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a cura di
VIRGILIO ILARI



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In copertina: Targa sbalzata e ageminata appartenuta a Enrico II, re di Francia, attribuita a Étienne Delaune, Jean Cousin il Vecchio e Baptiste Pellerin, Fontainebleau 1555 circa, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 34.85. Public domain.

Defending the Regno di Morea

Antonio Jansic and the Fortress of Modon

by ERIC G. L. PINZELLI

ABSTRACT. In four campaigns (1684-1687), Captain General Francesco Morosini had reconquered the Morea (the Peloponnese) from the Ottomans, but how could this prize be preserved against the Porte's future potential invasions? A talented young Dalmatian soldier, Antonio Jansic, participated in the gruesome conflict where he was introduced to the art of siege warfare, literally in the heat of battle. He became a military engineer, as Filippo Besset di Verneda's protege. By the early 1700s, Jansic was in charge of all the Venetian fortifications in the Levant. The huge Medieval fortress of Modon, key to the entire south-eastern Peloponnese, would have to undergo massive and costly upgrades adapted to the new tactics. While Jansic fashioned innovative designs, administrative delays and the lack of funds jeopardized the completion of the works. The irresistible Ottoman campaign of 1715 saw Jansic and Vincenzo Pasta side by side attempting the impossible: Defend Modon while all the other fortresses of the Regno di Morea and their garrisons had failed miserably.

KEYWORDS. REGNO DI MOREA, VENICE, OTTOMAN EMPIRE, FORTIFICATIONS, WARFARE, ANTONIO JANSIC, MODON, GREECE, MILITARY ENGINEERS.

The 1686 siege and capture of Modon.

Venice officially joined the Holy League against the Turks on 19 January 1684. By the second campaign, Coron had been taken on 11 August 1685, after a difficult and bloody siege. The next objectives to gain control of south-eastern Messenia, were the fortresses of Navarino and Modon, which were situated at highly strategic locations.

The campaign of 1686 started under the best auspices for the Venetians and their allies: In only 16 days the two castles at Navarino were taken, and the *serasker* once again beaten in a pitched battle. On June 21, Francesco Morosini's fleet dropped anchor in front of Modon and the next day the 13,000-men strong army joined him coming from inland. Three days later, a battery of 8 mortars began launching bombs in the city. According to Jean Leonard, 500 projectiles were

fired, 80 missing the fortress and 30 others exploding in the air¹. On the 26th of June, the suburb was captured, and the next day the Captain General sent a summons to the *disdar*. This call for surrender was rejected since the garrison was still hoping for the return of the *serasker* to relieve them.

Thus, the bombing resumed, while the Maltese opened the trench on July 1st. On the 5th, a man that had escaped from the fortress came to inform the Venetian High Command of the damage caused by the 4,000 bombs already launched: almost all the buildings had been destroyed. The women and children had been locked up in the castle of the sea, to “not disturb the men occupied in defending the walls” with their screams. Under cover of darkness the Maltese progressed fast. The siege works were directed by veteran engineers Lieutenant General Filippo Besset di Verneda and Giovanni Bassignani. As the threat of mines being placed under the ramparts was growing closer, and since the *serasker* was now out of reach, the garrison raised the white flag on July 8th. Two days later, 1,000 soldiers and 3,000 civilians abandoned the fortress, leaving behind their slaves and 105 guns. Modon was once again one of the “eyes of the Republic”. Filippo Maria Paruta was appointed its first provveditor extraordinary².

Antonio Jansic during the Morean War

Antonio Jansic, who much later in his life claimed to have enlisted at the age of 18, might have participated in the first campaigns in the Levant, as an ensign (*alfiere*)³. If it was the case, he couldn't have missed the capture of Modon. The reality is that nothing is known about his actions during the first years.

During the ill-fated 5th campaign of 1688, which was aimed at capturing Ne-

1 Jean LEONARD, *Histoire des conquestes des Vénitiens depuis 1684 jusques à présent*, Bruxelles, 1688, p. 104.

2 Camillo CONTARINI, *Istoria della Guerra di Leopoldo Primo Imperadore e de' Principi collegati contro il Turco*, Venice, 1710., I, p. 569-573; Pietro GARZONI, *Istoria della Repubblica di Venezia in tempo della Sacra Lega*, Venice, 1712., I, p. 131-134; J. LEONARD, *op. cit.*, p. 103-110; Leonardo PITTONI, *Memorie storiche delle Guerre, & acquisti fatti della Serenissima Repubblica Veneta*, Venice, 1688., p. 58-64; Alessandro LOCATELLI, *Racconto storico della veneta guerra in Levante*, Cologne, 1691, p. 234-236.

3 Marc'Antonio GANDINI, *Le opere di Senofonte ateniese, filosofo ed storico eccellentissimo, molto utili a' capitani di guerra ed al vivere morale e civile*, Verona, 1736, p. 4; Andrej ŽMEGAC, “Antonio Giancix – An ignored genius?”, in *Defensive Architecture of the Mediterranean* Vol VII, 2018, p. 281.

groponte (today's Chalkis in Euboea), he held the rank of captain of a company of sappers. Nothing particular by that point, the war time progression had not been exceptional. What really changed Jansic's destiny and set him on a different path is what happened at Negroponte. With the spread of an epidemic in the ranks of the Venetian army and the appalling toll of casualties, all the engineers being either dead or wounded, the 22-year old captain unexpectedly found himself in charge of the final phase of the siege operations (middle of August-middle of October 1688). In any case, by that time, the catastrophic outcome was unavoidable⁴.

Until that fateful moment, Jansic could only have observed the patented engineers and admired the legendary Cavalier Verneda at work. When nobody else remained, old Lieutenant General Filippo Besset di Verneda took on himself to introduce the young Dalmatian to the principles of mathematics, geometry, geography, ballistics, drawing and so much more: 17th Century engineers were accomplished technicians!

«... ridotta ad'una misera necessità, debba tutto passar adesso per mano del Capitan de Minatori Giacix giovine bensì di studio, e di spirito applicato, ma che finalmente, come può attestar il Tenente Generale Verneda, si vada di presente solo nella pratica della professione istruendo.»⁵

By the 20th of October, the remnants of the stricken Venetian army (a little more than 3,000 men capable of still bearing arms) abandoned the siege and were shipped back to the Morea. It was 69-year old Captain General Francesco Morosini's first clear-cut defeat of his entire military career⁶.

It is essential to understand that Francesco Morosini's staff of high ranking officers and specialists at the start of the War of Morea in 1684 was entirely composed of people he knew and trusted. They were all veterans of the War of

4 CONTARINI *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 113; GARZONI, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 278-281; LOCATELLI, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 128; Biblioteca Museo Correr (B.M.C.), fondo Morosini Grimani, Ms. n° 247, dispaccio n° 10 from September 20, fol. 159 r.

5 B.M.C, Ms. Morosini Grimani 247, dispaccio n° 12, from Negroponte on October 10, 1688, fol 162 v.

6 CONTARINI, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 118; LOCATELLI, *op. cit.*, II, p. 146; George FINLAY, *History of Greece under Othoman and Venetian domination*, Edinburgh, 1856, p. 190-191; Mario NANI MOCENIGO, *Storia della marina veneziana da Lepanto alla caduta della Repubblica*, Roma, 1935., p. 270; Kenneth M. SETTON, *Venice, Austria and the Turks in the Seventeenth Century*, Philadelphia, 1991., p. 358-359; Kevin ANDREWS, *Castles of the Morea*, Princeton, 1953, p. 183-185; Samuel ROMANIN, *Storia documentata di Venezia*, Venice, 1858., vol. VII, p. 348-350.

