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A Treaty of Narratives: Friendship, Gifts, and Diplomatic History in the British Capitulations of 1641

Michael Talbot*

Anlatıların Antlaşması: 1641 İngiliz Ahdnamesi'nde Dostluk, Pişkeş, ve Diplomasi Tarihi

Öz ■ Bu makale şimdiye kadar incelenmemiş 1641 yılında İngilizlere verilen ahdname-i hümayunun Osmanlıca metnini incelenmektedir. Osmanlı-İngiliz ticareti ve diplomatik nüfuz alanlarını düzenleyen maddeleri içermenin yanısıra, kapitülasyonlar diplomatik karşılaşmaların ve uygulamaların resmi kaydını ortaya koyan bir anlatıyı da barındırmaktaydı. Sultan'ın dostluğundan yararlanmak için hediyeler ve kraldan mektup getirmenin öneminin altını çizmek suretiyle, tarihsel anlatının ahdname metnine dahil edilmesi, Sultan'ı saltanat hiyerarşisinin tepesinde konumlandıran Osmanlı dünya görüşünü göstermekle kalmamakta, aynı zamanda kadim dostluk yoluyla ittifak retorüğünü güçlendiren katmanlı bir öncelik anlatısı yaratmaktadır. Tarihsel anlatıların tam tercümelerini zeylde vermek suretiyle bu ahdnamenin Osmanlıca ve Türkçe versiyonlarını inceleyen makalemiz, Osmanlı ahdnamelerini sadece tarihsel antlaşmalar değil, aynı zamanda tarihsel metinler olarak da görmek gerektiğini savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kapitülasyonlar, Ahdname, Osmanlı-İngiliz ilişkileri, tarihsel anlatılar, diplomasi

Introduction

The premise of the workshop held at the University of St Andrews in 2014 on Ottoman-European diplomacy was to explore diplomacy through contacts, encounters, and practices. One key source for considering these categories of analysis

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are the imperial Capitulations – *‘ahdnāme-i hümayūn* – granted to foreign states. These provided fundamental commercial privileges to foreign merchants, ensured significant legal and consular jurisdictions for European ambassadors and consuls, and wide-ranging rights and exemptions for those under their protection. These crucial legal and political texts have received significant scholarly attention and, as more examples are examined and compared, our understanding of the textual basis of the practice and form of diplomatic and commercial relations in the Ottoman Empire before the nineteenth century increases.¹ There is still much work to be done on later Capitulations, particularly on comparative work and notably on those treaties renewed and newly granted – for instance to Belgium, Sardinia, and a number of states in the German *Zollverein* (customs union) – in the aftermath

1 The literature on the Capitulations is extensive, and the following are only a few of the important studies on this subject: Hans Theunissen, ‘Ottoman-Venetian diplomatics: The ‘Ahd-Names. The historical background and the development of a category of political-commercial instruments together with an annotated edition of a corpus of relevant documents’, *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies* 1:2 (1998), 1-698; Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations, 15th-18th Centuries: An Annotated Edition of ‘Ahdnames and Other Documents* (Leiden, 2000); ‘The Ottoman Capitulations: Text and Context’, ed. Maurits van den Boogert, *Oriente Moderno* 22:3 (2003), particularly Alexander de Groot, ‘The historical development of the capitulatory regime in the Ottoman Middle East from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries’, 575-604; Maurits van den Boogert, *The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System: Qadis, Consuls, and Beratis in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, 2005), especially chapter 1; Halil İnalcık, ‘İmtiyâzât’ in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2, vol. 3, 1185-1189; Gilles Veinstein, ‘Les Capitulations franco-ottomanes de 1536 sont-elles encore controversables?’ in *Living in the Ottoman Ecumenical Community: Essays in Honour of Suraiya Faroqhi*, eds. Vera Constantini & Markus Koller (Leiden, 2008), 71-88; Gilles Veinstein, ‘Le sheikh ul-Islâm et l’ambassadeur: De l’autorité religieuse à la diplomatie’, in *L’autorité religieuse et ses limites en terres d’islam: Approches historiques et anthropologiques*, eds. Nathalie Clayer, Alexander Papas & Benoît Fliche (Leiden, 2013), 55-68; Bülent Arı, ‘The first Dutch ambassador in Istanbul: Corenlis Haga and the Dutch Capitulations of 1612’, Ph.D thesis, Bilkent Üniversitesi, 2012; Edhem Eldem, ‘Capitulations and western trade’ in *The Cambridge History of Turkey. Volume 3: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Cambridge, 2006), 283-335; Viorel Panaite, ‘French Capitulations and consular jurisdiction in Egypt and Aleppo in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries’ in *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History*, ed. Pascal Firges, Tobias Graf, Christian Roth & Gülay Tulasoglu (Leiden, 2014), 71-87; Gérard Poumarède, ‘Négociers près la Sublime Porte: Jalons pour une nouvelle histoire des capitulations franco-ottomanes’ in *L’invention de la diplomatie: Moyen âge à temps modernes*, ed. Lucien Bély (Paris, 1998) 71-85; Güneş Işıksel, ‘II. Selim’den III. Selim’e Osmanlı Diplomasisi: Birkaç Saptama’ in *Nizâm-ı Kadim’den Nizâm-ı Cedid’e: III. Selim ve Dönemi*, ed. Seyfi Kenan (Istanbul, 2010), 315-338.

of the Treaty of Baltılimanı of 1838.² Nonetheless, bit by bit, article by article, a clearer picture is being revealed of the complex intertextuality and competing provisions of this large corpus of commercial and political agreements.

Whilst the contents and contexts of these Capitulations are an important tool in making sense of Ottoman-European relations in the early modern period, particularly when it comes to trade, they are also historical texts, conscious of their own part in shaping those relations. In particular, the British Capitulations up to 1675 provide a running narrative of the history of relations between the two states in a way not found in many of the other treaties with foreign powers. Why this should be is unclear from a documentary perspective, and it would be particularly helpful to know more about the process of writing the Capitulations in terms of the identity of the authors. There is no similar narrative provided in either the French (up to 1740) or Dutch (up to 1680) Capitulations, and I can find no articulated explanation in either the archives or the chronicle record as to why the British should be different in this respect. Nonetheless, I contend that the British Capitulations demonstrate that we should think about these texts not just as historical treaties, but as historical narratives. In this paper, I will examine the Ottoman text of the Capitulations granted to the British in 1641, the cumulative result of the first formative decades of relations between London and Istanbul. Between the all-important provisions governing customs duties, commercial freedoms, and consular jurisdiction, the Ottoman authors of these treaties also provided a series of historical episodes that gave weight to arguments of precedent, and provided a rhetorical basis for practices such as gift-giving and court ceremonial. In this sense, we might apply the premise explored in Erdem Çıpa and Emine Fetvacı's edited volume on Ottoman historical writing – 'the role of historiography in fashioning Ottoman identity and institutionalising the dynastic state structure' – seeing the capitulatory texts such as this as part of a wider corpus of literature exploring, defining, and shaping the Ottoman state's view of its place in the world.³ More than this, by recording and repeating diplomatic practices surrounding the arrival of ambassadors, the Capitulations in effect gave the observation of practices such as gift-giving equal importance to fundamental articles guaranteeing freedom of trade and movement.

2 Ali İhsan Bağış, *Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayri Müslimler: Kapitülasyonlar, Avrupa Tüccarları, Beratlı Tüccarlar, Hayriye Tüccarları, 1750-1839* (Ankara, 1983);

3 H. Erdem Çıpa & Emine Fetvacı, 'Preface' in *Writing History at the Ottoman Court; Editing the Past, Fashioning the Future*, eds. H. Erdem Çıpa & Emine Fetvacı (Bloomington, 2013), vii-xii at ix.

Ensuring *dostluk*: Friendship and gifts in capitulatory texts

The British *‘ahdnāme-i hümāyūn* are, in a number of respects, unlike any of the others granted by the Ottoman state to European powers in terms of the historical narrative that they provide. However, they share the same broad content of the other Capitulations granted between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in setting the freedoms, restrictions, rights, and prohibitions that regulated trade at a number of levels, including governing disputes, customs duties, maritime practices, and diplomatic rights. Although, as Hans Theunissen has argued in his extensive examination of the Capitulations, a standardised form of diplomatic language began to emerge from the later sixteenth century, this did not mean that there were not differences in the details of provisions themselves.⁴ These commercial treaties, as opposed to those that formally ended wars, are an important source not just on changing trends in commerce and developing legal authorities among the *müstemin* (protected foreigners) in the Ottoman Empire, but also present a narrative history of Ottoman foreign relations prior to the development of bilateral diplomacy in the later eighteenth century. These narratives began by typically recording the monarch of a European power seeking friendship with the Ottoman sultan and sending an ambassador to secure it. In a number of these treaties, that is about as detailed as the narrative gets. In part, this is because they were the formative treaties, and when no subsequent additions were granted to particular states, like the Two Sicilies or Denmark, there was no need or opportunity to develop the historical narrative. In such treaties, practices that we find as central features in the British Capitulations, particularly descriptions of the ambassador presenting gifts, get little or no mention. What is key to all of the treaties, however, is the importance of friendship. As Güneş Işıksel has argued in his examination of Ottoman foreign policy in the later sixteenth century, ‘peace and stability applied to international relations, that is to say to the universal order, are frequently presented as the ultimate political objective’ in Ottoman royal letters and treaties.⁵ Without friendship there could be no peace; but without gifts and royal letters, there could be no friendship.

In some Capitulations and peace treaties, gifts relating to friendship are the subject of entire clauses, although with a different sort of tone presented between the Ottoman and European texts. For instance, in the Treaty of Zitvatoruk

4 Theunissen, ‘Ottoman-Venetian diplomatics’, 190-192, 300-309.

5 Güneş Işıksel, ‘La politique étrangère ottomane dans la seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle: le cas du règne de Selīm II (1566-1574)’, Ph.D thesis, EHESS, 2012, 91, and *passim*.

between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans in 1606, the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth articles concerned the exchange of presents as part of the maintenance of peace and friendship:

Latin text:

10. That for our part an ambassador is to be sent with gifts to the Turkish Emperor and the great Murat Pasha Zerdar, and he is also to send his ambassador to our most esteemed Archduke Matthias, our most gracious lord, with gifts. And when our ambassador arrives at Constantinople in order to ratify the peace, as well as the ambassador sent thence by the Turkish Emperor to our [city of] Prague, he will come with a greater number of gifts than has been the usual custom.⁶

11. That now the ambassador of His Caesarean Majesty promises to bring to Constantinople a gift with the value of two-hundred thousand florins, once and for all.⁷

12. That the peace will last for twenty years, calculated from the first of January to future years, and after three years both [parties] will reciprocally [send] ambassadors with gifts, without obligation, and nominate gifts of their own volition and choice [...]⁸

Ottoman Turkish text:

And after sending tributary presents to our Lofty Porte, nothing further may be demanded for three years after the writing [of the treaty at] the River Zitava. Three years from that date, tributary presents are to be dispatched for the requirements of friendship between the two [parties], with suitable presents to be sent together with a letter-bearing ambassador to our Exalted Footstool.⁹

6 *Treaties between Turkey and Foreign Powers* (London, 1855), 3. 'Ut ex nostra parte mittatur legatus cum muneribus ad Imperatorem Turcarum, et magnificus Murath Bassa Zerdar mittat etiam legatum suum ad nostrum Serenissimum Archi-Ducem Matthiam, dominum nostrum benignissimum, cum muneribus; et quando nostri legati Constantinopolim venerint, ad ratificationem pacis, inde quoque mittat Turcarum Imperator ad nostrum Pragam legatum cum maioribus muneribus quam antea solitum erat.'

7 *Treaties between Turkey and Foreign Powers*, 3. 'Ut nunc legatus suæ maiestatis Cæsaræ adferat Constantinopolim munus valoris ducentorum millium florenorum iuxta promissum, semel pro semper.'

8 *Treaties between Turkey and Foreign Powers*, 4. 'Ut pax duret per annos xx, computando à primo ianuarii future anni, et post triennium mittat uterque imperator legatos cum muneribus ad invicem sine obligatione et nomine munerum, ad libitum cuiusque et arbitrium suum [...]'

