

A R T I C L E S

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THE EDUCATION OF AN AMBASSADOR:
THE MARQUIS D'EFFIAT IN ENGLAND (1624–25)**Abstract**

When he left France in July 1624 to go to England, on young Louis XIII's order, Antoine Coiffier de Ruzé, Marquis d'Effiat, began his very first diplomatic trip. Despite his functions, the Marquis d'Effiat never accomplished any diplomatic mission of any kind. However, a few years earlier, he negotiated the marriage of Honoré d'Albert, a Duke of Luynes's brother. Thus, in 1624, he was entrusted with the delicate mission to bring England and France together through the marriage of Henrietta-Maria of France, the King's sister, to Charles, Prince of Wales.

This is an extraordinary embassy and the dispatches of the ambassador have been preserved as well as the replies of Louis XIII and the Secretary of State, Antoine de Lomenie. This allows us to observe an evolution both in Effiat's account of his actions and the content of the points negotiated, and the way his work was staged. Despite his age, the Marquis d'Effiat was new to diplomacy. He was familiar with the royal French court but his ignorance about England and diplomatic practices raises questions about the King's choice of sending him across the Channel. This ignorance of diplomatic customs includes negotiation strategies, but also the body language that an ambassador must adopt to serve the interests of his master and extensively described in 16th century treatises on ambassadors. This article aims to compare the ambassador's discourse with the diplomatic accomplishment. The interest of this embassy, besides its political and religious stakes, is that it makes it possible to observe its fears of error and procrastination through the correspondence of the marquis.

Keywords: Diplomatic training, early modern France, Louis XIII, career diplomat, Charles of England, Marquis d'Effiat, Henrietta-Maria, marriage negotiations

When in July 1624, on young King Louis XIII's order Antoine Coiffier de Ruzé, Marquis d'Effiat, left France to go to England, he began his very first diplomatic trip. As a nephew of Secretary of State Martin Ruzé, at 43 years old, Effiat was a faithful supporter of Louis XIII. He also joined the king's council that same year, backed by Cardinal Richelieu.¹ Despite his functions, the Marquis d'Effiat never accomplished any diplomatic mission of any kind. However, a few years earlier, he negotiated the marriage of Honoré d'Albert, a brother of the Duke of Luynes. Thus, in 1624, he was entrusted with the delicate mission of working to bring England and France together through the marriage of Henrietta-Maria of France, the King's sister, with Charles, Prince of Wales.²

This negotiation was sensitive due to the military and religious stakes. The first attempt at a marriage between Charles and Henrietta Maria's sister, Christine of France, was already the subject of 1612 failed negotiations. The negotiation's sticking point was the question of the treatment of English Catholics and the tolerance the French expected for them. Both the influence of anti-Catholics and that of the supporters of the Duke of Buckingham who favoured a Spanish marriage forced diplomatic agents to keep these negotiations secret. This distrust went so far as to lead to the dismissal of the members of the Privy Council.³

The records of the Marquis d'Effiat's embassy are almost complete thanks to the preservation of handwritten letters and collections of mid-seventeenth-century copies deposited at the Bibliotheque Nationale de France and the National Archives at Kew. The dispatches of the

¹ Alice Motte, 'Antoine Ruzé d'Effiat (v. 1581–1632), surintendant des finances sous Louis XIII' (unpublished master's thesis, l'école des Chartes, 2009), <http://theses.enc.sorbonne.fr/2009/motte> (accessed 25 October 2020).

² Susan Dunn-Hensley, *Anna of Denmark and Henrietta Maria. Virgins, Witches and Catholic Queens* (New Haven: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 17–45; Karen Britland, 'A Fairy-tale Marriage: Charles and Henrietta-Maria's romance', in *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623*, ed. by Alexander Samson (Farnham: Routledge, 2006), pp. 123–38.

