On 24 June 2014, a small group of doctoral students and early career researchers met at the University of St Andrews to discuss ideas of contacts, encounters, and practices between the Ottoman Empire and European states between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. The east coast of Scotland may not seem the most obvious location for a workshop on Ottoman-European diplomacy – Scotland as an independent kingdom never sent ambassadors to Istanbul, and only in the later nineteenth century do we find local Scottish businessmen acting as Ottoman consuls in Edinburgh and Glasgow to protect the interests of Ottoman commercial shipping in the docks on Clydebank and Tayside – but the beautiful surroundings of the oldest of Scotland’s ancient universities, which celebrated its 800th anniversary in 2013, and the surprisingly sunny and warm weather, helped the conversations to flow. The fruits of this workshop are presented in the following five papers, each of which examines Ottoman-European diplomacy in the early modern period from a different empirical and methodological base from archival sources and the increasingly rich scholarship in Ottoman studies,

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1 We would like to express our gratitude to the School of History at the University of St Andrews, the Department of History at the University of Sheffield, the Society for the Study of French History, and the Royal Historical Society for their generous support of this workshop. We would also like to thank Caleb Karges, Ninal Lamal, and John Condren for their probing questions and helpful comments, and are very grateful to Dr Condren for writing up a thorough conference report, available via ottomaneuropeandiplomacy.blogspot.co.uk/p/conference-report.html. We would also like to thank the editorial board of *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* for the opportunity to present these papers as a coherent group within this issue of the journal.
and which, in their sum, demonstrate the variety and vibrancy of the field of Ottoman-European encounters.

The historiography of Ottoman-European diplomacy is increasingly wide-ranging, with much of its focus on questions of international politics, particularly from the later eighteenth century when the Ottoman Empire began to dispatch regular resident ambassadors to foreign capitals.² Pivotal moments in Ottoman-European relations, notably the peace treaties of Carlowitz in 1699 and Passarowitz in 1718, have provided a chronological structure that emphasises different periods of interaction, adding nuance to the so-called ad-hoc period of diplomacy to demonstrate a variety of changing patterns of diplomatic practices.³ Given the central role of commerce in Ottoman-European relations throughout the early modern period, particularly with the northern European states, studies on diplomacy often take a commercial approach, through the Capitulations and through commercial disputes.⁴ Increasingly, historians have focused on the rhetoric and


practice of relations throughout Ottoman history, producing in sum a rich body of scholarship upon which emerging Ottomanists can build their research.\(^5\) Beyond the ever-growing body of case-studies and examples, comparative studies of diplomatic aims, practices, and ideologies, both within the Ottoman context and beyond, will help us even further in making sense of the mass of evidence in European and Ottoman archives regarding diplomatic activities.\(^6\) Moreover, by acknowledging the importance of what has been termed “new” diplomatic histories – that is, a methodology that scrutinises diplomatic interactions using a variety of (often interdisciplinary) analytical frameworks – but not dismissing more state-centred scholarship, the study of Ottoman diplomacy is moving away from ideas of Ottoman or European exceptionalism, typified in the question of “conventional or unconventional” practices or ideas posed in A. Nuri Yurdusev’s edited volume on the subject, and towards more integrative and comparative approaches.\(^7\)

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INTRODUCTION: CONTACTS, ENCOUNTERS, PRACTICES: OTTOMAN-EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY, 1500-1800

The St Andrews workshop was not, therefore, conjured from the ether, but aimed to build on historiographical trends in Ottoman studies and in the wider field of diplomatic history by showcasing the approaches and sources of emerging scholars. In formulating the intellectual rationale for this workshop, we were particularly concerned with the tensions between embassies as instruments of the state (with the ambassador as its personification), and ambassadors as individuals with their own networks, ideas, and agency. To borrow Daniela Frigo’s framework: diplomacy in the early modern period was not an abstract institution but an institutio, a set of specific functions and roles. As part of this, we wanted to think critically about the sorts of sources that are available for the study of Ottoman-European diplomacy in the archives in Istanbul and beyond, and, more importantly, what different facets of diplomatic practice could be reconstructed. In particular, we hoped that the workshop would provide a comparative perspective on what Frigo called ‘the social and institutional aspects of diplomatic practice’. From this, the three major analytical categories were developed: contacts consist of the correspondence and daily interactions between Ottoman and European actors, as well as the individuals that comprised their networks; the spaces of diplomatic interaction form Ottoman-European encounters, from the tentative delegations of the earliest relations to more regular meetings in embassies, courts, and borders; and practices refer to the daily functioning of embassies, from salaries to ceremonial to forms of address and writing. Analysing these categories requires individual case studies, and the papers that follow, ranging from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, and covering Ottoman relations with Venice, France, Britain, and Prussia, all provide examples based from a variety of Ottoman and European sources.