Candia, or relatives of the men who had fought by his side. Filippo Besset di Verneda, who had already been the Republic's foremost engineer throughout the entire previous war, and had led the other engineers at Candia when Morosini was in charge of defending the city, was appointed the Serenissima's Lieutenant General of artillery at the outset of this new war of retribution. He already held the functions of superintendent of fortifications, or chief engineer⁷. At his side, or working as students and assistants, Verneda could rely on his son Girolamo and two of his nephews, Giacomo and Giovanni. Both nephews were killed in action during the siege of Negroponte⁸.

Working mostly in the Dominante alongside the *savio alla scrittura* as a highly respected advisor for all matters pertaining to the technical aspects of warfare (except naval construction), in the 1680s and early 1690s, Filippo Verneda was also responsible for selecting the adventurers claiming to have engineering experience flocking from all over Europe looking for employment. They would introduce themselves to the secretaries of the *savio alla scrittura* who forwarded the candidates to Verneda. The Lieutenant General had them undergo a technical exam of his own. Only by passing this examination would Verneda issue their patent. The test apparently consisted of a theoretical questionnaire and some technical drawings to perform in a given time⁹. Verneda himself did not have the au-

7 Archivio di Stato di Venezia (A. S. V.), Senato da mar, registro n° 150 (1684), fol. 129. Pietro MARCHESI, *Fortezze veneziane 1508-1797*, Milano, 1984, p. 68, 198; Eugenio BACCHIO, *Il domino veneto su Corfù 1386-1797*, Venice, 1956, p. 144-145; Joseph DU CROS, *Histoire des voyages de Monsieur le Marquis Ville en Levant et du Siège de Candie*, Lyon, 1679, p. 17-18, where Verneda is called the «Sur-Intendant General des fortifications de la République». According to Pietro Gradenigo, Filippo Beset di Verneda originated from Verona, but others claimed he was French (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana (B. N. M.), Ms. It VII 167, fol. 227 v). According to Pierre Daru, Verneda was born at Agde, in Languedoc, part of southern France (Pierre DARU, *Histoire de la République de Venise*, Vol. V., Paris, 1821, p. 90-91).

8 Both came along with their uncle until the siege of Negroponte (1688), where they were killed, a few days apart. See Pietro Garzoni, *op. cit.*, I, p. 278-279; B. M. C., Ms. Morosini Grimani n° 557, fasc. XVII, fol. 458; National Library of Greece, (E. B. E.), Antonio Nani, Ms. 3916, fol. 202.

9 A. S. V., Senato da mar, registro n° 150 (1684), fol. 98; A. S. V., Senato da mar, registro n° 153 (1687), fol. 199r; A. S. V., Senato da mar, registro n° 154 (1688), fol. 226; B. M. C., Ms. Morosini Grimani n° 247, fol. 215 v; A. S. V., Senato da mar, registro 156 (1690), on May 24; A. S. V., Senato da mar, registro 157 (1691), the 5th of May. Vauban was also consulted before the admission of new candidate engineers (Gilbert BODINIER, *in Dictionnaire du Grand Siècle*, Poitiers, 1990, p. 755). Eric PINZELLI, *Venise et l'Empire Ottoman: les guerres de Morée*, Athens, 2020, p. 265.

thority to hire engineers (this was a prerogative of the patricians acting as *savii alla scrittura* who had the power to establish the *condotta*, the contract). However, his recommendations were always adopted. In 1697, The marquis de Vauban would also create a test for the future engineers of the Sun King¹⁰.

During the first ten years of the war, the captain generals had few engineers at their disposal (only 3 during the siege of Coron in 1685 for example, 7 at the beginning of the siege of Negroponte, although all of them were killed, injured or sick, 4 during the siege of Canea in 1692...). Morosini and his successors complained to the Senate constantly about this distressing reality as these technicians were indispensable for any type of operation¹¹.

Competent engineers were hard to find! Sometimes, almost in desperation, the captain generals would recruit officers who had demonstrated particular technical skills on the field, in the heat of action. This was the case with sergeant major Pierre de La Salle who was recruited in October 1694 by General da Sbarco Adam Heinrich von Steinau among the officers of the Regiment Degenfeld, or Giacomo di Solari, Antonio Strozzi, Franciscus Vandeyk (recruited directly by the *sindici catastaticadori*, the magistrates in charge of establishing a cadaster of the land, in early 1692), and even the young Jansic, as we have seen previously. While at first they retained their rank, if they lasted and proved to be as competent as needed, their precious and rare competence ensured them faster promotion, an increased salary, and long-term prospects. In the Levant, a patent could be issued directly by the *General da Sbarco* (sometimes called “marshal”) or the Captain General¹².

At the end of the 17th Century, there was no academy where one could be trained for this type of career. It was mostly a matter of experience gained directly in the field, with theoretical knowledge applied from the available treatises on fortifications, geometry, and artillery. The Alberghetti brothers, who had their own personal library (“*studio*”), were admirers of the predominant French School, in particular Blaise François Pagan, Manesson Mallet and the Marquis

10 Catherine BOUSQUET-BRESSOLIER, "Etudes et formations des ingénieurs sous Vauban", in *Comité Français de Cartographie* n° 195, Paris, 2008, p. 16; Isabelle LABOULAIS, *Les usages des cartes (XVIIe-XIXe siècle): Pour une approche pragmatique des productions cartographiques*, Strasbourg, 2019, p. 44.

11 Eric PINZELLI, *Venise et l'Empire Ottoman*, p. 264.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 264-265.

de Vauban's works. It was Vauban who declared in 1693 that "it only took a little common sense and two or three sieges to be able to dig a proper zig-zag trench of a formal attack, but a good builder was only made with fifteen to twenty years of application". The following year, Giust'Emilio own *Compendio della Fortificazione* was published at Venice¹³.

When Otto von Königsmark was contracted as *General da Sbarco* by the *savio alla scrittura* in January 1686, Königsmark brought along with him his own staff and among them, captain Tomas Boger and 200 Swedes or Germans acting as pioneers/sappers¹⁴. This company was decimated, only a few were still alive by the end of the campaign, and another company had dwindled to almost nothing¹⁵. In march 1688, a few weeks before the start of the new campaign, there was only 19 sappers in the army. Jansic, who is never mentioned before the siege of Negroponte, might have been one of these survivors¹⁶.

On the army payrolls of the year 1689, Jansic does not appear yet on the list of the engineers preserved in manuscript 2725 of the Museo Correr, although this document enumerates them all¹⁷. We can assume that this was a year of schooling for Jansic who was a pupil of Filippo Besset di Verneda. Secretary of the Senate Agostin Galdaldin informs us that the Lieutenant General was at Venice then, teaching his own son Captain Girolamo who had been given leave from his company of Oltramarini to study military engineering with his father¹⁸. It makes sense that the old veteran of Candia would want to continue what he had initiated with the young 23-year old Oltramarini at Negroponte. And to confirm this, the following year, Jansic would for the first time be acknowledged as a patented engineer.

In September 1690, after the surrender of Malvasia to newly appointed Captain General Girolamo Cornaro, the famous veteran of the War of Candia led his fleet and most of his army in Albania. His first objective was the castle of Canina, which surrendered after a 3-day siege. Valona surrendered the next day on the

13 Giust'Emilio ALBERGHETTI, *Compendio della Fortificatione*, Venice, 1694.

14 A. S. V., Senato da mar, registro 152 (1686), on March 28.

15 A. S. V., Senato da mar, registro n° 152 (1686), fol. 70 v; A. S. V. Senato, dispacci, P. T. M., busta 1249, dispaccio n° 39 of July 16, 1686; A. S. V. Senato, dispacci, P. T. M., busta 1070, dispaccio n° 96.

