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FROM THE PALACE OF RYSWICK TO THE SULTAN'S *SERAGLIO*: THE OTTOMAN TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION OF A CHRISTIAN EUROPEAN PEACE TREATY

Abstract

The inclusion of peace treaty articles between Christian powers in an Ottoman historical work of the late seventeenth century is unquestionably distinctive. The article presents an Ottoman translation of the Treaty of Ryswick (1697) concluded between the French king and the German emperor. This translation is included by the late seventeenth – early eighteenth-century Ottoman historian and palace official Silāḥdār Fındıklılı Meḥmed Aġa in his historical work called 'The Book of Victory' (*Nuṣretnāme*). With this unique text as its basis, the article will first attempt to place the translation in its historical context and explain the possible reasons for its inclusion by Silahdar in his history. Secondly, to morphologically evaluate the text to bring to the fore the translation strategies adopted and to explore the reception and the degree of understanding by the Ottoman side of the basic terms and linguistic topoi of a Christian European peace treaty. And lastly, to analyse the specific interpretation ascribed to the Ryswick agreement by the Ottoman leadership.

Keywords: Treaty of Ryswick, Silāḥdār Fındıklılı Meḥmed Aġa, supra-cultural translation, Alexandros Mavrocordatos

Once, during the early spring of 1698 and as the preliminary negotiations between the Ottomans and the Christian powers of the Holy League to end the Sixteen Years' War (1683–99) were well underway, a 'trustworthy French nobleman' who followed the Ottoman army, visited the Grand

Vizier's tent.[1] He told the Ottoman dignitary that the French king could mediate between the sultan and the German Emperor if the Ottoman side wished. The vizier, 'being perfectly aware of every matter regarding the state-of-affairs of friends and foes [alike]',[2] replied dismissively, 'they abandoned our cooperation in war, their mediation in peace is also not needed'.[3] And he added, 'Our friend, the French king needs rather conceal that he opted for a dishonourable peace, being driven out of so many places and castles that were in his hands'.[4]

The peace to which the vizier was referring to was the Treaty of Ryswick (Rijswijk, in the Western Netherlands), signed in October 1697 between France and the allied forces of the League of Augsburg, which ended the so-called Nine Years' War or War of the League of Augsburg (1688–97). Yet, by which means did the vizier acquire his knowledge of the treaty, and why did he interpret it as dishonourable for the French king? One of the answers lies in an intriguing, yet hitherto neglected by researchers, text inserted by the contemporary to the events Ottoman palace official and historian Silāḥdār Fındıklılı Meḥmed Aġa (1658 – c. 1726/27) to his history called 'The Book of Victory' (Nuṣretnāme), covering the period from 1695 to 1721.[5] This text is an Ottoman translation of the peace treaty

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[1] '[…] sefere ordu-yu hümāyūnla maʿan gelüb giden muʿtemed Franca Beg-zādesi […]': *Taʾrīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i ʿAmcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi (Topkapı Palace Museum Library, hereafter cited as: TSK), Revan, no. 1311, fol. 33a. Most probably, this 'trustworthy French nobleman' was no other than the Marquis of Ferriol, who was sent as a special envoy by Louis XIV in 1692 to accompany the Ottoman army. Jean Bérenger, 'La politique ottomane de la France de Vienne à Carlowitz (1683–1699)', in *Traktaty karłowickie z 1699 roku i ich następstwa*, ed. by Ilona Czamańska and Witold Szulc, Series: Balcanica Posnaniensia. Acta et Studia, 13 (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, 2003), pp. 35–53 (pp. 46–47).

[2] '[…] dost ve düşmanıń keyfiyet-i ḥāline vāḳıf her işiń eń yerlerin[i] bilmekle […]': ibid.

[3] '[…] cenkde refāḳatımızı terk ėtmişlerdir ṣulḥa daḫi anlarıń tavassuṭlarına iḥtiyāc yoḳdur': ibid.