Emrah Safa Gürkan’s examination of the Venetian renegado Uluc Hasan in the later sixteenth century and his relationship with the Venetian baili in Istanbul uses sources from the Venetian archives to provide a compelling narrative of their contacts and interactions, particularly when it came to securing and providing information, a key role of any early modern diplomat, and one that deserves further comparative consideration in the Ottoman context. Practices of knowl-

10 Some fairly recent examples include: Emrah Safa Gürkan, ‘Espionage in the sixteenth century Mediterranean: Secret diplomacy, Mediterranean go-betweens, and the Ottoman-Habsburg
edge transmission through encounters and contacts are explored further in Lela Gibson’s study of the journey of the Kâbusnâme (Mirror of Princes) from Istanbul to Berlin via the Prussian diplomat Heinrich von Diez, beautifully demonstrating how the intelligence gathering by ambassadors sought out intellectual as well as political capital.\(^\text{11}\) More than this, the transfer of such an important Ottoman political text to the Prussian milieu was indicative of closer political ties resulting from stronger Ottoman-Prussian relations. Moving from Berlin to Paris, Phil McCluskey considers the embassy of Müteferrika Süleyman Ağa to the court of Louis XIV in 1669 from the perspective of the French archival sources concerning the practices of this particular diplomatic encounter.\(^\text{12}\) In seeking to critically reconstruct this delegation, it is possible to get a sense of the tensions arising from the encounters between the king and the envoy as individuals and as personifications of their respective states; it also demonstrates how ideas of court practices could clash. Similar forms of court practices of ambassadorial embassies and gift-giving are examined in Michael Talbot’s critical analysis of the Ottoman text of the British Capitulations granted by Sultan Ibrahim in 1641. Looking around the articles governing trade and consular jurisdiction, the treaty reveals a historical narrative that expressed Ottoman hierarchies of power through relating earlier encounters, but also codified ideas of friendship and gifting through a narrative of practices. Last, but certainly not least, Irena Fliter examines one of the most important but understudied elements of diplomatic practice: ambassadorial pay.\(^\text{13}\) In particu-


lar, by examining the debts accrued by the Ottoman ambassador Mehmed Esad Efendi at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Fliter reveals the importance of regular and accountable finance to the professionalisation or bureaucratisation of diplomacy; the financial records also shed light on a variety of diplomatic practices and contacts that would otherwise be unknown.

Some of the key themes that emerged at the workshop are further borne out in the papers presented here. One idea that emerged again and again in our discussions was that of language. The use of language, obvious though it may seem, was at the heart of diplomatic interactions. The linguistic role of the ambassador and his translators was crucial in shaping relations and their practices. All of the sources examined here, from the reports of the Venetian baili to the correspondence of the French ambassadors to the financial records of the Ottoman and Prussian ambassadors to the translations of Capitulations and political texts, have been mediated through translation or reported speech. With Ottoman texts, they abdnames, mühimmes, or archival evrak, accurate translation and comprehension of often dense language – not always an easy task, particularly given the sometimes near impenetrable scrawl of long-dead yaztec – is absolutely central to making sense of the Ottoman side of the story. This is particularly important given the mistranslation or wilful reinterpretation of Ottoman terms or ideas by contemporary dragomans and ambassadors. By examining Ottoman texts in conjunction with European sources, archival and printed, our understanding of the Ottoman perspective can be enhanced, and a more rounded picture of diplomacy can be produced. Moreover, sometimes the European versions are all the evidence that survive of certain embassies or practices, requiring an extra-special effort of contextualisation.

Linked to language, the second key theme that emerged was one of identity. This is not simply the question of who or what was Ottoman or non-Ottoman


– although this is an extremely important question in the context of Ottoman relations with the wider world – but rather who was an ambassador or diplomat. Aside from the 

sefsırs, elçis, bailıı, and other ambassadeurs who held official credentials, a whole variety of historical actors engaged in diplomatic practices and shaped diplomatic contacts and encounters, from naval captains and generals to poets to humble scribes and not-so-humble translators. Moreover, through diplomatic actors possessing multiple identities, diplomatic practices in the Ottoman Empire were often polysemic in nature, a feature greatly helped by ambiguities of language and translation. Certainly, key diplomatic roles such as formally representing the monarch and delivering royal or imperial letters and gifts were the prerogative of certain kinds of diplomat, but so much more was going on in Ottoman-European diplomacy at a number of political and social levels that might be classed as diplomacy.

