

balances. Two parts discuss the role of the church and the third examines court ceremonies. But these chapters are not sufficiently adequate for the reader to perceive the importance of these two elements, the church and the court, in Byzantine culture; in particular the nature of the relationship of Church and Emperor is difficult to understand from the author's explanation.

The writing in the book tends, on the whole, to be anecdotal and episodic; the book is not a survey of Byzantine civilization but a sampling of their culture with an overly large portion of the material dealing with ecclesiastical architecture. The several favorable aspects of the book are, however, overshadowed by the disadvantages which have already been mentioned. The author's intention seems to have been to write a work for a general rather than an academic audience, though these two public interests ought not to be necessarily irreconcilable.

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Nestor Camariano, *Alexandre Mavrokordato, Le Grand Dragoman. Son Activité Diplomatique 1673 - 1709*, Thessaloniki, Institute for Balkan Studies, 1970, pp. 107 + pl. viii.

Decline of the Ottoman Empire's military might and the consequent deterioration of its political position during the 17th century—especially after the defeats suffered by its armies in the wars with Austria following Kara Mustafa Paşa's failure to take Vienna in 1683—convinced its rulers that if the empire was to survive, diplomacy would have to assume an important role in its relations with the European powers in place of its traditional political conception of dealing with them. And in order for its diplomacy to be effective the state would have to attract individuals who would be competent to deal with political questions (that might arise from the new circumstances) and have knowledge of foreign languages. This change in relations with the European powers was inaugurated by the first two Köprülü grand viziers who began to draw into the Ottoman service members of a group of Greek notables from the Fanar district in Istanbul—the Fanariots—whose education and expertise, they felt, could be utilized to the advantage of the empire. This aristocracy, comprising financiers, businessmen, physicians, writers and other professional persons, many of whom were educated abroad, in Italy in particular, and commanded foreign languages, soon took a leading place in the Ottoman hierarchy by occupying some of the highest positions in the state, such as chief dragoman of the Sublime Porte, chief dragoman of the fleet, and as hospodars of Wallachia and Moldavia under the suzerainty of the sultans.

In the well-researched and straightforwardly-written book under review, the Rumanian historian Nestor Camariano gives a fine historical account of the life, career and diplomatic achievements of the most prominent, most prestigious and probably most renowned of the Fanariots in the Ottoman service: Alexander Mavrokordatos, who occupied the post of chief dragoman of the Porte (*divan-i hümayun tercümanı*) for thirty years. In dealing with his subject, the author first describes Mavrokordatos' family background, his formative years and his scholarly activities (Ch. I), he then discusses the importance of the position of chief dragoman in the Ottoman state system and Mavrokordatos' appointment to the post (Ch. II), and, lastly, in separate chapters (III - V) he surveys Mavrokordatos' diplomatic relations with three of the important powers in Europe of that period—Austria of Leopold I,

France of Louis XIV and Russia of Peter the Great.

Without going into the interesting details of the social origin of Alexander Mavrokordatos' family provided by Camariano, it should suffice here to summarize the essential facts about his background. He was born on 7 November 1641, the son of Nicholas Mavrokordatos, a notable of Fanar, and Roxandra, the daughter of Skarlatos, a prominent Fanar merchant. Having lost his father early in life, he was, at the age of 12, sent by his mother, who wholeheartedly devoted herself to his education, to the Greek College in Rome. He then pursued his studies at the universities of Padua and Bologna, mastering a number of western and oriental languages and graduating with a doctorate in medicine and philosophy in 1664. Returning to Istanbul, he entered the service of the Patriarchate, rising to the grades of «chief rhetor» and «chief logothete». (It may be noted that the Patriarchate as head of the Greek *millet* and in its direct relations with the Porte was an important school of diplomacy). During that period, Mavrokordatos also served as a professor at the «High School of the Patriarchate of Fanar», practised medicine and occupied himself with political questions concerning Greeks, Turks and other European peoples. However, he soon gave up the practice of medicine and devoted himself entirely to the study of diplomacy. He apparently attracted the attention of the first Fanariot chief dragoman of the Porte, Panagiotis Nikousios, who engaged him as secretary, which, as will be shown later, led to his position of power at the Porte.

