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Islam Immediately beyond the Dalmatian Coast: The Three Reasons for Venetian Success

On 23 August 1647 the citizens of the besieged Dalmatian town of Šibenik (Sebenico), who carried munitions and food into Venetian trenches, ridiculed the 15,000 Ottoman troops and gunners by showing them their backsides.¹ In the fifteenth century their fellow citizen Juraj Šizgorić (1420–1509) lamented in his poem *Elegia de Sibenicensis agri vastatione* (Venice, 1477) about the destiny of the Šibenik countryside devastated by Ottoman irregulars. Only ten years before the siege, Girolamo Foscarini, the former rector and captain of Šibenik, repeated a *gran bisogno* for the restoration of the walls of the town, claiming that they were out-dated and therefore vulnerable to assault.²

Yet, the anecdote signals the military confidence the Dalmatians felt by 1647. Although the citizens of Šibenik faced 40,000 Ottoman troops led by the Bosnian *begler-bey* Tekeli that represented the strongest military campaign in Dalmatia ever, they were aware of the cracks in the Ottoman wall. The Venetians did not get an upper hand during this Cretan War (1645–1669), but in the next the First Morean War (1684–1699), they prevailed in Dalmatia within few months. I will argue that Venice succeeded on Dalmatian front due to the following reasons:

- 1) The decay of the feudal *timar* system attracted Ottoman peasants to the more profitable Venetian commercial market and thus increased the struggle for land surplus among Ottoman landowners and peasants.
- 2) The pressure of both landowners and the state to bind the movable cattle-breeding Ottoman Vlachs to agriculture and to force them pay tithes brought about their deflection to the Venetian side.
- 3) Using the innovations of the military revolution and the military service of the disloyal Ottoman population, the Venetians pushed the Turks be-

¹ F. DIFNIK, *Povijest kandijskog rata u Dalmaciji*. Split 1986, 144.

² G. NOVAK, *Commissiones et relationes Venetae*. Vol. VI. Zagreb 1970, 212.

hind the Dinara mountain range during the First Morean War of 1684–1699.

THE CONQUEST

The first Ottoman raids south of the Velebit occurred in 1415 when the Ottomans captured the Croatian-held fortress Zvončac near Drniš. This inland territory represented the diminishing rump of the medieval Hungarian-Croatian state positioned in front of the tiny belt of the Dalmatian coastal communes. Since the far distant ruling Hungarian kings of the Jagiełlon dynasty could not prevent the mounting Ottoman incursions south of the Velebit, the Venetian buffer zone was increasingly penetrated by Ottoman raids. The Venetians supported the local Croatian noblemen who could not resist the Ottoman pressure without the help of their distant king.³ In 1432 both Ottoman *martolosi*, the local Christian free-booter infantry soldiers and *akinci*, the irregular light cavalry used for raiding, reached the Venetian-ruled territory Srima in Šibenik municipality. On 24 December 1444 the Franciscan Andrija, the papal legate, campaigned in the Dalmatian cities delivering indulgences in exchange for arming an anti-Ottoman fleet.⁴

After they had overrun Bosnia in 1463 the Turks began to threaten the Venetian rule in Dalmatia, moving their border from the Balkan interior to the narrow and shallow Adriatic coastal belt of the Dalmatian districts. The panic was sown by numerous refugees who had fled the Ottoman-threatened Croatian hinterland and filled Dalmatian coastal cities to full capacity. In numerous raids that became the normal state of affairs, the Ottoman horsemen captured cattle and prisoners and forced civilians and Venetian troops to withdraw into the Adriatic towns. According to the chronology of Sanudo, the reliable Venetian up to date historian, the most intense period of devastation occurred during the War of 1499–1503. From 1499 until 1540 they had raided the territory of the Zadar (Zara) commune 57 times, that of Šibenik 67, Split (Spalato) 22 and Trogir (Traù) 16 times.⁵

³ T. RAUKAR/I. PETRICIOLI/F. ŠVELEC/Š. PERIČIĆ, Zadar pod mletačkom upravom. Zadar 1987, 201.

⁴ Državni arhiv Zadar (DAZ), Ostavština Šime Ljubića, Ispisi iz mletačkog arhiva VI/6, 21.

⁵ M. SANUDO, I Diari, I–LVIII, Venezia, 1879–1909, in: I. KUKULJEVIĆ, Arkiv za povjestnicu jugoslavensku. Vol. V. Zagreb 1859; B. HRABAK, Turske provale i osvajanja na području današnje sjeverne Dalmacije do sredine XVI. stoljeća, *Radovi Instituta za hrvatsku povijest* 19 (1986), 69–100.

The rule of Selim I (1512–1520) and Süleyman the Magnificent (1520–1566) witnessed the conquest of the Croatian rump. After the fall of Belgrade in 1521 the defensive line of King Matthias I, “Corvinus” (c.1440–90), stretching between Severin and Jajce was destroyed and opened to Ottoman troops. Although the Habsburg pretender on the Hungarian throne, Ferdinand, tried to fill the gap with his soldiers in Croatia and Slavonia, he could give little help to the Croatian defensive system south of Velebit. The Venetian defensive belt depended upon the Croatian fortresses Klis and Ostrovica which defended the most important Venetian cities - Split and Zadar. At the beginning of the summer of 1522 the Bosnian *sancak-bey* Husrev captured Knin and Skradin; Ostrovica fell in 1523.⁶ The neighbouring Obrovac capitulated on 30 March 1527 after prolonged resistance. Zaharija Valaresso, the Zadar captain, mentioned in September 1527 that after the fall of Obrovac the Turks raided Zadar territory on a daily basis.⁷ With the fall of Klis in 1537, the last fortress under Croatian rule, the Hungarian-Croatian defensive system south of the Velebit experienced a complete breakdown and was inserted into the Ottoman administrative-territorial organization. The Ottoman sweep of the Croatian strip had been so thorough that Turkish land registers (*defters*) recorded no single dwellers left in the town of Sinj in 1534.⁸

The peace treaties signed in 1540 and 1573 respectively, confirmed the loss of the Venetian territories. The most dramatic decrease in territory occurred during the War of Cyprus. The territory of Zadar that had been 1300 km² large, declined to 600 km². Šibenik lost around 570 km², or half of its district. The Ottomans seized half of the commune of Trogir as well as the fertile outskirts of the smallest district of Split.⁹

⁶ I. BEBIĆ, Skradin i njegovo područje u prošlosti. Skradin 1986, 24.

⁷ S. M. TRALJIĆ, Husrevbegov boravak i rad u Dalmaciji, *Anali Husrev-begove biblioteke* 5–6 (1978), 7–8.

⁸ F. DŽ. SPAHO, Splitsko zaleđe u prvim turskim popisima, *Acta historico-oeconomica Iugoslaviae* 13 (1986), 47–86.