16 A. S. V. Senato, dispacci, P. T. M., busta 1252, dispaccio n° 6 of March 18, 1688.

17 B.M.C., Ms. P.D. 2725, fol. 5.

18 A. S. V., Senato da mar, registro n° 155 (1689), fol 298.

18th of September. Unfortunately for Cornaro, it would be his last victories: he died from “fevers” 12 days later¹⁹. He was replaced by the incapable Domenico Mocenigo who summoned a *consulta* to decide what to do with the conquered Albanian fortresses and Jansic, who was at Corfou, was among the technicians who considered that these castles would be difficult to hold against a winter ottoman counter-offensive²⁰. Consequently, Canina’s walls were blown up and Valona abandoned in haste to the Turks on the 13th of March²¹.

In September 1691, we find captain Jansic, along with the entire Venetian army staff and engineers Bassignani, Camuccio and Vandeyk, visiting the Isthmus of Corinth for the first time to create topographic reliefs²². On this occasion, Jansic wrote an initial report on the feasibility of a defensive line to protect the entrance of the Peloponnese.

One of the nephews of the Lieutenant General had already sketched the entire area back in the summer of 1688, and had sent it to his uncle before being killed at Negroponte. His designs, and Oratio Alberghetti’s drafts created the following year, would serve as the basis for the huge amount of projects delivered until 1697 to eventually build modern fortifications on the Isthmus. The young Verne-da’s opinion was to erect a massive fortified wall, with forts in the middle and at both ends, exactly where emperor Nero had attempted to dig a canal in 67 AD²³.

In January 1695, following the loss of Chios by Antonio Zeno, all the Venetian engineers in the Levant met again at Corinth under provveditor Riva’s supervision to survey the area and submit new projects for the building of fortifications on the Isthmus. The two famous brothers Sigismondo and Giust’Emilio of the Alberghetti dynasty, distinguished Venetian engineers, “*Fondatori pubblici*”, mathematicians, architects and inventors, who participated to this *consulta*, were among the most respected Venetian scientists of the time²⁴. Along with Pierre de

19 Eric PINZELLI, *Venise et l’Empire Ottoman*, p. 162-166.

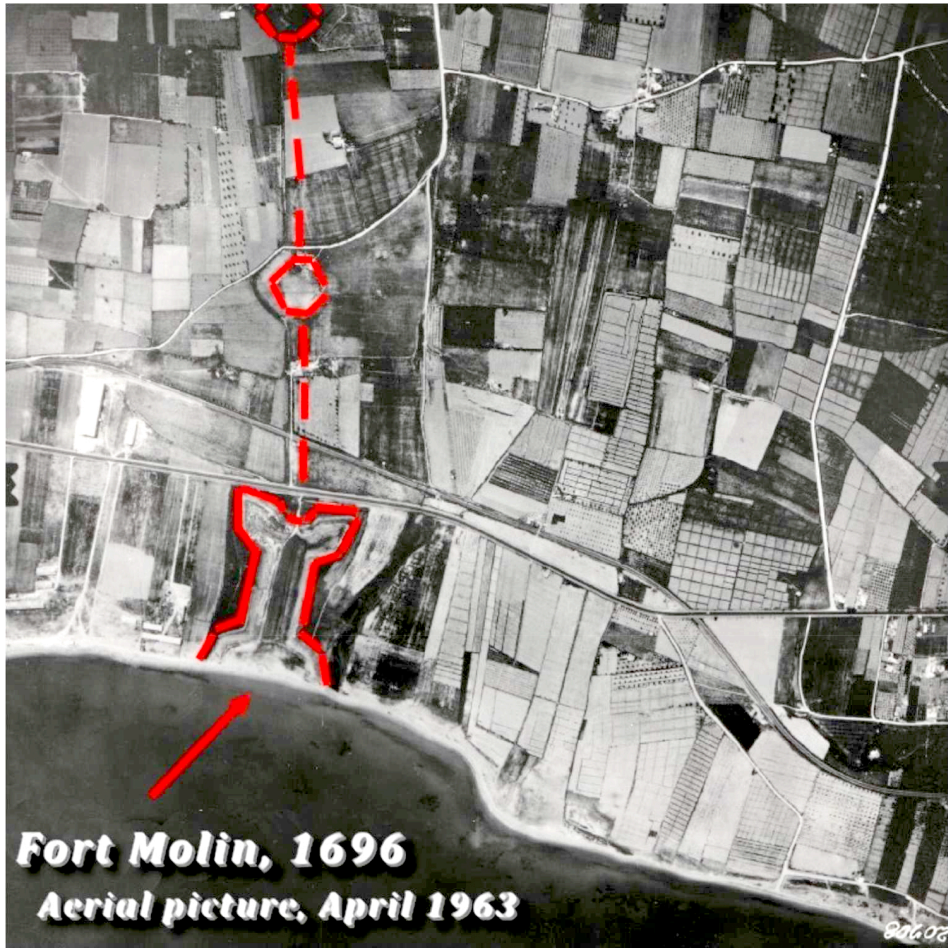
20 A. S. V. Senato, dispacci, P. T. M., busta 1125, dispacci n° 6 to 10.

21 A. S. V. Senato, dispacci, P. T. M., busta 1125, dispaccio n° 19 of March 14, 1691; SETTON, *op. cit.*, p. 377.

22 A. S. V. Senato, dispacci, P. T. M., busta n° 1125, dispacci n° 42 of November 3, 1691 and n° 43 of November 14, 1691.

23 Eric PINZELLI, *La défense de l’isthme de Corinthe*, University of Aix-en-Provence, 1997, p. 111-114.

24 Ennio CONCINA, "Venezia, le città fortificate, il Levante. Politiche, tecniche, progetti, dal



1. Aerial photograph of The Line of Corinth taken in April 1963
(courtesy of the Corinth Excavations, A.S.C.S. at Athens).

la Salle (who was particularly appreciated by Stenau and was by far the highest paid of the military engineers), François Levasseur and Jansic also attended. Each engineer produced his own set of drawings with their personal assessments²⁵. The following year, Sigismondo Alberghetti started to work on a model of the Isthmus and presented his stunning creation to the Senate in August 1697²⁶.

XV al XVIII secolo" in *Praktika 4^e synedriou eptanisiakou politismou*, Athens, 1996, p. 86-87.

²⁵ Eric PINZELLI, *La défense de l'isthme de Corinthe*, p. 92-100.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 122-128.

During the famous and decisive Battle of Argos on June 10th 1695, Jansic, now a lieutenant colonel, was on the battlefield. He suffered an injury, apparently a serious scimitar wound to the shoulder²⁷. Prior to the battle, Jansic and colonel Tutu had been on a reconnaissance mission to provide valuable intelligence to General Stenau and provveditor Alessandro Molin²⁸.

After the battle, we find again mention of Jansic, probably healed from his injury, in May 1696 when he is sent to Corinth. There, with provveditor Agostino Sagredo, he visited the ongoing works of baron Adam Heinrich von Stenau's defensive Line between Fort Molin on the shore at Lechaion, the city walls, and Fort Riva, on the north-east flank of the Acrocorinth's foothills²⁹. The Peloponnese had been invaded 3 times already, in 1692, 1694 and finally in the summer of 1695. This new "provisional" line of defense, anchored on the Acrocorinth, was expected to prevent a new Turkish incursion. The works, supervised by Pierre de la Salle, who was assisted by Jean-Baptiste De Monchaux (died June 1706), would go on until the year 1700³⁰.

