the eastern Mediterranean⁸⁸.

When a crisis broke out during a current year, an additional enrollment was demanded by the Venetian Senate from the Island of Crete. Due to rumors in 1400 of the arrival of pirates from the Lipari Islands, in NW Sicily, the Senate ordered the regimen of Crete to man another galley, to reinforce the defense of the Adriatic Sea⁸⁹. Due to the arrival of the Genoese fleet in Cyprus in August 1402 and because of a violent confrontation in Modon between the crew of a Genoese ship returning from Constantinople and a Venetian crew, the Senate ordered the regimen in Crete, in the same month, to man two galleys to escort the merchant convoys to Cyprus and Alexandria and back to the Adriatic Sea⁹⁰. In November 1403 Crete was ordered to man other three light galleys to patrol in the Aegean Sea to protect the Venetian territories and commercial ships from Genoese piracy out to retaliate for defeat of their fleet commanded by the Marshal Boucicaut near Sapienza, a month earlier. The same day of 29 November 1403 the regimen of Crete was instructed by the Venetian Senate to confiscate Genoese merchandises and vessels, to hit back for this Genoese piracy⁹¹. In another words, the overall number of galleys the Island provided that year for the Venetian naval fleet was seven. Due to the information that reached Venice in 1410 regarding the Ottomans intensions to attack Venice's territories in the Aegean Sea, the Senate instructed the regimen to man a galley and to send it to Negroponte, for the escort of the Romania convoy⁹². In May 1417

⁸⁸ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 54, f. 167r: 19 December 1423.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, reg. 45, f. 9v: fourth April 1400.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, reg. 46, f. 36v: 10 August 1402. For the Genoese fleet bound to Cyprus in 1402 and The fight in Modon, see: J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIV^e siècle* cit., vol. I, pp. 411, 413; for the Venetian colonies in the Ionian and the Aegean as providers of naval escorts for commercial ships, see: R. Gertwagen, *The Venetian Colonies in the Ionian and Aegean Seas in Venetian Defense Policy in the thirteenth Century* cit., pp. 371-373.

⁹¹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 46, ff. 117r-117v: 29 November 1403, F. Thiret, *Duca di Candia Ducali e lettere ricevute, (1358-1360; 1401-1405)* cit., p. 94, n. 98; the merchant galleys along the Beirut Line were put in auction especially for chasing pirates and for bringing over to Venice the precious goods from the Levant.

⁹² H. Noiret, *Documents Misti del Senato della Repubblica Veneta 1293-1331* cit., p. 200: 7 June 1410; on 11 June 1410 a letter concerning this issue was written to the regimen in Crete, where it was received on 2 July: Asv, Duca di Candia, b. 1, n. 5, f. 20v.

the Senate ordered the regimen of Crete to man as soon as possible a galley or *galeota* to join two merchant galleys to chase Nicholas Sampier, the pirate, who had seized a Venetian *navis* in the bay of Acre, along the northern Palestinian shore⁹³. In January 1418 the Venetian Senate instructed the regimen to equip a galley, in addition to the other three it had to provided on the spot as the annual enrollment for the same year, for reinforcing the Venetian fleet that defended Negroponte against the Turks⁹⁴. To strengthen the Venetian fleet that was occupied in 1423 with the defense of Thessalonica against the Ottomans, the Venetian Senate instructed the regimen of Crete in October and December 1423 to man immediately two other galleys in addition to those three, above-mentioned, that the Island had to provide that year. In another words, in 1423 Crete provided five galleys to the Venetian fleet. This number stayed for the next years as well⁹⁵. The Senate, it should be pointed out, prolonged the emergency situation for the following three years, and ordered in July 1424 to lend to the regimen of Crete 2500-3000 ducats for manning the additional galleys, and in 1426 the Senate indicated that due to lack of galleys in Crete, The arsenal in Venice will send to Crete two hulls of galleys that will be manned, in addition to the other three the Island provided that year, for the protection of Thessalonica⁹⁶. In addition to the five galleys, the Senate instructed the regimen in 1425 to send to Thessalonica also a *brigantine*⁹⁷. As a result of the Ottomans' attacks on Thessalonica and Negroponte in 1428, the Venetian Senate announced on emergency recruitment of another two galleys in Crete that had to sail to Negroponte. The

⁹³ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 52, f. 14v: 21 May 1417. Regarding the *galeota*, see: R. Gertwagen, *Characteristics of Mediterranean Sea going Ships of 13th-15th Centuries*, p. 550.

⁹⁴ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 52, f. 71v: 24 January 1417/18, f. 72r: 27 January, 1417/18.

⁹⁵ Asv, Duca di Candia, lettere ricevute, b. 1, n. 10, f. 44r: 18 October 1423-29, November 1423; Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 54, f. 153r: 18 October 1423; Asv, Duca di Candia, b.1, n. 10, f. 44v: 20 December 1423-20 January 1423/4 = C. N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, p. 259, n. 873: 19 December 1423; Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 55, f. 81r: 13 January 1424.

⁹⁶ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 55, f. 41v: 13 July 1424, f. 81r: 13 January 1424; reg. 56, f. 167v: 19 December 1426. The reason for the lack of hulls of galleys in Crete is discussed below.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, reg. 54, f. 141r: 7 July 1425.

enrollment of this number of galleys in Crete continued also the next year because of the failure of Jacobo Dandolo, the Venetian ambassador, to reach an agreement with the Sultan⁹⁸. Due to the war against the Genoese in 1431 that included attacking Genoese colonies in the Aegean, primarily the Island of Chios, The Senate instructed the regimen of Crete to man another two galleys, funded as usually by the local clergy, the Venetian settlers and the Jewish inhabitants. In May the Senate cancelled the contribution of the clergy in Crete on the pretext of the contribution of the church in Venice to the military effort⁹⁹. Due to this war, the Senate instructed in August 1432 the regimen of Crete for the first time to provide a *navis* of 1000 *botti* that was at the time still at a stage of building by three private individuals, not in the local arsenal. The Senate ordered the regimen to persuade those people with a loan of 3000 hyperpers to finish as soon as possible the construction of the *navis* and to dispatch it to the Venetian naval fleet. On the other hand the regimen had to enforce those individuals to keep the timetable under threat of a heavy fine¹⁰⁰. In 1446 the regimen had to prepare two galleys due to the fear of the Ottomans, despite of the pact Venice signed with them in February that year, two years after the defeat of the Crusade of Varna (1444)¹⁰¹. In April 1467 the Senate instructed the regimen for the second time to send to the Venetian fleet *naves*, six or eight in number, in addition to as many as possible *triremes*. To accomplish this mission, the regimen had to ask the rectors of Hania and Rethimon for help. The emergency was due to the fear that the Ottoman fleet, joined by the people of Ancona, was about to attack Negroponte. A month earlier, the Venetian fleet was ordered to attack a *navis* of Ancona, loaded with biscuits, that was on its way to the Straits of the Dardanelles¹⁰². Furthermore, as we shall see

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, reg. 56, f. 184r: 22 April 1428; reg. 57, f. 90v: 29 March 1428/9.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, reg. 58, f. 53r: 13 April 1431.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 144r: 19 August 1432.

¹⁰¹ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 2, f. 153v: 22 June 1446. Regarding the fear of the Ottomans, see: K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant* cit., vol. II, p. 94 and n. 51. As a result, the Venetian Senate forced the *naves* going to Constantinople and Romania to sail in convoys. The Venetian governors in the colonies of Modon and Coron had a major role enforcing this regulation: Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 2, f. 133r: 16 March 1446.