³ R. Malcolm Smuts, 'The French Match and Court Politics', in *Stuart Marriage Diplomacy. Dynastic Politics in their European Context, 1604–1630*, ed. by Valentina Caldari, Sara J. Wolfson, Tim Harris, Stephen Taylor, Andy Wood (Cornwall: The Boydell Press, 2018), pp. 13–28.

ambassador have been preserved as well as the replies of King Louis XIII and the Secretary of State, Antoine de Lomenie.⁴ The negotiation lasted almost a year. This allows us to observe an evolution both in Effiat's account of his actions and the content of the negotiated points together with the way his work was staged. Despite his age, the Marquis d'Effiat was new to diplomacy. He was familiar with the French royal court, but his ignorance about England and diplomatic practices raises questions about the King's choice of sending him across the Channel. This ignorance of diplomatic customs includes negotiation strategies but also the body language that an ambassador must adapt to serve the interests of his master, extensively described in sixteenth-century treatises on ambassadors.⁵ This article aims to juxtapose the ambassador's discourse with his diplomatic accomplishments. The correspondence of the marquis makes it possible to observe his fear of making a mistake and of procrastination. The diplomat sought advice from France as he was gaining diplomatic experience. While analysing these records, the article focuses on the ambassador's stay at the English court and his sometimes-awkward gestures. It raises the question of whether the ambassador's leisure and body language can become instruments to display royal authority as a prelude to the discussion of how both Effiat and his interlocutors perceived the 'ambassadorial function'. Thus, the necessary learning of the good practice of diplomacy, the king's vision of his emissary and the ambassador's perception of his own actions allow us to apprehend the training of an ambassador and the formation of his social and political status in the host court. This development of culture reflecting the need to stand out and to master body language must make the ambassador worthy of his position and consistent with the image of his master, Louis XIII. It must also reflect

⁴ The correspondence of the Marquis d'Effiat is available in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter cited as: BnF) under the reference Fr. 15991 'Ambassade du marquis d'Effiat (14 juillet 1624 – 28 décembre 1624) touchant au mariage de la princesse Henriette-Marie de France et du prince de Galles'; and in The National Archives, Kew, Richmond State Papers 78/72 and 78/73.

⁵ Stefano Andretta, Stéphane Péquignot, Marie-Christine Schaub, Jean-Claude Waquet, and Christian Windler, *Paroles de négociateurs, l'entretien dans la pratique diplomatique de la fin du Moyen Âge à la fin du XIX^e siècle* (Roma: EFR, 2010), pp. 71–90.

certain canons articulated by the printed treatises describing how to be a good ambassador.⁶

I

When he arrived in London, the Marquis d'Effiat was responsible for negotiating the terms and counterparts of the Anglo-French match directly with King James I, Prince Charles, and Secretary of State Conway.⁷ These negotiations evidence the intense competition between France and Spain. The sovereigns of these two states wanted to marry one of their princesses to the Prince of Wales. One of Effiat's first meetings with King James I took place at a deer hunt. During this hunting party, James I granted him the honour of finishing off the hunted beast. Anxiety grasped the Marquis d'Effiat. The ambassador had never put an animal to death, as he related in his first dispatch of 18 July.

Having found myself at the death [of the beast], the king wanted me to receive all the honours that are customary for him. I would have been awful at this activity because I had not been trained in such an exercise if his Highness, who took care of educating me, had not instructed me on how to deal with it so that I looked not a great master but not an apprentice either.⁸

This kind of scene is repeated several times in the ambassador's correspondence. He wrote on 28 July:

⁶ Pierre Danès, *Conseils à un ambassadeur* (Paris, 1561); Étienne Dolet, *De officio legati* (Lyon, 1541); Jean Hotman, *The Ambassador* (London, 1603); about these treaties, see *De l'ambassadeur: Les écrits relatifs à l'ambassadeur et à l'art de négocier du Moyen Âge au début du XIX^e siècle*, ed. by Stefano Andretta, Stéphane Péquignot, and Jean-Claude Waquet (Roma: EFR, 2015), pp. 85–112.