In examining Mavrokordatos's scholarly activities, Camariano gives most attention to his historical works (in which he reflected on the grandeur and decline of the Ottoman Empire) but also refers to his writings in the fields of medicine, philosophy and philology. The author points out that as an intellectual of a rich and varied culture and of vast erudition, Mavrokordatos was a consistent buyer of books, also buying them in Austria and Venice. He cites two incidents in Mavrokordatos' attempt to purchase books in Austria that deserve attention (although he does not stress this) for the light they throw on the control of the export of scientific materials from that country to the Ottoman Empire. In the first case, Mavrokordatos gave the Austrian resident in Istanbul, Georg Christoph Kunitz, 100 ducats for the purchase of certain books in Vienna. This request was submitted to the «Conseil aulique de guerre» (=Hofkriegsrat), which in a report to Emperor Leopold I of 25 February 1681 rejected the request «qu'il existe toutes sortes de considérations à cause des quelles ce n'est pas bien que ces écrits historiques parviennent entre les mains des-Turcs, particulièrement l'histoire de Gualdo (=Count Gualdo Priorato) sur la dernière guerre des Turcs, qui pourrait donner à la Porte beaucoup d'indications et de conseils utiles . . .» But the monarch, in order to please Mavrokordatos and retain his goodwill, decided that some of the books be sent and the money returned to him. In fact, the money was returned to Mavrokordatos by the new Imperial internuntius Albrecht (not «Albert») Caprara, «par un homme de confiance, dans une enveloppe cachetée...». In the second instance, Mavrokordatos, during his first unsuccessful peace mission to Vienna (1688-1692; see below), bought a large number of books on political, military, historical and other subjects intending to take them with him on departure from Austria. But the war council, «considérant qu'on ferait parvenir à la connaissance de l'ennemi les principes de l'art de gouverner et de faire la guerre contre les pays chrétiens, et pour prévenir ce péril . . .» ordered that the books be examined and selected by competent commissioners and the official censor.

Alexander Mavrokordatos, as mentioned, began his career in the Ottoman

service as secretary to the chief dragoman of the Porte, Panagiotis Nikousios (1661-1673). Under the latter's direction he was initiated into the secrets of Ottoman diplomacy and the political and administrative life of the Empire. When Nikousios died in the fall of 1673, during Sultan Mehmed IV's (1648-1687) campaign against Poland, the grand vizier, Ahmed Köprülü, much impressed with Mavrokordatos' diplomatic abilities, appointed him chief dragoman.

Now, prior to the ascent of the Fanariots, this post was held by Jews, Armenians and Christian renegades, and entailed the functions of intermediary between foreign diplomats and their courts and the Porte and of translator of speeches and documents. But, as Camariano correctly points out, with the Fanariots the character of the position changed and its scope expanded considerably, as well as acquiring many important privileges: The chief dragomans played a role resembling that of foreign minister (*reis efendi*); they received the letters of accreditation of foreign ambassadors to the Sublime Porte, which they handed to the grand vizier, who, in turn, submitted them to the Sultan; they translated the notes and memorials addressed to the Ottoman government by foreign ministers as well as the letters of foreign rulers to the sultan, and, in conjunction with other high Ottoman officials, they conducted negotiations with countries with which the empire was at war, or concluded alliances or peace treaties. Among the privileges acquired by the chief dragomans, the post itself became the exclusive privilege of the Greeks of Istanbul, Jews and Armenians apparently being barred from it by an imperial *firman*; they were part of the *divan*; they had the rank of minister; they participated in all diplomatic conferences, and enjoyed other privileges. (Cf. J. Reychman - A. Zajaczkowski, *Handbook of Ottoman Turkish Diplomats*, The Hague - Paris 1968, pp. 166. P. Nikousios is not on the «list of the chief dragomans (*baştercümans*) of the Sublime Porte»). The Fanariots occupied this important post for more than a century and a half—until the Greek Revolution of 1821.

Mavrokordatos' tenure as chief dragoman of the Porte spanned the reigns of five sultans and their many grand viziers, and according to the testimony of most of his foreign and native contemporaries who came in contact with him, surpassed Nikousios in prestige and influence in Istanbul. He achieved even greater power when Sultan Mustafa II (1695-1703) bestowed on him the title of privy councillor (*ex aporréon*; see below). In this role, says Camariano, Mavrokordatos «était plus important que celui de reis effendi, . . . parce que les ambassadeurs qui se trouvaient à Constantinople essayaient de résoudre les questions de politique extérieure avec le grand drogman . . . plutôt qu'avec le ministre de l'extérieur lui-même». It needs pointing out, however, that this position, like all highest posts in the Ottoman system, involved insecurity and danger: thus Mavrokordatos was imprisoned and tortured after the Ottoman defeat at Vienna, having been accused by Kara Ibrahim Paşa, Kara Mustafa's successor, that he favored «les chrétiens dans la levée du siège de Vienne et que les Allemands lui avait promis asile en Autriche», and after the defeat at Buda and Móhacs was forced to seek asylum with his friend Pierre Girardin, the French ambassador in Istanbul. Nevertheless, after each incident he was reinstated in his post — simply because he proved indispensable to the state.