¹⁰² H. Noiret, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire de la domination vénitienne en Crète de 1380 à 1485* cit., p. 503: 7 April 1467; K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant* cit., vol. II, p. 286; on *triremes*, see: R. Gertwagen, *Characteristics of Mediterranean Sea going Ships of 13th-15th Centuries* cit., pp. 547-548.

below, the Venetian Senate instructed three months later, on August 1467, the *bailo* of Corfu and that of Negroponte as well as the rec-tors of Hania and Rethimon, to enlarge the local arsenals for storing more *triremes*.

At the end of the fifteenth century, the crisis situations became quite daily, not only because of the Ottomans, but also due to other factors. In April 1480 the Senate instructed to man five of the nine light galleys in the arsenal of Candia by reason of “the present events” that were the preparations of the Ottoman fleet in Valona in the Adriatic to invade Italy. As two of the galleys were well equipped, the Senate sent to Crete 3000 ducats for their manning and for the manning and equipment of the other three galleys. A month later the senate instructed to man by the 300 ducats all the five galleys, whereas for gearing the hulls of the three galleys, the arsenal in Venice sent to Candia the necessary equipment¹⁰³. In April 1482/3 the Senate ordered to intensify the military effort and the maritime force of Venice because of needs of the hour that were the wars she conducted in the mainland and the presence of the fleet of Napoli, Venice’s rival, in the bay of Otranto. For the manning of four hulls of *triremes* for this purpose, the Senate ordered on the 30 October 1483 to send to Crete the funds of 3300 ducats¹⁰⁴. In May 1483 the strug-gles of Venice in the mainland reached their peak by her ban by the Pope. The Venetian Senate announced, therefore, on the emergency recruitment in Dalmatia, Corfu and in Crete. The Senate instructed to send to Crete four *triremes* geared completely and equipment for another two *triremes* that were in Candia. Other resolution regarding this subject in February and March 1485 prove that the *triremes* have not yet left for Crete¹⁰⁵. In March 1492 Crete provided four manned *trirems* to reinforce the Venetian fleets against the grand number of pirates that haunted the Adriatic Sea¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰³ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 11, f. 71v: 29 April 1480, f. 72v: 4 May 1480. Regarding the Ottomans in Valona, see: K. M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant* cit., vol. II, pp. 340-341.

¹⁰⁴ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 11, f. 142v: 15 April 1482-3; f. 170r: 30 May 1483. The Island of Corfu, as we shall see below, had also to man two galleys. For the events that lead to these resolutions, see: K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant* cit., vol. II, 375-376.

¹⁰⁵ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 12, f. 32v: 19 December 1484; *ibid.* f. 34r: 26 February 1485; f. 38r: 19 March 1485; Asv, *Literarum Secretum Collegi et aliorum consilii* de Decem, 1484-1485, ff. 80v-81r: 9 March 1485.

¹⁰⁶ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 13, f. 83r: 29 March 1492.

The Senate in Venice instructed the regimen of Crete to man galleys many times, in addition to the regular or emergency recruitment, especially for the protection Venice's territories in the Ionian Sea and in the Aegean Sea. In 1402, Crete had to provide two manned galleys and to send soldiers and crossbowmen for the protection of Negroponte against the Duke of Athens, who had captured the Venetian *bailo* of Negroponte¹⁰⁷. In November 1410 the regimen had to man two galleys to protect Modon and Coron. It had also to send 10,000 hyperpers to both places to pay the corps of soldiers stationed there as well as for other necessary expenses¹⁰⁸. In July 1425 the Senate ordered each of the colonies of Crete and Negroponte to send a *brigantine* to Thessalonica, for the request of the local government¹⁰⁹. In October 1436 another galley was manned in Crete to patrol the Ionian Sea, between Coron, Modon and the Island of Corfu, to chase the *fusta* of the pirates that caused heavy damage to the territories in the area¹¹⁰.

Due to the considerable contribution of the Island of Crete to the Venetian naval fleet, one could wonder about the naval protection of the Island itself. The resolution of the Venetian Senate on 10 October 1384 shows that in case of an attack on Crete by the Turks from the Aegean shore of Asia Minor, the *signoria* was authorized to man one or two galleys, however, with some reservation. Only if the Venetian settlers contributed half of the money and Venice the other half. On the 15th of the same month, the Senate instructed the Latin inhabitants of Candia to give their share to half of the sum that the Venetian settlers had to pay. The regimen determined the conditions and the extend of time for the manning of the galley/s. These galleys must have been two of the three stored in the arsenal of Candia. As above-mentioned, since 1384 the Island of Crete had to man annually in normal times two galleys for the fleet of the Adriatic. However, in the late 1384, it turned out that the hulls of these three galleys were too old and therefore forbidden to be used. Hence the Senate instructed in November 1384 to replace them by three new hulls, sent from the arsenal in Venice¹¹¹. Taking into account the proximity

¹⁰⁷ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, pp. 95-105, n. 315.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 255, n. 517.

¹⁰⁹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 54, f. 141r: 7 July 1425.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, reg. 59, f. 181v: 19 October 1436.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, reg. 39, f. 15v: 10 October 1384, f. 24r: 9 November 1384. According to this resolution, the three old hulls should have been used for construction needs in

of the resolution, regarding the sponsorship of these galleys for the protection of the Island, to the end of the War of Chioggia and the Pact of Turin, Venice's proposal for her share in the funds is undoubtedly very generous. In May 1395, the metropolitan arsenal sent to Crete two new hulls of galleys and the Senate ordered the local regimen to use them only when necessary, and till then to keep the hulls in the arsenal in Candia¹¹². It seems that these hulls were beyond the number manned by the Island annually for the fleet of the Adriatic. Indeed, the occasion for gearing and manning these two hulls occurred seven months later, although not for the protection of the Island itself. In December the Venetian Senate instructed the regimen of Crete to man on the spot three galleys, that undoubtedly included those two, for the protection of Venice's *Stato da Mar* against Bayezid I and the Byzantine Emperor, who was at the time vassal of the Ottomans. Venice feared the exit of the Ottoman fleet from Gallipoli. As a result, the Senate was concerned with Venice's commercial affairs in the Black Sea, in Tana in the NW and in Trebizond in the SE¹¹³. In September 1401, the Senate diminished the number of the galleys allotted to the protection of Crete against the Turks to one of the two the Island had to provide annually to the fleet of the Adriatic¹¹⁴. In January 1402, the Senate ordered the metropolitan arsenal to send to Hania and Rethimon each, a *galeota* that both places had to man to intensify the protection on Crete, due to the rumors of potential raids by Bayezid¹¹⁵. In 1408 the Senate withdrew from his second resolution made on 15 October 1384, regarding the funds for the manning of the galleys, and ordered that the Venetian settlers and the Latin population alone will pay for manning the galley, according to previous resolutions, made five days

one of the local ports: Candia, Rethimon or Hania; Sp. M. Theotokes (ed.), *Istorià Kretikà Eggrafa: Apophaseis Meizonos Symboulitou Benetias, 1255-1669* cit., vol. A/II, pp. 270-271, n. 1: 15 October 1384.

¹¹² Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 43, ff. 5r-5v: 21 May 1395.