⁹ V. OMAŠIĆ, Mletačko-tursko razgraničenje na trogirskom području nakon ciparskog i kandijskog rata i njegove posljedice. Trogir 1971, 13–17; S. M. TRALJIĆ, Tursko-mletačke granice u Dalmaciji u 16. i 17. stoljeću, *Radovi Instituta Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti u Zadru*, 20 (1973), 449; T. RAUKAR, Zadar u XV. stoljeću. Zagreb 1977, 16–17; J. JELASKA, Splitsko polje za turskih vremena. Split 1986, 17.

THE VENETIAN COASTAL SOCIETY

During the sixteenth century Dalmatia's communes lost a third of their population and came to the limits of their economic and demographic endurance. After the incursion in June 1499 Zadar's authorities recorded 2,100 missing persons and the loss of 40,000 heads of cattle. At the end of the war, the Venetian *providore* Dominik Capello recorded that, from the very beginning of the Ottoman appearance sixty years ago, Šibenik had lost 70,000 people. According to the more accurate data of Sanudo both Zadar and the neighbouring Croatian county of Luka lost 10,421 heads of livestock during the last War of 1499–1503; Šibenik lost 1,698, Trogir 309, and Split 215 heads.¹⁰ The Venetian fleet commander Vitturi in 1525 was shocked by the appearance of a "desert" in Zadar's hinterland.¹¹

After the War of Cyprus (1570–73), Venetian accounts noted the lowest ebb of Dalmatian population in the century, living almost entirely within the city walls. In 1575 the authorities counted 56,177 inhabitants as opposed to 88,922 in 1559. In 1552, 38 % of Zadar's commune population lived within the city walls. In 1578 7,900 inhabitants or 50.8 % of the entire district population lived within the walls of Šibenik. At the beginning of the century the commune of Split counted 7,282 city dwellers that fell to 3,073 by 1553.¹² In the mid sixteenth century almost half of the Dalmatian population lived on the more secure islands stretching alongside the eastern Adriatic from the Bay of Quarnero to Korčula.

The factors such as wars, hunger, plague and migrations upset the demographic balance and brought about an aberration in age and gender balance. According to the record of the Venetian magistrates in 1586 there had been in Zadar and Trogir 1,259 and 1,149 women respectively to one thousand men.¹³ In 1596 on Zadar's *terraferma* half of population was younger than 16; within the city walls the children made a third, and on the islands half of the population.¹⁴ In 1558, it was estimated that Dalmatia could arm 22 galleys serviced by 3,600 men. In 1581, there were 1,062 military able men (*da fati*) on Zadar's islands of whom 465, or almost 50 %, were selected for the galley service. Ten years later, the *proveditor*-general Francisco Nani

¹⁰ I. KUKULJEVIĆ, Arkiv, V, 1859; B. HRABAK, Turske provale, 69–100.

¹¹ G. STANOJEVIĆ, Jugoslavenske zemlje u mletačko turskim ratovima XVI–XVIII vijeka. Beograd 1970, 43.

¹² T. RAUKAR, Zadar, 229–230; G. NOVAK, Povijest Splita. Vol. II. Split 1978, 968; IDEM, Šibenik u razdoblju mletačke vladavine, Zbornik Šibenik, 1976, 178.

¹³ G. NOVAK, Commissiones et relationes Venetae. Vol. IV. Zadar 1964, 370, 432.

¹⁴ G. NOVAK, Commissiones et relationes Venetae, Vol. V. Zadar 1966, 154–155.

estimated that the population of 78,000 in Dalmatia could arm only 10 galleys out of which 6 were to be used to combat the Uskok's piracy.

When the neighbouring Croatian kingdom collapsed in the struggle against the Turks, Venice helped to resettle the surplus population from the Croatian counties in urban areas. At the time of the conquest there was a large-scale out-migration of Catholics who fled to the still unconquered region of Dalmatia. After the fall of Vrana and Nadin in 1538 their population fled to the neighbouring Venetian-ruled islands of Pašman, Ugljan, Vrgada and Murter.¹⁵ After the peace treaty reached in 1540 the Venetians unsuccessfully tried to resettle the population in the unruly Zadar countryside. The part of the Balkan migration wave that filled Dalmatian cities to full capacity Venice diverted to Istria. Many refugees sought shelter across the Adriatic, from Apulia to the city of San Marco. At the beginning of the sixteenth century there had been 15 % population of Croatian descent in Fano, Marche and in Pesaro.¹⁶

After acquiring Dalmatia Venice disturbed the independent local economy based on profitable salt export, shipbuilding and trade activity and imposed state mercantilism. The Ottoman control of the Dalmatian hinterland strengthened the policy of centralization. Yet, the province sustained the positive balance until the seventeenth century due to the salt production. In 1559 the Dalmatian communes contributed 31,220 ducats from taxes and 70,000 from salt that amounted to 100,000 ducats; at the same time troops and administration spent 54,925 ducats in the province. The wars affected the Dalmatian industry, especially that of *tinctorie*, the textile bleaching industry. Only protected islands recorded the steady rise of earnings. In contrast, the contribution of Zadar's countryside fell from 3,070 ducats in 1486 to only 1,021 in 1526.¹⁷

The Dalmatian economy was affected by the Ottoman conquest, the Venetian mercantilism and the price revolution. During the sixteenth century the daily wage doubled, but the price of grain rose three times and that of wine four times. The price of *galeda*, the local Split wine measure, rose

¹⁵ L. KOS, Prilog upoznavanju povijesti otoka Vrgade, *Zadarska smotra* 41 (1992), 94; P. STAREŠINA, Razvoj Oliba do potkraj XVIII stoljeća (U povodu 500. obljetnice doseljenja skupine s izvora Cetine), *Zadarska revija* 27 (1978), 221–222.

¹⁶ L. ČORALIĆ, U gradu Sv. Marka. Zagreb 2001; Italia felix. Migrazioni slave e albanesi in Occidente: Romagna, Marche, Abruzzi. Secoli XIV–XVI. Ed. S. ANSELMINI, in: *Quaderni di Proposte e ricerche* 3, Ancona 1988; F. GESTRINI, Migracije iz Dalmacije u Marke u XV i XVI stoljeću, *Radovi Instituta za hrvatsku povijest* 10 (1977), 399–400.

¹⁷ T. RAUKAR, Zadar, 242–244.

from 15 *soldi* in 1508 to 60 at the end of the century.¹⁸ Zadar's rector Otavian Mocenigo recorded in 1608 that there were only 59 agricultural households and 28 fishermen in Zadar as opposed to 300 priests and monks and thousand troops within the city walls.¹⁹ Dalmatian *per capita* in 1525 was 3.5 ducats, but jumped to 15.5 in 1591, still modest to 70 ducats of Venice in 1570.²⁰ In 1542 in Venice the *zecchino*, the golden ducat, valued 6 *liras* and 19 *soldi* compared to 7 *liras* in Dalmatia. In 1554 in Venice the *zecchino* was worth 7.14 *liras*, and was bought by Ottoman merchants to 8.15 *liras* in Split.²¹ The Council of Ten found the discrepancy useful for paying the administration and military.