⁷ David Coast, 'Secrecy, Counsel and Public Opinion during the Spanish and French Matches', in *Stuart Marriage Diplomacy*, pp. 189–202 (p. 190).

⁸ BnF Fr. 15 991, fol. 11: 'Il ne donna plaisir au Roy qu'une bonne heure pour ce que les chiens de la meutte le porterent par terre et m'ettant trouvé a la mort le Roy voulut que je recousse tous les honneurs qu'on a accoustume de luy randre, J'eusse esté fort empesche en cet affaire pour n'avoir esté nourry a tel exercice, si S.A qui prist le soin de my conduire ne m'eust donné une Instruction pour m'en demesler que je retins si bien que Jy parus non pour un grand maistre mais plus aussi d'un apprenty [...]'.

The King forbade them to bring me back to the house before I had the pleasure of killing a deer. I apologised for not being able to overcome this beast because I had never shot the crossbow which is the weapon used in such an exercise. However, I was so happy that I hit him and he died on the spot. The Prince congratulated me, and the King showed me joy.⁹

Body language, in a diplomatic mission, had no other purpose than to complete negotiations. These discussions were subjected to a specific protocol and requirements in the context of receptions and interviews between sovereigns and ambassadors. Here, these acts took place during an informal interview. He did not know how to hunt or even to kill the game. This failure ultimately turned to his advantage since his success as a novice impressed the King, the Prince, and those in attendance.¹⁰ The display of his natural talents empowered him and authorised him to continue negotiations in the best possible conditions thanks to his newly gained credit with the English royal family.

Hunting was a central element in the sociability of ambassadors, allowing them to integrate into the circles of the court.¹¹ The awkwardness and lack of expertise that can seem comical to a French nobleman were in the case of the Marquis d'Effiat meaningful and reflected the real nature of his meetings with the King and the Prince of Wales. Indeed, he would have no reason to reveal his shortcomings in his dispatches if he had not been able to take advantage of them as part of his mission. This embassy, therefore, began with a very physical introduction to

⁹ BnF Fr. 15 991, fol. 34: 'Il [Le Roi] leur deffendit de ne point me ramener au logis que je n'eusse eu le plaisir de tuer un cerf. Dequoy je m'excusay tant j'aprehendois de ne pouvoir venir a bout de ce chef d'œuvre veu que je n'avois Jamais tiré de l'arbaleste qui est l'arme dont on se sert en cet exercice. Neantmoins je fus si heureux qu'en ayant rencontré un en beau début je le frappay et demeura mort sur la place, de cette bonne aventure M. le Prince me fit tres grand feste et le roy mesme m'en tesmoigna de la joie'.

¹⁰ Geoff R. Berridge, *The Counter-Revolution in Diplomacy and other essays* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 32–49.

¹¹ To explore these questions further, see: Jean-Marie Cotteret, *Gouverner c'est paraître* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002); Robert Muchembled, *L'invention de l'homme moderne: sensibilités, mœurs et comportements collectifs sous l'ancien régime* (Paris: Fayard, 1988); Stéphane Vaquero, *Baltasar Gracian, la civilité ou l'art de vivre en société* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009).

the charge as the ambassador was expected to practice the noble art of hunting and, as a representative of Louis XIII, to excel at it. However, his lack of mastery put him in a position of immediate inferiority.

Effiat's experience illustrates the control of one's behaviour praised in texts on the 'perfect ambassador' and treatises defining the 'perfect courtier'. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the reference on how to behave in society was still Baldassare Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*.¹² Castiglione defined the virtues of the perfect courtier, and one of the most important was the mastery of one's body along with several other qualities, such as knowing how to dance and ride a horse.

As a professed neophyte, the Marquis d'Effiat left it to James I to take on a paternal role by giving him some advice. The success of putting advice into practice not only got him compliments, but also put him in a filial position awaiting the paternal validation of the King of England. This helped the ambassador build trust and create a specific bond with his hosts.