After the Peace of Karlowitz

During the War of Spanish Succession, as Venice chose to remain "neutral but under arms", officially ready to defend its sovereignty against invasions from the Imperials or the French, Jansic, now a Sargent General, was part of Daniel Dolfin's staff with a salary of 3,000 ducats per year³¹. When that external threat was over, Jansic was back in activity in Dalmatia, the Ionian island and the Morea. As Sergeant General, holding one of the highest rank in the Venetian army, he was entrusted with the supervision of all the fortification projects, while Pierre de la Salle remained the main military architect and engineer in Morea, and Levasseur

27 B. M. C., ms. Morosini Grimani n° 557, fol. 54, «Notta de Feriti è morti nel giorno di 10 Giugno».

28 Biblioteca Querini Stampalia, cl. IV, ms. 173 (429), *Sommarii... di savio del Consiglio*, fol. 303 r.; B.M.C., Cicogna, Ms. 2654, dispaccio n° 10.

29 A. S. V., Senato, dispacci, P. T. M. busta n° 847, dispaccio n° 37; A. S. V. Senato, dispacci, P. T. M. busta n° 1130, annex to dispaccio n° 34; A. S. V., Senato, dispacci, P. T. M. busta n° 1131, annex to dispaccio n° 38.

30 Eric PINZELLI, *Venise et l'Empire Ottoman*, p. 367-372.

31 B.M.C., Ms. Dona dalle Rose 428, document n° 11: "Ufficiali del Stato General, che servono nella neutralità in T. F. sotto il Gnltto Ecc:mo Dolfin..."

was being mostly employed at Corfu and Cerigo.

In September 1711, Jansic inspected the Acrocorinth according to provveditor Marco Loredan³². The Acrocorinth had benefited from a new ditch, slight upgrades on the Western flank, with a first wall repaired, a second wall completely transformed with gun embrasures added, and the third, main wall also equipped with new gun embrasures. All these had been constructed by Dutch engineer Franciscus Vandeyk in 1692-1693³³.

From the end of 1711 to 1714, Jansic supervised the creation of a brand new fortress on top of Mount Palamede above Napoli di Romania. The design, which needed to be adapted to the landscape, was revolutionary, with self-sufficient forts designed to support each other and fight independently if needed. The only thing missing was the troops to man them! The works were directed by Pierre de la Salle, who had already implemented the Line of Corinth in 1696, and, ten years later, this time with François Levasseur, worked on Napoli di Romania's new bastions Grimani and Dolfin, on each side of a new land gate³⁴. These fortifications were accurately described by Giuseppe Gerola in 1934 as the Italian scholar witnessed the destruction of the Dolfin bastion to erect a law-court³⁵.

During the month of August 1714, Jansic was at Corfou and handed out a report to Daniel Dolfin with a project to complete Verneda's past ambitious building program for the New Fortress at the cost of 23,800 Reals³⁶. Soon, he would be back in the Morea and returned to Modon where duty would find him on the *Regno's* last line of defense.

32 Δελτίον της ιστορικής και εθνολογικής εταιρείας της Ελλάδος (D. I. E. E.), 1896-1900, "Copia d'Informazione scritta dall' Ill:mo et Eccell:mo Sig:r Marco Loredan, Provveditor General dell'Armi in Regno all' Ill:mo et Eccell:mo Sig:r Antonio Loredan suo Successore. Modone li 20 Settembre 1711 S.N.", p. 732.

33 Eric PINZELLI, *La défense de l'Isthme de Corinthe*, p. 72-78.

34 A. S. V., Archivio privato Grimani dai Servi, busta 36, filza 94, fol. 196: Map of the works already done on the Grimani and Dolfin bastions dated from October 31, 1706; fol. 174: Map of the works on the 24th of February 1707; K. Andrews, *op. cit.*, plates XXI, XXII, XXIII. See also, B. M. C., P. D., codice 839/1, maps n° 12, 13, and 14 dating from July 1706.

35 Giuseppe GEROLA: "Le fortificazioni di Napoli di Romania" in *Annuario della Regia Scuola archeologica di Atene*, 1934, p. 345-410. See also Andrej Žmegac, *op. cit.*, p. 282-286.

36 A. S. V., Senato, dispacci, P. T. M, busta n° 959, dispaccio n° 5 of September 5, 1714.



2. The large natural harbor of Modon in Otto Magnus von Stackelberg, *La Grèce. Vues pittoresques et topographiques*, Paris, 1830.

Modon in the Early 18th Century and the New Fortifications

Since the 13th Century, Modon with its large natural harbor has been an essential stopover for the merchant ships coming from the eastern Mediterranean or the Ionian sea and a military base for the Venetian navy. The fortress stretches for about 600 m from the massive early Renaissance Bembo ravelin (or bastion), to the sea door called the San Marco door, and beyond to the medieval polygonal *Castel da Mar (Castel da Lanterna)*³⁷ erected on Akra Soukouli at its southern

37 Pietro GARZONI, *Sacra Lega*, vol. I, p. 131, provides a fine description of the Castello della Lanterna and its origin: « ...stà fondato sopra uno scoglietto discosto dalla porta del molo quarantacinque passi, alla quale presta il transito un ponte. Fù costruito da que' fedeli Cittadini per tener lontane dalle mura le navi nimiche, allorche seppero volgere Baiazetto le sue Armate a' lor danni. Il suo giro non grande, ma regolare forma un'ottagono; è nominato da' marinari Lanterna, perche forse serviva eziandio di scorta à discoprire il porto. » It was in this enclosed space that the Turks kept women and children during the Venetian bombardement: « Si chiamava questa per Cittadella, nella quale il Commandante haveva fatto ritirare le donne, e fanciulli, per evitar la confusione al Presidio, mentre restava così fieramente battuto dal fuoco incessante delli Assalitori. » See also Giovanni Battista DE BURGO, *Viaggio di cinque anni in Asia, Africa, e Europa*, Milano, 1688. vol. III, p. 451.

end. Furthermore, there was another natural harbor 4 nautical miles to the South, at Porto Longo, in the island of Sapienza, where in November 1354 Genoese admiral Paganino Doria had captured the entire Venetian fleet at anchor³⁸.

In his days, Francesco Morosini considered it by far the most important of the Serenissima's outposts in Messenia thanks to its strategic location and its mighty fortifications. The *Peloponesiaco* had commissioned several engineers to map the fortress and Lieutenant general Verneda had proposed important new works on the land front, although these projects, delayed by the war, never came into effect³⁹.