THE OTTOMAN STATE INTERVENTIONISM

After taking-over the shallow belt of the Croatian medieval state the Ottomans set up their territorial organization using pre-Ottoman medieval tradition. The territorial gains south of the Dinara mountain range were initially included in the *sancak* Herzegovina set up in 1470. The first territorial gains in the central Dalmatian territory were included in the military *vilajet* Hrvati, the Ottoman foothold set up in 1522 after the fall of Skradin. The *Vi-lajet* Hrvati was part of the Bosnian *sancak* until 1537 when it became the territorial core of the new *sancak* Klis.²² The *sancak* covered the vast territory stretching from Konjic on the east to Gospić at the west, including the *nahyas* – the basic administrative units - of Sinj and Cetina, Dicmo, Radobolja and Poljica, Zminje Polje, Vrhrika, Petrovo Polje and Petrova Gora that were bordering on Venetian territory. In 1580 the western part of the *sancak* was organized in the *sancak* of Krka-Lika, the military frontier-zone toward Habsburg Croatia.²³

The Ottomans tried to stir up a process of Islamization, especially on the fringe of the Empire. Islamization came mainly from Ottoman soldiers settled in the Dalmatian garrisons, refugees from neighbouring Venetian Dal-

¹⁸ V. VINAVER, Pregled istorije novca u jugoslavenskim zemljama (XVI–XVIII vek). Beograd 1970, 106–110.

¹⁹ R. JELIĆ, Stanovništvo Zadra 1608. godine. Zadar 1985, 6.

²⁰ I. ERCEG, Turska osvajanja i organizacija proizvodnje u Dalmaciji i njihov odraz na privredni život Hrvatske, *Zbornik Cetinske krajine* 4 (1989), 22.

²¹ DAZ, Splitski arhiv, Crkvena desetina, vol. 160, ff. 162; V. VINAVER, Pregled istorije novca, 106.

²² H. ŠABANOVIĆ, Bosanski pašaluk. Postanak i upravna podjela. Sarajevo 1982, 189.

²³ S. ANTOLJAK, Kada i koliko puta je osnovan Krčki ili Lički sandžak, *Zadarska revija* 6 (1957), 163–164.

matia, Christian slaves granted liberty after conversion to Islam and probably from some of the pre-Ottoman population. The Ottomans apparently did not promote Islam by forcible means. However, economic and political advantages to be gained by joining the state religion were sufficiently compelling. The profession of Islam enabled the feudal lords to enter the new elite. According to a document of the Bosnian cavalry probably heading to Hungary in 1526 there were 26 men under the label of Croat out of 3,116 drafters. There were also 971 soldiers labelled as Bosniaks and 100 under different labels such as Arab 4, Arnaut 29, Berane 5, Avlona 1, Edrine 1, Filibe 8, Anatolia 21, Vidin 2, Karaman 2, Istanbul 1, Ungurus 9, Siraz 3 and so forth. There were 1,779 cavalymen without origins.²⁴ The international composition of the army bears witness to the mixed soldier population with an overwhelming majority of Bosnians.

The first Muslim elements in Dalmatia were soldiers in the Dalmatian garrisons (*mustahfiz*) and *spahis*, the Ottoman military servicemen and local administrators. Slavery was an important social-economic factor contributing to the spread of Islam in Bosnia and Dalmatia. In the census of 1527 surnames of city dwellers of Zadar were for example Turčin, Turkinja, Turčinović. One can ask whether they got these surnames as converts to Christianity from Islam or rather as freed slaves from Ottoman captivity. The taking of slaves in war – soldiers as well as civilians – was standard practice. Large numbers of slaves were seized by the Turks in their campaigns against the Habsburg Croats and the Venetian Dalmatians. Although the overwhelming majority of slaves on the Sarajevo slave market had their origin in the Croatian province of Slavonia, there were a few references to slaves from Dalmatia. The *kanun-nama* of the Klis *sancak* from 1565 noted 2 *akchas* tax levied for any slave sold or bought.²⁵ In the *defter* of the Bosnian *sancak* for 1528 the total tax collected on the Sarajevo and Livno slave markets was 1,000 and 600 *akchas* respectively. In 1540 the tax in Sarajevo increased to 2,000 *akchas* and decreased in Livno to 300 *akchas*.²⁶

Slaves who converted to Islam could apply for freedom. According to the Kuran the liberation of the slave is the most praiseworthy act, and many

²⁴ A. S. ALIČIĆ, Popis bosanske vojske pred bitku na Mohaču 1526. godine, *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju i istoriju jugoslovenskih naroda pod turskom vladavinom* 25 (1975), 171–177.

²⁵ H. HADŽIBEGIĆ, Bosanska kanunama iz 1565. godine, *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu* 3 (1948), 215–216.

²⁶ J. VRANDEČIĆ, Had an Ottoman Combatant Any Chance to Win the Love of the Daughter of the Rector of the Dalmatian Town Zadar?, *Radovi Filozofskog fakulteta u Zadru* 34 (21) (1994/95), 163–184.

well-to-do Muslims bought Dalmatian slaves and liberated them after their conversion to Islam. Murat Tardić, the first *sancak-bey* of Klis, was a liberated slave of Husrev-bey, the most prominent conqueror of Dalmatia. On 1 June 1560 the Bosnian *sancak-bey* informed the Porte that the famous officer Ivan from Venetian Šibenik had escaped to the Ottoman side and deliberately accepted Islam and was granted with a large land estate in Ottoman territory in Dalmatia. According to Venetian accounts there were many Catholics who fled to the Ottoman side. On 8 April 1574 the Venetian rector from Split informed the Venetian government that he had been investigating the case of a Dalmatian girl from Vranjic who fell in love with an Ottoman soldier from Klis. According to his account sent to the Venetian government, there were many precedents, and some Catholic girls had fled to the Ottoman side.

The Ottomans attracted the settlement of Muslims by granting the population freedom of taxes and by building Muslim institutions and Muslim buildings. The Sultan ordered the *sancak-bey* of Klis, Ferhad Sokolović, to build a mosque, a school and shops within the strategically important region. Ferhad-bey on his own granted the Zemunik, Hrvace and Sinj Muslim communities many institutions provided by the taxes from his large estates. It was normal for rich men to set aside lands in permanent trust to provide an income for religious-charitable foundations, known as *vakif*. These institutions were vital to the development of all Ottoman towns, and helped to interlock the institutions of the town with those of Islam. The *vakif* religious-charitable foundations such as mosques, schools, inns, baths and bridges developed in Sinj, Klis, Vrlika, Knin, Hrvace, Zemunik and Vrana.

