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## A Letter by Sultan Mehmet III to King Sigismund III in Polish Transcription

The original letter by Sultan Mehmet III to king Sigismund III containing a delivery order of a new peace treaty to the Polish envoy Szczęsny Herbut, disappeared. In the National Archives in Warsaw there are two transcriptions in Latin characters — two versions of the mentioned Turkish letter<sup>1</sup>. The original Turkish document was made out in the year 1598<sup>2</sup>; the transcriptions were made out afterwards. The first text in transcription (No. 523), entitled "Extract from the imperial transcript", contains a full summary of the original Turkish letter. The other text in transcription (No. 524) is much shorter than the first one; it is an adapted and a simplified version of the original document, written in a colloquial language. The official expressions were limited to some necessary ones. As far as some phonetic and grammar features are concerned these transcriptions vary quite considerably. The shorter version shall be studied in this paper from a linguistic point of view.

The Turkish letter discussed preceded the peace and alliance treaty between Poland and Turkey<sup>3</sup>; it contained some main points of the treaty terms which were recapitulated in these extracts. The author of the shorter transcription and most probably the author of the extract, was the court interpreter Dawid Serebkowicz, an Armenian born. He prepared also a transcription in Armenian characters of the shorter text which he entitled: "Name. Translated from Arabic [sic] into Turkish

<sup>1</sup> Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, AKW, Dz. turecki, teczka 281, nr 523, 524 (photos "1" and "2").

<sup>2</sup> The date 4.VIII.1598 is given by Z. Abrahamowicz, see note 3.

<sup>3</sup> Z. Abrahamowicz, *Katalog dokumentów tureckich*. T. I, cz. 1, Warszawa 1959, pp. 232—233 (No. 241).

