

Cries and Whispers in Karamanlidika Books

Proceedings of the First International
Conference on Karamanlidika Studies
(Nicosia, 11th–13th September 2008)

Edited by
Evangelia Balta and Matthias Kappler

2010

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

ISSN 0177-4743
ISBN 978-3-447-06185-8

Some Venetian Sources on Cultural Landscapes of “Caramania”

Giampiero Bellingeri

The present paper is an attempt to trace an anthological itinerary, without claiming to present something absolutely new. It is rather a return – from a more specific angle, perhaps for a more precise aim – to ancient texts faded by time in spite of the general notoriety of their context. The texts of the sources I shall use are included in the “Appendix” at the end of the paper, and reference to each text will be made throughout the article. I shall follow a well-trodden path, already described by the representatives of the “Serenissima Repubblica” on the occasion of their visits to that region which, according to the rules and by extension, was called “Caramania”: “[...] vilâyet-i yunânda ki şimdi ol diyârın il dilinde karmân-ili ‘unvânıyle iştiharı var [...]”¹. Then, in Şikâri’s *Qa(h)ramân-nâme* (second half of the sixteenth century) one finds a figurative expression illustrating the golden peaks of the Taurus and the lapis-lazulis of the Mediterranean waters (text I).

Likewise, between sea and sky, between literal and metaphorical meanings, I shall quote a few extracts from texts written by different Venetian emissaries, who – in search of alliances in the East in order to oppose the Turkish pressure in the Balkans – frequently travel to, and into, Caramania, a land whose geopolitical orientation has its gaze, then as now, on Cyprus, and further afield on Persia, Syria, Egypt, towards the Mamluks, responsible for the end of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia (1375)². I wish to stress again that we will undertake a simple itinerary through these texts, with a few stops in order to distinguish, among the facts of the *histoire événementielle*, the specific “Karamanli” lines and features. Steps and passages that other people (I mean those eye-witness authors of reports, or the compilers of *Historie* and *Chronicles*, the historiographers), who pursue different aims from the topic of this conference (to set Edward Said’s mind and memory at rest...), have not considered worthy of further specifications or remark. Nevertheless, those authors, along with a lot of “facts” (*fatti d’arme*), sometimes provide essential and indispensable hints which can aid attempts to reconstruct a historical scenario derived from the everyday, common life of the local populations – although we dare not forget that our

1 Cf. Ibn Kemal (1991: 64–69), quoted here from Sözen & Sakaoğlu 2005: 21.

2 For older bibliography on the area, see Berchet 1886, with an index and quotations from the original work, written in Armenian and later translated into French, by Fr Lewond M. Alishan, *Sissuan ou l’Arméno-Cilicie*, Venice, San Lazzaro 1899; (Fr Alishan is also the author of the *Physiographie de l’Arménie*, Venice, San Lazzaro 1861).

itinerary could become superficial, also bibliographically, if we remain content to pretend we are making other people's steps deeper.

Here again "Caramania" echoes the meanings of the Turkish denomination of a region with pre-Turcoman memories. It is an area that in the second half of the fifteenth century (a period full of well-documented resolutions, exchanges of embassies, and relations connecting the Caramans, the Aqqoyunlus of Uzun Hasan, Persia, Venice, and Rome) continues to be inhabited by Turkish and non-Turkish, Christian and Muslim communities, interacting in a common language.

It is useful to quote, on the basis of documents written or published in Venice, some attestations of that long, complex political process, put in a context of strategic lines, projects, and short-lived conquests. The first one is a copy of a letter written by Catarino Zen, Ambassador in Persia, dated July 12, 1473 (text II); the second one is a letter to Uzun Hasan from the Venetian Senate (text III), and last, but not least, we have a testimony by a pope (text IV).

Also in the famous booklet of Giovan Maria Angiolello (or Angiolello Vicentino, Vicenza ca. 1451–1525), we can find some references to former designations of "Caramania", which changed as a result of historical events, vaguely reconstructed by this author (text V).

These events are reported in a somewhat confused way by Angiolello, who had been taken prisoner at Negroponte and arrived in Istanbul in 1470, i.e. after the civil war between the brothers Ishak and Pir Ahmed, the sons of Ibrahim. In 1468, the *Fatih* deprived Pir Ahmed of his authority and finally, in 1483, came the Ottoman conquest of the region with the consequent end of the Caraman family. Interesting is the shift towards Persia (Persia as "altera Caramania" – as the reflexes and reflections in the mirror of the Lagoon?) of the Caramano-Venetian enterprises, with a weak thread tying together the reminiscences of an over-excited ancient and extremely diluted Persian (Darius)/Byzantino-Turkmeno/Aqqoyunlu-Venetian kinship (text VI), a kinship extended to Caterina Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus (text VII).