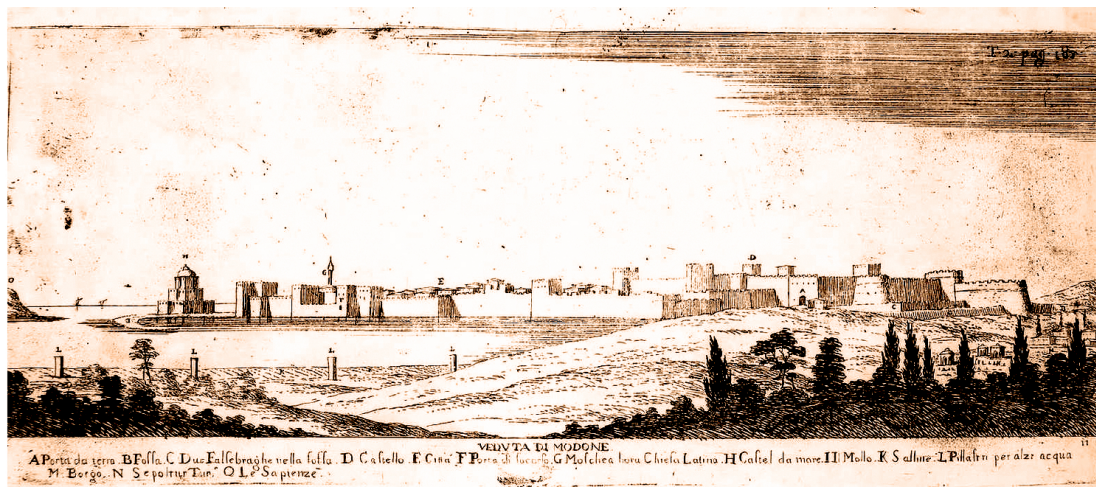
Following the Venetian reconquest, Giacomo Corner ordered the first indispensable emergency repairs, particularly to the *Castel da Mar*, which were accomplished by provveditor extraordinary Filippo Maria Paruta. In early spring 1689, Corner also commissioned engineer Giovanni Leonardo Mauro, who had been serving since the 1684 campaign against Sta Maura, to restore the West circuit wall damaged by the onslaught of the northwestern winds and waves⁴⁰. Eight years later, during the winter of 1697-98, the problem remained unchanged: the stormy weather caused parts of the west wall to collapse into the sea. Agostino Sagredo ordered Franciscus Vandeyk (who worked mostly for the *sindici cattasticatori*) to proceed to the repairs on the wall and on the *Castel da Lanterna*, which would later be used as a prison and bandits from Mani were being held in custody. Sagredo, always eager to find ways to save public funds, tried to "encourage" members of the large community of Latin refugees from Chios (60 families according to Tournefort) to take an active and voluntary part in the works⁴¹.

38 Frederic C. LANE, *Venise une république maritime*, Paris, 1985, p. 250-251; Charles D. STANTON, *Medieval Maritime Warfare*, Barnsley, 2015, p. 175-176.

39 A. S. V., Senato, dispacci, P. T. M., busta n° 1070, dispacci n° 83, from July 26, 1686; n° 89, from September 9, 1686; n° 112 from May 25, 1687: "Considera l'importanza della Piazza stessa di Modon conosce propria l'opera interiore delineata della virtù del S. Ten:te Gnal Verneda"; n° 137, from March 18, 1688: "Coron, Modon, e li due Navarin meritano esser considerati per li terri, e Porti gelosi, che vi sono... sarà ottimo ripiego darsi mano all'ogg: o raccordati dallo stesso Verneda per la difesa di Modon, massime a riparo de danni peggiori nella muraglia, quali non si poterono risarcire per li sospetti del Contaggio, e così doverà applicarsi all'accomodate del Molo, con l'escav: del fondo, che fara un Mandrachio capace di 25 Gale:".

40 Eric PINZELLI, *Venise et l'Empire Ottoman*, p. 375.

41 Joseph PITTON DE TOURNEFORT, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant fait par ordre du Roy*, Paris, 1717, vol. I, p. 367; A. S. V. Senato, dispacci, P. T. M., busta 848, dispaccio n° 54



3. “Veduta di Modone” in Raffaello Savonarola,
Universus Terrarum Orbis Scriptorum Calamo Delineatus..., 1713.

Outside the fortress, on the other side of the wide moat cut through solid rock from 1358, there was a village of few dozen houses with their orchards, gardens, vineyards dating back to the 14th Century. It was the dwelling place of the Greeks who had an Orthodox bishop, as only the Turks had been allowed to live in the fortress until the return of the Venetians, and it would still be the case after the Ottoman reconquest, a fact confirmed by Chateaubriand in 1806⁴². From May 1695, this borgo would also become a new residence for families of Latin refugees from Chios who had to flee their homeland after Antonio Zeno’s pitiful withdrawal from the island. Vandeyk was commissioned by Giustin Da Riva to conduct a cadastral survey of the city (which has not survived), to identify which properties had been granted to the newly settled Chiots, and which public lands could still be distributed to accommodate the refugees:

« con la distintione de fondi concessi a Scioti, et a Greci, o a livello con nomi de Turchi di chi detti fondi erano, e distinguere quello que resta a pu-

of April 16, 1697; Alexis M. MALLIARIS, *Alessandro Pini: Ανέκδοτη περιγραφή της Πελοποννήσου (1703)*, Venice, 1997, p. 59. Among these newly arrived refugees, Alessandro Pini mentioned the rich Giustiniani family.

⁴² François-René de CHATEAUBRIAND, *Itinéraire de Paris à Jerusalem*, Paris, 1968, p. 64: “La France n’avait point alors d’agent à Modon. Il [le consul allemand] demeurait dans la bourgade des Grecs, hors de la ville. Dans tous les lieux où le poste est militaire, les Grecs sont séparés des Turcs.”

blica disposizione... il sito per Magazeni, e depositi per Munizioni, quartieri, ospedale, et altro, acio si può distinguere quelle che resta per dispensare ad altri Sciotti, o a chi il Publico volesse concederli... »⁴³.

That same year, Alessandro Molin proposed to establish Modon as the capital of Messenia instead of the New Navarino. He considered that, alongside the Acrocorinth, Malvasia and Napoli di Romania, Modon was one of the best strongholds of the Morea and “*che se potrebbe ridurre con l’arte in stato di sostenere una valida difesa*»⁴⁴. Francesco Grimani was of the same opinion two years later, while in August 1702 Daniel Dolfin was willing to dismantle Coron and Navarino altogether to preserve only Modon⁴⁵. Shortly before the end of his mandate, Grimani ordered the construction of new suburbs and warehouses, three barracks were also built (they would be finished in September 1704) for the garrison and the officers who were until that moment given lodging among the civilians, which was never very popular with the locals!

Still in April 1703, we are informed by provveditor Pietro Bembo that the drawbridges giving access to the fortress were seriously compromised and needed new timber. Consequently, the drawbridges were not raised anymore during nighttime, to avoid breaking apart. The pyramid-roofed powder magazine, that is nowadays one of the best preserved building in the fortress, was by then almost completed by mason Marinoni⁴⁶.

Antonio Nani visited Modon in February 1704. Like all prior observers, he felt that improving the fortifications on the land front was enough to reinforce considerably the stronghold:

« Il Castello di Terra Ferma fasciato di sufficienti muraglie, e munito di validissime batterie, forti Terrapieni, Piazze basse ai due lati, un Cavaliero, due recinti, e due mano di fosse, à segno che riuscirebbe una Piazza, sopra cui potrebbesi all’occasione assai calcolare, quando vi fosse stabilita qualch’altra fortificatione, e perfettionato al di fuori il suo spalto.⁴⁷ »

The buildings ordered by Dolfin were completed under his two successors

43 National Library of Greece (E. B. E.), Ms. Nani 3916, fol. 235 r – 236 v, letter from Vandeyk dated September 22, 1697.

44 Senato, dispacci, P. T. M., busta 1131, dispaccio n° 63 of April 8, 1697.

45 Eric PINZELLI, "Les forteresses de Morée, projets de restaurations et de démantèlements durant la seconde période vénitienne", in *Thesaurismata*, Venice, 2000, p. 399.

46 E. B. E., Ms Nani 3937, fol. 25, April 26, 1703.

47 E. B. E., Ms. Nani 3917, fol. 61 v.



4. Master Marinoni's powder magazine (1703)

when Foscarin Foscarini served as the local provveditor⁴⁸. In November 1707, Angelo Emo called Modon the “store” of the Province and affirmed: “*L’Arte con moderato dispendio può renderla delle più forti, e meglio difese del Regno*”.