Nevertheless, we should make a distinction between the narrative and the factual reality of the Marquis d'Effiat's competencies. He had to learn to manage the vagaries and pitfalls of international politics, including religion and signs of the latent conflict between France and Spain. Thus, in the nest of spies that is the diplomat's world, royal approval or sympathy was not the guarantee of a successful embassy.¹³ The Marquis had to learn to bestow his trust cautiously and figure out whether his interlocutors were trustworthy. It meant distilling with great care the information he gathered in a cultural context and networks which were most foreign to him.

One could hope that the Marquis d'Effiat had either read or consulted Jean Hotman de Villiers' *The Ambassador*, published in a French as well as an English edition in 1603. Describing functions of the ambassador, the book explains the required virtues and values to be

¹² Baldassare Castiglione, *The Courtier* (1528), trans. Thomas Hobby (1566, London).

¹³ Lucien Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Fayard, 1990); Paolo Preto, 'L'ambassadeur vénitien: diplomate et "honorabile espion"', in Lucien Bély, *L'invention de la diplomatie, Moyen Âge – Temps modernes* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1998), pp. 151–66.

a 'perfect ambassador'.¹⁴ An ambassador was expected to have travelled before carrying out a diplomatic charge, and to be a man of letters and preferably well-off:

I require no more of him than hee may attain vnto by vse and nature. True it is, that I wish he were seene in all, by reason of the diversitie of affairs which are handled in his charge. The which hee cannot be, if he has not seene and travelled abroad, if hee haue not some experience, and especially the knowledge of Histories, which I finde to bee more necessary for him than any other study: and that formerly he has been employed in some other charges or affaires of state, if it were but onely to haue more assurednesse when he commeth to speak in public: for as it shall appear by the processe of the discourse, an ambassage is as it were an abridgement of the principalest charges and offices that are exercised in the commonwealth: So also would I have him rich, not only in the goods of the minde, but also in the goods of fortune, at least, in some indifferent sort.¹⁵

A perfect ambassador had to be careful about the information he could disclose. In the case of Effiat, the following precaution: 'I believe I should speak to them in this way'¹⁶ crops up regularly in his correspondence. As a result, he hesitated to authenticate letters of credence granted by Louis XIII to the English ambassador returning to James I. Effiat was aware of these letters, mentioned by Antoine de Loménie in his letter. Still, he chose to conceal his knowledge of the subject to gain time, while the English ambassador tried to obstruct the articles concerning measures of tolerance towards the Catholics. Indeed, easing restrictions against Catholics was not a popular option with the Privy Council or public opinion.¹⁷ This attitude can be explained by the French political will to obtain, within the framework of the negotiations, the end of persecution against Catholics. Since 1621, the French monarchy

¹⁴ Lucien Bély, 'La polémique autour de l'Ambassadeur de J. Hotman: culture et diplomatie au temps de la paix de Lyon', *Cahiers d'histoire*, 46, (2001), 327–54 (pp. 328–29).

¹⁵ Hotman, B4. (Although first published in French, in Paris in 1603, all quotations from 'The Ambassador' are from the first English edition).

¹⁶ BnF Fr. 15991, fol. 5v.

¹⁷ For the issue of religion in marriage negotiations, see Michael Quester (ed.), *Stuart Dynastic Policy and Religious Politics, 1621–1625* (Cambridge, 2009: Camden Society, 5th series, 34).

has been plagued by Protestant rebellions. The city of La Rochelle had declared its independence and several nobles had raised troops against Louis XIII. In 1624, the nomination of Richelieu as principal minister of the King exacerbated the role of the French monarch as protector of the Catholics.