Alexander Mavrokordatos appeared on the diplomatic scene in a critical period for the Ottoman Empire. Its calamitous defeats signaled a definite political reaction from Austria, Russia, Poland and Venice that ushered in the «eastern question», the main goal of which was the expulsion of the Ottomans from Europe. But while the

powers were in general agreement on the matter, they would not, owing to their own particular interests and ambitions, take joint military action towards it. Mavrokordatos, realizing the vulnerability of the empire and that it was forced to assume a defensive position and secure peace in order to survive, embarked on a search for peace by sagaciously exploiting, whenever possible, the differences and contradictions among the powers to the advantage of the Ottoman Empire. Camariano devotes the major part of the book to Mavrokordatos's diplomatic relations with Austria, France and Russia. In each of these case-studies (they are not the sum total of «son activité diplomatique» — Alexander Mavrokordatos, for instance, also played an important role (with grand vizier Kara Mustafa Paşa) in the negotiations with Jan Gniński, King Jan III Sobieski's extraordinary ambassador to Mehmed IV, of the treaty of Żórawno in the years 1677 and 1678 — he was required to deal with and resolve different problems. And in the end he emerged «une figure proéminente dans la diplomatie européenne» of the period.

In his relations with Austria, Mavrokordatos' main preoccupation was to conclude peace with Emperor Leopold I and with his allies, Russia, Poland and Venice, which eventually was to be the supreme achievement of his diplomatic career. Camariano shows how Mavrokordatos carried out his task in absolute loyalty to his government and in defense of its interests. The first opportunity in this direction presented itself when he joined «le diplomate turc» Sulficar, who was sent to Vienna ostensibly to inform the emperor of the accession to the throne of Süleyman II (on 9 November 1687, after the deposition of Mehmed IV) but actually to explore the possibilities for negotiating a peace settlement. The negotiations with Leopold and his allies proved futile, however, because «les prétentions des Allemands et des autres alliés étaient tellement exagérées» and could not be accepted by the Ottoman plenipotentiaries. But as grand vizier Köprülüzade Mustafa, instigated by the French ambassador Castagnères de Châteauneuf, prepared for a new war against Austria, Mavrokordatos and Sulficar were detained as virtual prisoners in Vienna, and only on 16 April 1697, after the death of the grand vizier, were they permitted to return to their country.

However, after the disastrous defeat of the Ottoman forces at Zenta (autumn 1697) by Prince Eugene of Savoy, grand vizier Amcazade Hüseyin Köprülü encouraged Mavrokordatos to start «la campagne de paix». At this juncture a number of factors in the international situation began to turn in favor of the Ottoman Empire: all plans for the expulsion of the Ottomans from Europe and division of their empire evaporated because Austria, France and England rejected Russia's claims to the Straits and to Istanbul. For now «Le principe de la défense de l'intégrité de l'Empire ottoman apparaît maintenant comme un facteur d'équilibre européen et comme le nœud de la question orientale». Mavrokordatos, opposing the French political machinations against Austria at the Porte, persuaded the sultan to accept instead the mediation of the English ambassador, William Paget, and of the agent of the Netherlands, Colyer, for securing an honorable peace. In the meantime, to pressure Austria into negotiating, he incited Louis XIV to threaten the emperor by massing troops on the banks of the Rhine and in the Palatinate, which forced Leopold, who was unwilling to fight on two fronts, to accept «la proposition de paix de la Turquie avec la condition de conserver tout ce qu'elle possédait à ce moment et de participer à ce traité de paix avec ses alliées, la Russie, la Pologne et Venise». This greatly encouraged the Ottomans and strengthened the position of the sultan's

envoys. And finally, the threatening war of succession in Spain intensified the mediation efforts of Paget and Colyer to liquidate the war in the East.

Satisfied with the progress of the preliminary discussions between the Ottoman plenipotentiaries and the allied negotiators, Sultan Mustafa II, in order to enhance Mavrokordatos's diplomatic stature in the negotiations named him *ex aporréton* and, what is noteworthy, in the official plenipotentiary document given Mavrokordatos on 29 July 1698 addressed him (*elkab* = inscriptio) «le plus remarquable parmi les grands illustres du peuple Messie, et remarquable parmi les plus grands de la chrétienté». (On *elkab* in Ottoman documents, see J. Reychman - A. Zajackowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-145). Upon agreement by the powers on the subjects for negotiation, a peace conference was convoked at Karlowitz at which the famous treaty of 26 January 1699 was concluded. Camariano goes into the minutiae of the negotiations and discusses the political consequences of the treaty for the Ottoman Empire and its importance to Christian Europe. But it should be emphasized that the treaty of Karlowitz was essentially the result of Mavrokordatos' skilled diplomatic maneuvering and of his ability to convince Austria, Poland and Venice to moderate their exaggerated demands on the sultan and preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. While the treaty concluded with Austria and Poland was for twenty-five years, Russia was willing to sign only a two-year armistice agreement, for reasons which will be explained later on.