Meanwhile, in July 1706, Francesco Grimani's engineers had proposed a series of interventions for an estimated cost of 55,359 Reals. Necessary works also included repairing the mole and dredging the *mandracchio* (silting was an issue since the foundation of the mole in the 14th Century) which was only 68 cm to 2,40 m deep at the time. The implementation of these projects turned Modon into the third building site of the *Regno di Morea* in terms of financial investment, just after Napoli di Romania (for the city land defenses and the fortress on Mount Palamede the expenses were estimated at 55,435 Reals), while the Castle of the

⁴⁸ E. B. E., Ms. Nani n° 3937, fol. 154 r – 156 v. Foscarini took his functions at Modon in July 1705. On the new works and buildings erected within the fortress, see also Museo Correr, Ms. Morosini Grimani n° 277, ducali of January 7, 1706 and December 21, 1707.

Morea was allocated a staggering 152,015 Reals (it would be re-baptized “*Fortezza nuova di Morea*” for the occasion)⁴⁹.

Grimani recommended the building of a ravelin to the right of the land gate that would cover this access and the drawbridge that led inside the fortress. A half bastion bathed by the water would defend the ditch at the eastern end, since this sector was considered the weakest and easiest to attack. To the Ponant (the West), a tenaille with its covered would be created. In addition, cavaliers needed to be erected inside the fortress. Most important of all, it was imperative to occupy the height that slightly dominated the fortress to the North, to form defenses equipped with cisterns. These defenses would delay the enemy for several months, losing plenty of time and manpower in the attempt, giving time for reinforcements to arrive and relieve the garrison⁵⁰.

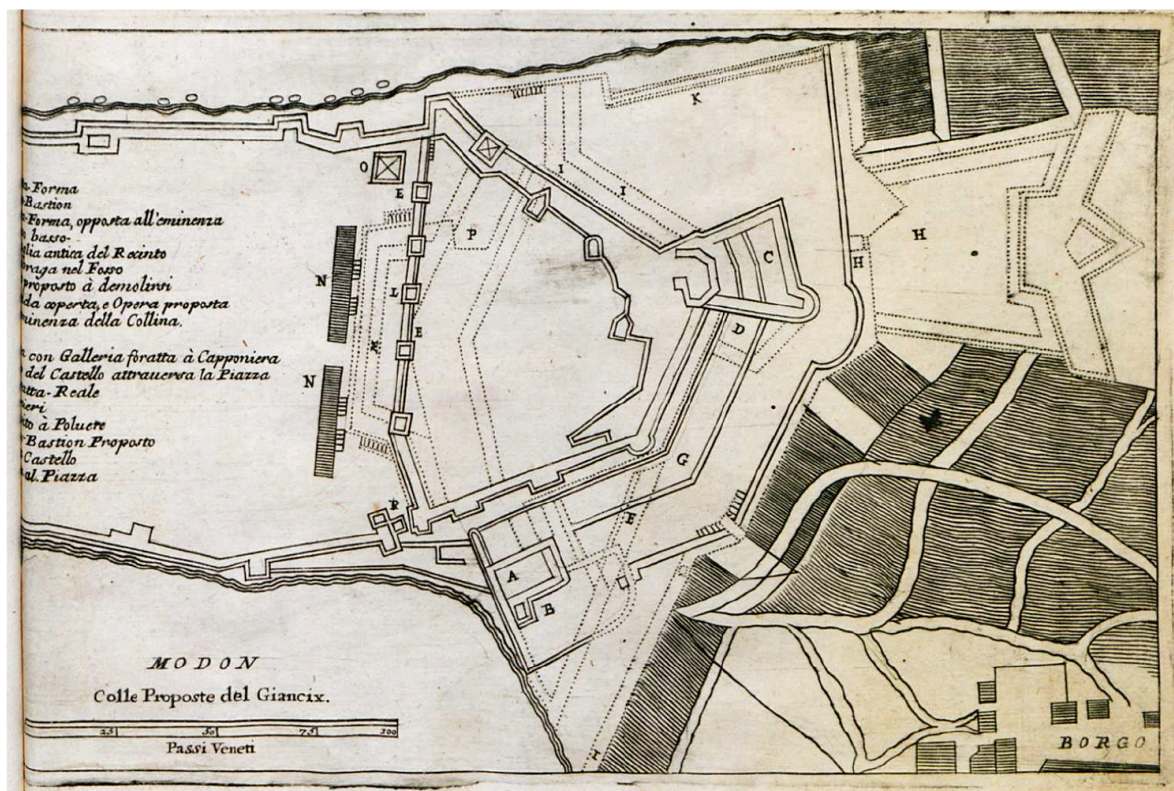
Antonio Jansic’s projects, dating from the same period, were reproduced in Coronelli’s *Teatro della guerra. Morea, Negroponte, & Adiacenze* published in 1708. This demonstrates how the cosmographer had access to military intelligence and was allowed to publish this material. On Jansic map and on the one cited above, the cavalier above the Bembo bastion seems already realized. In Jansic’s design, the height north of the land front would be occupied by a large hornwork, preceded by a ravelin⁵¹. Would Modon finally obtain its long-expected, much needed, state-of-the-art improvements?

On December 7, 1707 although the Senate ruled that Napoli di Romania,

49 Eric PINZELLI, *Les forteresses de Morée*, p. 404-406.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 406, and Museo Correr, Ms. P. D./c 839, filza I (with the cover page damaged by humidity): “1706 li 15 Luglio Libro in Cui Appariscono Li Disegni de[ll]e Piazze Principali DEL REGNO DI MOREA Nè quali si vedono pur li progetti per farvi in ogn’una [nuova] fortificazioni necessarie, con i Calcoli della Spesa; e con la descrizione dell[e] m[ateriali] occorrenti Formato Per Co[m]men[do] dell’Ill[ustrissim]o et Ecc[ellentissim]o [Sig]nor FRANCESCO GRIMANI PROV[VEDITORE] GEN[ERA]L DA MAR CON A[UT]ORITA DI CAP[ITAN] GEN[ERA]L & accompagnato a riflessi Publi[ci] con] Dispaccio di S[ua] E[ccellenza] N[ume]ro 35”. The map of Modon being kept in the Museum’s photographic archive under n° 22186. See also: A. S. V., Archivio privato Grimani dai Servi, busta 38, filza 97 “Filza di carte diverse (Morea) 1694/1708” Fol. 759-760: “1706 li 22 Luglio S. N. Corfù, Nota delle spese, per li ristauri, e Fortifcat[io]ni delle Piazze del Regno di Morea” and “Computo della spesa per demolir diverse Piazze del Regno di Morea”.

51 Vincenzo CORONELLI, *Teatro della guerra. Morea, Negroponte, & Adiacenze*, Venice, 1708.



5. “Modon colle Proposte del Giancix”, Coronelli, *Teatro della Guerra*, 1708

Corinth and the Castle of the Morea were the most important fortresses of the *Regno*, the senators also underlined, once more, the importance of Modon that deserved “*distinta consideratione*”. Nevertheless, it took many more conferences and reports to finally budget the works: on December 14th. 1713, 21,000 Reals were allocated to Modon, while Napoli di Romania’s new fortification on Mount Palamede, designed under Antonio Jansic’s supervision, was allocated three times that amount. Thus, as in Napoli di Romania or the Castle of the Morea, most of the restructuring only took place at the very end of the 2nd Venetian period, under the administrations of Antonio Loredan (1711-1713) and Agostino Sagredo (1713-1714)⁵².