It was impossible for me to confirm a credential which I did not know, which was approved by Sir Buckingham. They still prayed to confirm to them the credential of M. Riche. I apologised, but occasionally I would gladly inform the Prince and that they should not fear that your Majesty would disown Mr Riche of the credence of his letter.¹⁸

Pretending to be naive, the Marquis obtained information on the negotiations in progress and on the expectations of the different parties. Thus, he wrote to the King about an interview with the Duke of Buckingham:

Following his speech, Sire, he told me all the interests of the lords of this Court, to educate me about their affection, and so that I took great care of how I would speak to them.

I also told him that I made much of his diligence towards me. I have indulged in small talks with him which I held in secrets and which can in no way prejudice your Majesty's service and yet will exempt me from talking to him in the future. Nevertheless, I hope that I did not betray your majesty's service by speaking in this way.¹⁹

This last quote is interesting since it comes at the start of the embassy and highlights the doubts felt by the ambassador about his own actions.

¹⁸ BnF Fr. 15 991, fols 16–17: 'il m'estoit impossible de confirmer une creance qui ne m'estoit point connue, ce qui fut approuvé par ledict sieur Duc de Bouquiquan ils me prierent encore qu'en prenant congé du Roy, et que S.M je voulusse leur confirmer la creance de M. Riche pour le regard du Roy ie m'en excusay mais que par occasion j'en informerois volontiers M. le Prince et qu'ils ne devoient apprehender que V.M desadouast M. Riche de la creance de sa lettre'.

¹⁹ BnF Fr. 15 991, fol. 40: 'Suivant son discours, Sire il m'a conté tous les interrestz des seigneurs de cette Cour, afin de m'instruire de leurs affection, et que je ne prisse garde de qu'elle sorte, Je parleroia a eux. | Je luy ay aussi tesmoigné que je faisois grand cas de son procedé en mon endroit je me suis eslargy avec luy en de petits discours que je luy ay tenu confidemment et qui ne peuvent en rien prejudicier le service de V.M et m'exempteront pourtant de luy en dire d'autres a l'advenir. J'espère neantmoins n'avoir trahi le service de V.M en parlant de la sorte'.

It is as if he was inquiring about a way of conducting discussions for which he was ultimately responsible. He was constantly seeking approval from his King.

II

The strategy that the Marquis seemed to have adopted can be inferred from both his letters and the responses he got. As often in diplomatic literature, the letters from the King or his secretary contained a whole series of advice on the attitude to adopt and on the content of the dispatches Effiat was to send as soon as he settled in England.²⁰ The case of this ambassador tutored by a king also marks the transition to professionalised diplomacy and the expert diplomat. Initially, the ambassador was above all a royal courtier. However, while the Marquis d'Effiat went to England for an extraordinary mission, Cardinal Richelieu undertook a significant reform aiming to create a genuine department of foreign affairs staffed by professionals who could spend their entire career in French diplomacy. Besides, a real hierarchy was formalised, from the diplomatic agent to the Secretaries of State to the King.²¹

A very close friendship that you should not rush so that he does not suspect that it is by order, but rather imperceptibly move him to form. With news of him, your first reports must be filled [...] Your mission is to manage the affection of the priests and the clerics and having known some men of court and conduct and who wants some benefit, you will commit to await my resolution. Right now, I tell you that I rely on your advice.²²

²⁰ Thérèse Bru, Solène de La Forest d'Armaillé (eds), Introduction, in *Matière à écrire: Les échanges de correspondance du XVII^e au XIX^e siècle* (Saint-Denis: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 2017), p. 7; Hélène Sirantoine, 'La lettre diplomatique à la croisée des genres', in *Epistola 2. La lettre diplomatique: Écriture épistolaire et actes de la pratique dans l'Occident latin médiéval* (Madrid: Casa de Velasquez, 2018), pp. 1–7.

²¹ Madeleine Haehl, *Les affaires étrangères au temps de Richelieu. Le secrétariat d'État, les agents diplomatiques (1624–1642)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2006), pp. 32–33.