¹¹³ H. Noiret, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire de la domination vénitienne en Crète de 1380 à 1485* cit., pp. 72-73: 9 December 1395. The arsenal in Venice had to provide four manned galleys on the spot; On the circumstance that lead to the subordination of the Byzantine emperor at the Ottomans, see: H. Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire, The Classical Age 1300-1600*, N. Itzkowitz and C. Imber (trans.), Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1973, pp. 15-16.

¹¹⁴ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 45, f. 120r: 17 September 1401.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 123r: 10 January 1402.

before¹¹⁶. When, however, the danger for the Island grew, the number of galleys allotted for its protection increased. In May 1410 the Senate instructed the *signoria* to man two galleys for the protection of the Island against hostile fleets coming from Provence, Catalonia, Genoa and Naples to the Levant¹¹⁷. It is interesting that there is no further reference on this issue in the documents, most probably as there were no alterations to the usual instructions in case of danger.

Negroponte, the biggest Venetian colony in the northern Aegean Sea was also obliged to take on the burden of contribution to Venice's naval force, however, with some major differences to Crete. First, Negroponte's involvement was only in times of crisis and for the merely activity in the NE Aegean. The role of the galley then was either participating in the protection of territories, or escorting Venetian merchant convoys, the *muda* of Romania, to Constantinople and the Black Sea. Negroponte's contribution in comparison to Crete was, however, very poor – only one manned galley. In 1395 it was to protect Venice's territories against Bayezid I and the Byzantine Emperor his vassal at the time. One has to bear in mind that Crete provided then three manned galleys¹¹⁸. In 1402, Negroponte had to provide a manned galley to join the naval fleet for attacking Ottoman Gallipoli, and in October and December of the same year, due to the predicted danger on the Venetian merchant convoys from the Genoese naval fleet that returned from Cyprus¹¹⁹. Due to the fear of the Genoese fleet under Marshal Boucicaut, the Senate ordered the *bailo* to man a galley in July 1403 for the protection of the merchant convoy bound to the NE Mediterranean. But, if it were not ready by the time the convoy arrived, a galley of the Venetian fleet was to replace the galley of Negroponte, in order to avoid any hindrance of the convoy. In 1409, the government in Negroponte had to man the local galley and to dispatch it to the Island of Tenedos, with

¹¹⁶ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, pp. 211-212, n. 447.

¹¹⁷ Asv, Duca di Candia, lettere ricevute, b. 1, n. 5, f. 19r: 16 May 1410 (received on 20 January 1410/1411).

¹¹⁸ See above, n. 112.

¹¹⁹ For the attack on Gallipoli, see: H. Noiret, *Documents inédits pour servir a l'histoire de la domination vénitienne en Crète de 1380 a 1485* cit., pp. 130-131: 20 May 1402. For protection against the Genoese, see: C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, pp. 103-105, n. 315; Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, f. 59r: 12 December 1402.

galleys from Crete stationed in the Island of Negroponte, for its protection. The galleys had to meet the captain of the Venetian naval fleet waiting in Tenedos with the Venetian *coche* bound for Tana and to escort the *coche* into the Dardanelles. The measure were in reaction to the news of the departure of two Catalan *coche* from Gallipoli heading for the waters around the Island of Cerigo or Cape Malea – in other words, along the sea lane leading from the eastern Mediterranean to Coron and Modon. Because of the Ottoman threat to attack Negroponte and other Venetian islands in the Aegean in 1414-1415, the *bailo* of Negroponte had to recruit the local galley, the one in Nauplia of Romania and the one in the islands of Tinos and Mykonos for the protection of the merchant convoy to the NE Mediterranean, and to escort it, the first time down to Constantinople, and in the other time, as far as the Sea of Marmara, after which the galleys had to get back into the Aegean to protect the Venetian territories against the Ottomans¹²⁰. In August 1415, the Venetian Senate authorized the regimen of Negroponte to man the galley for two years, in case Venice established a treaty with the Islands of Rhodes, Chios and Lemnos against the Ottomans¹²¹. In January 1424 the galley of Negroponte had to join the Venetian naval fleet that was fighting the Ottomans, to release the Ottoman siege on Thessalonica¹²². It is interesting that there are not specific reference to the enrollment of the galley of Negroponte after the formal declaration of war by Venice on the Ottomans, in 1429. On the other hand there are references to the enrollment of the galley for escorting the merchant convoy to the NE Mediterranean, a task Negroponte accomplished with other colonies. In 1442, Negroponte and Nauplia Romania again had to man one galley each, to escort the convoys to Romania and Tana, to protect them against 40 Turkish *fuste*, that had reached the Island of Lemnos¹²³. In 1445 after the defeat of the Crusade in Varna (1444), Negroponte manned the local galley, which with the one manned of Corfu had to escort the convoy of Romania up to Gallipoli or further northwards. The convoy had to wait in Negroponte for four days at

¹²⁰ R. Gertwagen, *The Venetian Colonies in the Ionian and Aegean Seas in Venetian Defense Policy in the Fifteenth Century* cit., pp. 372-373.

¹²¹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 51, f. 15v: 26 August 1415.

¹²² N.C. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, pp. 118-120, n. 671, 672.

¹²³ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 1, ff. 107v-108r: 17 July 1442; f. 109r: 21 July 1442; f. 110v: 27 July 1442.

the most, until the manning of the local galley had been completed. A year later, due to the news that had reached Venice concerning the Turks' intention to attack Venetian territories, the galley of Negroponte with the one of Corfu were once again manned to escort the convoy of Romania¹²⁴. This was the last time the galleys of Corfu and Negroponte were used for escorting the merchant convoys. Twenty five years later, Negroponte was conquered by the Ottomans.

However, it should be pointed out that the galley of Negroponte was, with again a sharp contrast to Crete, only active for five or six months a year, due to the lack of manpower for its manning¹²⁵. Furthermore, the activity of the galley of Negroponte included, in addition to the participation in military operations of the Venetian naval fleet and to escorting of merchant convoys, also protection of the Island itself. One should bear in mind, that quite often than not, the Island was under the attacks of the Turks. Sometimes the local galley protected alone the Island. However, quite frequently another galley of the fleet of the Adriatic, the one that had been manned in Venice or Crete, joined the one of Negroponte¹²⁶. As above-mentioned, for these galleys, enrolled in Venice and the Island of Crete, that was part of their routine service in the Venetian fleet of the Adriatic. The allotment of two galleys for the protection of the Island of Negroponte, was mainly due to the short term of activity of the local galley.

The Island of Corfu that was annexed by Venice formally in the early fifteenth century, contributed to Venice's military efforts already on the morrow of the Venetian occupation of same parts of the Island in the late fourteenth century. In July 1387, the Senate in Venice instructed to man the galley stationing in the Island with local sea people, whereas the commander (*sopracomitus*) and the professional

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, reg. 2, ff. 85r-85v: 25 June 1445. The instruction regarding the waiting time was given in July: *ibid.*, f. 92v: 2 July 1445; f. 161r: 17 July 1446. The galley of Negroponte had to be ready for action the moment the convoy reached Negroponte, in order to prevent detention.

¹²⁵ D. Jacoby, *Les gens de mer de la marine de guerre vénitienne de la mer Egee aux XIVe et XVe siècles*, in R. Ragosta (ed.), *Le genti del mare Mediterraneo* cit., pp. 169-201, here, pp. 189-191.