According to Ottoman regulations there were two types of towns: *kasaba* and *varos*. At the beginning of the Ottoman conquest there was no town of this status because the Dalmatian population had fled. According to the defter from 1550 there were no civilians in both Obrovac and Skradin in spite of the fact that there were people at the beginning of Ottoman rule. There were only six households in Skradin in 1574. But at the turn of the century the town continued to grow rapidly because of its strategically important position. In 1620 Skradin had 200 households.²⁷ The model of Skradin highlighted the rise of other Dalmatian towns under Ottoman control. Sinj, Klis, Vrlika, Drniš, Knin, Zemunik and Hrvace reached the privileged status of a *kasaba*. Gračac, Vrana, Nadin and Ostrovica enjoyed the status

²⁷ F. DŽ. SPAHO, Skradinska nahija 1574. godine, *Acta historico-oeconomica Iugoslaviae* 16 (1989), 79–107.

of a *varos*. In 1604 the entirely Muslim Sinj had 100 households, Vrlika 85, Drniš 200, Knin 300, Skradin 200 and so forth.

The Ottomans tried to revive the new life in vacant towns. During the sixteenth century Ottomans set up alongside the border *kapetanije* or „captaincies“, the military-administrative units each led by *kapetan* charged with tasks such as to raise troops, check travelers who crossed the border, keep roads safe from bandits, and perform various similar police and administrative duties.²⁸ In 1616 the Krka *sancak* contained six *kapetanije*: Knin, Skradin, Nadin, Zemunik, Seddi-islam and Obrovac with 24 garrisoned towns. There were two *kapetanije* set on the territory of the Klis *sancak*: Klis and Kamen.²⁹ On the south there was the *kapetanija* of Imotski situated in the Hercegovina *sancak*. As the century progressed the range of powers of the *kapetans* was extended and some prominent families began to treat the *kapetanije* as hereditary offices. During the seventeenth century the family of Halil-bey of Vrana, the first generation of Ottoman warriors in Dalmatia acquired the *kapetanije* in hereditary office.

As a rule Christians settled only in villages (*karye*). There were also villages populated entirely by Muslims, such as Hrvace and Civljani. Unfortunately there is no evidence either their inhabitants were converted Catholics or recent Muslim settlers. In 1604 there were 151 Muslim households in the town of Sinj and 179 households in the surrounding villages. In 1604 in the Vrlika *nahiya* there were 115 Muslim and 191 Christian households.³⁰ Islamization proceeded at very slow pace, however. Catholics that fled to Venetian Dalmatia and the Eastern Orthodox Christian population protected by their large autonomy within the Ottoman Empire were not prone to convert. In the *nahiya* Skradin in 1574 there were 36 Muslim households in 20 of which the householder's name was Abdullah servant of God, a label given to new converts. The percentage of householders named Abdullah in the Sinj-Cetina *nahiya* in 1604 is 8.5 % (28 out of 330) which proves that the second part of the sixteenth century was the most intensive period of conversion.³¹ Despite Ottoman efforts, the towns in the hinterland remained

²⁸ N. MALCOLM, *Bosnia. A Short History*. New York 1994, 90.

²⁹ H. KREŠEVLJAKOVIĆ, *Kapetanije u Bosni i Hercegovini*. Sarajevo 1954, 121; F. SPAHO, *Vojna organizacija turske vlasti u Kliškom sandžaku u XVII stoljeću*, *Zbornik Cetinske krajine* 4 (1989), 73.

³⁰ F. DŽ. SPAHO, *Neke karakteristike razvitka varoških naselja u Kliškom sandžaku u XVI i XVII stoljeću*, *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju i istoriju jugoslovenskih naroda pod turskom vladavinom* 38 (1988), 241–242; IDEM, *Jedan turski popis Sinja i Vrlike iz 1604. godine*, *Acta-oeconomica Iugoslaviae* 12 (1985), 21–120.

³¹ F. DŽ. SPAHO, *Skradinska nahija*, 79–107; IDEM, *Jedan turski popis*, 21–120.

mainly small supported concentrations of Ottoman soldiers, handicraftsmen and state officials.

THE VLACHS

The Ottomans found their most reliable settler material in the Orthodox Balkan Vlachs, the descendants of hinterland Romanized and Latin-speaking population groups of this area who survived the sixth – and seventh – century Slavic onslaught by retreating to the high mountain passes. The Turks were particularly eager for the return of order in the strategic areas close to the Venetian frontier. Vacated lands were settled by Vlachs who had started fleeing into Bosnia and Dalmatia in the decades of Ottoman pressure on Serbia. The Vlachs were particularly suitable for the Ottoman government's purposes, not only because they were mobile (their typical occupations were shepherding, horse-breeding and organizing transport for traders), but also because they had a strong military tradition. They were entitled to carry arms and expected to fulfil a military role; in place of a salary, they were permitted to plunder enemy territory.³²

The Ottoman conquest of the Balkans included a wave of “ethnic cy-clones”, which further complicated the existing natural settlement. The Ottomans had already faced the problem of mountainous tribes in Anatolia. However in Anatolia the Ottomans forcibly drew them into the Ottoman agricultural system forcing them to work in the mines and fields, or just settled them in Cyprus. The Balkans were different. The numbers of Vlachs were a threat to the state and the Ottomans did not dare to adapt a forcible policy toward them, but rather relied on cooperation.

As opposed to the medieval Vlachs settled on the territory of Croatia (*Wolachi banatus regni Croacie*) of Catholic faith, the Vlachs moving into the frontier zone of Dalmatia in Ottoman service were of Eastern Orthodox denomination. Their settlement in Dalmatia occurred in waves, but basically after the assertion of Ottoman sovereignty in these territories.³³ On 26 February 1531, the Venetian syndic Andrea Barbarigo spoke in the Senate about the Vlach movement during 1523–2, mentioning that *piu miglia* Serbian families put down roots in Dalmatia. During the sixteenth century the Venetian rectors stated that the Ottoman settlers across the Venetian-Turkish border were of Serbian faith. In 1553, a Venetian official painted a vivid

³² B. GUŠIĆ, Wer sind die Morlaken im adriatischen Raum?, *Balkanica* 4 (1973), 464.