²² BnF Fr. 15 991, fols 20–21: 'une tres estroicte amitye avec luy, Ce que vous ne devez presser tout a coup a fin qu'il ne croye que ce soit par ordre, mais plustost insensiblement l'engager. De luy voz premiers memoires sont chargez [...] Vous avez pour cet effect a mesnager l'affection des Prestres et des religieux et en ayant connu quelqu'un homme de Cour et de conduite et qui veille quelque bien faict

Beyond the instructions, the King's writings were memoranda intended for his inexperienced ambassador. They told him how to behave and, above all, how to create the links and what events to relate. Put together, these writings constitute a guide, inspired by educational treatises, of the behaviour expected on different occasions and in the face of interlocutors with sometimes contradictory interests.

Your first dispatch must full of the deeds performed by the extraordinary ambassadors from wherever what is thought in England about the articles of law published against the Catholics of England in this last Parliament and how they are applied.²³

Monsieur le Marquis d'Effiat, it is common practice for a king to write again to his ambassador, to speak of other affairs than those touching the country where he keeps him. However, circumstances often obliged to do so. But it is because of a link they have with it and the man there and their pleasantries that we gladly entrust with him and address him that which could take another path.²⁴

Instructions or information on the progress of negotiations aside, the King's answers can be read as various steps in the diplomatic education of the Marquis d'Effiat. Indeed, if they are omnipresent in the letters of Louis XIII until October 1624, the quantity of advice started decreasing at the end of the year and disappeared entirely in 1625. This evolution of the royal discourse suggests improved skills in the use of diplomatic codes by the marquis. It also marks a greater autonomy given to the marquis as the negotiations progressed and positive outcome emerged.

vous lengagerez a attendre ma resolution, et moy des apresent Je vous dits que Je defereray a voz advis'.

²³ BnF Fr. 15 991, fol. 22: 'Vostre premiere despesche doit estre chargée des offices qu'auront rendu les Ambassadeurs extraordinaires qui sont de deça et de dela et ce que l'on pense dans l'Angleterre des articles y publiez contre les Catholiques d'Angleterre en ce dernier Parlement qu'elle en est l'execution'.

²⁴ BnF Fr. 15 991, fol. 50: 'Monsieur le Marquis d'Effiat, il est mal aysé qu'un Roy rescrive a son Ambassadeur, sans parler un mot des affaires qui le concernent au Pays ou il le tient, Et neantmoins il arrive bien souvent que toutes autres que celles l'a l'y obligent. Mais c'est par un rapport ou qu'ils y ont ou que celui qui y est, est si agreable que volontiers on luy confie & on luy adresse ce qui pourroit prendre un autre chemin'.

III

The structure of the letters evolved throughout the embassy. The Marquis d'Effiat began with very long dispatches containing traditional information on the host court and the progress of negotiations. Besides, they revealed two crucial elements for our understanding of the evolution of how Effiat viewed his own actions. His first writings were extraordinarily long and rich in details concerning his daily activities and the characters he met. He even went so far as to get lost in the physical descriptions of some of his nocturnal visitors. This profusion of details can be explained in two ways.

First, his intention could have been to provide as much information as possible to the French secretaries who will sort it out. However, this may also point out a man not so versed in court matters and incapable of prioritising relevant information. In any case, the demand for him to transmit information prompted him to register the smallest acts and gestures. He even explained the rhetoric or the stratagems, which he used to obtain secrets. By describing meetings and interviews in great details, he seemed to provide proof of his work and his involvement. This profusion of particulars is not unheard of in diplomatic correspondence. Many ambassadors extensively reported the discussions they had with members of the host court or in official talks. In the case of the Marquis d'Effiat, the details concern less the exchanges he had than the environment in which he found himself and the attitudes of the people he met. This extensive correspondence is a legitimation of his presence, evidencing his work and his obtaining the approval of his King. Thus, he went so far as to relate politically unimportant incidents. Although incredibly useful for us and a good analyst if there had been one, his anecdotes may have also raised questions viz. the qualities of the French agents and could have been of a nature to tarnish their reputation and damage their credibility.