¹²⁶ For a solo mission of protection, see: C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, pp. 211-2122, n. 447; *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 2, n. 556. With a galley that had been armed in Venice: *ibid.*, pp. 52-54, n. 268; Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 45, ff. 27r-27v: 19 August 1400; H. Noiret, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire de la domination vénitienne en Crète de 1380 à 1485* cit., pp. 130-131: 20 May 1402.

staff that operated technically the galley, including the *nauclerus*, were sent from Venice. The Metropolis sponsored the manning of the vessel by soldiers and oarsmen with 1000 Ducats. The galley had to watch the Adriatic, as the fleet of the Adriatic had left for Modon, Coron and Negroponte, due to the events regarding the Ottomans' raids on the Peloponnese¹²⁷. One could safely assume that Corfu, the biggest Venetian colony in the Ionian Sea, would have contributed regularly a manned galley for the Venetian naval fleet. Nevertheless, in July 1397, the Venetian Senate rejected a proposal, identical to the one made ten years earlier, regarding manning the galley in Corfu to watch the Adriatic in times the fleet of the Adriatic had to leave for other urgent missions. In 1397 the fleet of the Adriatic was occupied again with the protection of Negroponte, Nauplia in Romania, Coron and Modon, that were attacked by the Ottomans¹²⁸.

The galley in Corfu was manned only in the extreme time of crisis. In October 1423, due to the fights between Venice and the Ottomans, as a result of Venice's annexation of Thessalonica, a month before. Then, a galley was manned also by Thessalonica itself. This instruction was repeated also in December 1423, regarding the enrollment for the following year. This time the resolution referred in addition to Corfu and Thessalonica also to Zara and Crete, that contributed alone four galleys¹²⁹. Due to the fear of the Catalans in 1426, the Senate announced the emergency recruitment and ordered to dispatch a light galley to Corfu for manning when required, in other words, not immediately¹³⁰. In July 1431, due to the rumors on the arrival of a Genoese fleet to the eastern Mediterranean, the Venetian Senate instructed the *bailo* of Corfu to man a galley and a month later, the *bailo* was ordered to man the *galeota* with the 22-25 bancs that was in the Island¹³¹. In June 1432, due to the fear of Genoa's retaliation as a result of Venetian attack of the Island of Chios a year before, the Senate instructed the arsenal in the Metropolis to send

¹²⁷ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 40, f. 12v: 8 July 1387. For the historic circumstances, see: A. Luttrell, *The Latins of Argos and Nauplia: 1311-1394*, in Id., *Latin Greece, the Hospitallers and the Crusaders*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1982, n. VIII, p. 45 and n. 2.

¹²⁸ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 44, f. 10, 5 July 1397; f. 12v: 8 July 1397.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, reg. 54, f. 168r: 30 October 1423; f. 167r: 29 December 1423.

¹³⁰ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. III, p. 303, n. 888.

¹³¹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 58, f. 72v: 20 July 1421; f. 41r: 14 August 481.

to Corfu a galley completely geared and equipped and manned with the professional staff for its operation. The island of Corfu provided the rowers, soldiers and *balisterii*¹³². On the other hand, in November 1432, the Senate rejected the proposal to order the *bailo* of Corfu to man the local galley for a two month period and to send him 1000 Ducats for this purpose¹³³. One can safely claim that the rejection was due to the high expenses. If not rejected, Corfu might have provided two galleys in that year. Then again, in January 1432-3, due to the continuation of the crisis and the presence of the Genoese fleet in the eastern Mediterranean, the Senate instructed the *bailo* to man a galley that had, with the galley of the vice-captain of the fleet of the Adriatic and another two galleys of the fleet, to patrol in the southern Adriatic, and around Cape Otranto¹³⁴. The rumors on the withdrawal of the Genoese fleet to Genoa, lead the Senate in Venice to announce the annulment of the emergency enrollment for the protection of the Adriatic Sea, declared in January 1433. As a result of this annulment, the Adriatic might have been left without a fleet for its protection, the Venetian Senate ordered the *bailo* of Corfu that only when he will have solid information regarding predicted danger for Venetian merchant vessels (*navigia*), he should man the *galeota* stationed in Corfu for the protection of these ships¹³⁵. One has to keep in mind that in 1445-1446 the galley of Corfu was manned for the escort of the convoy of Romania¹³⁶. In 1449 the Senate instructed the *bailo* of Corfu to man the galley, which had been sent from Venice for the protection of the Island, with sponsorship of the incomes of Venice in the Island. If these incomes were not enough, the Venetian colony of Nauplia in Romania had to provide the missing money from the profits it made of the taxes. These means prove the urgent need for the manning of the galley in Corfu, although the motive is not indicated¹³⁷. In April 1450, the Island had to man the galley due to the threat made by the Catalan and Genoese vessels¹³⁸.

Since the 1470s the Island of Corfu had had to man two galleys or a galley and a *justa* stationed in the Island, most probably since

¹³² *Ibid.*, f. 172r: 8 June 1432.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, f. 195v: 12 November 1432.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 204r: 22 January 1432/3.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, reg. 59, f. 81v: 12 November 1434.

¹³⁶ See above, n. 101.

¹³⁷ *Asv*, Senato Mar, reg. 3, f. 131v: 7 July 1449.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, ff. 182r-182v: 11 April 1450 (two documents).

the construct of a local arsenal and its enlargement in the 1460s. Nevertheless, the enrollment was made only in urgent situations. In the 1470, it was due to the conquest of Negroponte by the Ottomans and their intentions to invade Italy from Valona in the southern Adriatic Sea¹³⁹. In April 1482, it was because of the attendance of the Neapolitan fleet in Otranto, and in 1484 due to the presence of hostile fleets in the Adriatic Sea. In April 1482, the arsenal in Venice sent to Corfu two hulls of light galleys geared and equipped, and in 1484 it sent to Corfu two *triremes* for manning¹⁴⁰. In 1487, the two *triremes* in Corfu were put with three galleys of Crete on stand-by position, and five years later both *triremes* of Corfu were manned with four *triremes* of Crete against pirates that searched for prey in the Adriatic Sea¹⁴¹.

No galley was ever manned in Corfu for the Island's own protection, because of the constant attendance of the Venetian naval fleet in the area. The Island was an anchorage for the naval fleet or some of its units. Thus, the expenses for manning the local galleys were spared. However, smaller oared vessels were used instead. In February 1414 the *bailo* of Corfu ordered as an exceptional occasion to man the local *galeota*, and the other *fuste* and vessels in a minimum of expenses in case of Sicilian piracy against the island¹⁴². On the other hand, in order to protect Valona in the southern Adriatic against the Ottomans at the eve of their conquest of this place in 1417, the Senate in Venice authorized the *bailo* of Corfu to send to the senior of Valona a *galeota* and same armed boats. The *bailo*, however, conditioned this contribution that the assistance delivered for the protection of Valona will only be maritime without the landing of the soldiers, in order to prevent from the Ottomans any excuse to open a war, especially after the successful, although unintentional attack of Gallipoli a year before by the Venetian naval fleet¹⁴³. After the Ottoman conquest of Valona in 1417 and the piracy they conducted since then along the eastern coast of the Adriatic, the arse-

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, reg. 10, f. 76r: first May 1476; f. 124r: 10 June 1477; reg. 11, f. 6v: 26 December 1478.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 142v: 15 April 1482; reg. 12, f. 32v: 19 December 1484.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, ff. 122r-122v: 11 September 1487; reg. 13, f. 83r: 29 March 1492.