³³ D. ROKSANDIĆ, Srbi u Hrvatskoj. Zagreb 1991, 33.

picture. “The inhabitants are all called Morlachs and have an appearance more feral than human. They are coarse and dirty, and of a heretical faith – Serbian.”³⁴ Ottoman *defters* from 1540, 1550, 1574 and 1604 confirm the existence of Christian Orthodox monasteries in Dalmatia: Dragović, Krupa and Krka were most probably founded at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Although the state regulations strictly forbade the building of new churches within the Empire, the Ottomans turned a blind eye as far as new Eastern Orthodox churches were concerned. From 1523 to 1537 several new Christian Orthodox churches were founded in Biljane, Ostrovica, Karin, Đevrske, Kistanje, Biovičino Selo, Radučić, Mokro Polje and Žagrović by repairing old and vacated Catholic churches. This is why the *Grande consiglio* in the neighbouring Venetian Zadar complained on 2 February 1546 that churches on the Ottoman territories were “*in miseria*” because of “[...] *esser ocupati da forestieri, et persone estranee* [...]”.³⁵

The Ottomans purposely directed the Vlachs from Hercegovina to the Zadar countryside, the favourite territory for the Vlachs by devastating the territory of Nadin and Novigrad in order to prepare terrain for their permanent settlement. The raids of the Habsburgs-controlled Uskoks disturbed the Vlach communities, however, and forced them to move inland. In 1551 the Habsburg general Ivan Lenković informed the king Ferdinand that the Ottomans had drawn several thousands of Vlachs from the inner Empire and settled them in Dalmatia – around the Kosovo valley near Knin. The sources mentioned several Vlach communities originating from Hercegovina that settled in the frontier-zone such as Banjevci and Stankovci in Ravni Kotari in Zadar countryside.³⁶ Islamization did not take a root among the Vlach population there: in the *nahiya* Petrovo polje and gora there were only 5 Islamized Vlach families in 1528 out of 239 households, and in 1550 only 20 out of 295 in total.

³⁴ J. VRANDEČIĆ, What did the Merchant s Son Francis of Assisi Say to Thomas, a Student from Split? Protonationalism in Early-Modern Venetian Dalmatia (1420–1797), *Annales* 11 (2001), 1–10.

³⁵ Znanstvena knjižnica Zadar, Zbirka rukopisa Libri Consiliorum, vol. III, 2, 1546.

³⁶ Ž. BJELANOVIĆ, Toponimija benkovačkog kraja kao ogledalo njegove prošlosti, *Zbornik Benkovački kraj kroz vjekove* 1 (1987), 177; B. HRABAK, Vlaška i uskočka kretanja u sjevernoj Dalmaciji u XVI stoleću, *Zbornik Benkovački kraj kroz vjekove* 2 (1988), 107–258.

COEXISTENCE

Despite three wars in the course of the sixteenth century – the War of 1499–1502, the War of the Holy League 1537–40 and the War of Cyprus 1570–73 – there was broad coexistence and cooperation between the “two Dalmatias” which included both trade and personal relationships. Their relationships varied from cruel hostilities during the wars to the example of mutual cooperation in the Asian-European trade through the Dalmatian town of Split. The spectrum of coexistence included wars, raids and skirmishes, but also everyday communication through trade, visits, personal friendships and love relations.

The stabilization of political relations with the Ottomans allowed the revival of the Venetian Balkan trade system to a greater extent than in the pre-Ottoman period. Before the official end of the War of the Holy League of 1537–40, the Ottoman authorities proposed in 1539 the revival of the export of Ottoman grain to Venetian towns to a much larger extent. Due to an abundant harvest on his territory, the *sancak-bey* of Bosnia offered grain to the rectors of Venetian towns, mentioning the large sums of ducats which Venetians spend purchasing grain from Sicily and Apulia.

In 1553 Venetian sources estimated the trade to be worth 400,000 ducats per year. According to the tax registers of the Dalmatian port of Split from October 1548 to June 1549 there were 100 trade contracts concerning the purchase of horses from the Ottoman territory. At the end of the sixteenth century – in 1590 and 1593 – 1,317 and 1,474 horses were sold respectively.³⁷ In 1553 the Venetian official visitor Giustiniano estimated the trade of Šibenik to be 50,000 ducats per year. This is why in 1587 the rector of Šibenik Luca Falier claimed that, due to the abundant trade, Šibenik enjoyed the best living standards of all Dalmatian towns. In 1580, the Venetian office *Magistrato dei Cinque Savii all’Mercanzia* accepted the activity of a Jew from Split, Daniel Rodrigo, who tried to make this Venetian town an international port of trade between the Ottoman Empire and Venice. In 1592, Venice accepted this plan to build a warehouse in the Split port for attracting merchants from all over the world. Apart from wanting the trade route to the eastern Mediterranean along the eastern part of the Adriatic Sea, Venice wanted to penetrate with trade the territories of the Balkans and to maintain and develop the trade with that area. This was to substitute for the loss of Venetian markets caused by a reorientation of the world trade to other routes and the appearance of the great colonial powers. Moreover, Venice sought

³⁷ DAZ, Splitski arhiv, vol. 134, b. 133, 15, ff. 578.

to break the monopolistic position of rival Dubrovnik on the Ottoman Balkans.

One Venetian account from 1590 pointed out that the amount of trade running through Split attracted tradesmen from India, Persia and Armenia, and represented the “golden ring” between the Orient and Venice. The period before the Cretan War (1645–1699) witnessed the international trade boom. In 1626, the amount of trade in Split reached 25 % of that done in the port of Venice due to the fact that two thirds of the Balkan trade ran through this port. In 1639 the Bosnian treasury received 50,000 ducats from the *scala* of Split. Tradesmen from Sarajevo and Banja Luka, as well as those from Istanbul and Ankara, many of Armenian origin, crossed Bosnia and Dalmatia for Italy to buy goods for their own markets. The trade routes follow mainly ancient Roman and medieval communications. The most important communication (*magna exercitus, via exercitualis*) run from Sinj to Split via Klis and from Zadar to Knin and further toward Croatia and Danube basin. Ottomans tried to build their own system of ports, constructing warehouses in Makarska, Obrovac and Karin.

There was a specialization in trade. Zadar became the main spot for exporting cattle over the sea, and Split and Obrovac for salt, a strategic Adriatic good which enabled economic and political stabilization of the province. Salt attracted Ottoman subjects to come to Dalmatian towns bringing grain, meat, cheese and so forth. In spite of the Ottoman salt-pans production which covered a third of Bosnian needs, the rest was covered by salt from Dubrovnik or Venetian Dalmatian territories. On 10 April 1525, emin Džafer Čelebija, the Ottoman representative, reached a settlement in Šibenik according to which Ottoman subjects from Bosnia could come to Šibenik and import salt on condition that seven *akchas* from the salt trade belonged to the Venetians and six to the Ottomans. The emin guaranteed that he would prevent any attack or harm on Šibenik territory. Thus, Antonio Diedo in 1553 claimed that in Šibenik the whole population lived from trade with the Ottoman hinterland. In 1631, the population of the three Ottoman Adriatic *sancaks*: Krka, Klis and Herzegovina spent the huge amount of 300,000 ducats in buying Venetian salt. The Venetians produced most of the salt on the eastern Adriatic.³⁸ The most productive salt pans of Pag delivered 7,500