As a matter of fact, Angiolello will be an eye-witness and a more reliable narrator of the military expedition led in 1473 against Uzun Hasan by Prince Mustafa, the beloved son of Mehmed the Conqueror, who granted to this prince the custody of the "Vicentino" prisoner. At nearly the same time when Angiolello was following Mustafa in Anatolia, Iosaphat Barbaro (Venice, 1413–1494), another famous envoy to Uzun Hasan, was going back and forth between the shores of Caramania and those of Cyprus, the island on which the Republic was inventing the image of a pure and displaced Venetian queen. In this manner, the Caramanian area was overburden with a lot of implications.

From Barbaro's *Travel* to Persia we read some lines describing "Curcho" (Korigos/Görkes), a real "common place" (text VIII). In this passage we can observe a distinction between regional and political borders, underlining that sign of familiarity with "Curcho / Görkes"³, a land well-trodden by the Venetians, which is made

3 Cf. Pomponius Mela's notes on Corycos and the "divine" caves of that Cilicia in Parroni 1984:

more domestic by the creation of a natural and architectural association between features of the area under their own jurisdiction (Histria, Brenta, the Arena in Verona...). Probably, it is a kind of a bi-univocal nostalgia (being in Venice... the Curco, being in Caramania... the waters of the Brenta, the stones of Histria and the Arena)⁴.

Also in Coriolanus Cepio / Coriolano Cippico we are witness to the classical restitution of the evocative spots of Caramania, Korigos, and Seleucia (texts IX–XI).

Through these sources that scan the distances between the points we have considered and quoted, and through the related passages, we may try to reduce the distances between us and the Caramanian landscape (like politics are made of sweet or bitter affections). Actually, that landscape is to be understood in an utmost metaphoric way, but always as an exception somehow remote from that forced and violent transfer made in 1468, by order of Mehmed the Conqueror, by Mahmud Pasha, when, after the massacre of a lot of Caraman people, he deported to Istanbul the surviving craftsmen and artists (Babinger 1959: 290–291). Across this bitter eradication that it would be grotesque to call “diaspora”, I shall go back to the traces of a human panorama outlined in our sources.

A confirmation of a particularly articulated cultural situation can be found in a long passage of the *Historia Turchesca, 1300-1514*, edited a century ago by I. Ursu (1909a)⁵ on the basis of two manuscripts kept in Paris, and attributed by the editor to the noble Venetian Donado da Lezze⁶. Ursu considers da Lezze as “Author” of the *Historia*, but he should be seen rather as “compiler”⁷; and, in my opinion, even as

Libro I/13, 71–77.

4 For the presence and activities of I. Barbaro in this region, see *Lettere al Senato Veneto di Giosafatte Barbaro Ambasciatore ad Usunhasan di Persia*, Tratte da un codice originale della I. R. Biblioteca di Vienna e annotate per Enrico Cornet, Vienna: Tendler & Co., 1852; see also Cornet 1856: 118–119 (letter no. 97, dated the end of January, 1473), where we can read about I. Barbaro: “[...] Existimando nui che già fosti azonto a lo ill.mo signor Usson Cassan, havendo ricevuto una vostra de dì IV de decembre fra le altre da Famagosta, che grandissima meraviglia e despiacer ce ha dato, intendendo Vui non solamente esser andato, ma anco disposto de non gli andar perché Vui dite de andar al Churcho e scriver de lì al predicto illustrissimo signor e tuor information de nove, e poi tornar in Famagosta. Troppo ce costeria caro questo vostro scriver de nove, le qual e niente è tutto una cossa, se Vui ve persuadesti de livrar per questo tanto salario e star cum tanta nostra spexa conzonta con pocho honor nostro e vostra grandissima vergogna che al procurar l’ambassata et acceptarla fosti sì gagliardo, et poi non mai più credemo vi habbia apparso haver conseguito il fine vostro che è stato l’utile, e non vi curate mo’ del nostro che è el necessario del stato nostro [...]”. Nicolò Zeno (1515–1565) provides an overview over the diplomatic exchanges between Venice and Persia (such as the reconstructed *Viaggio* by Caterino Zeno, envoy to Uzun Hasan in 1471) in his *Dei Commentarii...* (Zeno 1585), where we find extensive reference to I. Barbaro’s mission, and his long stay in Cyprus and in the “marine di Caramania”; see e.g. Zeno 1585: 25.