¹⁴² C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. III, p. 99, n. 647.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 159-160, n. 717; on the attack of Gallipoli, see above.

nal in Venice sent a light galley to Corfu for the protection of Durazzo¹⁴⁴. In July 1423, the *bailo* of Corfu ordered once again to man the local *galeota* for the protection of the Venetian merchant *naves* that sailed between Patras and Corfu and in order to protect Lepanto against the Ottoman pirates¹⁴⁵. In May 1476, the Senate in Venice instructed the *bailo* of Corfu to man one of the two best galleys in the Island and to send it nearby Valona, to deter the Turkish *fuste* that caused extensive damage to Venetian subjects. The galley had to stay nearby Valona until it received an order to withdraw¹⁴⁶. In December 1478, the *bailo* of Corfu had to man the galley and the two *fuste* in Corfu to protect the Island against the attacks from Valona of Ottoman *fuste*¹⁴⁷.

Coron and Modon were the only colonies that hardly contributed manpower and vessels to the Venetian naval fleet in the fifteenth century, despite, as we shall see below, of the construction of arsenals for the storage of war ships in both places. In March 1400 the mention of manning was made in the negative way. Due to a recent epidemic and because of the Ottomans' attacks, many of the sea people were killed, as a result of which Coron could not man but only one galley. The other galley in Coron should have been sent back to Venice or destroyed¹⁴⁸. In June 1432 the Venetian Senate instructed the castellan of Coron to «equip and to prepare the *galeota* placed there» due to the emergency draft against the Genoese fleet that came to the eastern Mediterranean to retaliate Venice's attack on Chios a year before¹⁴⁹. It is interesting that Modon was not mentioned in neither of these instructions.

The references to the manning of galleys in Coron and Modon in the fifteenth century for their own protection are also quite rare, in contrast to those made on the morrow of the pact of Turin. Then however, only Modon was mentioned. During the War of Tenedos/ChioGGia (1377-1381), hulls of five light galleys were stored in the arsenal in Modon. In November 1381, the Senate in Venice instructed to arm and man them for the protection of Modon and

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 181, n. 732.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 252, n. 823.

¹⁴⁶ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 10, f. 76r: first May 1476.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, reg. 11, f. 6v: 26 December 1478.

¹⁴⁸ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, p. 1, n. 209.

¹⁴⁹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 58, f. 127r: 8 June 1432.

other Venetian colonies. Since 1382 a vessel of *galledellum* or *galeota* type was stationed permanently in Modon. These were small or medium oared vessels for the protection of the place, or in times of crisis for other use according to Venice's needs¹⁵⁰. Nevertheless, there is no reference to their actual use then nor in the fifteenth century. It might be because Modon and Coron were obligatory ports of call for the vessels leaving the Ionian for the Aegean and vice versa, including the Venetian naval fleet.¹⁵¹ In urgent situations, like in July 1397, January and February 1401, March 1418 and April 1431, when Coron and Modon were under Ottoman's and Genoese attacks, the Senate in Venice instructed units of the Venetian naval fleets to arrive and stay there for the protection of both places¹⁵².

It is interesting that the war ships stored in the local arsenals in Modon and Coron were used for military purposes only in the Adriatic, Aegean and Ionian Seas. In April 1382, The *castellani* of Coron and Modon had to transfer one of the galleys in Coron to the Duke of the Aegean Sea, and another galley had to be relocated in April 1400 to the Island of Crete¹⁵³. The manning topic in this context was ignored. Furthermore, Modon was not mentioned, most probably as the *galeota* stored there was for local use, as above-mentioned. In March 1402, once again only the *galeota* of Coron was mentioned, although the *castellani* of both Coron and Modon had to man it together by mariners enlisted among Venetian subjects. The galley had to patrol between Patras in the NW of Modon and Cape Malea in the SE, and to protect Venetian merchants against Ottoman subjects that committed piracy in the gulf of Patras as well as raids on Coron and Modon. The manning of the *galeota* in this case was not solitary, but continued according to the necessity, and it was sponsored by

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, reg. 37, ff. 26r, 85v; reg. 40, ff. 46v, 85r; reg. 41, ff. 76r, 169r and *passim*.

¹⁵¹ R. Gertwagen, *The Venetian colonies in the Ionian and Aegean Seas in Venetian Defense Policy in the fifteenth Century*, pp. 354-367; Ead., *Does Naval Activity - Military and commercial - Need Artificial Ports? The Case of Venetian Harbours and Aegean Sea till 1500*, in George K. Livadas (ed.), *Festschrift in honour of V. Christides*, «Graeco-Arabica», vols. IX-XV, 2004, pp. 163-180.

¹⁵² Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 44, f. 1v: 8 July 1397; reg. 45, f. 128v: 2 January, 1401; f. 134v: 3 February 1401; reg. 46, f. 169r: 7 February 1404; reg. 52, f. 83v: 28 March 1418; reg. 58, f. 54v: 21 April 1431.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, reg. 37, f. 69r: 18 April 1382; H. Noiret, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire de la domination vénitienne en Crète de 1380 à 1485* cit., p. 106: 26 April 1400.

Venice¹⁵⁴. In April 1409, the *castellani* of Coron and Modon had to dispatch a manned galley to Zara and another one in August 1408. It should be noted that according to the documents in both cases Coron and Modon dispatched the manned galleys with the Island of Corfu. The documents, however, did not specify the contribution of either colony¹⁵⁵.

How can one explain the relative poor contribution of Coron and Modon of manned galleys to Venice's military effort, despite the existence of local sea people? On these the information is quite abundant. In May 1392, the Senate in Venice ordered the castellan of Modon to encourage foreign mariners to settle in Coron and in Modon by cancelling the *angaria* taxes, from which the Latins were freed. In July 1392, the Senate instructed to release the mariners from the taxes, which the villains had to pay for the land and the working animals, the bulls. The Senate emphasized that it was essential that the mariners will only dedicate their life to their profession, in other words, on boats and *ligna*, and not to agriculture. On the other hand, they should have once more been obligated to pay the *angaria*¹⁵⁶. It turned out that in every day life the mariners were occupied with maritime transportation of stones and other objects needed in Coron and Modon. In 1402 the Venetian Senate announced that only when these sea people Coron and Modon will be occupied with maritime activity, most probably naval, they will be released from the *angaria*¹⁵⁷. Moreover, in April 1401 and March 1402, the Senate also instructed to give the mariners houses in a protected area, known as the "island" (*insula*), near the *castrum* of Coron. Every mariner, who will live with his family in this area will enjoy a discount of four and a half *solidi* of the total amount of the *angaria* tax he had to pay. Nevertheless, another discussion regarding this subject matter in the Venetian Senate in October 1412 shows that the resolution had not been carried out¹⁵⁸.

¹⁵⁴ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, pp. 70-71, n. 284.

¹⁵⁵ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 48, f. 71v: 18 April 1409; f. 96r: 25 August 1409.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, reg. 42, f. 61v: 28 May 1392; f. 70r: 61 July 1392.

¹⁵⁷ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age* cit., vol. II, p. 72, n. 285.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70, n. 282, pp. 273-274.

It should be finally pointed out, that the soldiers and crossbowmen on Venetian war ships as well as on commercial ships were only Venetians or free Latins. Due to the lack of confidence in the local subject Greek population as well as discrimination against it, Venice prohibited its employment in military service and certainly not at sea. Only in Crete were the free Greek seamen that had been invited by the Venetians to settle on the Island, employed by Venice as rowers. In order to prevent the employment of the local subject population, the government in Venice sent to its colonies crossbowmen, first of all Venetians but also Latins, whom she had hired herself. One can safely conclude that the crossbowmen that the colonies of Negroponte, Corfu and rarely also Coron and Modon provided were Venetians or hired Latins. Crete was the only colony that employed crossbowmen for the naval fleet from the residents of the Island, Venetians or Latins. There were at least 500 *balisterii*. Since 1350, the *regimen* had ordered eve male between thirteen and thirty six on the Island to practice at least once a week with bows and crossbows. Crete provided Venice's military efforts on the mainland as well as its colonies with crossbowmen¹⁵⁹.