52 Eric PINZELLI, *Les forteresses de Morée*, p. 422-427; Eric PINZELLI, *Venise et l’Empire Ot-*



6. Aerial photography of Modon from the north and labeled, land front, August 2007.

The entire land front was profoundly modified in adequacy with 17th Century military architecture. The new works were described in details by Kevin Andrews who visited most of the fortifications of the Peloponnese during the summers of 1948 to 1951⁵³.

The ditch, in the shape of a wide arc, was reworked and enlarged. Today the ditch is completely dry. Bernard Randolph informs us that it was already the case in the 1670s. As a matter of fact, Modon was never transformed into a peninsula separated by the sea as it was originally intended, following the model of Corfu's old fortress with its *contrafossa* that turned it into an island.

The counterscarp was reconstructed, enlarged where needed, and from East to West, the Venetians built the 7-cannon embrasures bastion "Sant'Antonio" (al-

*to*man, p. 376; Biblioteca Querini Stampalia, classe IV, codice n° 168 (424), *Diario del Senato tenuto da Pietro Garzoni 1693 sino al 1732*, fol. 255 r of June 19, 1714.

⁵³ Kevin ANDREWS, *op. cit.*, p. 58-82.



7. Ditch, faussebraye, Loredan Bastion, December 2018.

so called bastion Loredan since a plaque below a worn-out winged lion of St Mark informs us it was built in 1714 when Antonio Loredan held the position of provveditor general of the Morea)⁵⁴, a flanking platform 100 m away below the massive 1494 Bembo bastion, and a low 4-gun embrasures half bastion which provided an artillery platform built upon 5 vaulted rooms. That work, battered by the waves, sits on the western end of the moat.

Across the ditch, that is at its widest at that point, an outer work with gun embrasures pointing due north, defends the approaches from the rocky sea side and shore. It was accessed by a ramp, from the ditch itself. It marks the western end of the former glacis and the only element that survives. A new monumental baroque gateway was created 35 m north-east from the previous Medieval land gate which disappeared with the enlargement of the moat and the creation of the Loredan bastion.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p. 61-63.



8. Ditch, faussebraye, counterscarp, December 2018.

To multiply the obstacles, a faussebraye had been erected during the XVth Century in the middle of the ditch. It runs parallel to the early Renaissance circuit forming a salient angle. A newly-built counterscarp, hiding an underground corridor, and the covered way with battlements were designed to face attacks from the entire land side. The glacis was re-worked and salient places d'armes added. Today, apart from the work at the western end, it has disappeared completely, buried under modern habitations.

Jansic recommended building a hornwork on the height north of the bastion Bembo in the direction of the Agios Nikolaos hills, but, as always, Sagredo had to postpone such an undertaking for lack of adequate funds. A hornwork had already been considered by Lieutenant General Verneda after the capture of the fortress, as can be verified in an anonymous map of the siege of Modon kept at the Marciana which was labeled in French and was certainly Verneda's own project. Jansic could only acknowledge his former tutor's good judgment.



9. Heights facing the Bembo bastion and the cavalier, July 2015.



10. New works in the western part of the ditch looking due North, March 2018.



11. Outer work at west end of counterscarp, March 2018.

Failure to occupy the hill meant that the glacis, and the entire land side part of the fortress, would still be exposed to direct shots from batteries posted on higher grounds, a position occupied by the Venetians during the siege of 1686. The cavalier above the Bembo bastion, also from that period, was not elevated enough. Since the 1680s, there was also the new threat represented by mortars firing explosive shells. Considering the very short period during which the new works had been erected, much had been done. However, when the Turks returned in the summer of 1715, the building campaign was far from complete!

As for the garrison, governor Giuseppe Fracchia (who died in the summer of 1707) informs us that there were 138 soldiers in June 1705, while in February 1707 that number had dropped to only 74 men. A year later, the garrison was composed of 114 soldiers from the companies of Captains Carl'Antonio Balugani and Giovanni Battista Conti⁵⁵. Some of these soldiers had to be detached to the salines which had been in exploitation since the first Venetian occupation

⁵⁵ A. S. V., Archivio privato Grimani dai Servi, busta 38, filza 97, fol. 705.

and continued thereafter under the Ottomans (they were mentioned in the *kanun-names* of Bayezid II and Kanunî Sultan Süleyman)⁵⁶.

In 1700, the huge fortress was defended by only 48 guns (with as many as 16 different calibers) and truck carriages apparently in a degraded state. The storehouses held 110 barrels of black powder in reserve, a very small quantity when compared to the 8,000 barrels kept in the warehouses of Napoli di Romania at the same period⁵⁷.

Siege and Capture of Modon by the Ottomans

After taking Napoli di Romania on July 20th, the sack of the capital and massacre of the population kept the Turks busy for a while. The huge Grand Vizier's army did not set out in the direction of Modon until the 4th of August. On the 7th of August, the Grand Vizier's troops reached Leondari. On the 9th, they passed near Androussa and Nissi (the new Messene) where they could observe the new buildings intended for the lodging of the dragoons; and on the 11th, they arrived in sight of Modon⁵⁸.

Vincenzo Pasta, a famous and respected veteran of the previous war, was in charge of the defense as provveditor extraordinary of Morea, with extended responsibilities for the province of Messenia. The gallant Pasta, who had dedicated his existence to the service of the Venetian state, embodied the patrician spirit of the time. From the onset of the war in Morea, Pasta had served onboard the fleet where his courage earned him fame. In 1690, Girolamo Cornaro appointed him provveditor of Zarnata. While in charge of the fortress of Spinalonga afterwards, he rebuffed French consul Fabre who attempted to bribe him to hand over the Cretan fortress to the Turks.

As a ship's governor, even when he fell seriously ill, he refused to retire. Pasta was critically wounded by a gunshot to the chest on the 50-gun *San Domenico* during the second naval battle of Chios in September 1695, but remained in command, gaining the admiration of his fellow companions and his crew. In 1696, Pasta was at the head of a naval convoy towards the Morea when he was appoint-

56 Evangelia BALTA and Fehmi YILMAZ, "Salinas and salt in Greek lands during the Ottoman period" in: *Tuz Kitabı* (eds) Emine Gürsoy Naskali, Mesut Şen, Istanbul, 2004, p. 251-253.

57 B.M.C., Morosini Grimani, busta 530, filza IV.

58 Eric PINZELLI, *Venise et l'Empire Ottoman*, p. 429.

ed provveditor extraordinary of Corinth by Daniel Dolfin in May 1701, a position he held until September 1703. Elected provveditor of the province of Romania in March 1705, he went on to be serve successively in Laconia and Achaia. When the threats of an Ottoman invasion were becoming more tangible, although freed from his duties, Pasta nonetheless decided to remain in Morea and fight as a simple volunteer. Soon after, the Senate appointed him provveditor extraordinary of the entire Morea, while Daniel Dolfin entrusted him with Messenia in particular⁵⁹.

To assist him, Pasta could rely on the experience of Nuzio Querini and Marco Venier, respectively provveditor and rector of the province, as well as veterans such as the knight of Malta Luigi Cittadella⁶⁰ and Sergeant General Jansic. Daniel Balbi, a Venetian nobleman, also volunteered to defend the place at the head of handful of inhabitants from Cerigo and Zante. The Venetian fleet had abandoned Modon to its fate, the garrison only numbered 700 men, but Pasta and Balbi, whose patriotism was indisputable, were determined to resist and hold as long as possible.