9 Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (BOA), Düvel-i Ecnebiye Defterleri (A.DVN.DVE.d 57/1), fol. 6. 'Ve Südde-i Vâlâmıza gönderilen pîşkeşlerden sonra Jitve Boğazı'nda yazılan târihden üç yıla

As with most of the Ottoman treaties of whatever form, there are substantial differences in tone and content. The Habsburg text focuses on detail and reciprocity, noting the precise value of the tributary gift, and emphasising that the dispatch of gifts would be reciprocal (*invicem*) between two emperors, whilst the Ottoman text simply lays out the three-year grace period following the signing of the treaty, completely ignoring any notion of reciprocity. Indeed, the emphasis on the resumption of regular tributary gifts for ‘the friendship between the two [parties]’ (*mâbeynde olan dostluk üzere*) indicates a completely different understanding to the *laissez-faire* attitude expressed in the Latin text that speaks of the two parties ‘nominating gifts of their own volition and choice’ (*nomine munerum ad libitum cuiusque et arbitrium suum*). For the Ottomans, gifts were a central expression of the key concept of *dostluk*, friendship, between themselves and any other contracting parties. Unlike gifts given to receive or renew Capitulations, peace treaty gift giving was often reciprocal. Almost a century after Zitvatoruk, the language used seems to have converged somewhat, such as in the Treaty of Passarowitz of 1718, where the Latin text of the seventeenth article spoke of the voluntary giving of gifts as a sign of friendship (*in signum amicitiae spontaneum munus*), complementing the declaration in the Ottoman text that ambassadors will be dispatched ‘with gifts appropriate to the glory of each side as a sign of friendship of their own free-will’ (*dostluk nişanesi için hüsn-ü ihtiyâra tâlik her tarafın şânına lâyık hedâyâ ile*).¹⁰

Gifts given for Capitulations, however, were generally one way, European to Ottoman. Ambassadors would receive *hîlâts*, robes of honour, at their first audiences with the grand vizier and sultan, but the bulk of gifts were the kaftans, fabrics, timepieces, and jewellery given to Ottoman officials and their retinues. However, there was little mention of the practice of giving gifts in the Habsburg Capitulations of 1718, nor in the additions of 1784, and the same goes for the Capitulations of the Two Sicilies in 1740, of Tuscany in 1747, of Denmark in 1756, and those of Spain in 1782. This is not to say that gifts played no role in the practice of these relations – indeed, for example, one of the first acts of the Spanish after their Capitulations were granted was to dispatch a ship with the king’s presents to the sultan – but that it was not seen as necessary to regulate these gift-giving practices within the treaty itself.¹¹ More important was the idea

değın nesne taleb olunmaya üç yıl soñıra irsâl olunacak pışkeş olageldiğı üzere mâbeynde olan dostluk muķtezâsınca münâsib olan hedâyâ be-nâm elçiler ile ‘atebe-i ‘âliyemize göndereler.’

10 *Treaties between Turkey and Foreign Powers*, 75-76; BOA, A.DVN.DVE.d 57/1, fol. 60.

11 Hüseyin Serdar Tabakoğlu, ‘The re-establishment of Ottoman-Spanish relations in 1782’, *Turkish Studies / Türkoloji Araştırmaları* 2/3 (2007), 496-524 at 518-519.

of friendship as a key part of the opening narratives of these treaties, with the Spanish text of the Capitulations referring specifically to establishing a peace ‘in the form and manner that the other friendly powers enjoy’ (*en la forma y norma que la gozan las otras potencias amigas*).¹² As part of a commitment to that friendship, in the majority of the texts gifts appear only in their exemption from being subject to Ottoman taxes. The tenth article of the Swedish Capitulations of 1737, for example, stipulates only that ‘customs duties and taxes will not be demanded from the gifts and clothes brought by the Swedish ambassador’, with a close similarity in the Ottoman Turkish and Latin texts (*İsveç elçisiniñ getirdikleri hedâyâ ve libâslarından gümrük ve bâc taleb olunmaya / Et rebus legati Sueciae munerum gratia allatis, ac vestimentis eiusdem, nec telonium, nec datum, Bazz dictum exigatur*).¹³ The same prohibition was included in the second article of the Prussian Capitulations of 1761 (*l’ambassadeur de Prussia per quelle robbe, abiti, e cose appartenenti alla sua persona e per i suoi regali, non sia ricercato di dritta di dogana nè dazio*).¹⁴ It would seem that this provision has its roots in the French Capitulations of 1604, with the twenty-first article stating ‘that the materials that the ambassadors of the aforementioned emperor [of France] residing at our Porte bring for their own use and for presents shall not be subject to any imposition or tax’ (*que les estoffes que les ambassadeurs d’iceluy empereur residens à nostre Porte serôt venir pour leur usage et presens; ne soient subjectes à aucunes daces ou impôts*), with the Ottoman text specifically listing ‘their presents, clothes, food, and drink’ as being exempt from customs duties and taxes (*ve hedâyâ ve libâsları ve me’kûlât ve meşrûbâtları mühimmi içün aqçeleriyle getirdikleri nesnelerden gümrük ve bâc taleb*

12 G.F. Martens, *Recueil des principaux traités d’alliance, de paix, de trêve, de neutralité, de commerce, de limites, d’échange &c. conclus par les puissances de l’Europe tant entre elles qu’avec les puissances et états dans d’autres parties du monde* (Gottingue, 1791), vol. 2, 218. Martens gives the German translation as ‘wie ihn andere freundschaftliche Mächte genießen’; I have not seen the original Ottoman text, but I imagine it would be very similar to the first agreements of the British Capitulations, that speaks of ‘ve sâ’ir ‘atebe-’i ‘aliyeme ‘arż-ı ihtîşâş eyleyen kralar ile mâbeynde mün‘akid olan müvâlât ve müşâfât muktezâsınca’.

13 BOA, A.DVN.DVE 49/1, fol. 22; F.A.W. Wenck, *Codex Iuris Gentium Recentissimi* (Leipzig, 1781), vol. 1, 484. It is interesting to note the translation of the Ottoman term *bâc* (transliterated in the Latin text as *Bazz*) as *datum* – a donative – when the Ottoman word refers to a particular form of taxation. It would be interesting to see how the Swedish text, also in Wenck’s collection, compares, but this is a language that is beyond my reach. The word that seems best to correspond is ‘afgiften’, which, from a search in an eighteenth-century dictionary, is given the definition of ‘tribute’, or ‘duty’: Jacobus Serenius, *Dictionarium Suethico-Anglo-Latinum* (Stockholm, 1741).

14 Wenck, *Codex*, vol. 3, 273.

olunmaya), confirmed subsequently in the new Capitulations of 1673 and 1740.¹⁵ This was followed by a similar article in the Dutch Capitulations of 1612, with the additional mentioning of two other exempted taxes – *reft* (a sort of departure tax) and *kaşşābīye* (a tax on animals or meat) – again carried over to their renewed treaty in 1680.¹⁶

A further instruction about gifts came with the French Capitulations of 1673 relating to encounters between the Ottoman navy and French ships, with the French text instructing that ‘we desire also that [Ottoman galleys] should in no case take young children by force, or similar things, under the pretext of a gift’ (*nous voulons aussi qu’ils ne puissent point prendre par force de jeunes enfants, et autres choses semblables, sous prétexte de présent*), and the Ottoman text similarly cautioning that ‘if [the French] do not give gifts by their own volition, [Ottoman subjects] may not commit an attack by taking weapons, goods, young boys, and other things’ (*mādām ki kendü rızālarıyla hediye vermeyeler cebren âlet ve esbābların ve emred oğlanların ve gayrī nesnelerin alub te’addī itmeyeler*).¹⁷ The same article appears, almost verbatim, in the Dutch Capitulations of 1612 and 1680.¹⁸ The prohibition on Ottoman naval personnel demanding gifts indicates another form of practice, similar to the provisions stopping taxation on gifts and personal goods brought by ambassadors, that damaged the link between *hediye* and *dostluk*, gift and friendship.

However, in the majority of the Capitulations with European powers, gifts, despite their importance in regular diplomatic practice, play little role in

15 *Fransa pâdişāhi ile Âl-ı ‘Osmān pâdişāhi mabeyninde mun’aqid olan ‘abdnāmedir ki zikr olunur / Articles du traite fait en l’annee mil six cens quatre entre Henri le Grand Roy de France et de Navarre et Sultan Amat Empereur des Turcs* (Paris, 1615); Archives Diplomatiques (AD), Traités et accords 16730010, Capitulations entre Louis XIV et le sultan Mahomet IV, 1673; AD, Traités et accords 17400002, Capitulations de la cour de France avec la Porte ottomane, 1740.

16 Alexander de Groot, ‘The Dutch Capitulation of 1612’, in Alexander de Groot, *The Netherlands and Turkey: Four Hundred Years of Political, Economical, Social and Cultural Relations: Selected Essays* (Istanbul, 2009), 131-154 at 139;

17 *Treaties between Turkey and Foreign Powers*, 199; AD, Traités et accords 16730010, Capitulations entre Louis XIV et le sultan Mahomet IV, 1673.

18 De Groot, ‘The Dutch Capitulation’, 137; BOA, A.DVN.DVE 22/1, fol. 12; *Treaties between Turkey and Foreign Powers*, 358. This is the thirty-seventh article in the Dutch text of 1680, which shows a closer relationship to the Ottoman text: ‘[...] ende soo sy in Zee ofte in de Havens geene presenten met haere vrye wille begeeren te geven, soo sal men haer nogtans geen Scheeps Gereetschap, ofte goet, nogte jongens, ofte eenige andere saken met geweld ofte force mogen afnemen, ofte haer daerom eenige overlast nogte quellinge aan doen.’

developing the narrative history of relations. If we take, for example, the French Capitulations of 1673, a text that built on and expanded those of earlier treaties and had a significant influence on the content and tone of other capitulatory texts, the narrative that is presented after the various titles of the sultan and king gives two interesting accounts of the flow of relations:

French text:

We have received a sincere letter by the hand of the Sieur Charles François Olier, Marquis de Nointel, on the part of his master the said emperor of France, who is his advisor in all his councils, and his ambassador to our Ottoman Porte, chosen from among the gentlemen of his kingdom, supporting the prosperity of the greatest of all the grandees of the Messianic faith, and his ordinary ambassador to our Porte; finding that the Capitulations that have persisted for a long time between our ancestors and the emperors of France should be renewed under this consideration; and by the inclination that we have to preserve this ancient friendship, we have accorded that which follows.

[Article] 1. [...] We further desire that, beyond the observation of our Capitulations, that those granted by our forefather, glorious in his life and a martyr in his death, be inviolably observed in good faith; and for the honour and friendship that the said emperor of France has always had with our Porte, we have granted to him to renew the Capitulations that had been given in the time of the Emperor Mehmed [III], our ancestor, and to add there certain articles in accordance with the request that has been made of us, that we have granted, and commanded, that they should be inserted.¹⁹

19 *Treaties between Turkey and Foreign Powers, 194-195.* 'Nous ayant reçu une lettre sincère par le main du Sieur Charles François Olier, Marquis de Nointel, de la part du dit Empereur du France, son seigneur, comme son conseiller en tous ses conseils, et son ambassadeur à nostre Porte Ottomane, choisi entre les gentils-hommes de son royaume, soutien de la prospérité du plus grand de tous les grands de la croyance du Messie et son ambassadeur ordinaire à nostre Porte; de trouver bon, que les Capitulations qui ont long-temps duré entre nos ayeuls et les empereurs de France, fussent renouvelées sous cette considération: et par l'inclination que nous avons à conserver cette ancienne amitié, nous avons accordé ce qui s'ensuit. 1. [...] Voulons de plus, qu'outre l'observation de notre Capitulation, celle qui fut faite et accordée par nostre feu père, glorieux en sa vie et martyr en sa mort, soit inviolablement observée de bonne foy: et pour l'honneur et l'amitié que le dit Empereur de France a toujours eu avec nostre Porte, nous luy avons accordé de renouveler les Capitulations qui luy avoient esté données du temps de l'Empereur Mehmet nostre bis-ayeul, et d'y ajouter quelques articles sur la demande qui nous en a esté faite, que nous avons acordée, et ordonné, qu'elle y fut insérée.'

