



ANGIOLELLO, GIOVANNI MARIA

ANGIOLELLO (or **DEGLI ANGIOLELLO**), GIOVANNI MARIA (1451-ca. 1525), Venetian adventurer, merchant, and author of an important historical report on the Aq Qoyunlū and early Safavid Persia. Angiolello's biography and literary works give rise to much controversy, since few points are definite. Of noble family, he took part as a youth in the defense of Negroponte, besieged by the Ottoman emperor Mehmed II. In the summer of 875/1470 he was captured and enslaved by the Turks, then transferred to Constantinople. In 877/1472 he was assigned to Moṣṭafā Čelebī, the Sultan's second son and commander of the Ottoman troops in the war against the Aq Qoyunlū Uzun Ḥasan (q.v.), who at that time was allied with the Venetian Republic. After the death of Moṣṭafā Čelebī (1474), Angiolello became a *daftardār* (treasurer) of Mehmed II and was among the officers of his suite in the palace of Constantinople and on various military campaigns. He also entered the service of the following sultan, Bāyazīd II. After about 1483 Angiolello's career is obscure. It is certain that he came back to his home town Vi cenza, married and became a functionary; he possibly had two missions (perhaps for the Venetian Republic) or stayed (as an agent or merchant) in Persia around 1482 (after Sultan Mehmed's death) and then in between 1499 and 1515.

The main work attributed to Angiolello is the so-called *Historia turchesca* (Turkish history) a noteworthy source on the Ottoman history. A considerable part of it is the *Breve narratione della vita et fatti del signor Ussuncassano* (A



brief narrative of the life and facts of the sovereign Uzun Ḥasan) that first was published in Vicenza by the printer Leonard from Basel (October, 1490; no surviving copy), then by G. B. Ramusio in the second volume of his famous collection of *Navigazioni et Viaggi* (Venice, 1559) together with a continuation of the *Narrative* dealing with Persian history until the beginning of Shah Ṭahmāsp's reign (930/1524). There is a question of the narrative's authenticity, although it is clearly a firsthand chronicle, and no modern edition of it has been made. The first section seems partly founded on Giosafat Barbaro's account of his own mission to Persia (first published in Venice, 1487), and the text and history of the second section remain to be verified critically.

The *Narrative* is essentially a first person chronicle of the political and military events in Persia from 1467 to 1524, and particularly a report of the Turkish-Persian wars. It depicts Uzun Ḥasan and his family; the campaign of Caramania (872-78/1467-73) against the Ottomans, which became a defeat of the Aq Qoyunlū forces; the Turkish counteroffensive (879/1474), in which the author took part (a detailed description of the two opposing armies is given); the Persian campaign in Georgia (882-85/1477-80), and Uzun Ḥasan's death (882/1478). The second section, in twenty-three chapters, concerns the beginnings of the Safavid rise to power: Ya'qūb Pādšāh Sultan's succession to Uzun Ḥasan; the struggle of Shaikh Ḥaydar and his "Sofians" against Rostam; Shaikh Ḥaydar's death; the birth, education, character, and rise of Esmā'īl; his conquest of Iraq (906-09/1500-03) and subsequent campaigns against Ottomans and Uzbeks (911-21/1505-15); his campaign in Šīrvān and conquest of Šamākī (916/1510); and the Ottoman campaign of Egypt and conquest of Cairo (922-23/1516-17). The report concludes with a final (and apocryphal?) note on the death of the Sophy (i.e., Shah Esmā'īl I 930/1524) and the accession of Ṭahmāsp. Paolo Giovio used the *Narrative* as a source for the portraits of these two Safavid kings in his biographical collection *Gli elogi, vite brevemente scritte d'uomini illustri*, Venice, 1559.

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