5 On another frontispiece: “1910”. On the manuscripts used, see also Ursu 1909b.

6 Born in Venice 1479; 1509–1510 *Consigliere* in Cyprus; died as *Luogotenente* of Cyprus in 1526.

7 See Reinhard 1913: 73: “Nous avouons que M. Ursu n’est pas assez difficile en matière de

one of several compilers, or transcribers, or “integrators”, who put a frame to a “macrotext” constituted by a complex plot made out of a lot of “voices” not yet completely clarified, or not yet returned to their places of articulation. Among these voices, that of Angiolello is the most intimate and original one, being the core of the whole compilation⁸.

I shall quote that same long passage, dictated by the *Vicentino*, extracting it from two others copies of that *Historia*. They are two examples not pointed out in Ursu’s edition. Even if these manuscripts (at least one of them) are copies not completely unfamiliar to researchers of Venetian turcological materials, they have, as far as I know (e.g. in Ursu’s publication), not been collocated into a larger context, in order to re-establish a kind of open scheme of the various copies and textual variants, embedded in a system of adequate recollections, derivations and transcriptions. At this point, I have to limit myself to recalling that Caramanian landscape: it is undoubtedly an extract of Angiolello’s original memoires, narrating the last months (i.e. September 1473–June 1474) of the life of Mustafa (after defeating Uzun Hasan and his sons in August 1473 near Erzincan), where he definitely denies that the cause of the death of the prince was “a poisoned pear” (text XII). It is the last sentence of this quotation that is particularly interesting in our context; therefore I shall reproduce it here in its Italian original⁹:

“Era gionto Achomat bassà con el Campo, et era alloggiato à Merem lontano dalla Terra [=Konya] circa 3 Miglia, ove abitano Cristiani Greci, li quali pochi di loro sanno parlar Greco, ma parlano Turcho, et hanno li Libri della fede Christiana *in lettera Araba, e scritti in Lingua Turcha*”.

It could be a charming landscape, at least theoretically, before the massacres, deportations and mourning struck the Ottoman family in the person of Mustafa, the beloved and intemperate prince fond of banquets and entertainments. A kind of international, multi-ethnic banquet, not different from those referred to by Şikâri in his *Qa(h)ramân-nâme* (text XIII).

So, I would like to take again the image and reality of a cultural context, where *imarats* and convents are of Mevlevi persuasion, while the vineyards and wines are God’s gifts depending on the Christian cares of the Greek and Armenian population,

composition”.

- 8 For a survey of Angiolello’s works, see also *Angiolello Historien des Ottomans et des Persans*, first edition annotated by J. Reinhard, Buenos Aires/Besançon, Jacques et Demontrond, n. d. (but 1913), *passim*. The use in Paolo Giovio’s *Commentario* of the news provided by Angiolello is well-known and openly stated by Giovio himself: “[Mahometto II] fece gran carezze a Gio. Maria Vicentino schiavo di Mustafâ suo primogenito, il qual’ aveva scritto in Turchesco, & in Italiano la vittoria avuta contra Usun Cassano Re di Persia, qual noi havemo letta (...)”, (see the *Commentario delle cose de Turchi*, di Paulo Iovio, Vescovo di Nocera, a Carlo Quinto Imperatore Augusto, Romae, apud A. Bladum Asulanum 1532, p. C iii r).
- 9 Museo Correr, Cod. Cicogna 2761, *Storia Turca*, cc. 63–66; Cod. Correr 1328, *Storia Turca*, cc. 26r–27v.

and made available to the pleasures of the Muslims too. And those “Holy Scriptures”, reconsidered from the Caramanian angle, could they perhaps be read as if drawn up in *Greek*, rather than in *Arabic* letters? If it were so, this remark by Angiolello (based on records of the year 1474) would be, to our knowledge, one of the earliest references to a Turkophone Orthodox population in Asia Minor, the population that only later on was called “Karamanlis”, i.e. those communities who used to write a multi-coloured language with the conventions of a script which reflected their specific and syncretic identity, thus giving form and essence to the complexity of so-called “Karamanlidika”. Metaphorically, this population could be considered, in a sense, the only people obeying for centuries the famous Karamanoğlu Mehmed Bey’s *buyruq* / order, delivered in Persian in c.1277, but translated into Turkish in this quotation: “Bugünden sonra hiç kimse divânda, dergâhda, bârgâhda, mecliste ve meydânda Türkçeden başka dille konuşulmayacaktır”¹⁰. I would even like to append as a marginal note: “... kitâpta...Türkçeden başka dille yazılmayacaktır...”

There remains the final question about the position of Angiolello’s linguistic observations, chronologically speaking, in terms of their weight on the scales of the ancient annotations about the cultural traditions of a Caramania, broadly defined.