Ottoman Turkish text:

Louis, the emperor of the province of France (may he end his days in goodness and truth) [sent] to the exalted footstool of my mighty capital his own servant, approved and esteemed from among his gentlemen, the commander and advisor of all the affairs of the province and of the Paris council, and now engaged with the duty of ambassadorship at the Threshold of Felicity, the wisest of the great men of the Messianic confession, the pillar of the mighty men of the Nazarene nation, Charles François Olier, Marquis de Nointel (may his days end in goodness), who came with a letter in his hand bearing tidings of a sincere heart and a perfection of unity. The covenant in force from the former and earlier age between [us] and the emperors of France from the joyful time of our august forefathers and great ancestors, with God as their evident supporter, that joined us in former manner with the bonds of sincere friendship, the most ancient of which and oldest of that which has passed is that given in the felicitous time of the aforementioned departed Sultan Mehmed [III] Khan, happy in life, a martyr in death (mercy upon him). After that, in the time of our departed ancestor, Sultan Ahmed [I] Khan (mercy upon him, may his tomb be restful), they were again renewed, and they took the imperial Capitulations given to their hands. As the said friend at our Threshold of Felicity came for the perfection of unity, sincerity, and affection so that the aforementioned imperial Capitulations be renewed and certain articles appended through a gracious bestowal, this favour was granted with full approval. The imperial Capitulations that had originally been given were fixed as they are held, and the requested articles that were also to be appended to the imperial Capitulations, were set by our firm command emanating with the noble touch of our imperial signature.²⁰

20 AD, Traités et accords 16730010, Capitulations entre Louis XIV et le sultan Mahomet IV, 1673. '[...] 'atebe-i 'aliye-i devlet-medârimıza [...] vilâyet-i França pâdişâhı Luiz hutimet 'avâkıbuhu bi'l-hayr ve'r-reşâd kendünün müdebbir ve maqbûl ve mu'teber beğzâdelerinden olub vilâyetleriniñ cem'i umûrlarından ve Paris divânın müşir ve müsteşârı ve hâlâ Âsitâne-i Sa'âdet'de elçilik hizmetinde olan kıdvetü'l-ümerâ'ü'l-milletü'l-mesîhiye 'ümdet'ü'l-küberâü't-tâ'ifetü'n-naşrâniye olan Şarle Franseviye Olyer Markiz dö Natvanel hutimet 'avâkıbuhu bi'l-hayr yediyle hulus-u fû'âd ve kemâl-i ittihâdî müşir nâmesi gelüb 'ahd-ı pîşin ve devr-i dirinden ilâ hizâü'l-hîn ibâ'-ı kirâm ve ecdâd-ı 'azâmımız enâr-Allahü berâhînuhum ile França pâdişâhları mâbeynlerinde mün'aqid olan dostluk üslûb-u sâbık üzere mer'î olmak mümâ-ileyhiñ kuşvâ-yı âmâl ve akşâ-yı mâ'fû'l-bâli olub [...] sa'idü'l-hayât şehidü'l-memât merhûm ve mağfûr-leh Sulţân Mehmed Hân zamân-ı sa'âdetlerinde verilüb ba'adehu merhûm ve mağfûr-leh ceddemiz Sulţân Ahmed Hân tâba şerâhu zamânında tekrâr tecdid olunub ellerine verilen 'ahdnâme-i hümayûnu getirüb ve mümâ-ileyh Âsitâne-i Sa'âdetimiziñ dostu olub kemâl-i ittihâd ve hulus ve vidâd üzere olmağla zıkar olunan 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn tecdid ve ba'zı mevâd ilhâk olunmak bâbında istid'âyı 'inâyet itmekle iltimâsı hayr-ı kabûlde vâk'î olub ve muqaddemâ verilen 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn muqarrer tutulub ve iltimâsı olunan mevâd daği 'ahdnâme-i hümayûna ilhâk olunmak üzere haqq-ı hümayûn-u şevket-maqrûnumuz ile fermân-ı kazâ-ı cereyânımız şâdir olub.'

The French text retained a truncated version of the description of the qualifications of de Nointel, and, crucially, kept the description of the ambassador bringing Louis XIV's letter by his own hand (*par le main du / yediyle*) and that the letter was sincere (*sincère / hulus*). Yet, the French text only contained one reference to 'this ancient friendship' (*cette ancienne amitié*) that played such a crucial role in the Ottoman narrative. As well as sincerity, the French king's letter in the Ottoman version spoke of 'a perfection of unity' (*kemāl-ı ittiḥādı*); the Capitulations 'joined us in the former manner with the bonds of sincere friendship' (*mün'akıd olan dostluk üslub-u sābık üzere*); and the ambassador was a 'friend' (*dost*) at the imperial court who came to Istanbul 'for the perfection of unity, sincerity, and affection' (*kemāl-ı ittiḥād ve hulus ve vidād üzere*). A number of references were made to the longevity of relations, with a number of references to a deep past, although it is interesting that the earliest text cited here is the 1597 renewal by Mehmed III.²¹ One especially important feature missing from the French translation was that the ambassador's mission to secure the new document was a petition (*istidā'*) treated as a supplicant request (*iltimās*) that was approved by a gracious bestowal (*'ināyet itmekle*) of the sultan. Thus, we see another important link between friendship and gifts; the bestowal of the Capitulations was a gift for the advancement of friendship. This is something completely lost in the French text, where the sultan simply 'granted to [the ambassador] to renew the Capitulations [...] and to add there certain articles in accordance with the request that he has made of us' (*nous luy avons accordé de renouveler les Capitulations [...] et d'y ajouter quelques articles sur la demande qui nous en a été faite*). We might take from the Ottoman text that the articles of the Capitulations themselves were a form of gift. However, in this narrative, physical gifts, and in particular the tributary gifts (*pışkeş*) are lacking, with physical items appearing only in the articles prohibiting abuses. In this sense, as we shall see, the narrative contained in the British Capitulations was comparatively unusual in making physical gifts so central to the historical narrative presented in the text of the treaty.

Constructing an historical narrative of early Ottoman-British relations

The texts of the British Capitulations, held in both The National Archives in London (TNA) and the Prime Ministry's Ottoman Archives in Istanbul (BOA) provide a fascinating insight into how the history of Ottoman-British relations

21 De Groot, 'Historical development', 597; Panaite, 'French Capitulations', 72.

was recorded and remembered by the Ottoman state. The first rights, granted in the later sixteenth century, took the form of correspondence between the Ottoman and English monarchs, followed by the setting of formal Capitulations in 1580, and were the subject of a significant discussion following the first major publication on the subject using sources from all sides, Susan Skilliter's *William Harborne and the Turkey Trade, 1578-1582* (1977).²² Scholars who reviewed that study at the time – Gilles Veinstein, Madeline Zilfi, and, notably, V. L. Ménage – pointed to Skilliter's skill in hunting out the relevant correspondence, and her study has left us with an incredibly comprehensive history of early relations; Professor Ménage's prediction that Skilliter would have the last word on the subject seems to have held true to this day.²³ With nothing really to add to the contemporary empirical data that shapes our understandings of Anglo-Ottoman encounters in the late-sixteenth century, I will instead consider how those earliest relations were recorded in later treaty documents. Leaping slightly forward in time, I will use the extensive, detailed, and largely unexamined treaty of 1641 to view how the Ottoman treaties with Britain acted as a written record of earlier encounters, laid the foundation for later gifting practices, and how those relations formed part of Ottoman imperial worldview.

The British copy of the Ottoman text of the *'ahdnâme-i hümayûn* of 1641 is stored in TNA as part of the State Papers, Foreign: Treaties collection, and, when I first consulted the document, I found that the catalogue had it wrongly labelled as being written in Arabic rather than in Ottoman Turkish. The beautifully illuminated *tuğra* of Sultan İbrahim (1640-1648) heads the treaty (see Appendix 1), which is written in clear *divani* script on one side with an English translation scrawled on the other.²⁴ A more legible English translation was provided in an

22 Susan Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Turkey Trade, 1578-1582* (Oxford, 1977). For an earlier Turkish study on this period, see: Akdes Nimat Kurat, *Türk-İngiliz Münasebetlerinin Başlangıcı ve Gelişmesi, 1553-1610* (Ankara, 1953).

23 Gilles Veinstein, 'Review: S. A. Skilliter, William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey, 1578-1582: A Documentary Study of the First Anglo-Ottoman Relations, published for The British Academy, by Oxford University Press, 1977', *Journal for the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 22:3 (1979), 341-343; Madeline C. Zilfi, 'Review: S.A. Skilliter, William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey, 1578-1582: A Documentary Study of the First Anglo-Ottoman Relations, published for The British Academy, by Oxford University Press, 1977', *The American Historical Review* 84:1 (1979), 124; V.L. Ménage, 'The English Capitulation of 1580: A review article', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12 (1980), 373-383.

24 The National Archives, London (TNA), State Papers (SP) 108/540.

accompanying booklet written at roughly the same time.²⁵ To my knowledge, this important text, which greatly expands on earlier privileges and sets the foundation for those of 1675, has received little scholarly attention, and I am unaware of any study citing this original copy of the treaty.²⁶ It was not in itself a major development in terms of articles granted; it was simply a renewal of earlier articles, with only the historical narrative being developed. It came a number of decades after the expanded British Capitulations gained by Thomas Glover in 1607, and the crucial additions gained in 1621 by Thomas Roe, which posed a serious challenge to the French Capitulations of 1604 and the new Dutch Capitulations of 1612, something of a diplomatic victory on the part of the British against their commercial rivals. Other articles had been added at an earlier point – notably the guarantee of a customs rate of three per-cent in 1601 – but this treaty represents the official confirmation Roe’s additions, including forbidding unlawful customs levies in Aleppo, ensuring the customs officials did not levy double duties on British goods by refusing to accept payment receipts or trying to levy payments on goods transported via other ports, and confirmation of basic freedoms to trade. The Capitulations of 1641 therefore confirmed the 1621 additions together with the earlier grants, totalling fifty-five articles in the English text including renewals and confirmations.

The physical document itself bears an interesting history, noted in the appended English translation written by the embassy translators – Dominico Timone, Georgio Dapieris, and Lorenzo Zuma – who did a far more accurate job than the later translation found in the printed copy of the 1675 Capitulations.²⁷ At some point after the dating of the document at the beginning of Şaban 1051 (5 November 1641) in the Ottoman text, and the dating of the English translation on 28 October 1641 in the Julian calendar (i.e. 7 November in the Gregorian

25 TNA, SP108/541.

26 It is given the briefest of mentions, without any communication of its contents or context, in *A Collection of Treaties between Great Britain and Other Powers*, ed. George Chalmers (London, 1790), 431. Edward Van Dyck’s overview of the Capitulations in the late nineteenth century says ‘fuller capitulations were granted on the 28th October, 1641, to King Charles I by Sultan Ibrahim’, indicating he knew of the existence of the treaty in the British records and that the text was comprehensive: Edward Van Dyck, *Report of Edward A. Van Dyck, Consular Clerk of the United States at Cairo, upon the Capitulations of the Ottoman Empire since the Year 1150* (Washington, 1881), 16.

27 *The Capitulations and Articles of Peace between the Majesty of the King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland &c. and the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1679).

calendar), this original copy of the Capitulations disappeared until it was passed to Joseph Williamson, a senior British civil servant, almost three decades later. Williamson noted on the Ottoman original that he had received the original copy of the treaty from the former ambassador Sackville Crowe in 1668, 'together with some other papers relating to ye Turkish Empire and ye affaires of ye Nation there', with a note on the separate translation booklet that it had been passed to Williamson in 1670.²⁸ The long absence of the document can be accounted for by the political turmoil during and following Crowe's ambassadorship. Crowe was appointed to the embassy in Istanbul on the orders of Charles I (1625-1649), arriving there at the end of 1638. His ambassadorship was first marred by economic difficulties that affected the trade of the British merchants, but it was his royalist sympathies coupled with his mismanagement of fees collected from *harbî* merchants (lit. enemy, but referring to merchants from states without Capitulations) using British ships that saw him recalled by London and imprisoned following a major dispute with the governors and merchants of the Levant Company. He was forcibly shipped back to Britain after the king's defeat in the British civil wars in 1647. Imprisoned in the Tower of London on his return, he was not formally released until 1659, and, despite receiving some royal favours following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, he found himself in debtors prison, where he died in 1671.²⁹ Crowe had evidently passed on these documents during his final incarceration, perhaps in the hope of obtaining favour from a high-ranking statesman like Williamson.