Pasta therefore rejected the ultimatum of the Turks, after buying twenty-four hours of precious time. As a result, beylerbey of Rumelia Sari Ahmed Pasha ordered the opening of the trench on the night of August 12th to 13th. Due to the abundant work force available to the Turks, the next morning the lines were already at musket range of the glacis.

From the onset, there was groaning and mutiny within the ranks of the garrison. Officers and soldiers alike, mostly new recruits from Western Europe, were wondering why they were being dragged to a certain death. Morale was extremely low. If Napoli di Romania, previously considered impregnable, had fallen in just nine days, how long could they hope to hold Modon with half the number of men?

Vincenzo Pasta looked after everything, but on the evening of the 14th, he suffered a serious injury, a bullet wound to the head. With the rumor of his death spreading like wildfire, the patrician had to be carried to the piazza d'armi to reassure the troops. That same day, the Venetian fleet reappeared, which gave some measure of hope to the defenders. Daniel Dolfin evacuated the women and the

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

⁶⁰ Lieutenant general Francesco Luigi Cittadella was a veteran of the War of Morea and first governor of Corinth in 1687. See Alessandro LOCATELLI, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

children, but left the following day. “He remained on the side, in the distance, like a fugitive,” said of him Dioketes⁶¹. *Kapudan Pasha* Canım Hoca Mehmed Pasha arrived a few hours later and dropped anchor in the vast natural harbor of Modon.

On the evening of the 16th, Jansic learned that some of the troops had mutinied on the *piazza d’armi*: a corporal from Lieutenant-Colonel Fortis’s company was trying to persuade the men to capitulate on the spot. Vincenzo Pasta stooped up and attempted to reinstate discipline with the help of sergeant general Jansic. Both were taken hostage by the mutineers, and were only saved by the intervention of Chancellor Marco Trompetti and Daniel Balbi’s volunteers. At the San Marco door, Lieutenant General Cittadella had also repressed another revolt. However, by then, most of the officers begged Pasta to raise the white flag declaring that they preferred to become slaves of the Turks rather than being slaughtered by their own soldiers!

Count Alvisè Salvatico and Major Zorzi Gaster were delegated to negotiate with the Turks. Since the grand vizier was well aware of the deleterious situation inside the fortress, he rebuffed any type of truce, and demanded instead that the Venetians surrender their arms unconditionally. On hearing this, two captains of the garrison deserted, followed by a large number of soldiers who climbed down the walls. A white flag was hoisted on the *Castel da Mar* without permission, and Jansic could only muster 70 soldiers still loyal on the *piazza d’armi* with Captain De Buisson and Lieutenant Pizzamano. The Turks rushed in from literally everywhere, without encountering resistance. Jansic retreated to the sea gate where he was reunited with Cittadella, but the resistance was short-lived: they were captured and on August 17, at 14:00, the Turks were masters of Modon⁶².

Jansic was captured by an officer of the janissaries and brought him before the beylerbey who asked him why he had taken so long to surrender. To which the sergeant general boldly replied that he only “regretted not having served his prince better”.

Pasta and Balbi had been collected on dinghies sent by Canım Hoca. The *Kapudan Pasha*, who had served on Vincenzo Pasta’s galley after his capture at Coron in 1685 had not forgotten the human treatment he had received from the

61 Constantin DIOKETES, *Chronique de l’Expédition des Turcs en Morée 1715*, edition Nicolas Iorga, Bucharest, 1915., p. 185-190.

62 A. S. V., Dispacci, P. T. M. 960, dispaccio n° 96 of 1st December 1715.

patrician decades earlier. Feeling obligated, he took Pasta and other Venetians under his protection. Nevertheless, the Grand Vizier later ordered Pasta and thirteen other officers to be tied by the neck, and had them sent to Istanbul by sea. On their arrival in the Ottoman capital, they were locked up at the Seven Towers. Old Lieutenant General Cittadella would not survive his captivity⁶³.

Conclusion

News of the losses of Modon and the Castle of Morea reached the Venetian Senate on the 26th of September. On September 7th, the garrison of Malvasia surrendered without a fight to the *Kapudan Pasha*. In only 78 days, Venice had lost the entire Peloponnese⁶⁴.

Contrary to the catastrophic loss of Cyprus in 1571, where at least Famagosta had bravely resisted for almost a year, the Morea fell swiftly to the Turks, without any glory. Although the steadfast resistance offered by the formidable new fortress at Corfu saved the remnants of the Venetian Stato da Mar in the Ionian islands, Prince Eugene's victory at Petrovaradin was the truly decisive act of the campaign.

63 Benjamin BRUE, *Journal de la campagne que le Grand Vizir Ali Pacha a faite en 1715*, Edition George Finlay, Paris, 1870, p. 45-50; Constantin DIOKETES, *op. cit.*, p. 198-200; Samuel ROMANIN, *op. cit.*, vol. VIII, p. 32; Joseph VON HAMMER PURGSTALL, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, Paris, 1844., vol. III, p. 356-357; Thomas AMAULRY, *Campagnes de M. le Prince Eugène en Hongrie et des généraux vénitiens dans la Morée*, Lyon, 1718, p. 235; George FINLAY, *op. cit.*, p. 224-225; Kenneth SETTON, *op. cit.*, p. 432; Dionysios HATZOPOULOS, *La dernière guerre entre la République de Venise et l'empire ottoman (1714-1718)*, Montréal, 1999, p. 82-88. In the aftermath, Daniel Dolfin praised the courage demonstrated by Jansic, Balbi and above all Pasta, during the siege and later during their tough detention at Yedikule: «V.V.E.E vi rileveranno altrettanta costanza, valor, e vigilanza in tutti quei degni Rappresentanti et egualmente in ser Daniel Balbi, entrato volontario in quell'arduo impegno, e nel medesimo Giansix, quanta codardia nella maggior parte degl'Offitiali, fellonia, et amutinamento in quasi tutta la militia di quel Presidio. E testimonio dell'intrepidezza del N. H. Proveditor Estrordinario Pasta la ferita d'archebuggio, che lo colpi in fronte nel primo giorno dell'attacco, non ostante la quale mai cessò dall'essere personalmente dov'era maggior il pericolo, e dove più lo richiedevano le fatali contingenze, che l'attorniarono, rendendosi ben meritevole dei più generosi testimonij della Publica gratitudine. Egli mette in dubbio la sua salute, mentre non hà forse quella cura, che vaglia à ricuperarlo, se pur al pari della ferita non lo tormenta assieme con tutti gl'altri, l'aspro et ... trattamento, e l'afflittione della schiavitù» (A. S. V., Senato, dispacci, P. T. M, busta n° 960, dispaccio n° 96 from 1st December 1715).

64 Eric PINZELLI, *Venise et l'Empire Ottoman*, p. 431.



12. “Place de Modon” by Augustin François Lemaître in Blouet’s *Expédition Scientifique de Morée*, Paris, 1831-1838.

The Serenissima would never recover from this complete military collapse. According to Jacques Nicolas Bellin, two decades later, the fortifications of Modon were already crumbling. The broken doors had not been repaired since the siege, there were less and less inhabitants. The dismal situation was confirmed before the Greek Revolution by Chateaubriand, who observed with melancholy the absolute derelict state of the fortress and the city inside:

«Modon ne présente aux regards qu’une ville du moyen âge, entourée de fortifications gothiques, à moitié tombantes. Pas un bateau dans le port; pas un homme sur la rive: partout le silence, l’abandon et l’oubli»⁶⁵.

Photographs are from the author, unless indicated otherwise.

⁶⁵ François-René de CHATEAUBRIAND, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

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