References

- Angiolello, Giovan Maria 1873. “A Short Narrative of the Life and Acts of the King Ussun Cassano.” Grey, Charles (transl. and ed.) *A Narrative of Italian Travels in Persia in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*. London: Hakluyt Society, 73–138.
- Babinger, Franz 1959. *Mehmed der Eroberer und seine Zeit. Weltenstürmer einer Zeitenwende*. Munich: F. Bruckman.
- Barbaro, Josafa & Contarini, Ambrogio 1873. *Travels to Tana and Persia*. (Thomas, William & Roy, S. A. [transl.], Lord Stanley of Alderley [ed.] London: Hakluyt Society.
- Berchet, G. 1886. “Una recente pubblicazione sulla Cilicia armena”. *Bollettino Storico della Società Geografica Italiana*, Marzo 1886: 1–5.
- Concina, Ennio 1994. *Dell’Arabico. A Venezia tra Rinascimento e Oriente*. Venice: Marsilio.
- Coriolanus Cepio Dalmatae 1477. *Petri Mocenici Imperatoris Gestorum Libri Tres, Liber secundus [...]. Venetijs [...]*.
- Cornet, Enrico 1856. *Le guerre dei Veneti nell’Asia, 1470-1474 – Documenti cavati dall’Archivio ai Frari in Venezia*. Vienna: Tendler & Co.
- Foscarini, M. 1976. *Della letteratura veneziana ed altri scritti intorno ad essa*. Bologna: A. Forni 1976. [reprint Venice 1854].

10 Sözen & Sakaoglu 2005: 27 (where we read: “Buyruğu belgeleyen biricik kaynak, İbni Bibi’nin 1280’lerde Konya’da yazdığı „Farsça“ Selçuknâme, Tıpkıbasım, s. 696, Ankara 1941”).

- Ibn Kemal 1991. *Tevârîh-i âl-i Osmân*, II, (ed. Ş. Turan). Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu.
- Lockhart, L. & Morozzo Della Rocca, R. & Tiepolo, M. F. (eds.) 1973. *I viaggi in Persia degli ambasciatori veneti Barbaro e Contarini*. Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato.
- Malipiero, Domenico 1843. *Annali Veneti dall'anno 1457 al 1500 del Senatore Domenico Malipiero* – [Archivio Storico Italiano 7/1]. Florence.
- Papa Pius (Enea Silvio Piccolomini) 1503. *Cosmographia Papae Pij. Asia*. Venetiis per Bernardinum Venetum de Vitalibus.
- Parroni, C. (ed.) 1984. *Pomponii Melae De Chorographia Libri Tres*. [“Raccolta di Studi e Testi” 160]. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.
- Ramusio, G. B. 1980. “Breve narrazione della vita e fatti del signor Ussuncassano, fatta per Giovan Maria Angiolello.” Milanesi, M. (ed.) *Navigazioni e viaggi*, III, Turin: Einaudi 1980, 369–370.
- Reinhard, J. 1913. *Essais sur J.-M. Angiolello*. Angers: Siradeau.
- Sözen, M. & Sakaoğlu, N. (eds.) 2005. *Şikârî: Qaramân-nâme – Kitâb-ı Tevârih-i Karamâniyye*. Istanbul: Karaman Valiliği – Karaman Belediyesi.
- Ursu, I. 1909a. *Donado Da Lezze, Historia Turchesca, 1300-1514*. Bucarest: Editi-uneâ Academiei Române.
- Ursu, I. 1909b. “Uno sconosciuto storico veneziano del secolo XVI (Donato Da Lezze)”. *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, nuova serie, 9: 2–21.
- Zeno, Nicolò 1558. *Dei Commentarii del Viaggio in Persia di M. Caterino Zeno il Kavalier & delle guerre fatte nell'Imperio Persiano dal tempo di Ussuncassano in qua*. Libri due [...]. Venetia: F. Marcolini.

Appendix

I. Şikâri: *Qa(h)ramân-nâme* (Sözen & Sakaoğlu 2005: 175 [= f. 87r])

“[...] Râvi eydür: ‘Alâüddin, Süleymân Pâşâyı her ‘ilimde kâmil bildi. Bir ‘ilm yokdur ki bilmeye ve tamâm istikametde görüb cümle mülki âna ısmarladı. Nice rûzgâr hizmetinde oldu. Bir gün vüzerâ ile meclis edüb otururken kal‘anın ahvâlinden suvâl eyledi. Süleymân Pâşâ, ‘Umrân derler bir şâh vâr imiş. Silifke tahtı imiş, Bedsiye kal‘ası yaylakı imiş. Etrâfında olkadar pınâr vardır, hesâbın Allah bilür. Hükemâ-yı Yunân’dan dört yüz kişi medfûndur ve Dakyanus Tarsus’da iken anda sâkin olur imiş dedi. Sultân av bahâne edüb cümle begleri ile ol tâğa çıkub ol kal‘ayı seyr eyledi. Etrâf bâğ bâğçedir ki cennet misâlidir. Ol Kasr-ı ‘Umrân’a geldiler. Yüz seksen ayak nerdübân var idi. Sultan cümle begleri ile ol kasrın üstüne çıkdılar. Sâfi lâciverd altun halle yazılmış bir günlük yoldan deryâyı seyr eder! Her kulesi âsmâna çıkmış. Kasrın mukabelesinde taşın yarığından bir ‘azim su çıkmış akar [...]”.