Stored in the British archives with the other original copies of international treaties, the 1641 Capitulations therefore come with their own history as a material object. As a text, they contain their own version of a history of Ottoman-British relations right up to their inscription at the beginning of the 1640s. Of particular interest is the narrative presented in the Ottoman text that describes

28 TNA, SP108/540, 541.

29 A detailed biography of Crowe can be found in Alan Davidson & Andrew Thrush, 'CROWE, Sackville (1595-1671), of Laugharne, Carm: formerly of Brasted Place, Kent and Mays, Selmeiston, Suss.' in *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1604-1629*, available online via: <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/>. On the Civil War viewed in Istanbul, see: Mark Fissel & Daniel Goffman, 'Viewing the scaffold from Istanbul: The Bendysh-Hyde Affair, 1647-1651', *Albion* 22:3 (1990), 421-448. A letter from the British merchants in the Ottoman Empire to the Levant Company in London dated 28 June 1646 registered a number of grievances and complaints against Crowe: Richard Knolles & Paul Rycaut, *The Turkish History, from the Original of that Nation to the Growth of the Ottoman Empire*, 6th edn. (London, 1687) vol.2, 67-71.

the very earliest relations, included at the beginning of the document after the usual titles and honorifics:

Ottoman Turkish text:

In the past, the chief of the nobleman of the queen [Elizabeth I] of the aforementioned province originally came to our gate of the workings of felicity – which is the refuge of asylum of the sultans of the world, the place of retreat of the rulers of the globe – with her gentlemen and her ships with her tributary gifts, and the gifts that she had sent were gladly accepted. In the time of my ancestor Sultan Murad [III] Khan (may his tomb be pleasant to him) who dwells in the shining celestial nest of heaven, she sent a gentleman to our Threshold of Felicity, making displays of friendship and affection and signs of amicability. He petitioned that [British] gentlemen might come and go, and in this matter imperial permission was given in the time of my said departed [ancestor] by giving a noble provision saying that ‘at the stopping places and stations, and at the crossings and the gateways, at sea and on land, no person may trouble them’.³⁰

English text:

Lett it bee Knowne to all How in tymes passt the Queene of the abovementioned Kingdomes, haveing sent her Ambassador, with divers his well esteemed Gentlemen, and other Persons of Quality, with letters, shippes & her Presents to this Imperiall High Port, (the Refuge of the Princes of the World, and the Retraict of the Kings of this wholl Universe) in the happy tyme of famous memory of my Great Grandfather Sultan Muratt Han, now place in Paradise, whose soule lett bee repleate with Divine mercy, Which Ambass[ado]r Gentlemen and Presents were gratefully accepted, making declaration and offering in the Name of the sayde Queene, a sincere good Peace, and pure friendshippe, and demanding that his subjects might have leave to come from England into these parts, The saide my Greate Grandfather of Happy Memory, did then Graunt his Imperiall License, and gave into the handes of the saide Ambass[ado]rs for the Crowne of England divers his Especiall and Imperiall Commands to the end the Subjects of

30 TNA, SP108/540. ‘Bundan aḳdem vilāyet-i mezbūre ḳrāliçesi sūdde-’i sa’adet-destgāhımıza ki melāz-ı melcā’-ı selāṭin-i cihān ve penāh-ı mencā’-ı ḥevāḳin-i devrāndır müdür-i beýzāde ve adāmları ve gemilerile pışkeşleri gelüb ve asl ve irsāl eyledikleri hedāyā ḥayr-ı ḳabūlda vāḳa’ olub cennet-mekān firdevs-i aşyān-ḡarīḳ raḥmet-i raḥmān ceddim Sulṭān Murād Ḥān ṭabe serāhu zamānında Āsitāne-i Sa’adetlerine adem gönderüb izhār-ı muşāfāt ve iḥlāş ve eş’ār-ı meveddet idüb adamlar gelüb gitmek bābında isticābe eylediklerinde merḥūm mūmā-ileyh zamānında icāzet-i hūmāyūn olub menāzil ve merāḥilde ve ma’ābir ve binā-derde deryāda ve ḳarada kimesne rencide eylemeye deyü aḥkām-ı şerife verilmeḳle’

the saide Crowne might safely, and securely come & goe into theise Dominions, and in cominge or returneing either by Lande or Sea in their wage or passage, that they should of noe man be molested or hindred.³¹

In sum, Elizabeth I dispatched an un-named ambassador who was described as ‘the chief of the noblemen’ (*müdir-i beyzâde*), who arrived with a retinue of gentlemen and ships (*ve adâmları ve gemilerile*), and, most importantly, the queen’s tributary gifts (*pîşkeşleri*) at the court of Murad III (1574-1595). Only when the sultan accepted these gifts (*irsâl eyledikleri hedâyâ hayr-ı kabûlde vâka’olub*) could relations truly be established. It was after the acceptance of these initial gifts, the Ottoman narrative tells us, that she sent another man to Istanbul who made ‘displays of friendship and affection and signs of amicability’ (*izhâr-ı muşâfât ve ihlâş ve eş’âr-ı meveddet idüb*). It was only then that this Englishman received imperial permission for his countrymen to trade in the Ottoman realms. The English translation of the story follows basically the same pattern, with a slightly less deferential tone, so that the queen’s presents were ‘gratefully’ accepted, rather than the Ottoman text saying they were simply ‘gladly’ accepted. This, then, is an important record of the first encounter from the perspective of the Ottoman state looking back from the seventeenth century. By beginning with the story of the first ambassadors sent to Istanbul from London, the intention was, perhaps, to remind the British that their friendly commercial relations came through two key acts: the giving of gifts; and the active display and declaration of friendship. But we might also see this narrative as constructing two forms of hierarchy: a hierarchy of power, with the queen of a mere province (*vilâyet*) sending her ambassador in a performance giving value to the claim of the sultan’s court as ‘the refuge of asylum of the sultans of the world, the place of retreat of the rulers of the globe’ (*melâz-ı melcâ’-ı selâtin-i cihân ve penâh-ı mencâ’-ı hevâkîn-i devrân*); and a hierarchy of historical precedent, with the friendship – designated in different degrees by the terms *muşâfât*, *ihlâş*, and *meveddet* – established by these early encounters through the ambassador and practices through gift-giving and consolidated through memory.

This was only the first of a number of places in the 1641 Capitulations that these practices were recorded. Indeed, unlike the French and Dutch Capitulations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the British *‘ahdnâme* was structured by historical events; it was, in fact, a sort of chronicle of past relations, showing

31 TNA, SP108/541, fol.1.

how they informed the present, and dictating future practices and interactions. The act of the sending of an ambassador was developed, with each arrival of a new ambassador to renegotiate the Capitulations given a place in the text along similar lines. The formative events of the earliest relations, however, were given particularly special treatment, and it was in the second part of the first narrative section that we learn that Sultan Mehmed III (1595-1603) had received ‘a pure and affectionate petition of a sincerity of intention and purity of conviction’ (*hulûş-u tavîyet ve safâ-yı ‘akidet üzere ‘arz-ı ihlâş ve ihtîşâş*) from the British requesting that treaties made ‘in a spirit of friendship and amity’ (*muvalât ve muşâfât muktezâsınca*) by France, Venice, Poland and other states ‘who made affectionate petitions’ (*arz-ı ihtîşâş*) be similarly granted to the British, resulting in the ‘cordial request’ (*istid‘â-yı ârifet*) being granted.

There is some clear similarity of language with the French Capitulations of 1604 examined above, with de Nointel’s letter bearing ‘tidings of a sincere heart and a perfection of unity’ (*hulûş-u fû‘ad ve kemâl-ı ittiḥādı*), and continual references to friendship. This was a friendship that was therefore a quantifiable element of relations, through the provisions of past and present Capitulations granted to other states. Although gifts are not mentioned in the second part of this passage, the request had been enabled through another petition that gained credence through its amicability and sincerity. This was, in practical terms, the most important part of early relations according to the Ottoman narrative, as it is following this embassy that the original, full articles laying down basic commercial rights and obligations were fixed, nineteen articles in all, protecting British merchants from pirates, corrupt officials, and ensuring their general safety and basic rights in travelling and trading. Moreover, unlike the French Capitulations that spoke in 1604 of ‘the covenant in force from the former and earlier age between [us] and the emperors of France from the joyful time of our august forefathers and great ancestors’ (*ahd-ı pîşîn ve devr-i dirînden ilâ hizâü’l-ḥîn ibâ’-ı kirâm ve ecdâd-ı ‘âzâmımız [...] ile França pâdişâhları mâbeynlerinde*), these British Capitulations, as the first, had no deeper history to which to refer.³²

This grant of friendship, however, came with a specific caveat that also shows how the account of early encounters served as a legal as well as a narrative text:

32 AD, Traités et accords 16730010, Capitulations entre Louis XIV et le sultan Mahomet IV, 1673

Ottoman Turkish text:

As long as this pact, covenant, and pledge is faithfully and purely observed by the aforementioned queen on a fixed foundation enduring the passage of time, from our part we will also hold these provisions of covenant and safety, and regulations of peace, harmony, and old friendship with full-force and with esteem. In the noble time of my departed grandfather (may his tomb be pleasant to him), full details and explanations of the imperial Capitulations were given, saying ‘we will not see anything commanded to the contrary’.³³

English text:

[...] and as longe as the sayde Queene of England according to this present agreement of sincere friendshippe, and good Correspondence shall shew herselfe, and continue with us in peace, friendshippe and league, firme constant and sincere, Wee doe promise alsoe on o[u]r part reciprocally that this Peace friendshippe, Articles and Capitulations, and Correspondence in the fore written forme shall for ever of us bee mainteynd observed and respected, and of noe man any a[rtic]le thereof shalle [be] contradicted or infringed. All of which above mentioned Articles of Peace and Friendshippe were Concluded Signed, and our Imperiall Capitulations granted to the sayde Ambass[ado]s for the Crowne of England by o[u]r Greate Grandfather of happy Memory Sultan Muratt, & confirm'd by my Father of famous Memory Sultan Muchmett, in the tyme of the blessed Memory of the sayde Queene Elizabeth.³⁴

The implication here is that the Ottoman state would never break the accord first, but rather blame would inevitably fall on the other contracting party for doing something to disturb the friendship established.³⁵ This was therefore a friendship conditioned on constant renewal and maintenance. Moreover, friendship acquires a new form of gravitas in this confirmatory text, so that the ‘provisions of covenant and safety’ (*şerâ’it-i ‘ahd ve emân*) were given equal weighting with ‘the regulations

33 TNA, SP108/540. ‘Ve işbu mişâk ve ‘ahd ve peymân üzere mādām ki mûmā-ileyh kraliçeniñ tarafından şadâkat ve ihlâs-ı müşâhede oluna ve müddetde şâbît-kadem ve râsih-dem ola cānibimizden dañi işbu şerâ’it-i ‘ahd ve emân ve kavâ’id-i şulh ve salâh ve muşâfât-ı kemâ-kān mer’î ve muhterem tutulub aslâ hilâfına cevâz gösterilmez deyü dedem-i merhûm tabe şerâhu zamân-ı şeriflerinde mufaşşal ve meşrûh-i ‘ahdnâme-i hümayûn verilüb’.

34 TNA, SP108/541, fol.4.

35 This seems to have a root in the Qur’anic narrative of treaties, with verse 56 in sura *al-Anfâl* speaking of ‘those with whom you have made a treaty/covenant, then they break their treaty/covenant every time, and they do not fear [God]’. Qur’an 8 :56 : الَّذِينَ عَاهَدَتْ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ : فِي كُلِّ مَرَّةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَتَّقُونَ

of peace, harmony, and old friendship' (*kavā'id-i şulh ve salāh ve muşāfāt-ı kemā-kān*). With the emphasis on the friendship being 'old' by the time this narrative was drafted, we can see how quickly the early phase of relations became a space of antiquity and precedent.