³⁸ On Adriatic salt production and trade see: J.-C. HOCQUET, Fiscalité et pouvoir colonial. Venise et le sel dalmate aux XVe et XVIe siècles, in: État et colonisation au moyen âge. Ed. M. BALARD. Lyon 1989; R. PACI, La “Scala” di Spalato e il commercio veneziano nei Balcani fra Cinque e Seicento. Venice 1971; and T. RAUKAR, Venezia, il sale e la struttura economica e sociale della Dalmazia nel XV e XVI secolo, in: Sale e saline nell’Adriatico (secc. XV–XX). Ed. A. DI VITTORIO. Napulj 1981.

tons in 1575, and that of Šibenik 2,800 tons. Salt pans in the Ionian Sea such as Zante and Krf produced 8,000 tons both. At the same time, Ottomans yielded only 967 tons in Poljica, 2,560 tons in Novi and 1,309 in Grbalj and dependent upon Dubrovnik's production of 6,000 tons in Ston which traditionally supplied the Ottoman market.³⁹ The Venetians had pushed out the merchants of Dubrovnik from many local markets such as Neretva, Makarska and Risan.

THE CHRISTIAN UNREST

In the sixteenth century it had been quite common for peasants in Ottoman Dalmatia to retain a surplus after taxation, which they could then take to market. Limited Dalmatian districts could not satisfy their own need for grain, so the accounts of the Venetian administration are full of data of production, spending and import of Ottoman grain. In the relation of Cristofor Canal, the rector of Zadar in 1598, it is stated that the whole territory of Zadar produces grains for only 4 months: there is no grain production on the islands due to infertile soil, and so far as the hinterland is concerned there were no inhabitants for cultivating the soil.

During the 1560s, the Trogir municipality suffered hunger because the import of Ottoman grain ceased. In the relation of Nicolò Priuli the rector of Trogir on 1 May 1575 stated that after the Cyprus War the inhabitants started to cultivate the soil again. In spite of abundant sowing, the commune could meet its needs only for 6 months, so it had to import from Apulia and Bosnia. In 1560s the Venetian "Office for grain" negotiated imports of grain from Ottoman Dalmatia to Venice. Giovanni Battista Giustiniano, the Venetian supervisor of the Dalmatian communes (*sindico*), estimated in 1553 that Dalmatia had needed 450.000 *stari* of wheat (star = 83.31 litres) but produced no more than 100.000 *stari*.

The trade was stimulated by a devaluation of the Ottoman currency, because foreign tradesmen paid with stable currency. One of the main characteristics of the price of the Ottoman grain is a stable low price until about 1560, as opposed to the prices in Western Europe and Venetian Dalmatia which were influenced by the price revolution. According to *defters* the prices in the Ottoman hinterland were: in 1528 – 15 *akchas/kejl*, and in 1574

³⁹ A. HANDŽIĆ, *Bosanske solane u XVI i XVII vijeku. Članci i građa za kulturnu istoriju istočne Bosne*. Vol. II. Tuzla 1959.

– 25 *akchas/kejl* (1 *kejl* of Sarajevo =100 pounds).⁴⁰ Venetian grain was much more expensive. Around 1565 the price of *kejl* in Venetian Dalmatia was 60 *akchas*. This discrepancy in prices started the struggle for the grain surplus between Ottoman land-holders and the mostly Christian peasantry because both of these social and political groups were eager to sell grain on the markets of Dalmatian towns.⁴¹ This became impossible on the *čifliks*, the private estates, where peasants were reduced to little more than subsistence. The old system of military-feudal tenure had gradually eroded, and in the place of the *timar* class there arose a new kind of local aristocracy holding large estates in full, hereditary ownership. From the very beginning of their settlement in Dalmatia the Ottomans tried to bind the Vlachs to the land and make them pay taxes including tithes. The Ottomans tried to cripple the Vlach privileged *filuri* status according to which each Vlach household was obliged to pay one Ottoman golden ducat yearly and participate in the Ottoman military service. According to *defters* from 1528 the Vlach population from the *nahiyas* Petrovo polje and gora as well as Zminje Polje was forced to pay personal taxes as well as tithes. The peasants had to pay a tithe in kind, varying between a tenth and a quarter of their produce, and pay a few other smaller dues: instead of a ducat they were forced to pay a tithe in kind such as *ispence*. According to *defters* from 1550 the Vlach population in Dalmatia was again granted the *filuri* status by the Ottomans. In spite of Ottoman wishes to attach this population to agriculture, the Vlach population rejected the pressure because the *filuri* status allowed them less taxes and more mobility. According to the land register of the *nahiya* Skradin in 1574 134 or 82.7 % of households enjoyed the *filuri* status which contributed only 42,5 % in total tax sum of the *nahiya*. While in the *nahiya* Skradin in 1574 the *filuri* household disbursed 140 *akcas* yearly those attached to the land compensated 907 *akcas* in tithes. In 1604, in the *nahiya* Sinj-Cetina 698 households or 70,57 % were of *filuri* status but covered only 63,74 % of total tax amount.⁴²

Conditions of life for the serfs deteriorated. According to the estimation of the Venetian *proveditor*-general Jacopo Foscarini there were 6,860 Christian households in the Dalmatian part of Klis *sancak* – not including the

⁴⁰ B. HRABAK, Izvoz žitarica iz Osmanlijskog Carstva u XIV, XV i XVI stoleću. Priština 1971, 564–565; V. VINAVER, Pregled istorije novca, 217–222.

⁴¹ J. VRANDEČIĆ, Had an Ottoman Combatant Any Chance, 163–184.

⁴² F. DŽ. SPAHO, Jedan turski popis, 21–120; IDEM, Splitsko zaleđe, 47–86; IDEM, Skradinska nahija, 79–107.

Bosnian part of this unit – to 560 Muslim households.⁴³ He proposed to grant Christians a guarantee of settlement in the Venetian territory because they were prone to take part in uprising against the Ottomans. Foscolo also suggested that Venice strengthened cavalry and artillery in the province in order to impress the Christians and foster their rise against the Ottomans. Between 1603 and 1624 there was much unrest in the Klis sancak among the peasant population due to local conflicts with the *sancak-bey* Mehmed. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the pressure to convert *timar* lands into private estates increased. The Venetian official Mateo Zane wrote in 1595 that the Ottoman holders took one third of the products from their peasants. Many of Ottoman soldiers wanted the security which land-ownership would give them: in some cases *spahis* killed peasants in order to seize their land. Ottoman sources confirmed huge migration to the more secure area of the Ottoman Empire. There was a huge Vlach migration around 1530 from the Adriatic military frontier zone to the Danube region, and a return of the Vlachs on the old settlement around 1565. An Ottoman land register of the *sancak* of Klis from 1564/65 stated that the overwhelming number of the local *raya* who had left their settlements 35 years ago for the more fertile and stable Danube region, returned again. Between 1604 and 1620 the Vlachs drifted in the same direction. The *begler-bey* of Bosnia boasted in 1636 that he had succeeded to return this population again. In 1594, the Ottoman subjects along the coast, especially in the Makarska region, withdrew inland. In 1615, 800 households from the semi-independent Poljica region in Split left the territory. The migration intensified during the 1620s when both Muslim and Christian Bosnian families left the region to settle in the Danube basin. In the long-run the social struggle of the “second feudalism” strategically weakened the Ottoman Empire, particularly its military frontier-zone.