II. Letter by Caterino Zen (12.7.1473) (Malipiero 1843: 87-89)

“[...] Sua Magnificentia, intesa la richiesta et l’aviso che ‘l Re Ussan era vicino con l’essercito, fece la massa delle galie e volse che andassimo a bater Castel Sechi; il qual non potendo resister alla batteria, si rese, con gran reputazion de la Illustrissima Signoria. Il Castelo è in cresta di monte, un miglio distante da marina. Le bombarde ne’l fecero haver. Fu piantado il stendardo di San Marco, e poi fu consignado a li Caramani. Poi venissemo al Cunco [! Curco] per darli la batteria: ma quelli di dentro, presentida la nostra venuta et l’aparechio della batteria, fecero intender che se renderiano alla Signoria, et non ad altri; onde si hebbe la terra, salve le robbe et le persone. Si piantorno li stendardi su le mure, et forno conduti 150 gianizeri a Laiozo per patto fatto; perché se havesseno tegnudo, s’haveria avuto luogo con gran difficoltà, per la fortezza del sito. El zorno driedo fo consegnado questo luogo al Caraman, con gran reputazion della Illustrissima Signoria et della fede sua. Poi venissemo a Selefica, primo luogo d’Armenia, giurisdiction del Caraman. Subito che comparesemo, quelli del luogo si resero, et non aspettorno la batteria. Con questa reputazion havemo acquistado l’Armenia et tutto ‘l paese da marina, et dato a i Caramani. Dio voglia che lo conoscano. Tutto è sta fatto in gratia de Ussan Cassan, il qual vede chiaro che l’armada è presta ad ogni suo soccorso. Si tuol questi stati a’ Turchi Ottomani, et si dà a’ Turchi Caramani: non si può far altro per intertegnirse con questo Re de Persia. Dio voglia che succeda de fatti sui quello che si demo ad intender. Siamo venuti qui con l’armada, credendo trovar il suo esercito a questi confini, o qualche nuova certa di lui. Fin qui non habbiamo certezza alcuna delli suoi progressi: in modo che stemo sempre in penser dei fatti sui”.

III. Letter of the Senate to Uzun Hasan (1473) (Cornet 1856: 127–128)

“Serenissimo Domino Ussono Cassano, 1473, die 15 Februarij (More Veneto).

Nui veramente dal canto nostro cum l’armata et forze nostre marittime piui instructe che mai, havemo deliberato che ‘l Capitano nostro [Pietro Mocenigo] inteso el zoner de Vostra Sublimità cum el suo potentissimo esercito in Arzingan per descender in l’Anatolia, intri in Strecto [Gallipoli] et vada fino a Constantinopoli per divider et intersecar le provincie et forze de lo inimico, azò de azonta a le altre sue grandemente debilitate condition, questa anchor necessità de remaner o lassar a defesa de la propria caxa et sedia sua bona parte de quelle forze li sono rimaste, tanto più debile et infermo se possi opponer a Vostra potentissima Signoria, salvo se da essa Sublimità Vostra al Capitano nostro non fosse altramente commandato [...]. Le bombarde veramente spingarde et schiopeti et ogni altra sorte di munition belliche, bombardieri, schiopeteri et omeni esperti et esercitati in la guerra mandati per nui l’anno passato et che anchor se ritrovano in Cipro, et manderemo et multiplicheremo de nuovo, sono anchor et saranno presto ad ogni Vostro commando et requisitione in quella marina [di Caramania] [...].”

IV. Pope Pius (Papa Pius 1503: FF iiiii-II iiiii, r-v).

“[...] Ciliciam Campestem Caramanus obtinet: qui secundo in honore apud Turcos habetur [...] is qui modo regnat Abraam nomine saepe nostris praecessoribus & nobis scripsit auxilia contra Octavianum [! rectius: *Ottomanum*] petens: cui inimicus est quamvis in cultu Mahumeti consentiat [...]. Sed non omne Turci Ottomanorum imperio subsunt: nam & Caramanus Ciliciae dominus: qui magnam Cappadociae partem possidet: & Asambecus qui principe Euphratem dominatur: & alii nonnulli reguli ab origine Turci cum Ottomanis progenie diu de regni possessione certarunt. Caramanus inter Mahumetem Turcorum imperatorem: & Soldanum Aegypti dominum medius: multa per nostram aetatem modo cum hoc modo cum illo praelia gessit: locorum difficultatibus: & Ciliciae gentis: cui dominatur virtute confisus: & odio Mahumettis christianorum amicus: nec Asambecus Ottomanorum prosapiam quiescere permisit christianae coniunctus uxori imperatoris Trapezuntii filiae: quamvis parvi momenti apud Turcos matrimonii nomen: quis coniuges sunt: quot ducere voluerunt [...].”