5. *Arsenals and other logistic facilities*

Venice's colonies could contribute to her naval efforts due to two correlated initiatives made by the Metropolis. One was the enlargement of the arsenal in Venice, first in 1302-1303, on the morrow of the establishment of the fleet of the Adriatic (1301) and again in the 1320s, with the construction of a new arsenal. Under the jurisdiction of the 'new arsenal' were included also the industries related to the vessels and their armament, like the rope industry and the weapons, including gun powder. Concina claims that the construction of the new arsenal in the 1320s indicated a turn point towards a new logistic organization of the maritime system of Venice that functioned until the eighteenth century. Since the 1320s the metropolitan arsenal had provided the Venetian colonies with the equipment and the materials needed for all their activities, regarding construction operations, mainly of ports and their maintenance on the one hand, and

¹⁵⁹ R. Gertwagen, *The Venetian Colonies in the Ionian and Aegean Seas in Venetian defense Policy in the Fifteenth Century* cit., pp. 369-370.

on the other hand, regarding the war galleys and their rigging¹⁶⁰. For the storage of the warships, the rigging and armors, sent from Venice to her colonies, the Venetian Senate initiated the construction of suitable facilities, known by the general term as arsenals.

It is interesting that the first references to Venetian 'colonial' arsenals were made before the enlargement in 1301-1303 of the metropolitan arsenal. The first colonies that were authorized by Venice to build arsenals were Candia in Crete and Coron in the SW Peloponnese, both in 1281 or 1282. In both places the arsenals were for storing ships, in Crete *a navilium*, a general term for a small ship and in Coron in addition to *navilium* also a galley. According to the resolutions of the Maggior Consiglio in Venice, these facilities supplied then services to the convoys of merchant ships going either to the NE or to the SE Mediterranean. Negroponte was mentioned in this context as well, and therefore, although the term arsenal was not indicated explicitly but only in the second decay of the fourteenth century, one can assume that such a facility had already existed in Negroponte in the early 1280s. The type of services that the colonies had to provide the convoys, and for which they had received a loan from Venice is unknown. These, however, could be supplies of biscuits, supplement of armament sent from the Metropolitan arsenal, of missing equipment – rigging, anchors, naval escort etc.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰E. Concina, *L'Arsenale della repubblica di Venezia, tecniche e istituzioni dal medioevo all'età moderna*, Electa, Milano, 1984, pp. 26-27, 34-36. My interpretation for the relation between the enlargement of the metropolitan Arsenal and the Venetian colonies, as is discussed below, differs from Concina's. Doumerc, it should be indicated, used wrongly Concina and claims that the "new arsenal" was built between 1304 and 1307: B. Doumerc, *Exemplary Maritime Republic: Venice at the end of the Middle Ages* cit., pp. 153-154.

¹⁶¹R. Cessi, *Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio di Venezia*, Zanichelli, Bologna, 1931-1950, vol. II, p. 350, vol. III, p. 38, n. 102; R. Gertwagen, *The concept of Pots in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Construction and Maintenance on Crete to the end of the Fifteenth Century*, «International Journal of Maritime History», vol. XII, n. 1, June 2000, pp. 177-234, the arsenal of Candia is discussed in detail in pp. 228-234; Ead., *Does Naval Activity - Military and Commercial - Need Artificial Ports? The Case of Venetian Harbours and Ports in the Ionian and Aegean Sea till 1500* cit., p. 169. In 1325 two *ligna* were sent to Coron and the Castellan had been authorized to build an arsenal for their storage. The document might refer to an addition to the existing facility: R. Cessi, P. Sambin, *Le Deliberazioni del Consiglio dei Rogati (Senato)*, Serie "mixtorium" cit., vol. I, p. 156, n. 111.

Chronologically speaking, the other arsenal built in the Venetian colonies was again in Crete, in Hania. In 1325 or 1326 the Venetian Senate ordered to keep in this arsenal after its construction a *lignum*, small oared vessel, used for commerce, transport of horses, to supply the war galleys and to protect the Island. Such vessels were kept at the time also in the arsenal of Candia¹⁶². In 1329, an arsenal was built, as mentioned above, in Ragusa in the Adriatic. The exact date for the construction of the arsenal in Modon is quite vague, although one can safely presume that it was constructed in the second half of the fourteenth century. In this facility were stored during the war of Tenedos/Chioggia, as above-mentioned, five hulls of light war galleys. In Corfu, the last colony among those that Venice annexed gradually since 1386, the Venetian Senate ordered in 1392 to station a *galeota*, “due to many reasons”, most probably because of the fear of the Genoese, as above-mentioned. To keep this *galeota*, when not in use, the *bailo* was instructed to build a roofed shed (*facere cohoptam bonam*) with as little expenses as possible in a place, which he finds suitable. The resolutions of the Venetian Senate of April 1401, June 1412, June 1453 and August 1455 show, however, that the building had not been built, as a result of which the condition of the two galleys stationed in Corfu was real bad¹⁶³.

All these arsenals, it should be pointed out, were dried dockyards. When not in use, the vessels were dragged by some kind of mechanical device into the arsenal. The resolutions of the Venetian Senate in 1395, regarding the arsenal in Coron reveal that the installation was built with two vaulted halls near the mole. Inside the vaulted halls two galleys could be kept on land (*salvare in terra*). The building was, however, in ruin¹⁶⁴. In Candia in Crete, on the other hand, with the increasing number of war galleys that Crete had to equip and arm every year from four in the 1350s, after the loss of Dalmatia and Ragusa, to six in 1362, the Senate ordered the *signoria* to

¹⁶² Sp. M. Theotokes (ed.), *Istorikà Kretikà Eggrafa: Apophaseis Meizonos Symboulou Benetias, 1255-1669*, Vol. A/1, p. 81, n. 4; R. Gertwagen, *The concept of Pots in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Construction and Maintenance on Crete to the end of the Fifteenth Century*, p. 228 and n. 81.

¹⁶³ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 40, f. 12v: 8 July 1392; C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age*, vol. II, p. 18 n. 236: 15 April 1401, pp. 272-273, n. 540: 3 June 1412; Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 4, f. 193r: 1 June 1453; reg. 5, f. 109v: 21 August 1455.

¹⁶⁴ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 43, f. 185v: 10 May 1395.

enlarge the arsenal by adding two more vaulted halls (*volti*). In other words, the arsenal had then three *volti*¹⁶⁵. With the decrease of the number of galleys Crete provided the Venetian naval fleet after the War of Tenedos/Chioggia that were, as above-mentioned, no more than three or four galleys, the existing space sufficed.