THE MILITARY REVOLUTION

Despite the fact that the Habsburgs continued to claim their right to Dalmatia after settling the Uskok question (1617), as the seventeenth century unfolded, Venice strengthened its position in the province. When Petar Zoranić, the poet from Zadar, complained about “the massing of strangers in the province and disunity of the Dalmatians who felt deep down that they were not able defend their rights,” he noticed the rise of the “*nouveau riche*”

⁴³ I. GRGIĆ, Opis Kliškog sandžaka s ove strane Velebita i Dinare iz godine 1572, *Zadarska revija* 5 (1956), 253–261.

coming from Italy (Cavagnin, Capogrosso) and the creation of a military elite (Babić, Janković). Both groups were exposed to strong acculturation from the overwhelmingly Croat base of the Dalmatian towns, but they remained politically devoted to Venice. The rector Leonardo Bollani unlike his sixteenth-century counterparts was able to brief the Venetian government on 3 April 1600 on the political conformism of the Dalmatians: “Your town of Split is in very good condition, enjoying under the rule of Venice the two most important things, abundance in living standards and peace on the border.”⁴⁴

The “baroque revolution” integrated the world of the disunited post-medieval communes in Dalmatia on a supranational or anational base of the early capitalist Venetian Empire. During the sixteenth century Venice made visible effort to militarize Dalmatian society in order to withstand the Ottoman threat to the province. From 1601 onwards the Venetian governor of Dalmatia, the general-*proveditor*, became a symbol of the fiscal and judicial integration of the province. In Hvar the state built the first military hospital and arsenal in 1608, and in Zadar the representative palace of the general-*proveditor*, the administrative centre of the provincial government. Prolonged wars of the seventeenth century skyrocketed Dalmatian public debt. In a peacetime year such as 1591, Venice spent in the province 34,000 ducats on its 900 foot soldiers, 300 horsemen and 37 gunners.⁴⁵ In the war year of 1655, the communes contributed only 33,000 ducats or 7.7 % of overall expenses of 431,012 ducats. Venetian actions in the seventeenth-century wars took an incomparably heavier toll on the open battlefield and in finances than prior wars. The regular sixteenth-century wars in Dalmatia were limited to raids by Ottoman cavalry, to the passive posture of Venetian infantry behind walls, and listening to news from distant eastern Mediterranean battlefields. The Venetians tried their luck during the War of Cyprus. In 1572, they attacked Herceg-Novi, the strongest Ottoman outpost in the Bey of Kotor with 3,000 troops, and captured for a short time Klis, Makarska and Skradin. Despite the few short-lived tactical successes the professionals proved no match for numerous Ottoman troops.

The heavy involvement on the *Terraferma* from 1509 and 1529 and a fear of provoking the Turks may be the causes of the campaign approach to Dalmatian fortifications. Despite 10,000 ducats allocated in 1522 for re-fortifying Zadar and Šibenik, none of the Dalmatian coastal fortresses of Zadar, Šibenik, Trogir, Split, Omiš, not to mention the outlying strongholds could

⁴⁴ J. VRANDEČIĆ, What did the merchant s Son Francis of Assisi Say to Thomas, 1–10.

⁴⁵ G. NOVAK, Commissiones, V, 9–37.

withstand a Turkish attack “for more than a week”. In such conditions, in spite of repeated warnings from returning castellans and captains, the fortifications were essentially outdated when the War of the Holy League broke out in 1537.

In the same year Venice began a serious building program *alla moderna*, starting with the fortification of St. Nicholas at the entrance to Šibenik’s port constructed by the Venetian engineer Michele Sanmicheli.⁴⁶ Unlike the bastions around the Zadar city centre, which were finally reshaped *alla moderna* during the early 1590s, the designs of the other Dalmatian cities show that the rapid evolution of fortifications occurred during the Cretan War.⁴⁷ New-style fortresses with uneven lines like the teeth of saw, and angled bastions, built lower and thicker behind wide, deep ditches, provided security.⁴⁸ In 1646, both the male and female citizens of Trogir, carried soil in order to strengthen the walls. In addition, Split and Šibenik sent envoys to Venice, urging the building of the new fortresses of Gripe and St. John, both located on higher ground, above the city. Elsewhere, due to local monetary contributions as well as to the labour of its citizens, a great number of Dalmatian strongholds were constructed during the war. These included the Ravelin in Zadar, the fortresses of St. John and Baron in Šibenik, the outer wall of Trogir, and the entire frontal circuit of Split including the neighbouring fortresses of Gripe and Botticelle.

In contrast to the increasingly impregnable Venetian towns along the coast each Ottoman stronghold succumbed at least once during the Cretan War. Located on an inaccessible and easily defensible spot, the fortress of Klis was designed to keep out human assault rather than withstand artillery bombardment. It was captured in 1648 during a short, dynamic siege principally by means of heavy Venetian cannons. In spite of the fact that the walls of Zemunik (Zemunico) were 3 feet thick and 8.5 meters high, its outdated fortifications and shallow ditch did not withstand a two-day Venetian artillery bombardment and infantry assault in 1647.⁴⁹ The Ottomans’ superiority in manpower was no longer sufficient in the Cretan War. In the unsuccessful Ottoman assault on the walls of Šibenik in 1647, the Ottomans neglected muskets in favour of their traditional weapons: bows and short,

⁴⁶ For more see J. VRANDEČIĆ, The military revolution in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Dalmatia, in: Melikov zbornik. Slovenci v zgodovini in njihovi srednjeevropski sosedje. Ed. V. RAJŠP. Ljubljana 2001, 293–310.

⁴⁷ T. RAUKAR/I. PETRICIOLI/F. ŠVELEC/Š. PERIČIĆ, Zadar, 275–279.

⁴⁸ See for further references G. PARKER, The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800. New York 1988.