V. Giovan Maria Angiolello (ca. 1451–1525) (Angiolello 1873: 74–76)

“Assambei, the most powerful king of Tauris and Persia [...] had a war with the Ottoman monarch on account of the kingdom of Caramania, to which both preferred a claim. This kingdom was anciently called Cilicia, but afterwards, and to the present time, called Caramania, from an Arab chief named Caraman, who, in the course of time, had a descendant named Turvan, who had seven sons. After his death these sons came to blows amongst themselves, five of them died, and there were two left, Abrain and Pirahomat. Abrain, by having more adherents, made himself master, and Pirahomad fled to the Grand Turk, who claimed a relationship with them. Pirahomat,

while in Constantinople, continually solicited the Turkish monarch to give him aid to oust his brother and make him king, offering, in return, to be his subject. The Ottoman monarch, seeing that this offer suited his purpose, agreed, and gave him sufficient forces. Abrain, Prince of Caramania, hearing this, made preparation to defend his State. In the year 1467 the two armies met between Carasar and a city called Aessar [Akhisar], a great slaughter taking place on both sides. However, at length Pirahomat gained the victory, and remained master of the contry without any opposition; his brother, turning to fly, fell from his horse and breaking his ribs, died from it. [...] Pirahomat, however, remained in peaceble possession of the throne for two years only; for it being the custom for all the Turkish barons to go to visit the monarch once a year and to kiss his hand, giving him presents in proportion to their income and dignity, and for the monarch to caress them, and to give them many presents. Pirahomat, not caring to observe this custom like the others, the Turk sent to tell him to come to his assistance with part of his forces, as he wished to march against the Christians. But Pirahomat would not obey; wherefore the Turk, enraged at his disobedience, went in person to attack him, and took from him part of the Country as far as Cogno, putting in command his second son, named Mustafa Celebi, leaving a large force with him and sending a good commander with a number of men to go on occupying the rest of the contry. Pirahomet, seeing that he could not resist the Turkish forces, left some governors in certain fortresses, departed from the country, and went to Persia to the king Assambei (...)”¹¹.

VI. Nicolò Zeno 1558 (quoted after Ramusio 1983: [143–145])

“[...] Perché noi dobbiamo molto più prestar fede a uno che per parentado era congiunto con Ussuncassano e ch’ebbe dalla reina Despina sua zia, come si de’ credere, di tutte le cose da lui fatte cognizioni, che non a coloro che solo nelle loro istorie si sono valuti delle relazioni d’alcuni Armeni, forse nimici di quel re; i quali, per togli la riputazione, andarono spargendo fama ch’egli non era nato di sangue reale [...]. Le quali cose tutte si conoscono non essere vere, perché come averebbe Ussuncassano potuto signoreggiar la Persia quando egli non fosse stato di sangue reale? Massimamente perché non è alcuna nazione che abbia in più stima la nobiltà e stirpe reggia di quel che hanno i Persiani; e lasciati gli esempi antichi di Dario d’Istaspe, nato (!) di Atossa, figliuola di Ciro, s’è veduto nei più freschi tempi regnar gloriosamente Ismaele per questa cagione, che, quantunque egli non nascesse di sangue reale da canto di padre, la madre nondimeno sua, chiamata Marta, fu figliuola di Ussuncassano, per la quale il nuovo re fu tolerato, come già Dario per sua madre (!) Atossa (...)”

11 A modern Italian version can be found in Ramusio 1980: 369–370.

VII. Foscarini 1854 (quoted after Foscarini 1976: 432–433, n. 3)

“[...] Caterino prese per moglie Violante Crespo de’ duchi dell’ Arcipelago, la quale era figliuola d’una sorella della Despina reina di Persia, moglie d’Ussumcassano. [...] Fu dunque Caterino dalla Signoria eletto ambasciatore in Persia, il quale avendo stretta parentela col re, ne accettò volentieri l’incarico, e giunto in Tauris, dove allora Ussumcassano teneva sua residenza, questi gli fece le più cortesi accoglienze, fin permettendogli contro l’uso persiano di praticare in Corte familiarmente. [...] Da un’altra sorella di Violante detta Fiorenza, maritata in Marco Cornaro, nacque Caterina, che fu poi reina di Cipri. Degli onori, cortesie, e domestichezze insolite, che ricevette Caterino in quella Corte dalla reina e dal re, veggasi il libro primo de’ suddetti Commentarii di Nicolò Zeno”¹².