One thing that the workshop’s participants did not attempt to do was to provide a comprehensive definition of what diplomacy was or meant in the early modern Ottoman context. If we take Yurdusev’s definition that it was ‘the conduct of relations between states and other entities with standing in world politics by official agents and by peaceful means’, then there are certain elements that our papers support, and other elements that might not fit so well.16 The various ways in which relations were conducted, recorded, and reported were not always by official agents, and the question of world politics was not always at the forefront of diplomatic concerns. Moreover, this definition perhaps makes the assumption that both parties saw themselves on an equal footing, and that the goal of diplomatic interactions, beyond the basic premise of maintaining peace, was the same. By not taking into account commercial, intellectual, financial, rhetorical, or personal interests, large segments of the stories presented here would not fit into this framework. In part, this is because diplomacy, not being a word really in use before the nineteenth century, is ahistorical for much of what we are dealing with. As such, we should perhaps think not in terms of Ottoman-European diplomacy, but rather in terms of Ottoman-European negotiations. The eighteenth-century French diplomat and writer, François de Callières, spoke not of diplomacy, but of the manner of negotiating with sovereigns (de la manière de negocier avec les souverains), a phrase translated into English in the early twentieth

16 A. Nuri Yurdusev, ‘The Ottoman attitude toward diplomacy’ in Ottoman Diplomacy, ed. Yurdusev, 5-35 at 10.
century as ‘the practice of diplomacy’.\(^{17}\) De Callières’s opening statement might well suit our cases better:

The art of negotiating with sovereigns is so important, that the fortune of the greatest states often depends on the good or bad conduct and on the level of capacity of the negotiators that are so employed, so that princes and their principal ministers cannot examine with too great a care the natural and acquired qualities of the subjects that they send into foreign countries in order to maintain a good correspondence with their masters, to make there treaties of peace, of alliance, of commerce, and of other kinds, to impede those that other powers might conclude there to the prejudice of their prince, and generally to take care of all the interests that they can manage there in the different junctures that may present themselves.\(^{18}\)

The Ottoman and European diplomats engaged in Ottoman-European relations were nothing if not negotiators. As well as negotiating the practices and products of high politics – the treaties, the alliances, and the all-important notion of friendship – they negotiated identities, ideas, languages, finances, and many other features of diplomacy in practice. And if we take a common Ottoman equivalent, miḳālême, then the negotiation becomes a kind of dialogue between the two parties, Ottoman and non-Ottoman, resulting in a rich variety of contacts and practices.\(^{19}\) Much work remains to be done on Ottoman-European diplomacy, from both Ottoman and European sources, but it is hoped that the following papers will play some role in helping to further our understandings.

\(^{17}\) François de Callières, De la maniere de negocier avec les souverains (Amsterdam, 1716); François de Callières, The Practice of Diplomacy, trans. A.F. Whyte (London, 1919).

\(^{18}\) De Callières, De la maniere de negocier, 1-2. ‘L’Art de negocier avec les Souverains est si important, que la fortune des plus grands Etats depend souvent de la bonne ou de la mauvaise conduite et du degré de capacite des Negociateurs qu’on y employe, ainsi les Princes et leurs principaux Ministres ne peuvent examiner avec trop de soin les qualitez naturelles et acquises des sujets qu’ils envoient dans les Pays Etrangers pour y entretenir une bonne correspondance avec leurs Maîtres, pour y faire des Traitez de Paix, d’Alliances, de Commerce et d’autres especes, pour empêcher ceux que les autres Puissances pourroient y conclure au préjudice de leur Prince, et généralement pour prendre soin de tous les interêts qu’on y peut menager dans les diverses conjoncures qui se presentent.’

\(^{19}\) For an example of the use of miḳālême in a diplomatic context, specifically on the negotiations of the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739, see: Mustafa Sami Efendi, Hüseyin Şakir Efendi & Subhi Mehmed Efendi Tarih-i Sâmi ve Şâkir ve Şubhî (Koştantiniye, 1198 [1783]), especially 90-112.