In his dealing with France, Alexander Mavrokordatos was forced to concentrate on combatting the expansionist policies of King Louis XIV in the Near East and on counteracting the attempts of his «très savants envoyés» to obtain through intrigue and bribery the exclusive protectorate over the Holy Places in Jerusalem. While the conflict between the Orthodox and the Catholics over the possession of the Holy Places was of long standing, it was intensified by the king's plans of their complete domination. Camariano provides a detailed account of the struggle that began with the treaty of capitulations of 5 June 1673, obtained by the French ambassador Charles de Nointel, which granted to France certain privileges with regard to the Holy Places. But the «vrai succès de la diplomatie française» was short-lived, for two years later the privileges were abrogated through the intercession of Mavrokordatos, the «grand défenseur de l'orthodoxie» and the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Dositheos, at the Porte. Henceforward, the struggle between the successive French ambassadors, supported by personal interventions of the king, and Mavrokordatos was greatly complicated by the constant shift in the Porte's position which now favored one side and now the other, and which in the unfavorable conditions after 1683 and especially during the conference at Karlowitz was subjected to great pressures from the coalition of the Catholic powers (France, Austria and Venice). However, without considering the particulars of the conflict so painstakingly unraveled by Camariano, it may be noted that the diplomatic efforts of Mavrokordatos assured the Orthodox of control of the Holy Places. Consequently, «Toute l'orthodoxie perdit, par sa mort, un grand défenseur qui affronta avec acharnement l'une après l'autre, les actions diplomatiques des ambassadeurs qui représentèrent la France dans la capitale de l'Empire ottoman entre 1673-1709».

Russia's failure to secure through her adherence to the anti-Ottoman coalition outlets to the Black and the Mediterranean Seas, which she considered vital for her commercial expansion, and the realization that these objectives could be achieved only by war led her to reject a long-term treaty at Karlowitz. But Czar Peter the

Great also sought an outlet to the Baltic sea which was controlled by Sweden of Charles XII. Involvement of the other great powers in the war of succession in Spain offered him an opportunity to make war on Sweden without fear of intervention against him. To have a free hand, however, he had to secure peace with the Ottoman Empire, and «il était nécessaire de passer de l'armistice à la paix». Camariano shows that in the hard negotiations which followed with the czar's plenipotentiary Ukratzov, Alexander Mavrokordatos, though he, like all Balkan peoples, considered the czar of Russia the defender of the Orthodox faith and «comme le seul prince qui peut délivrer les Grecs de la tyrannie des Turcs et rétablir l'ancien empire grec», nevertheless defended the interests of the empire. As both sides were (for different reasons) interested in a peace settlement, the two delegations signed on 13 June 1700 in Istanbul a peace treaty for thirty years. While Russia got Azov on the Black sea and the right to have «un agent diplomatique permanent à Constantinople», the czar failed to obtain provisions for expanded commercial relations with the Ottoman Empire. But the negotiations with P. A. Tolstoi, the first Russian permanent representative, continued and, despite the steady opposition by France, and Charles XII's and Poland's incitations of the Porte to a war with Russia, Mavrokordatos and Tolstoi succeeded in concluding a definitive treaty in November 1709. This was Mavrokordatos' last diplomatic act, for he died on 23 December 1709.

Nestor Camariano's book is an interesting contribution to the history of the Ottoman Empire in the period of decline and to the diplomatic activities of the Fanariot Alexander Mavrokordatos in defense of its integrity and interests.

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Evangelos Kofos, *Greece and the Eastern Crisis 1875-1878*, Thessaloniki, Institute for Balkan Studies, 1975, pp. 260.

Almost a hundred years ago the Greek state faced problems not too dissimilar from those that it faces today. The problem then was continental rather than insular and the kaleidoscopic relationships between and among the powers were as complicated as they are today. Originally written as a doctoral dissertation at the University of London and now revised, Kofos' study of Greek foreign policy during these three crucial years delves into areas where the works of Langer and Seton-Watson were unable to go. It brings to light new material concerning Greek-Serbian and Greek-Rumanian negotiations for an alliance; a previously unknown attempt to bridge the Greek-Bulgarian ecclesiastical schism; material on the Turkish cession of Cyprus to Great Britain as well as interesting information on the role and participation in the formulation of Greek foreign policy during this period by those Greeks residing in the Ottoman Empire. Clearly-written and based on a wealth of material published and unpublished, some of the latter in private hands, it is unlikely that this work will be superseded.

The study naturally is of interest to the historian and particularly to that breed interested in Greece and the Balkans, and also to students of international relations. The actions of small states in the international arena are rarely examined in depth. This is one of the book's values. Aside from describing the twists and turns of Greece's decision-makers to the changing international situation and their attempts to thwart the southward thrust of the Bulgars, Czarist Russia's satellite-protégé in the Balkans, it also gives us a view of Greek measures both official and formal, but especially