The purpose of this narrative was therefore to situate the genesis of Ottoman-British relations, a point from which precedent could be measured. The fact that the two sultans involved in the opening narratives were Murad III and Mehmed III gives us a firm historical period of the ambassadorships of William Harborne, Edward Barton, and Henry Lello, and the language used to refer to those monarchs as 'my ancestor' (*ceddim*) and 'my grandfather' (*dedem*) respectively begins to give situate the narrative perspective of this part of the document quite accurately. The next clue comes with the following piece of narrative, which rounds off the first "set" of capitulatory articles by bringing in the arrival of a new British monarch, James I/VI (1603-1625). This takes place 'in the noble time of my departed father' (*bābām-ı merhūm [...] zamān-ı şeriflerinde*), Sultan Ahmed I (1603-1617), probably referring to the Capitulations received by Thomas Glover in 1607. The fact that the narrative refers to Ahmed I as a father, Mehmed III as a grandfather, and Murad III as an ancestor points to this part of the Capitulations being narrated from the viewpoint of Osman II's reign, (1618-1622), meaning that the narrative was added with the new Capitulations granted to Thomas Roe in 1621. Here, the story established with the arrival of the ambassador of Elizabeth I was repeated, so that the Ottoman text recorded that the king 'sent a letter with his ambassador, dispatching his ships with his tributary gifts, and these presents were well-received' (*nāme ile elçileri gemileriyle ve pışkeşlerini gönderüb irsāl eylediği hedāyısı hayr-ı kabülde vāka' olub*). Once again, gifts and a royal letter, being gladly accepted, mark the formal beginning of the relationship between this foreign monarch and the sultan. Friendship again takes centre-stage, so that 'the strengthening of friendship' (*te'kid-i muşāfāt*) took equal weighting with confirming the previously granted Capitulations, and ensuring that the 'peace, harmony, friendship, and amity' (*şulh ve şalāh ve muvālāt ve muşāfāt*) granted to other monarchs also be granted to the British. This is an intentional and direct reference to the earlier narrative, and thus reinforces the two hierarchies of power and precedent that gave the narrative of early Ottoman-British encounters a relevance in practice.

‘The fixed foundation of perfect friendship’ and a fluid narrative

So far, the narrative portions of the 1641 Capitulations have recorded the beginning of relations up to 1607, narrated from some time during the reign of Osman II, probably around 1621, and establishing the significance of practices like gift-giving and emphasising the importance of the performance and maintenance of friendship. However, one crucial historical article used the narrative trope in order to strengthen the legal foundation for preventing disputes between the British and the French. The thirty-fourth article (by the count of the English translation) details a dispute over whose authority Dutch merchants would fall under. In the fourth article of the French Capitulations of 1604, *ḥarbī* nations – those not in treaty with the Ottoman state – specifically ‘the merchants of Genoa, Portugal, and Catalonia, and all those of Sicily, Ancona, Spain, Florence, and Ragusa’ (*Ceneviz ve Portuḡal ve Ḳatalan tācirleri ve Ciciliya ve Anḳona ve İspanya ve Florentin ve Dobro-Venedik bi’l-cümle*), were granted the right to come to the Ottoman Empire under the French flag.³⁶ This was further confirmed in the fifth article, extending the protection to ‘all merchants of the enemy merchant nations without their own separate ambassadors [coming] under the French flag’ (*müstakīl elçileri olmayan cümle ḥarbī tüccār tā’ifesi Fransa sancāḡı altında ḥarbī tüccār / toutes les autres nations alienees de nostre grand Porte, lesquelles n’y tiennent Ambassadeur [...] soubz la banniere et protection de France*).³⁷ What is more, that same article specifically commanded that ‘there may not be any interference or aggression by the British ambassador’ (*İngiltere elçisi tarafından daḥl ve ta’arruḡ olunmaya / sans que jamais l’ambassadeur d’Angleterre, ou autres ayent de sen empescher*).³⁸ However, Dutch merchants, who were considered to be *ḥarbī* prior to their receiving Capitulations in 1612, made use of both the French and British flags, causing consular disputes. This was complicated by the fact that the British had succeeded in getting sole rights to protect the Dutch in their Capitulations, with a clause recording an imperial rescript issued to Elizabeth I that ‘all the merchants of the four parts of Flanders called Holland, Zealand, Friesland, and Gelderland shall come and go under the flag of the queen of Britain [...] and from now on the ambassador and consuls of France may not interfere or cause any aggression’

36 *Articles du traicte fait en l’anné mil six cens quatre*. The French text differs slightly in listing ‘les Espagnols, Portugais, Cattelans, Ragusois, Geneuois, Anconitains, Florentins, et generalement toutes autres nations quelles qu’elles soiet.’

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

(*cemî' Flandra vilâyetlerinde Holanda ve Zelanda ve Farlandya ve Gelderlanda nâm dört pâra vilâyetleriniñ tüccâr tâ'îfesi İngiltere kraliçesi bayrâğı altında gelüb gidüb [...] min-ba'd França elçisi ve konsolosları tarafından dahl veta'arruz olunmaya*).³⁹

This dispute was important; if the Capitulations granted the right to protect *ḥarbî* merchants, it also gave those merchants the obligation to pay consulage and other duties to the authorities of the protecting state. The tussle between the British and the French over the right to protect Dutch and other *ḥarbî* merchants was not one simply of prestige, but of economic imperative.

This narrative flashback to the time of Elizabeth I sets up the legal basis for the argument that followed, returning to the present and the articles gained by Glover through the trope established in the earlier narratives: 'Afterwards the ambassador of the aforementioned king of England came again, and when the presents and tributary gifts arrived and were accepted, the ambassador of the said [king] recorded and communicated his desire that certain matters be added to the imperial Capitulations' (*ba'dehu mûmâ-ileyh İngiltere kralınıñ tekrâr elçisi gelüb irsâl ittiği hedâyâ ve pîşkeş vaşıl ve maqbûl olmağla müşârun-ileyhiñ elçisi 'ahdnâme-i hümâyûna ba'zı huşûşlar ilhâk olunmasını murâd eylediğîn defter ve i'lâm idiüb*).⁴⁰ Once again, the capitulatory text emphasises the importance of the presentation and acceptance of gifts before any of the new articles would be considered for inclusion, and as a fundamental precondition for friendship. And, in this case, the first article granted was a clarification of article four of the French 1604 Capitulations – granted 'in the noble time of my ancestor Sultan Süleyman Khan' (*ceddem Sultân Süleymân Hân [...] zamân-ı şerîflerinde*) – removing the French claim to sole responsibility over *ḥarbî* merchants.⁴¹ The narrative complexity of this particular article, using historical encounters to build a solid legal foundation for the new provisions and regulations, demonstrates the centrality of precedent and legal argument to the development of the capitulatory text, and the recurring trope of gifts preceding political business and ensuring bilateral friendship solidifies the relationship between material (gifts) and rhetorical (letters) expressions of *dostluk* within the framework of practical applications of imperial justice and law.

³⁹ TNA, SP108/540.

⁴⁰ Ibid. The English text from TNA, SP108/541, fol. 4, reads: 'After w[hi]ch there beinge arrived another Ambass[ado]r att this High Port sent from the Kinge of England that now reigneth w[it]h letters and presents (w[hi]ch were most acceptable) the sayde Ambass[ado]r did make request, that certayne other Necessary Articles should bee added and written into ye Imperiall Capitulation.'

⁴¹ TNA, SP108/540.

The story to this point has still only got us as far as the early years of the seventeenth century, to the ambassadorship of Thomas Glover – who would become something of an expert in his day of Ottoman capitulatory practices – and his renewal in 1607 that secured a number of privileges for the British, including the rights over foreign merchants. Aside from the resort to historical precedent in the extended article concerning jurisdiction over the Dutch, subsequent narratives of ambassadors during the reigns of James I/VI and Ahmed I were brief. The next mention of a new ambassador in the Ottoman text simply states, ‘afterwards, the ambassador of the king of Britain came to the Threshold of Felicity’ (*ba‘dehu İngiltere kralının elçisi Âsitâne-i Sa‘âdete gelüb*), probably refering to the arrival of Paul Pindar and the renewal of the Capitulations in 1612.⁴² For simple renewals, it seems not much was needed in the way of extended narrative, but every instance is recorded in the text, adding further to the strength of relations and emphasising the number of times the British monarch sent an ambassador to pay respects to the sultan’s court.

The final narrative sections of the 1641 Capitulations largely relate to the deaths of old and accessions (*cülûs*) of new Ottoman sultans. The first is that of Osman II in 1618, at which time the narrative described in now familiar terms how ‘the ambassador of the said king of Britain came with his letter and tributary gifts; the presents that were sent arrived, and were gladly received’ (*müşârun-ilyeh İngiltere kralının elçisi nâme ve pîşkeşlerin ile gelüb irsâl itdikde hedâyâ vâsıl ve hayr-ı kabûlda vâķ’a olub*).⁴³ As a result, Pindar was able to confirm the Capitulations granted ‘in the esteemed time of justice of my great ancestors and my august father’ (*ecdâd-ı ‘azâmım ve âbâ-ı kirâmım zamân-ı ma‘dalet-ı ‘unvânlarında*).⁴⁴ There is evidently a narrative transition here, as the voice of Osman II speaks about the provisions granted by his father, i.e. the Capitulations granted by Ahmed I in 1607, but a new narrative voice speaks of Osman II as ‘the departed’ (*merhûm*), thus shifting the history into a new phase. The account moves directly from this confirmation and renewal following Osman’s accession to the arrival of yet another British amabssador, this time Thomas Roe in 1621. Roe succeeded in gaining a number of valuable new additions to the existing Capitulations, and his arrival is given full attention in the narrative: ‘After the accession to the imperial throne, the king of Britain again sent an ambassador with a letter and tributary

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

gifts, appointing and sending one of his loyal and esteemed noblemen to reside at the imperial capital, who made demonstrations of friendship and signs of amity at the Threshold of Felicity; the gifts that were sent arrived and were gladly accepted' (*ve cülüs-u hümayyûndan sonra İngiltere kralı tekrâr elçisi ve nâme ile pîşkeşin gönderüb Âsitâne-i Sa'âdete izhâr-ı muşâfât ve iş'âr-ı muvâlât eydüb yarâr ve mu'teber beğzâde birin der-i devlet mütemekkin elçi olmağı için ta'yîn ve irsâl idüb irsâl ittiği hedâyâ vâsıl ve hayr-ı kabûlda vâk'a olub*).⁴⁵ Here the narrative shows us the full manifestation of the link between gifts and friendship, and emphasising the credentials of Roe as one of the king's 'esteemed noblemen', showing how seriously the British king took his friendship with the sultan. The language of the Ottoman text emphasises the importance of gifting even further; just as the gifts were gladly accepted (*hayr-ı kabûlda vâk'a olub*), so too was the petitionary request of the king receive new articles gladly accepted (*istid'ası hayr-ı kabûlda vâk'a olub*).⁴⁶

The English translation – although not the Ottoman original – finishes the final confirmation of the articles gained by Roe by dating the whole of the preceding text as 'Written in the Middle of the month of September in the yeere 1031, Given in our Imperiall and Majestique Cittie of Constantinople', with the later part of the *hicri* year 1031 falling in 1621.⁴⁷ The Ottoman text, however, goes straight into the final part of the narrative that takes us forward directly to the beginning of the ambassadorship of Sackville Crowe in 1638. Crowe was described as a 'retainer, servant, trusted agent, and nobleman of the said king of Britain' (*İngiltere kralının yarâr ve müdebbir ve mute'medül-ı-kavl ve beğzâde*), again showing how much the British king was invested in maintaining this friendship.⁴⁸ The description of his arrival, and of the gifts and letter he brought, were more detailed than usual, with Crowe described as bringing 'treasures and presents' (*tuhfe ve hedâyâsı ile*), which accepted as both tributary gifts *and* presents (*pîşkeş ve hedâyâ*).⁴⁹ The king's letter, meanwhile, 'professed a sincerity of heart and a perfection of unity' (*hulûs-u fû'âd ve kemâl-ı ittiḥâdı müş'ir nâmesi*) repeating the descriptoin found elsewhere in the Capitulations.⁵⁰ However, despite the gifts and letter being acceptable, the Capitulations were not renewed 'in accordance with

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 TNA, SP108/541, fol.11.