One day, having been told that the Marquis d'Inoyozza, Spain's extraordinary ambassador, by the form of a compliment, had been made a doctor there, I thought that this same title was due to me, thus to honour me more than the Spaniards, they bestowed this dignity upon me through the gentlemen of my retinue, amongst them the Sieur de Belleville, who badly trained in the job of being a squire and being deaf and irritated by their speeches interrupted the one who introduced and

praised him with a harangue in Latin and asked the assistance that he be given an interpreter because he did not hear English. I felt it was my duty to represent this episode which will not be unpleasant to your majesty when you will know that your authority shines through everything and has this virtue to make doctors out of uneducated men.²⁵

This incident in Cambridge shows his lack of knowledge of English and Latin, and the lack of education of some members in his entourage, but above all emphasises an essential part of the ambassador's education: vernacular languages.²⁶ It also points out the ambassador's permanent management of the king's representation which he was tasked to preserve notwithstanding his ignorance of diplomatic practice. He asked to be made a doctor only because he thinks it is a right for ambassadors. Finally, as with advice from Louis XIII, the rate of these trivial details decreases with the progress of the negotiations. This may be because Louis XIII never responded to or commented on these details, but more probably the priorities of the Marquis changed over time.

The records describing the ambassador's daily life are much more infrequent after November 1624. Yet, they still featured many descriptions of the compliments and favours given to the Marquis. He systematically specified that he did not draw any 'vanity' from them but that he received them as so many honours to the glory of Louis XIII.

Between these compliments, I received one from M. de Buckingham, which I would easily remove because it was to my advantage and because I am above the vanity.

²⁵ BnF Fr. 15 991, fols 64–65: 'Un jour m'ayant esté dict que le Marquis d'Inoyozza Ambassadeur extraordinaire d'Espagne par forme d'insigne compliment y avoit esté passé Docteur. Je creus que ce mesme tiltre m'estoit deu de sorte que pour m'honorer davantage que les Espagnolz, ilz communiquerent en ma consideration cette dignité aux gentilzhommes de ma suite, entr'autres au sieur de Belleville, lequel portant sa science d'Escuyer aux talons eust sa surdité incommodée des discours qui se faisoient de facon qu'il interrompit celui qui le presentoit et faisoit sa louange une harangue en latin et demanda a toute l'assistance qu'on luy donnast un interprete attendu qu'il n'entendoit pas l'Anglois. Jay estimé Sire vous devoir représenter cette particularité qui ne sera peut estre desagréable a V.M quand elle scaura que son autorité reluist par tout, & a eu cette vertu de faire passer docteurs des hommes non lettrez'.

²⁶ Frédérique Leferme-Falguières, *Les courtisans: une société de spectacle sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2007), see chapter 4, pp. 223–302.

However, Sire, it is my duty to represent to you the affection this lord carries for Your Majesty and for those who serve you.²⁷

This focus on favours which do not enter the traditional competition between ambassadors shows the Marquis d'Effiat's will to paint himself in a most favourable light to his King:

I considered that it was not decent that I drank in the glass of the king but that in another so I could salute his health; this reason did not work, despite the Council of the Duke and I obeyed the king's will. I write to you about this event, Sire, to let you know that such a favour, which is not small and not common, has been bestowed to me to let you know that there is no kind of honour he does not bestow upon those who serve your majesty.²⁸

Now Sire, being obliged to tell you everything that I see or that I learn from what is happening in this Court, if I include in it the great favours that I receive, I very humbly beg your majesty not to impute this to vanity.²⁹

It was customary for him to make knights that day after dinner. He wanted so much to favour me that he used my sword which he took from my side, then tapped me once on the shoulder, as if I had been one of them. To that, I replied with a low reverence that he was doing me an extreme favour. He moved to all the others who were kneeling and tapped them thrice on the shoulder each.³⁰

²⁷ BnF Fr. 15 991, fol. 9: 'Entre ces compliments J'en receus un de M. de Bouquiquan que je supprimerois facilement parce qu'il fait a mon avantage et que je suis audela de la vanité n'estoit Sire, qu'il est de mon devoir de vous représenter l'affection que ce seigneur porte a V.M et a ceux qui la servent'.