[4] '[…] dostumuz Franca ḳralı ziyade saḳlamaḳ gerekdir ki elinden bu ḳadar ḳalʿa ve yerlerin[i] iḫrāc ve kesr-i ʿırz ile ṣulḥu irtikāb ėtmişlerdir […]': ibid.

[5] Silâhdâr Fındıklılı Mehmed Ağa, *Nusretnâme: İnceleme-Metin (1106–1133/1695–1721)*, ed. by Mehmet Topal (Ankara: Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, 2018).

signed between the French king and the German emperor at Ryswick on 30 October 1697.[6]

With this critical source as its base and starting point, the article aims to: first, place the translation in its historical context and explain the possible reasons for its inclusion by Silahdar in his history; second, to evaluate the text morphologically to bring to the fore the translation strategies adopted; third, to explore the reception and the degree of understanding by the Ottoman side of the basic terms and linguistic topoi of a Christian European peace treaty; and lastly, to analyse how the Ottoman leadership interpreted it and why it possibly did so.

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Including peace treaty articles between Christian powers in an Ottoman historical work of the late seventeenth century is a unique phenomenon. All available evidence suggests that Silāḥdār is the first Ottoman historian before the eighteenth century to have included such a text in his opus. To understand the reasons behind this novel inclusion, one needs to take as a starting point the specific historical background of the last quarter of the seventeenth century, dominated chiefly by war in both the eastern and the western half of the European continent. In the East, since 1683, a long-term conflict was raging between the Ottoman Empire and the Holy League, which included the Holy Roman Emperor, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Venice, and from 1686, informally, Muscovy. In the West, the ambitions of France were also countered by a coalition called the League of Augsburg, headed by the Holy Roman Emperor, that included several German electors, Sweden and Spain.[7]

The common goal against the Habsburg Emperor de facto brought together the Ottomans and the French once more.[8] If some Ottoman chronicles are to be believed, there was even a strong French influence

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[6] Ibid., pp. 455–61.

[7] Lucien Bély, *Les relations internationales en Europe, XVIIᵉ–XVIIIᵉ siècle*, 4th edn (Paris: Presses Universitaire de France, 2007), pp. 282–83. The United Provinces and England joined the coalition against France in 1688.

[8] See Bérenger, 'La Politique Ottomane'.

in the Ottoman decision to declare war against the Habsburg Emperor in 1683.[9] On the other hand, the practical need of the latter to engage his forces simultaneously on two fronts meant that the eastern and the western theatres were closely connected and what happened to the one carried significant repercussions for the other.[10]

In this respect, it was essential for the Ottoman leadership to be informed of the events in Western Europe since they closely influenced their decision-making. The same applied to the French side as well. In 1688, after five years of successive defeats, loss of territories and unsuccessful peace efforts, the Ottomans decided to send envoys to Vienna to negotiate a peace settlement.[11] Louis XIV, informed by his ambassador in the Ottoman capital of the Ottoman willingness to terminate the war with the House of Austria, decided to strike the German Empire as soon as possible before the emperor would conclude peace in the East and would become able to transfer his forces to the West.[12] That was the beginning of the Nine Years' War.

By attacking the Holy Roman Emperor, the French relieved the Ottomans from the pressure of the imperial forces. By the time of the declaration of war in the West, the Imperials had just conquered Belgrade, the entrance to the Balkan Peninsula. With the transfer of forces to the western front, the Habsburg advance in the core of the Ottoman lands lost its impetus.[13] The significance of these events for the Ottoman side is vividly demonstrated in the relatively detailed narration of the causes and

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[9] See for instance, Üsküdarî Abdullah Efendi, *Vâkı'ât-ı Rûz-merre*, vols 1–4, ed. by Erhan Afyoncu (Ankara: Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, 2017), 3, p. 310.

[10] On this constant vacillation of the Habsburgs between east and west during those years, see Jean Bérenger, 'La politique de l'Empereur Léopold 1er face à l'Empire ottoman (1689–1699)', in *La Paix de Karlowitz, 26 Janvier 1699: les relations entre l'Europe centrale et l'Empire ottoman*, ed. by Jean Bérenger (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2010), pp. 9–24.