48 TNA, SP108/540.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

[sultanic] law' (*kānūn üzere*).⁵¹ The reason for this refusal to renew the treaty was given as the absence of Sultan Murad IV (1623-1640) 'on campaign in Baghdad' (*Bağdād seferinde*), with the implication that the renewal could not go ahead as the sultan was unable to receive the gifts or the ambassador personally.⁵² It is curious to note that this was more than a question of custom (*âdet*) or ceremonial (*âyîn*), but of imperial law (*kānūn*), so that the processes of gift and letter giving were legal requirements. Interestingly, the English translation omits this part of the narrative, simply recording that, 'Notwithstanding [the gifts] were most gratefull to his Imperiall Ma[jes]tie of Glorious Memory, yett before the Capitualtions according to the ancient Custome could bee renewed betweene theyr Ma[jes]ties, Wee ascending the Throne [...]' so that law became custom and the Baghdad part of the story was entirely erased; it is not clear why the embassy translators chose to alter the text this way.⁵³

In the Ottoman version, the fact that the narrative text refers to the sultan as '*karındaşım*' – literally 'my womb companion', less poetically, 'my brother' – points to the narrative voice having shifted to Murad's successor, İbrahim (1640-1648). The accession of İbrahim to the Ottoman throne in 1640 is narrated in suitably glorified terms, but also gives us an insight into how Ottoman court etiquette was able to get around the problem of Crowe having already arrived, not received his audience, and then been faced with the accession of a new monarch. The new sultan sent a royal letter 'in accordance with official Ottoman ceremonial' (*âyîn-i resm-i 'Oşmānî üzere*) to Charles I (1625-1649), and in sending his own letter back congratulating İbrahim on his accession, the British king 'demonstrated his friendship and amity' (*izhār-ı muşāfāt ve muvālāt eyleyüb*).⁵⁴ Crowe's request to have the Capitulations renewed were therefore granted, and thus the exchange of royal letters was accepted in lieu of the dispatch of a new ambassador with gifts. We know from the British archival records that both the grand vizier Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Paşa and the new sultan wrote to Charles I soon after İbrahim's accession in February 1640 informing him of this event, and a copy of Charles's letter to İbrahim later that year congratulates him on his accession and requested an audience on behalf of Crowe.⁵⁵ Letters exchanged and audience arranged, this

51 Ibid.

52 This refers to the Siege of Baghdad in 1638.

53 TNA, SP108/541, fol.11.

54 TNA, SP108/540.

55 TNA, SP105/109, fols. 156, 162-163.

final part of the document concluded with an echo back to the caveat originally made to Elizabeth I, that ‘so long as the king of Britain, Charles (may his days be sealed in goodness) continues the fixed foundation of perfect friendship and amity firmly lasting the passage of time with my Exalted Footstool as in the time of my great ancestors, I will also honour this friendship’ (*mādām ki İngiltere kralı olan Karolo hutimet ‘avākıubı bi’l-hayr ‘atebe-i ‘aliyemiz ile ecdād-ı ‘azāmım zamânında olduğu gibi meveddetde şâbit-kadem ve hüsn muvâlât ve muşâfâtde râsih-dem ola ben dahî dostluğu kabûl idûb*).⁵⁶

This final section gives us important insights into the workings of Ottoman court ceremonial, but also at how the history of that ceremonial and of relations in the first part of the seventeenth century were chosen to be remembered. These incidents and events were recorded not simply as a record of history, but as a means of directing future interactions. However, the narrative from Sackville Crowe’s arrival in 1638 to renewal of the Capitulations in 1641 was largely erased from later versions of the British capitulatory text, and by the recording of the final major version in 1675, the story had become rather truncated:

Ottoman Turkish text:

Afterwards, in the time of my departed mighty uncle who dwells in the shining celestial nest of heaven (mercy upon him), Sultan Murad [IV] Khan (may his tomb be pleasant), the ambassador of the said king of Britain, called Baronet Sir Sackville Crowe, came to my imperial stirrup with treasures and presents, and the tributary gifts and presents received imperial acceptance. The period [of residency] of the aforementioned ambassador being completed, the ambassador called Baronet Sir Thomas Bendish came to reside in his place in the imperial capital, arriving at my Threshold of Abundant Benevolence with tributary gifts and presents, and a letter professing a sincerity of heart and a completeness of unity. The said ambassador also brought your capitulations in his hands and according to [sultanic] law they were renewed.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ TNA, SP108/540.

⁵⁷ BOA, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi Defterleri (TS.MA.d) 7018.0002, fol. 14. ‘Ba’dehu cennet-makân firdevs-i aşyân merhûm ve mağfûr-leh ‘amm-ı buzurgvârım Sulţân Murâd Hân şâbe şerâhu zamânında müşârun-ileyh İngiltere kralının rikâb-ı hümâyûnlarına Barotel [sic] Sîz [sic] Stefil [sic] Kroy nâm elçisi ve tuhfê ve hedâyâsı ile gelüb irsâl itdiği pîşkeş ve hedâyâ maqbûl-u hümâyûnları olub ve hâlâ elçi-i mûmâ-ileyhiñ müddeti tamâm olmağla yerine der-i devletde mütemmekin olmağ için âsitâne-i fâ’izü’l-ihsânıma Baronel [sic] Ser Nomaz [sic] Petus [sic] nâm elçisi ile pîşkeş ve hedâyâsı ve hulûs-u fû’âd ve kemâl-ı ittihâdı müş’ir nâmesi gelüb izhâr-ı

English text:

In the time of the happy memory of my Uncle Sultan Murat Han, the King of England sent his Ambassador Sir Sackville Crow, Baronet, with his Present and Letter, which was received in good part; and the time of his Embassie being expired, Sir Thomas Bendish arrived to reside at the Port with his Present and courteous Letter, the which was in like manner well accepted, And the said Ambassador having tendered the Imperial Capitulations formerly granted, that according to the ancient Canon they might be renewed [...]⁵⁸

By 1675, the narrative voice had again moved forward, this time to Mehmed IV (1648-1687) – indicated by his calling Murad IV his uncle (*'amm*), Mehmed being the son of İbrahim, Murad's brother – and the extended description of the period 1638 to 1641 had been written out in both the Ottoman text and the English translation. This, of course, reminds us of the fluidity of these documents through their renewals and additions, so that although the transmission of the provisions regarding trade and so forth were largely unchanged, the historical narrative was altered to fit with the times and to account for later developments. Yet the tropes found throughout the earlier incarnations of the capitulatory text, of gifts being brought and accepted, and letters professing friendship presented, continued to build a documentary memory of practices and encounters.

Conclusions

The British Capitulations of 1641 did not grant new articles favouring British merchants or consuls, nor were they the completion of the story of Ottoman-British relations in the seventeenth century. However, this *'ahdnâme* shows quite nicely how historical narrative was woven into the treaty text not simply as ornament, but as a way of recording and processing historical memory, and of relaying and confirming diplomatic practices and enacting rhetorical claims of power. The poetic description at the very beginning of the treaty recalling the arrival of William Harborne at a court that thought itself 'the refuge of asylum of the sultans of the world, the place of retreat of the rulers of the globe' (*melâz-ı melcâ'-ı selâṭîn-i cihân ve penâh-ı mençâ'-ı hevâḳîn-i devrân*) is more than rhetoric. With every arrival of a new British ambassador bearing tributary gifts and friendly royal

muşâfât ve muvâlât idüb elçi-i müşârun-ileyh daḥi ellerinde olan 'ahdnâmeñizi getirüb kânûn üzere tecdîd olunmasın'.

58 *The Capitulations and Articles of Peace*, 31-32.

letters, this claim was confirmed and enacted. The historical narratives in the 1641 Capitulations therefore placed the British within a particular space within the Ottoman world hierarchy, confirmed half a dozen times over the course of this treaty's narration. We see the significance of gift and letter giving as a means of accessing the sultan's friendship, but other parts of the narrative give us other insights into other court practices and attitudes, so that the ceremonial legally required the presence of the sultan in Istanbul, and that in one case gifts could be substituted for an exchange of letters. The emphasis on friendship as a means of enabling peace, and of diplomatic practices such as gift-giving being the route to securing friendship, chimes with other Ottoman treaties, but presents this information in a rather different way. Further comparative studies of capitulatory texts will doubtless reveal more recurring tropes and themes, and on that front there is much work yet to be done, particularly in comparing the Ottoman Turkish texts with their European translations. We should also start thinking more about the authorship of these treaties, and how particular phrasings and terms became standardised. Above all, by treating the Capitulations as historical texts as well as treaties, further light can be shed onto changes and continuities in diplomatic practices and the Ottoman *Weltanschauung* between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

A treaty of narratives: Friendship, gifts, and diplomatic history in the British Capitulations of 1641

Abstract ■ This article examines the hitherto unexamined Ottoman Turkish text of the Capitulations granted to the British in 1641. As well as containing the articles governing Ottoman-British trade and diplomatic jurisdiction, the Capitulations contained a historical narrative that provided a formal record of diplomatic encounters and practices. By emphasising the importance of bringing tributary gifts and royal letters as a precondition for receiving the friendship of the sultans, the inclusion of the historical narrative within the treaty text presented an Ottoman worldview that saw the sultan at the top of a hierarchy of monarchical power, but also created a layered narrative of precedent that strengthened the rhetoric of alliance through an ancient friendship. In examining the text of the Ottoman Turkish and English versions of this treaty, including full translations of the historical narratives in an appendix, this article makes the case for viewing the Ottoman Capitulations not just as historical treaties, but as historical texts.

Keywords: Capitulations, Ahdname, Ottoman-British relations, historical narrative, diplomacy

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APPENDIX 1:

THE *TUĞRA* AND OPENING LINES OF THE
1641 BRITISH CAPITULATIONS



Ottoman Turkish text:

Shah İbrahim son of Ahmed Khan, the forever victorious.

The noble mark of high-renown of the glorious sultanic presence, and the radiant sign of the world-ruler: by the power of the assistance of the Lord, the benefactor of gracious blessings and the eternal protector, his command is that:

By the near grace of lordly blessings, and the desire of the divine path of truth, I who am the sultan of the sultans of the world and the proof of the rulers of the globe, crown-giver of the princes of the age, Sultan İbrahim Khan son of Sultan Ahmed [I] Khan son of Sultan Mehmed [III] Khan son of Sultan Murad [III] Khan son of Sultan Selim [II] Khan son of Sultan Süleyman [I] Khan son of Sultan Selim [I] Khan:

The pride of the greatest of the great men of the Jesuans, overseer of the mightiest of the powerful men of the Messians, the orderer of the affairs of the commonwealths of the Nazarene peoples, master of the limits of glory and possessor of the proof of majesty and renown, Charles, king of the provinces of England, France, Ireland, and Great Britain⁵⁹, may his end be sealed in goodness.⁶⁰

English text:

Ebrahim Han Prince ever Victorious

By the Mercy, and wonted Grance & favor of the Greate & blessed God, Wee att this present Prince of Princes of the world, Magnamonious King of Kings of

⁵⁹ This is good evidence that the Ottoman state paid attention to, but did not necessarily understand, the intricacies of British royal titles. British ambassadors were constantly pressured by London in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to ensure that the title 'King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland' was used in full in Ottoman correspondence, as the Ottomans, understandably, were under the impression that the title of king of France was already taken. As we can see here, the Ottoman scribes have first used the name they were most familiar with, *İngiltere*, which in practice was a catch-all term for the British polity as well as England specifically, but have also included France (*França*), Ireland (*Hiperniye*, from the Latin *Hibernia*), and Great Britain (*Britaniya-ı Kebir*), listing them all as provinces (*vilâyetler*) of Charles I. This was repeated in the 1675 Capitulations and many other official letters.

⁶⁰ Şâh İbrâhîm bin Aḥmed Ḥân el-muẓaffer dâ'imâ / Nişân-ı şerîf-i 'âlî-şân-ı sâmi-mekân-ı sulṭânî ve tuğrâ'-yî garrâ'-yî cihân-sitân-ı ḥâkânî nüffuze-i bi'l-'avnü'r-rebbânî ve'l-mennü'l-mennânî ve'-ş-şavnü's-samedânî ḥükmü oldur ki / Şimdiki hâlde 'avn-ı 'inâyet-i rabbânî ve meşîr-i hidâyet-i subḥânî mükâreneti ile ben ki sulṭân-ı selâṭîn-i cihân ve burhân-ı havâķîn-i devrân tâc-baḥş-ı ḥüsrevân-ı zamân Sulṭân İbrâhîm Ḥân ibn Sulṭân Aḥmed Ḥân ibn Sulṭân Mehmed Ḥân ibn Sulṭân Murâd Ḥân ibn Sulṭân Selîm Ḥân ibn Sulṭân Süleymân Ḥân ibn Sulṭân Selîm Ḥânım / İftihârü'l-ümerâ'ül-'izâmü'l-'İseviye mühtârü'l-küberâ"ü'l-fahâm fi'l-milletü'l-Mesîḥiye muşliḥ-i maşâliḥ-i cemâhîr-ü't-ṭâ'ifetü'n-Naşrâniye sāhib-i ezyâl-ü'l-ḥaşmet ve'l-vaķâr şāhib-i delâ'il-ü'l-mecd ve'l-iftihâr İngiltere ve França ve Hiperniye ve Britaniya-ı Kebîr vilâyetlerinin kralı Kârolo ḥatimet 'avaķıbuḥu bi'l-ḥaydır

the Universe, Giver of all Earthly Crownes, Sultan Ebrahim Han sonne of Sultan Mustapha Han, sonne of Sultan Machmett Han, sonne of Muratt Han, sonne of Sultan Selim Han, sonne of Sultan Solyman Han, sonne of Sultan Selim Han.