In the second half of the fifteenth century the increase of naval efforts against the Ottomans affected the inner space of arsenals of Corfu, Negroponte and Crete. This situation caused the construction in the Island of Crete of arsenals also in the other two port towns along the northern coast of the Island, Rethimon and Hania, in addition to the one in Candia. In 1467 the Venetian Senate ordered each of these colonies and port towns to build arsenals according to the number of *triremes* they had to provide the Venetian naval fleet. In Corfu and Negroponte it meant an arsenal that could accommodate three *triremes*; in Candia Crete, the *signoria* had to enlarge the existing arsenal to accommodate another four *triremes* and in Hania and Rethimon the arsenals had to be built with two *volti* each to house two *triremes*¹⁶⁶. In the 1470s the efforts against the Ottomans, who had conquered Negroponte, were further intensified. Candia and Hania in Crete were the only port towns in the Island to carry the burden. Five additional *triremes* were sent to Crete, and the Senate in Venice ordered the Rector of Hania to complete the construction of the two *volti*, which should have been built twenty four years earlier. These were supposed to be constructed along the southern coast of the port. Sanudo's diaries, however, show that this building operation was only carried out in the second decade of the sixteenth century¹⁶⁷. In Candia, on the other hand, the regimen was instructed to build as quickly as possible proper *cantenarii* for the storage of the new *triremes*. In 1472 the complex contained five *volti*, the length of each was twenty-eight *passi veneziani* (48.72 metres) and the width seven *passi* (12.8 metres). In April 1498, five-roofed *volti* and two without roofs were mentioned. In April 1480, nine war galleys were kept inside the arsenal. One can safely assume that in the winter, when all the galleys had to be

¹⁶⁵ R. Gertwagen, *The concept of Pots in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Construction and Maintenance on Crete to the end of the Fifteenth Century*, p. 229.

¹⁶⁶ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 8, f. 162r: 20 February 1467; f. 138v: 30 November 1467.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, reg. 9, f. 110v: 29 September 1471; G. Gerola, *Monumenti veneziani nell'isola di Creta. Ricerche e descrizioni fatte per incarico del R. Istituto*, Venezia, 1905-1932, 4 vols, here, vol. IV, p. 39 and n. 3.

kept in the arsenal, at least some of these vaulted halls held more than one galley each¹⁶⁸.

It should be pointed out that the Venetian Senate discussed the construction of wet arsenals in addition to dry docks, however, only regarding Coron and Corfu. In August 1393, the Venetian Senate ordered to build in Coron another arsenal for keeping a galley in the water (in quo locare posit aliqua galea in aqua). The new Castellan was, therefore, instructed to consult with the retired one and with other people, with whom he will inspect the field, on the expenses required for the operation and where to build it so that it will be protected against storms and human attacks¹⁶⁹. Due to the lack of further information regarding the subject, it is hard to tell if this building operation was actually carried out. In the Island of Corfu, discussions regarding the wet dockyard had already begun one year after Venice had occupied the capital of the Island and the bay of Cassiopo in the NE of Corfu. Venice, one has to keep in mind, accomplished in 1386 an illegal, though, very partial occupation of Corfu, and therefore had to protect the old town that was the capital of the Island from the rest of the mainland that still was loyal to the legal owner, the king of Napoli. To protect the Old Town the *bailo* was instructed in 1387 to dig a moat, east to the eastern castle that built the old town. In May 1394, he had to deepen the moat under the sea level, in order to let the sea water to flow inside. This is in fact the present topography of the old town of Corfu. The Venetian Senate ordered to keep four war galleys inside the flooded moat¹⁷⁰. The resolution of the Venetian Senate in March 1414 as well as Pietro Casola's description in 1494 proves, that the digging operation was still at its peak. The excavation of the moat under the sea level was only accomplished in the sixteenth century¹⁷¹. Instead of a moat full of

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 124 and n. 4-6; Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 9, f. 110r: 27 September 1471; reg. 11, f. 1v: 29 April 1480.

¹⁶⁹ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 42, f. 127r: 25 August 1393: «...in quo locare possit aliquo galea in aqua [...] et in quo loco si erit securus ab iminicos et fortuna maris».

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, reg. 40, f. 78r: 22 April 1387; f. 79r: 9 May 1387; reg. 43, f. 4v: 15 May 1394.

¹⁷¹ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age*, vol. III, pp. 45-46, n. 588; M.M. Newett, *Canon Pietro Casola's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, Manchester, 1907, p. 186; E. Bacchion, *Il dominio veneto su Corfù (1386-1797)*, Venezia, 1956, p. 42. Bacchion, however, ignored the first instructions regarding the digging of the moat as well as the letting of sea water into it.

sea water as a wet dockyard, the Venetian Senate discussed in December 1409 the permission that the retired *bailo* had received for buying a house, near the port, that had been previously used for leather tanning. That house could have been easily transformed into an arsenal for storing a galley or *galeota*. For this purpose the floor of the building had to be excavated under sea level. The water in this so called wet arsenal were cleared of worms and sea weeds. Another resolution in November 1425 regarding the deepening of the bottom of the building shows, however, that the first instruction had not been carried out¹⁷². Due to further reference to this subject, and taking into consideration that dry arsenal in Corfu was built only in the 1460s, as indicated above, one can only wonder if it was in this wet dockyard that a galley was stored according to a resolution made in September 1450, so that it would not dry up and consequently destroyed¹⁷³.

It should be indicated that in most of these arsenals, the one in Candia excluded, construction operations were very rare, and if any at all, they were quite often than not very minor. In 1393 the Venetian Senate indicated that in Coron there were in the port one galley and one *galeota* not apt anymore for sailing and therefore blockading part of the anchorage zone. The new Castellan was, therefore, authorized to decide whether to sell, destroy or dismantle the hulls of these vessels in order to use the dismantle good parts for construction of a new vessel¹⁷⁴. A Senate resolution of April 1401 refers to repairs made in vessels in Corfu; it was, however, quite exceptional. Furthermore, as no special installation for keeping galleys has been built yet at the time, it must have been done in the open. Due to the lack of a proper building that could enable the conditions for a quick work and could provide good storage, the Senate forbade a month later to send wood and the equipment to repair the existing galley¹⁷⁵. In another words, the arsenals were provided for keeping warships when not in use, and for the storage of their rigging and equipment.

¹⁷² C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age*, vol. II, pp. 229-230, n. 480: 19 February 1409; vol. III, pp. 301-302: 13 November 1425.

¹⁷³ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 4: f. 2v: 19 September 1450: «...quod provideat per modum quod galea predicta ad copertum stare posit ut non marceat et devastetur...».

¹⁷⁴ Asv, Senato Misti-Secreta, reg. 42, f. 127r: 25 August 1393.

¹⁷⁵ C.N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Age*, vol. II, p. 18, n. 236: 15 April 1401, p. 25: 14 May 1401.