VIII. I. Barbaro, *Travels to [...] Persia* (Barbaro & Contarini 1873: 43–46)

“[...] This Curco standeth on the sea, and hath forneagainst it westwarde a rocke, the thierde parte of a myle in compasse, on the which heretofore hath been a castell both stronge and faire and welle wrongt, thogh at this present it be greatly decaied. On the principall gates were graven certain lettres, which seemed verie faire and lyke to the Armenians, but in an other kinde than those which the Armenians vse at this present: for I had certein Armenians there with me which could not reade them. This broken castell is distant from Curco towards the mouthe of the haven, the shoote of a crosbowe, and Curco is partely edified on a rocke, and partely it hangeth downe hill towards the sea. Ont of the rocke in hawen a great dyche on theaste side, and on the sande towards the hill side is annoyed with artyllerie. Such an other place is likewise in the castell with exceading great walles and most stronge, towards which in all my compasse twoo thirde partes of a myle, and the same hath also vpon the gates (which arr twoo) certain Armenian letters graven. Everie habitacon of this towne hath his cisterne of freshe water, and in the open streates arr iij verie great citie. In the high waie, a boweshoote out of the towne eastwardes, arr cerein arches of marble, of one peece (for the most parte broken), which contynewe on both sides the waie to a certein churche halfe a myle distant: seemyng to haue been a verie great thinge and all wrought with very great pillars of marble and other excellent things.

The grounde about the towne is hyllie and stonye, liek vnto that of Istria, and hath been inhabited by the subjects of the Lorde Caramano. There groweth much wheat, cotton, and cattaill, and specially they breed many oxen and horses, and haue excellent fructes of divers sortes: the ayre being as ferre as I coulde pecaue very tempate, but wath cace the country is in at this present I wot not; for I heare saie it hath been destroied by Ottomano. Neere to the seaside arr ij castells, one of Sigi, before named, buylded on an hyll, and an other very stronge. The first whereof is within a bowe shoote of the sea and thother vj myles distant from that.

12 See also Concina 1994: 27–56; 32–33.

Likewise on the sea-side, departing from Curco, ten myles northwest is Seleucha, on the top of an hyll; under the which reneth a ryver [Calycadnus] that falleth into the sea beside Curco, about the bignesse of Brenta; and neere vnto this hill is a theatre liek vnto that of Verona, verie great, and environed with pillers of one peece, and gryses about [...].

This towne [Seleucha] is in the Lesse Arminie, stretching towards the mountaine Taurus, called in their tonge Corthestan. I aboade awhile in this place, and afterwarde took my iorney towards Persia. And notwithstanding that there was an other waie, yet went I by the sea costes, and the first day without longe iorney, passing fourth of caramanos domynion, I arryved at a good citie called tarsus, the lord whereof is named Dulgadar, brother to Sessuar. This countrey, though it be in the Greater Arminie, is nevertheles vnder the souldanes subiection [...]¹³.

IX. Coriolanus Cepio (1477: 26r–26v)

“[...] Coricus a duabus partibus mari alluitur, tertia a continenti profundissima fossa munit. Duplici ac valido muro undique circumdat. Portum habet a parte Favonii quem intraturis non procul a muris oppiai transeundum est. Ex adverso a parte austri trecentos passus ab oppido distans insula Eleusia adiacet: quam totam occupat antiquum aedificium albo ac quadrato lapide magnifice constructum. Haec quondam regia Archesilai fuit [...]”¹⁴.

13 This translation by W. Thomas, a Welsh “Italianist” who was compelled to leave England in 1544, and who arrived in Italy around 1546, was expected to be printed in the mid-sixteenth century (which means just a few years before the publication of the extensive compilation by Richard Hakluyt in 1589, re-edited and enlarged 1598-1600, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation, Made by Sea or Overland...*), according to the *Introduction* by Lord Stanley of Alderley: “Of the Italian travellers and envoys, whose narratives are here given, Josafa Barbaro is the most interesting personage: but none of them attract the same interest which attaches to Varthema, or to the Portuguese and Spanish travellers and voyagers of the same period. The Travels of Barbaro and Contarini have long time been ready for publication, but have been delayed hitherto, for want of an editor [...]”, (see Barbaro & Contarini 1873: vi–vii). The Italian original of Barbaro’s extract on “Curco” can be found in Lockhart & Morozzo Della Rocca & Tiepolo (1973: 110–113), based on the ms. it. cl. VI, 210 (5913) of the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, attributed to the sixteenth century with the variants in the margin of the contemporary cod. miscellaneo Correr 1328 of the Biblioteca del Civico Museo Correr, Venice. The first edition of *Viaggi* by Barbaro was printed in Venice in 1543 (cfr. *Viaggi fatti da Vinetia alla Tana, in Persia, in India, et in Costantinopoli, con la descrizione particolare di città, luoghi, siti, costumi...*, nelle case de figliuoli di Aldo, in Vinegia MDXLIII, pp. 3–64); for further reference, see Ramusio 1980: 485–576.