To the renowned and famous Prince, amongst the Ma[jes]ties of the mighty Princes of Jesus obeyed of the greatest Potentates of the Followers of Messiah, sole Director of the Important affayres of the Nazarene People, Lord of the Limmitts of Hon[ou]r and Power Fountayne of Greatnesse and Authority, The Glorious Charles Kinge of Greate Brittain France and Ireland whose last dayes the Lord God accomplish, and fulfill with all true felicity.

APPENDIX 2:

THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVE OF THE 1641 BRITISH CAPITULATIONS

The following texts – first the translation of the Ottoman Turkish original and then the original English translation – have been taken from the 1641 Capitulations, and these are the instances of historical narrative being provided. I hope in the near future to publish a full comparative translation of the entire text of this treaty, together with a comparison with the final version granted in 1675. For now, and for the purposes of this article, the narrative portions of the 1641 texts must suffice. The narrative takes us from the crucial first rights gained by William Harborne in 1579, through the additions and renewals granted to Henry Lello in 1601, Thomas Glover in 1607, Paul Pindar in 1612 and 1618, Thomas Roe in 1621, and Sackville Crowe in 1641. The first part immediately follows the titles noted above in Appendix 1.

Ottoman Turkish text:

In the past, the chief of the nobleman of the queen [Elizabeth I] of the aforementioned province originally came to our gate of the workings of felicity – which is the refuge of asylum of the sultans of the world, the place of retreat of the rulers of the globe – with her gentlemen and her ships with her tributary gifts, and the gifts that she had sent were gladly accepted. In the time of my ancestor Sultan Murad [III] Khan (may his tomb be pleasant to him) who dwells in the shining celestial nest of heaven, she sent a gentleman to our threshold of felicity, making displays of friendship and affection and signs of amicability. He petitioned that [British] gentlemen might come and go, and in this matter imperial permission was given in the time of my said departed [ancestor] by giving a noble provision saying that ‘at the stopping places and stations, and at the crossings and the gateways, at sea and on land, no person may trouble them’.⁶¹

61 Bundan aḳdem vilāyet-i mezbûre ḳrāliçesi sūdde-’i sa’adet-destgâhımıza ki melâz-ı melcâ’-ı selâṭîn-i cihân ve penâh-ı mencâ’-ı hevâḳîn-i devrândır müdür-i beýzâde ve adâmları ve gemilerile pîşkeşleri gelüb ve asl ve irsâl eyledikleri hedâyâ ḥayr-ı ḳabûlde vâḳa’ olub cennet-mekân firdevs-i aşyîân-ğarîḳ rahmet-i rahmân ceddım Sulṭân Murâd Ḥân ṭabe şerâhu zamânında Âsitâne-i Sa’adetlerine âdem gönderüb izhâr-ı muşâfât ve ihlâş ve eş’âr-ı meveddet idüb adamlar gelüb gitmek bâbında isticâbe eylediklerinde merḥûm mûmâ-ileyh zamânında icâzet-i hümâyûn olub

In the time of my deceased grandfather Sultan Mehmed [III] Khan (may his tomb be pleasant to him), a pure and affectionate petition of a sincerity of intention and purity of conviction was made at the sovereign threshold of justice, [requesting that], agreements having been made in a spirit of friendship and amity with France, Venice, Poland, and with other kings who made affectionate petitions to my lofty footstool, the said [queen] also [petitioned], in accordance with friendship, that her gentlemen with their translators be permitted to come to the Well-Protected Domains in security and safety to engage in trade, and that the same imperial capitulations of the great presence given to the aforementioned kings in accordance with friendship, and the noble rulings accorded them, be also given [to her]. A command was made [granting] the petition made by the said queen of Britain in accordance with her cordial request.⁶²

Afterwards, in the noble time of my deceased father Sultan Ahmed [I] Khan (may his tomb be peaceful), the king of Britain, James (may his end be sealed in goodness), sent a letter with his ambassador, dispatching his ships with his tributary gifts, and these presents were well-received. The peace, harmony, amity, and friendship contracted in the time of my deceased grandfather, the devotee of God (may his tomb be peaceful), as well as the imperial capitulations, provisions, and limits, were agreed and renewed, and the friendship strengthened. A petition and declaration was brought to our imperial capital to be favoured, so that certain articles be added to the imperial Capitulations, and that imperial Capitulations, restrictions, and provisions, the peace, harmony, friendship, and amity, as well as that the imperial Capitulations and capitulations given to other kings in friendship with the Threshold of Feclitiy, also be granted to and renewed for the said king. It is commanded that the provisions of the imperial Capitulations are always to be enforced.⁶³

menâzil ve merâhilde ve ma'âbir ve binâ-derde deryâda ve karada kimesne rencide eylemeye deyü aḥkâm-ı şerîfe verilmekle

62 Merhûm dedem Sulṭân Mehmed Hân ṭabe şerâhu zamânında dergâh-ı ma'delet-i penâhilerine ḥulûş-u ṭaviyet ve safâ-yı 'aḳidet üzere 'arz-ı iḥlâş ve iḥtişâş idüb França ve Venedik ve Leh ve sâ'ir 'atebe-i 'aliyeme 'arz-ı iḥtişâş eyleyen ḳrallar ile mâbeynde mün'aḳid olan müvâlât ve müşâfât muḳtezâsınca mûmâ-ileyh ile daḥi dostluḳ üzere olub adamları ve tercümânları ile memâlik-i maḥrûsaya emin ve emân üzere gelüb ticâret idüb ve muşâr-ileyhim ḳrâllara dostluḳ mücebince verilen 'ahdnâne-i hümayûn-ı 'izzet-makrûn ve aḥkâm-ı şerîfe mücebince mûmâ-ileyhâ canibine daḥi verilmek bâbında istid'â-yı âṭifet olub mûmâ-ileyhâ İngiltere ḳrâliçesi tarafından iltimâs olunduḡu üzere fermân olunub

63 Ba'dehu İngiltere ḳralı olan Yaḳub ḥutimet 'avâḳıbuḥu bi'l-ḥayr bâbâm-ı merhûm Sulṭân

Afterwards, the ambassador of the aforementioned king of England came again, and when the presents and tributary gifts arrived and were accepted, the ambassador of the said [king] recorded and communicated his desire that certain matters be added to the imperial Capitulations.⁶⁴

Afterwards, the ambassador of the king of Britain came to the Threshold of Felicity.⁶⁵

Afterwards, the departed Sultan Osman [II] (mercy upon him, may his tomb be peaceful) acceded to the splendid fortuitous throne, and the ambassador of the said king of Britain came with his letter and tributary gifts. The presents that were sent arrived, and were gladly received. In accordance with the desire of the ambassador of the said king that the imperial Capitulations given in the esteemed time of justice of my great ancestors and my august father be renewed, the said [sultan] also agreed to hold firm [with friendship] by giving anew the imperial Capitulations.⁶⁶

After the accession to the imperial throne, the king of Britain again sent an ambassador with a letter and tributary gifts, appointing and sending one of his loyal and esteemed noblemen to reside at the imperial capital, who made demonstrations of friendship and signs of amity at the Threshold of Felicity. The gifts that were sent arrived and were gladly accepted. A petition to be favoured was made by the ambassador of the said king that the imperial Capitulations given

Ahmed Hân tabe serâhu zamân-ı şeriflerinde Âsitâne-i Sa'âdetlerine nâme ile elçileri gemileriyle ve pîşkeşlerleri gönderüb irsâl eylediği hedâyası hayr-ı kabûlde vâk'a' olub merhûm dedem hüdâvendigâr tabe serâhu zamânında mün'akıd olan şulh ve şalâh ve muvâlât ve muşâfât ve verilen 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn ve şurûṭ ve kuyûd muḳarrer ve tecdid ve te'kid-i muşâfât olunması ve 'ahdnâme-i hümayûna ba'zı maddeler ilhâk olunmak iltimâs olduğu pâ-yı taht-ı hümayûnlarına 'arz ve i'lâm olunduḳda şulh ve şalâh ve muşâfât ve muvâlât ve 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn ve sâ'ir Âsitâne-i Sa'âdet ile ve dostluk üzere olan ḳrallara verilen 'ahdnâme gibi müşârun-ileyh ḳrala daḫi 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn ve kuyûd ve şurûṭ muḳarrer ve tecdid olunub dâ'imâ 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn mücebince 'amel olunmak fermân olunmuşdur.

64 Ba'dehu mûmâ-ileyh İngiltere ḳralının tekrâr elçisi gelüb irsâl itiği hedâyâ ve pîşkeş vaşıl ve maḳbûl olmaḫla müşârun-ileyhin elçisi 'ahdnâme-i hümayûna ba'zı ḫuşûşlar ilhâk olunmasını murâd eylediğin defter ve i'lâm idüb

65 Ba'dehu İngiltere ḳralının elçisi Âsitâne-i Sa'âdete gelüb

66 Ba'dehu merhûm ve maḡfûr-leh Sulṭan 'Osmân Hân tabe serâhu taht-ı ferruḫ-ı baḫta cûlûs itdikde müşârun-ileyh İngiltere ḳralının elçisi nâme ve pîşkeşlerin ile gelüb irsâl itdikde hedâyâ vâsıl ve hayr-ı kabûlde vâk'a' olub müşârun-ileyh ecdâd-ı 'azâmım ve âbâ-ı kirâmım zamân-ı ma'dalet-ı 'unvânlarında verilen 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn tecdid olunması mûmâ-ileyh ḳralın elçisi istedikleri üzere mûmâ-ileyh daḫi muḳarrer ṫutub müceddiden 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn verüb

in the noble time of my great ancestors and august father be renewed and the Capitulations earnestly desired by the said king be renewed and fixed, and that certain articles be revised and explained by writing them in the Capitulations, to which assent was gladly given. The imperial Capitulations given in the era of my great ancestors and august father were also fixed firm by the said [sultan], and his imperial agreement was given.⁶⁷

Afterwards, when my departed brother who dwells in the shining celestial nest of heaven (mercy upon him), Sultan Murad [IV] Khan (may his tomb be pleasant) was on campaign in Baghdad, the ambassador called Baronet Sir Sackville Crowe came in order to reside in the capital, being a retainer, servant, trusted agent, and nobleman of the said king of Britain, with treasures and presents together with a letter professing a sincerity of heart and a perfection of unity. The tributary gifts and presents that had been sent arrived and were given our imperial acceptance. However, in accordance with [sultanic] law, their Capitulations were not renewed. My felicitous imperial accession taking place to the splendid fortuitous Ottoman throne and the dias of the global sultanate with prosperity, signs of good-fortune, and strength, in accordance with official Ottoman ceremonial in sending my imperial letter, the said king again proved his friendship by the arrival of his letter wholeheartedly congratulating my customary accession, and thus a display of friendship and amity was made. The aforementioned ambassador also made a representation for the clarification of the imperial Capitulations in his hands, saying that the said king desired them to be renewed. The declaratory petition was favoured at the honoured throne, so that the said bond of friendship was favoured by confirming all the regulations and restrictions of the imperial Capitulations, and my imperial acceptance gave its blessing and deemed worthy the renewal of my imperial Capitulations. So long as the king of Britain, Charles (may his days be sealed in goodness) continues the fixed foundation of perfect