²⁸ BnF Fr. 15 991, fol. 35: 'n'estimant pas qu'il fust de la decence que je beusse dans le verre du Roy mais que dans un autre je pouvois saluer sa santé cette raison n'opera rien si bien que par le Conseil du Duc j'obeis a la volonté du Roy. Je vous écris cette particularité Sire pour faire scavoir a V.M que telle faveur qui n'est n'y petite n'y commune m'a esté faite afin de vous donner a connoistre qu'il n'y a sorte d'honneur qu'il ne face a ceux qui servent V.M.'.

²⁹ BnF Fr. 15 991, fol. 70: 'Or Sire, estant obligé de vous dire tout ce que je voy ou que j'apprens qui se passe en cette Cour, si jy mesle les grandes faveurs que je recois je supplie treshumblement V.M n'imputer cela la vanité'.

³⁰ BnF Fr. 15 991, fol. 71: 'sa coustume est de faire ce jour la apres son disner des Chevaliers, Et me voulut tant favoriser que de les faire avec mon espée qu'il prit a mon costé, puis m'en donná un petit coup sur l'espaule, comme si j'eusse esté du nombre, aquoy je respondis avec une basse reverence, qu'il me faisoit une extreme faveur, il passa vers tous les autres qui estoient à genoux, & leur donna chacun trois coups'.

The list of honours described, in the context of secret negotiations, is paradoxical. At the same time, they testify to the favourable progress of the talks led by the French agent. That said, by agreeing to receive such marks of friendship publicly, Effiat was jeopardising the secrecy to which he was supposed to be bound. The term 'vanity' used precisely to discard any personal ambition is interesting since it explains specifically the conditions for writing this story. A squire of the king at the start of Louis XIII's adult reign in 1617, the Marquis gradually climbed the ladder alongside Richelieu. As a member of the king's council, already negotiating the marriage of the brother of the Duke of Luynes, it is possible to see in Effiat's first international mission the starting point for his career and an experience that would allow him to gain access to more important functions. This explains his self-promotion and his excessive evidencing of his being fit to serve as ambassador by referring directly or indirectly to the practical skills and virtues expected of an ambassador. The seemingly apologetic detailed accounts of the gestures and the favours he was bestowed were meant to testify to his good diplomatic practice. Effiat was the physical representation of the King of France, but beyond this inherently diplomatic role, it was for him an opportunity to show himself as a reliable, faithful gentleman with qualities useful to royalty, while increasing the honours attached to his name. This negotiation was the only diplomatic mission entrusted to Effiat. He did not intend to have a diplomatic career, and this episode emphasises perfectly how diplomacy was still perceived as a means for French nobles to increase their political profile and obtain new offices.

Besides, the personal ambitions of Effiat, the records of his actions as ambassador, of his personal successes as well as his failures exemplify the many stages of the rapid integration of a man of influence into foreign environments. This embassy allows us to understand the process of self-legitimation of a newcomer to the diplomatic field. The rhetoric of humble preterition and cumulative syntax used in his letters show an academic application as well as a desire to appear as a model agent. Moreover, the detailed self-aggrandising account of Effiat's experiences and actions, whether they served Louis XIII or not, also fits perfectly the noble culture of the time which consisted in always seeking honours that could benefit a name and therefore a family. The actions of the Marquis

d'Effiat, despite his age, make it possible to analyse the changing early modern process of learning the diplomatic function through the direct confrontation of the theory of diplomatic practices with their practical implementation on the ground.

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