14 Coriolano Cippico (Traù 1425–1493), has been “sopracomito” of the Venetian galleys fighting against the Ottoman Turks in the waters of Negroponte (July 1470) and Caramania; see also a late Italian translation of his work, *Delle guerre de’ Veneziani nell’Asia, dal MCCCCLXX al MCCCCLXXIII*, Libri tre, di Coriolano Cippico..., in Venezia, Palese 1716. All these visions and enterprises are summed up in P. Callimachi Experientis (...), *Historia, de his quae à Venetis tentata sunt, Persis ac Tartaris contra Turcos movendis*, Haganoe, ex officina Seceriana, 1533, pp. O, III.V–P, III.V.

X. Coriolanus Cepio (1477: 23v)

“[...] In hoc loco [in the harbour of San Theodoro] olim Veneris oppidum fuit propter opportunitatem loci frequens piratarum habitatio: Nunc etiam fanum Veneris extra oppidi ruinas in littore maris extat mire magnitudinis quadrato lapide egregie edificatum. Hic Cassambeg minor ex Caramanis fratribus (Piramet autem alter cili-cum regulus in exercitu regis Persarum erat) oratores ad imperatorem mittit: qui venientes adventum imperatoris gratulantur. Addunt etiam Caramanos semper paternam amicitiam cum Venetis in eorum viribus maximam spem habuisse [...]”.

XI. Coriolanus Cepio (1477: 28r)

“[...] Seleucia urbs antiqua fuit a Seleuco uno ex successoribus Alexandri edificata quinque millia passuum a mari recedens. Fuit autem civitas ampla: egregijs vicis ac alijs multis monumentis olim clara [...] Extant adhuc multa vestigia [...] iuxta ripam fluminis Calicadni [...]”.

XII. Angiolello, *Storia Turca* (Museo Correr, Cod. Cicogna 2761, cc. 63–66; Cod. Correr 1328, cc. 26–28)

“[...] On the contrary, I [Angiolello] say that this is false, because at that time I was serving the above-mentioned Mustapha, living at his home, being with him [...]; and I affirm that the story of the pear is not true, as Mustapha, after coming [from the battle], was in good health for three months; then he was taken ill, for about six months, then he died. Once he arrived at Cogno [Konya] at the end of September [1473], Mustapha was in amusements and pleasures; he had a certain fleet [...] with sails and oars in the lake of Begsar [Beysehir] [...], and he used to go to those villages where the inhabitants are mostly Christian Greeks and Armenians, and there are beautiful gardens, and vineyards which make good and precious wines, and the aforesaid Mustapha with the other companions used to drink and eat great quantities, plunging into debauchery and excesses; and they grew tired, hunting with hawks [...]. Mustapha was advised to go to Media [Nigdia], in which there are wonderful gardens, and a salubrious climate, and once they came to that place they took lodging in an Imarat, i. e. a well-built convent of dervishes, and they remained there eight days; [...] in two days they reached a village named Buru [Bor] [...]. As the prince's health became worse, he wanted to rest some days there, in the hope of improving in health; and a night [...] he asked to be carried to the hammam, and once undressed, according to the custom, he washed himself [...] then he died [...]. Achomat Bassa [Gedik Ahmed Pasha] with the whole camp reached Merem, about three miles away from Cogno; Christian Greeks live there; few of them can speak Greek, but they speak Turkish, and they have the Books of the Christian Faith in Arabic letters, and written in Turkish [...]”¹⁵.

15 See also in Ursu (1909a: 63–66); paraphrase in Babinger (1959: 358–360).

XIII. Şikâri: *Qa(h)ramân-nâme* (Sözen & Sakaoğlu 2005: 119 [= f. 24r])
“(…) Ez-in-câhib, Karamân iki yüz yigirmi sekiz demür kuşaklı pehlivânla altun sandâlı üzerine oturub bir yanında Moğol begleri, bir yanında Kürd Türkmân serverler ile meclis kurub meydâna bâde getirüb Rûm Yunân dilberler ile raksa girüb kelleler germ hâtırlar nerm olub oğlu Mehmed Beg dahi yanında idi”.