67 Ve cülüs-u hümayûndan sonra İngiltere kralı tekrâr elçisi ve nâme ile pîşkeşin gönderüb Âsitâne-i Sa'âdete izhâr-ı muşâfât ve iş'âr-ı muvâlât idüb yarâr ve mu'teber beğzâde birin der-i devlet mütemekkin elçi olmağı için ta'yîn ve irsâl idüb irsâl ittîği hedâyâ vâsıl ve hayr-ı kabûlda vâk'â olub ve ecdâd-ı 'azâm ve âbâ-ı kirâmım zamân-ı şerîflerinde verilen 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn ve mûmâ-ileyh kral tarafından verilen 'ahdnâme-i mütemennî-i maqrûn tecdîd ve muqarrer olmağ için ve 'ahdnâme-i hümayûna ba'zı mühimm ve elzem mevâdd ilhâk olunub ve 'ahdnâmede meşûr olan ba'zı mâddeler tashîh ve taşrih olunmağ için elçi-i mûmâ-ileyh kral tarafından iltimâs ittmekle istid'âsı hayr-ı kabûlda vâk'â olub ecdâd-ı 'azâm ve âbâ-ı kirâmım 'aşr-ı şerîflerinde verilen 'ahdnâme-i hümayûn mûmâ-ileyh tarafından dağı muqarrer tutulub ve maqbûl-u hümayûnları olub

friendship and amity firmly lasting the passage of time with my exalted footstool as in the time of my great ancestors, I will also honour this friendship.⁶⁸

English text:

Lett it bee Knowne to all How in tymes passt the Queene of the abovementioned Kingdomes, haveing sent her Ambassador, with divers his well esteemed Gentlemen, and other Persons of Quality, with letters, shippes & her Presents to this Imperiall High Port, (the Refuge of the Princes of the World, and the Retraict of the Kings of this wholl Universe) in the happy tyme of famous memory of my Great Grandfather Sultan Muratt Han, now place in Paradise, whose soule lett bee replete with Divine mercy, Which Ambass[ado]r Gentlemen and Presents were gratefully accepted, making declaration and offering in the Name of the sayde Queene, a sincere good Peace, and pure friendshippe, and demanding that his subjects might have leave to come from England into these parts, The saide my Greate Grandfather of Happy Memory, did then Graunt his Imperiall License, and gave into the handes of the saide Ambass[ado]rs for the Crowne of England divers his Especiall and Imperiall Commands to the end the Subjects of the saide Crowne might safely, and securely come & goe into theise Dominions, and in cominge or returneing either by Lande or Sea in their wage or passage, that they should of noe man be molested or hindred.⁶⁹

68 Ba'dehu cennet-makân firdevs-i aşyân merhûm ve mağfûr-leh karındaşım Sulţân Murâd Hân şabe şerâhu Bağdâd seferinde iken müşârun-ileyh İngiltere kralının yarâr ve müdebbir ve mute'medü'l-kavl ve beğzâde der-i devlet mütemekkin olmağ için Baronet Ser Sakfil Kır nâm elçisi ve tuhf ve hedâyâ ile hulus-u fû'ad ve kemâl-ı ittihâdı müş'ir nâmesi gelüb irsâl itdiği pişkeş ve hedâyâ vâsıl ve maqbûl-u hümayûnları olub lakin kânûn üzere 'ahdnâmeleri tecdid olunmadın devlet ve ikbâl-ı işâret ve iclâl ile taht-ı ferruh-u baht-ı 'Osmânî ve serir-i sulţanat-ı cihâniyânı olan cûlûs-u hümayûn-u sa'âdet-maqrûnum vâk'a olmağla âyîn-i resm-i 'Osmânî üzere nâme-i hümayûnum gönderildikde tehniyet-i cûlûs-u mütemenni-i me'nûsum için mûmâ-ileyh kral tarafından tekrâr dostluğu müş'ir nâmesi gelüb izhâr-ı muşâfât ve muvâlât eyleyüb elçi-i müşârun-ileyh dağı vech-i meşrûh üzere ellerinde olan 'ahdnâme-i hümayûnu ibraz idüb tecdid olunmanı kral-ı mûmâ-ileyh murâd eylemişdir deyü iltimâs itdiği pây-i serir i'lâm-ı 'arz olunduğda ben dağı zikr olunan 'ahdnâme-i hümayûnuñ cümle-i şurûf ve kuyûdun muqarrer tutub ve maqbûl-u hümayûnum olub müceddiden 'ahdnâme-i hümayûnum erzânî ve inâyet idüb mādâm ki İngiltere kralı olan Kârolu hutîmet 'avâkıbuhu bi'l-hayr 'atebe-i 'aliyemiz ile ecdâd-ı 'azâmım zamânında olduğı gibi meveddetde sâbit-kâdem ve hüsn-ü muvâlât ve muşâfâtda râsih-dem ola ben dağı dostluğu kabûl idüb

69 TNA, SP108/541, fol.1.

After w[hi]ch tyme in the days of my Grandfather Sultan Machmett Han of famous Memory (unto whose soule bee granted divine absolution) the sayde Queene haveing agayne shewed unto this High Port (the Sanctuary of Justice) sincere & Royall friendshippe and continuance of good Peace & Correspondance equall to the Peace & ancient amity contracted with France Venice & Poland, and others in League with the Imperall Porte, and haveing anew desired, that her Subjects, Merch[an]ts, and theyr Interpreters might freely, and securely come, merchandize and negotiate through all the parts of the Imperiall Dominion, and that such Capitulations and other Priviledges, and Imperiall Commandes as had beene Granted unto the Ammbass[ado]rs for the sayde Kinges & Princes in Peace and amity with this High Porte, might alsoe bee Granted unto her. In Conformitie of w[hi]ch request of the sayde Queene were given and Confirmed by my saide Greate Grandfather, Grandfather, & Father of Happy Memory, the Imperiall Capitulations and Priviledges succedeing, To say, It is Commanded:⁷⁰

Since w[hi]ch tyme, his Ma[jes]ty the Kinge of England that now reigneth, James whose Last departure pray the Divine Ma[jes]ty to fulfill w[i]th all Prosperity, In the tyme of our Great Uncle of Happy Memory Sultan Achmett Han, haveing sent unto our Imperiall Porte his Ambass[ado]r, Letters, Presents w[hi]ch were most acceptable, and seird that the already contracted peace, friendship, and good Correspondence, amde with our Father Sultan Mechmett, and the Capitulations Articles and Priviledges above written, should be agayne rattified, and the sayde Peace and friendshippe renewed, furhter requesting that Certayne Articles very necessary should to the sayde Capitulations bee added. The desire of his Ma[jes]tie beinge declared in the Imperiall Presence of our sayde uncle, was presently accepted, and hee gave expresse com[m]and and order that the sayde Peace, friendship and league should be renewd and fortiyed, and the ancient Capitulations and Priviledges Confirmed, and that the new desired Articles should bee written in, and added to ye Imperiall Capitulation. Granting further unto ye sayde English Ambass[ado]r all those Articles and other Priviledges, w[hi]ch were tranted and written in any capitulations, given to any other Nation, Potentate or Kinge in Peace and amity with this Imperiall Porte, And by his Imperiall Com[m]and he gave order that theise his Imperiall Capitulations should be obeyed of all men, and the Tenor of them duly observed.⁷¹

⁷⁰ TNA, SP108/541, fol.1.

⁷¹ TNA, SP108/541, fol.4.

After w[hi]ch there beinge arrived another Ambass[ado]r att this High Port sent from the Kinge of England that now reigneth w[it]h letters and presents (w[hi]ch were most acceptable) the sayde Ambass[ado]r did make request, that certayne other Necessary Articles should bee added and written into ye Imperiall Capitulation [...]⁷²

Since w[hi]ch tyme of my Greate Grandfather, and Grandfather of famous Memory, and the Grante of theise abovementioned Articles, Capitulations, and establishment of peace and friendshipp, the sayde Majesty of England haveinge in the tymes of our Greate Uncle of Happy Memory Sultan Achmet Han, sent one his well deserveing Ambass[ado]r a Person of Quality to this High Port to Confirme the sayde Peace and amity Articles and Capitulations [...]⁷³

Our sayde Uncle Sultan Achmett Han beinge deade, In the tyme of the Inauguration to the Imperiall and high Throne of Sultan Osman Han of happy memory, the sayde Ma[jes]tie of England did send anew a famous and noble Gentleman his Ambass[ado]r with his letters and Presents, w[hi]ch were most acceptable: And the sayde Ambass[ado]r desiring in the Name of his Kinge and Lord, that the ancient Capitulations, Articles, and Conracts granted in the dayes of his Greate Grandfather, Grandfather, and Father of happie Memory, should of him bee renewed and Confirmed, and the ancient Peace and Amity anew fortified and establisht, Which his Request was to the sayde Sultan Osman most acceptable and the Ancient Capitulations, Articles, and Privileges were herein written, renewed, and confirmed, and the Longe since contracted peace and amity by him promised, accepted and establisht.⁷⁴

After whom in like manner, in the Dayes of the sayde Sultan Osman Han of famous memory the sayde Ma[jes]tie of England haveing anew sent unto the high and happy Port his Ambass[ado]r the Elect, Hon[oura]ble Illustrious S[i]r Thomas Roe K[nigh]t with his Royall letters, and Presents to Reside in our happy Port, w[hi]ch Ambass[ado]rs letters and Presents were to him most accepectable, who professing and declaring in the Name of the Kinge his Lord all good Tearmes of friendshippe and sincere Correspondence, and requiring that the ancient Imperiall Capitulations, and all the Articles from his Ancestors Grandfather and father, and from himselfe formerly granted unto the royal Crowne of England, might

72 TNA, SP108/541, fol.4.

73 TNA, SP108/541, fol.9.

74 TNA, SP108/541, fol.9.

be anew Confirm'd, and the Peace League and good Correspondence long since betweene both parts cotracted, might in like manner bee renewed, reinforced and rattified, and that some other Articles very necessary might newly be added to ye Imperiall Capitulations, and divers others already granted, renew'd amended, and in better forme expalined. Which his request and demand was very acceptable unto him, and in conformity thereto, the ancient Imperiall Capitulations, and all the Articles, and other Priviledges in them often confirmed, and the Peace amity, and good Correspondence contracted in ye tymes of his Ancestors, Grandfather and Father, and by himselfe confirmed were agayne by the sayde Sultan Osman Han then rattified established promissed and accepted.⁷⁵

After which whilst our Brother Sultan Moratt Han (now in Paradise wth celestiall habitations in the mercy of the Eternal God) the most honored S[i]r Sackville Crow Barr[one]t one of the most acceptable and faythfull serv[an]ts of the most Glorious Charles new Kinge of Greate Brittainne, arriving heere att our Glorious Port to Reside as his Ma[jes]ties Ambass[ado]r in our Sublime and Happy Courte, with his Ma[jes]ties most loveing and effectuall letters full of sincerity, As also with Noble Presents and Gentilezzas (w[hi]ch Ambass[ado]r Kingly letters and Presents arriveing in Safety) Notwithstanding they were most gratefull to his Imperiall Ma[jes]tie of Glorious Memory, yett before the Capitulations according to the ancient Custome could bee renewed betweene theyr Ma[jes]ties Wee ascending the Throne of our Imperiall Ma[jes]tie and Dominion over the Prosperous and our Glorious Othoman Empire (by w[hi]ch the Universe became preserved) and in Conformity to ye Custome alwayes observed by the Othoman Empire haveing sent our Imperiall Letters to the abovenamed most renowned King of England, who on the other side to performe the office of Congratulation with our Imperiall Ma[jes]ty haveing sent other letters to our Imperiall Courte full of all Sincerity and affection, signifyinge his cleere friendshippe and abundant Love, Whereof Talchis beinge made and represented before our Imperiall Throne, and thereby the Ambassador abovesaide on the part of his King desireing that the Capitulations might be renewed, Wee alsoe in Conformity, and agreeable to his instance, doe hereby Confirme and ratifye all the Articles and Conditions of the Capitulations beforementioned, And doe declare that they are all well-pleasinge to, and allowed by our Imperiall Ma[jes]ty, and doe renew Graunte, and ordeyn the same, declaring th[at] as longe as the sayde Charles his Ma[jes]tie the Kinge of England (whose end God make happy and Glorious) shall continue constant

⁷⁵ TNA, SP108/541, fol.9.

and firme in this friendshippe and good Correspondence concluded w[i]th our
Glorious Port in manner as itt hath beene observed in the tyme of our Mighty and
Greate Ancestors, Wee also accepting the sayde friendshippe oblige our selves to
continue firme in this promise and Confederacy of ours [...] ⁷⁶

⁷⁶ TNA, SP108/541, fols.11-12.