⁴⁹ F. DIFNIK, Povijest kandijskog rata, 115.

curved swords. The Ottoman sluggishness in arming and training their men swung the initiative in favour of the Venetians. The Ottomans could not easily bring into action their large bombards, which were mostly gathered in Bosnia; field artillery was too cumbersome to be shifted easily about the rocky and hilly Dalmatian battlefields. Small wonder then that Foscolo protracted the warfare season, simply exploiting the weather conditions, as in the January 1648 campaign when the local Ottoman forces were cut off from Bosnia. Innovations in star-shaped fortifications, gunpowder weaponry and trained troops had all occurred in Dalmatia mostly during the sixteenth century. During the Cretan War these elements were successfully coordinated for the first time to produce offensive capacity. The Venetian assault on the Ottoman fortress of Klis in 1648 had scored the biggest victory of the Republic's arms in the province yet. Thanks to the massive amphibious landing of troops, bombards and horses, and the coordination of artillery bombardment with the charges of the handgun-armed mercenaries and militia, the Venetians stormed the Ottoman stronghold which had dangerously hindered the neighbouring Split. The best Ottoman men, large bombers, and supplies were deployed in the Danube basin and were bogged down in a centuries-long, static and bloody confrontation with the Habsburgs. Even during the wars against Venice, Turks perceived the eastern Adriatic shores as a battlefield of secondary importance for diverting Venetian military potential from the eastern Mediterranean to Dalmatia.

The crucial reason for maintaining the momentum of complex and numerous Venetian siege operations was the increasing defection of the Ottoman auxiliaries. Thousands of militia and Ottoman irregulars tipped the balance in favour of the Adriatic towns. During the attack on Ottoman Drniš in 1648, 7,000 rebellious Ottoman auxiliaries switched sides and joined the Venetian forces. The Venetians had been attracting the Ottoman Christians all along from the War of the Holy League in 1537. During the War of Cyprus and the Cretan War hundreds of their families settled on the central Dalmatian islands such as Brač, Hvar and Vis and in Split. At the end of the Cretan War the number of new settlers on the island of Brač reached 12.3 % of population. Their short, massive assault on the Ottoman strongholds in the First Morean War enabled the Venetian conquest of the entire province by 1688. During the attack the Venetian professionals and local forces slaughtered or baptized the local Ottoman population.

After the last, the Second Morean War was over in 1718, the enlarged Dalmatia reached 166,000 inhabitants. Yet, instead of integrating the countryside (*acquisto nuovo* and *nuovissimo*) and the Dalmatian cities (*acquisto vecchio*) into a single society, Venice organized the new lands as a

separate military borderland (*Krajina*) facing Ottoman Bosnia and set up an administrative system that differed from that of the Dalmatian communes. The military frontier was put under Venetian *proveditors* who relied on service of local officers: *harambaši*, *serdari* and *koluneli*. Venice granted the state-owned land to the free peasants-soldiers in exchange for tithes and military service. The most attracting part of the land was granted to the loyal Venetian elite of local origin to bind them to the regime and to smooth the administrating of the territory.

SUMMARY

After they had overrun Bosnia (1463) in the mid fifteenth century the Ottomans began to threaten Venetian sovereignty in neighbouring Dalmatia, moving their border from the Balkan interior to the narrow and shallow Adriatic coastal belt of the Dalmatian districts. The former Croatian hinterland, a thin strip of land sandwiched between Ottoman Bosnia and Venetian Dalmatia, experienced a complete breakdown by 1537 and was inserted into Ottoman administrative-territorial organization. In numerous raids, the Ottoman horsemen captured cattle and prisoners and forced civilians and Venetian troops to withdraw into the Adriatic towns.

At the time of the conquest there was a large-scale out-migration of Catholics who fled to the still unconquered region of Dalmatia. The Turks were particularly eager for the return of order in the strategic areas close to the Venetian frontier. They found their most reliable settler material in the Orthodox Balkan Vlachs, the descendants of hinterland Romanized and Latin-speaking population of this area who survived the sixth – and seventh – century Slavic onslaught by retreating to the high mountain passes. The Vlachs were particularly suitable for the Ottoman government's purposes, not only because they were mobile (their typical occupations were sheep-herding, horse-breeding and organizing transport for traders), but also because they had a strong military tradition. They were entitled to carry arms and expected to fulfil a military role; in place of a salary, they were permitted to plunder enemy territory. From the very beginning of their settlement in Dalmatia the Ottomans tried to cripple the Vlach privileged *filuri* status according to which each Vlach household was obliged to pay one Ottoman golden ducat yearly and participate in the Ottoman military service. The Ottomans tried to bind the Vlachs to the land and make them pay taxes including tithes. In spite of Ottoman wishes to attach this population to agriculture, the Vlach population rejected the pressure because the *filuri* status allowed them less taxes and more mobility.

In the circumstances of an overwhelming majority of Christians on the neighbouring Bosnian border toward Venice the Ottomans tried to stir up a process of Islamization, especially on the fringe of the Empire. Islamization came mainly from Ottoman soldiers settled in the Dalmatian garrisons, refugees from the neighbouring Venetian Dalmatia, Christian slaves granted liberty after conversion to Islam and probably from some of the pre-Ottoman population. The new proximity forced both Venetian and Ottoman Dalmatia to build and adapt their mutual relationships. Their relationships varied from cruel hostilities during the Wars to the outstanding example of mutual co-operation in the Asian-European trade through the Dalmatian town of Split. The question of importing grain from the Balkan hinterland was of life-and-death importance for Dalmatian towns. Imports commercialized the Ottoman economy of the hinterland, and attracted the Ottoman non-Muslim subjects toward Venetian Dalmatia. The need for adaptation imposed the redefinition of the system, because the regular tithes collected from the peasantry became worthless by inflation, which opened the struggle for a direct right of cultivating the land, which started the process of land renting and the struggle for a land market.

Besides the impact of capitalist economy on the Ottoman society, the military revolution decisively tipped the balance in favour of Venice. The reconstruction of old fortifications took place throughout all of the sixteenth and the first part of the seventeenth century. In contrast to its defensive posture in the sixteenth century, Venice took the initiative on the battlefield and in finances during the protracted seventeenth-century Wars – the Cretan War of 1645–69 and the First Morean War of 1684–99. Innovations in star-shaped fortifications, gunpowder weaponry and trained troops had all occurred in Dalmatia mostly during the sixteenth century. During the Cretan War these elements were successfully coordinated for the first time to produce offensive capacity.

The crucial reason for maintaining the momentum of complex and numerous Venetian siege operations was the increasing defection of the Ottoman auxiliaries. Thousands of militia and Ottoman irregulars tipped the balance in favour of the Adriatic towns. The massive appearance of powerful siege and field artillery, lethal shoulder guns volleys and trained troops on the eastern Adriatic shores encouraged steady defection by the Ottoman Christians to the Venetian side during the Cretan War. Their short, massive assault on the Ottoman strongholds in the first months of the next, the First Morean War would finally enable Venetian conquest of the entire province by 1718.