The arsenal in Candia, Crete was an exception. During the fourteenth century only the local ships were built and maintained in this arsenal, whereas galleys were sent from the Metropolitan arsenal, like in the other colonies. From the beginning of the fifteenth century, however, the Candiot arsenal dealt also with the repair of galleys, despite the complaints and the prohibition of the Metropolis. Venice aimed to maintain direct control over the warships industry and to prevent the colonies from developing this expertise. One of the means to realize this direct control was to make the abundant good woods in the Island a Venetian monopoly, but even this did not stop military shipbuilding from eventually appearing on the Island. The archive of Candia, which contains a lot of correspondence between the *signoria* and the other Rectors, includes interesting details about the supply of wood to the Candiot arsenal for the construction and repairs of ships. The construction of war galleys in this arsenal was evident in the 1420s, when the Venetian Doge discussed the defects of the new war galley built there. Venice therefore ordered the *protomagister* in Candia to build a new galley. Local shipwrights determined the shape of the vessels, its curve, measurements and draft. In 1424 the Senate ordered, Leo Miconditi, the main shipbuilder in the Candiot Arsenal to come to Venice and to build, with another famous shipbuilder, Leo of Rhodes, galleys in the Metropolitan Arsenal. Due to a fire that burned the arsenal in Cadi in 1441, the construction activity in Candia halted at first for four years and then for another six years, until 1451, despite the presence of skilled *magister*. The Senate, therefore, ordered the *signoria* that every two years the *magister* in charge had to construct a light galley or a medium-sized war galley, *galea bastarda*, in order to maintain the expertise. During the wars against the Ottomans, the Venetian Senate ordered in December 1494 to build four *triremes* in Candia. The reason was the good timber, which was of much better quality than that available in Venice. The Venetian paid for the construction and sent the required armaments. Two days later, the Senate voted to send a supervisor (*gubernator*) to the Candiot Arsenal¹⁷⁶. In this respect, the Candiot Arsenal was the only one among Venetian colonies that resembles the Arsenal in Venice. Furthermore, like the Metropolitan Arsenal,

¹⁷⁶ R. Gertwagen, *The concept of Pots in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Construction and Maintenance on Crete to the end of the Fifteenth Century* cit., pp. 231-234.

the Arsenal of Candia consisted also of various types of magazines, which were of two main types.

One type was the *camere arsenali*, which contained the material for the vessels, like rigging, anchors oars and pitch, as well as the equipment necessary for the operation of the port, all provided by Venice. In the magazines or near by, were the ropewalks and sail lofts. The second type of magazine was the *camera armamenti*, where arms for the warriors were kept. There were two kinds of arms, first, the "cold weapons", such as lances, bows and arrows, catapults, armor and helmets, all of which were sent from Venice. As firearms became an integral part of warship armament, the Candiot arsenal had contained them from the mid-fifteenth century. As Candia lacked canons, swivel guns and rifles, the Senate in June 1456 sent to Candia a *magister from Brescia*¹⁷⁷. The Candiot Arsenal was the only one in the Venetian colonies to possess a firearms industry. However, it was the only one in the Venetian colonies that carried with Venice the heaviest burden of naval efforts for the protection of Venice's interest and her maritime Empire.

6. Conclusions

The documents of the Venetian archives we have looked at demonstrate the efforts Venice invested to keep her survival both with her position as a major emporium in the northern Adriatic for the international trade between the eastern Mediterranean and southern Europe and Germany.

Whereas up to the third decade of the fifteenth century Venice maintained defensive approach that she adopted since the war of Tenedos/ChioGGia, due to the monetary and psychological crisis she suffered after this war that forced her to avoid aggressive tactics and to use as much as possible scheming diplomacy to consolidate her position in the Adriatic and in the eastern Mediterranean, in the third decade of the fifteenth century Venice made a sharp shift into assertive and aggressive policy. In either case Venice found herself in a state of constant war, either for pure defensive needs, against organized powers as well as against pirates and corsair that took advantage of the constant belligerent situation in the eastern Mediterra-

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 229-230.

nean. As a result of which, Venice had to maintain a constant fleet enforced by emergency drafts. Venice would not have been able to maintain such a fleet without the support of her colonies, notwithstanding a forced support under the strict observance of the Metropolis.

The common support of the colonies we have referred to was of mainly of war galleys, the hulls, gear and armament of which were sent from the arsenal of Venice. The old used hulls were either destroyed either sent back to the metropolis. When not in use, the fresh hulls were kept in the dockyards or arsenals of the colonies, usually dry docks, quite rarely in wet docks. The space of the arsenal was dictated according to the number of ships they had to store.

Comparing the contribution of each colony to the Venetian naval fleet, Modon and Coron, "the two eyes" of the Venetian maritime Empire are conspicuous of their small and quite rare share in manned galleys, in contrast to Negroponte, Corfu and mainly to Crete. This Island was in fact the only one that contributed armed manpower, rowers, operators that were the inhabitants of Crete. In fact this Island contributed its manpower to the other colonies as well. The armed fighting powers of the galleys in the other colonies were Latin mercenaries sent by Venice, the local contributed mainly the rowers.

Crete was also the only Island where the arsenals had another role than just storing warships. The arsenal of Candia was an industry for repairing and constructing warships thanks to the local forests and skills. With the increase of war efforts against the Ottoman Turks, the Island augmented its contributions of warships due to the arsenals built in the other two port towns of the Island, Hania and Rethimon. The arsenals in these two cities were, however, for storage of vessels only.

It should be pointed out that in times of increased belligerent situations the Island of Crete contributed also *naves*, to match those of the hostile fleets. These *naves* were built either privately, however, supported by the Metropolis or more rarely, they were built in the local arsenal. In 1430, the Senate learnt about the private construction of a *navis* of 1000 *botti* by rumors, and instructed to sponsor the construction and enlist the ship against the Genoese. In 1452, on the other hand, at the peak of the war against the Ottomans and at the eve of the conquest of Constantinople, the Senate instructed the regimen of Crete to build a *navis*, again of 1000 *botti* (600 tons), yet this time in the Arsenal in Candia. This construction operation should have been carried out parallel to the construction of two *naves* in the Arsenal in Venice. The instruction of the *patroni* of the

Metropolitan arsenal, which was sent from Venice in October and arrived at Crete in January 1452, regarding the measures of the *navis*, emphasized that the hull should be high. Built in the arsenal, this vessel should have been stored separately from the galleys¹⁷⁸. Since then the Senate in Venice had encouraged the inhabitants of Candia to build such vessels, although one can learn about it on the negative way. A discussion in the Venetian Senate in November 1488 is very instructive. It indicated that the inhabitants of Candia, including the Greeks, had not built *naves* for a long time. The building practice «would have increased the knowledge and skill in construction of ships for the benefit of the citizens and subordinates of Venice». Therefore, it was decided with a majority of 74 supporters without any voice against to encourage the construction of big *naves* of 1000 *botti* in a roofed building (*sotto coperta*) for reinforcement of the Venetian naval fleet. Every one in Crete involved in this operation should be sponsored by the Metropolis with 1000 ducats. In the case bigger ships were built, the payment would increase accordingly. Furthermore, as long as the vessels stayed on land under shed, the builders received half of the sum, and the rest was paid the moment the ships were entered into the sea¹⁷⁹. This construction was carried out privately. It should be pointed out that it was already in 1475 that the Metropolis encouraged building of *naves* privately with its sponsorship, only however, in Hania. The Senate supported the local *calafat* who was engaged in building a *navis* of 960 *botti* with both material and money, 2000 Ducats. Similarly, the Senate encouraged other locals to be engaged in this practice¹⁸⁰.

Undoubtedly, the island of Crete deserved the nickname of small Venice of the Levant, not only due to the international commerce but also to its naval power and the industry involved. Without the naval support of the Island of Crete, it is hard to tell how the Venetian naval squadron would have accomplished its missions and furthermore, it is hard to predict how the Venetian Maritime Empire would have recovered after the fall of Negroponte in 1470 and of Modon and Coron in 1500-1501.

¹⁷⁸ For the *navis* built privately in 1430s, see above, n. 103; for the construction in 1452: Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 4, f. 155r: 3 October 1452; Asv, Duca di Candia lettere ricevute, b. 2, n. 21, f. 3r.

¹⁷⁹ Asv, Senato Mar, reg. 12, f. 158r: 18 November 1488; f. 159r: 18 November 1488.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, reg. 10, f. 42r: 7 April 1475.