[11] Yasir Yılmaz, 'An Ottoman Peace Attempt at the Habsburg Court during the Ottoman-Holy League War: Zülfikâr Efendi in Vienna, 1688–1693' (unpublished MA thesis, Bilkent University, 2008).

[12] Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Zübde-i Vekayiât: Tahlil ve Metin (1066–1116/1656–1704)*, ed. by Abdülkadir Özcan (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1995), pp. 395–96; Bély, *Les relations internationales*, pp. 355–56; Bérenger, 'La politique ottomane', pp. 44–45.

[13] Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Zübde-i Vekayiât*.

the early phase of the Nine Years' War – another novelty – that one can encounter in many contemporary Ottoman historical works, Silāḥdār's being one of them. In these narrations, one can see that the Ottoman court possessed not only a considerable knowledge of the events taking place on the Rhine but also of the decision of the French king to bring forward his attack due to the Ottoman-Habsburg peace negotiations.[14]

The negotiations in Vienna, having borne no fruits, continued the war in the East. Yet, the need of the Holy Roman emperor to fight on two fronts resulted in concrete benefits for the Ottoman side – Belgrade was reconquered in 1690 – in informal yet actual military cooperation between the Lily and the Crescent.[15] In 1697, the French king decided to conclude peace with his enemies.[16] The Ottoman decision-makers were privy to these developments. In a letter to Count Kinsky, the leading statesman in Vienna by that time, dated 23 February 1697, Lord William Paget, the English ambassador at the Ottoman court, informed him that,

> The French ambassador told the Grand Vizier that peace is negotiated with Christendom. But this peace cannot be to the Porte's advantage since the French king, disengaged from these enemies, will have the means to provide the most significant assistance to the Porte.[17]

As the negotiations at Ryswick were well in progress and even drew near conclusions, in September 1697, the Ottoman army under the personal command of the sultan suffered a devastating defeat by the imperial forces at Zenta. After this debacle and while the Ottoman leadership under the new Grand Vizier ʿAmcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa (d. 1702) meditated on

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[14] Silāḥdār Fındıklılı Meḥmed Aġa, *Silāḥdār Taʾrīḫi*, vol. 1–2 (İstanbul: Orḫaniye Maṭbaʿası, 1928), 2, pp. 396–98; Sarı Mehmed Paşa, *Zübde-i Vekayiât*. It must be also noted that parts of the narration being the same in both works, it's highly probable that the one was copied from the other.

[15] For an example of this cooperation in 1691 see Üsküdarî Abdullah Efendi, *Vâkı'ât-ı Rûz-merre*; Bérenger, 'La politique ottomane', p. 46.

[16] On the negotiations see, Bély, *Les relations internationales*, pp. 367–72.

[17] 'L'ambassadeur de France a dit au grand visir qu'on traitte de paix en Chretienté, mais que cette paix ne pourrá étre qu'à l'avantage de la porte, puisque le Roy de France étant parla degage de ses Ennemis aura moyen d'envoier des plus grandes assistances à la porte': Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (hereafter cited as: HHstA), Turcica 164/5, fol. 10ᵛ, Paget to Kinsky, 23 Feb. 1697.

its next moves, the news of the signing of the peace treaty between the French king and the Habsburg emperor reached the Ottoman court.

In a letter to the Dutch ambassador in Vienna, the Estates-General's Resident at the Porte Jacob Colyer (d. 1725) informed him that,

> They arrived here from all corners with the news of the general peace in Christendom. The Turks didn't want to believe something regarding the Emperor and the Empire until the Prince of Walachia delivered the 18 of the current month and printed a copy of it in the hands of the Grand Vizier.[18]

The fact that the Grand Vizier was not content to be orally informed about the treaty,[19] as seems to be generally the case, and he requested a copy of its articles, reveals the importance he attached to the treaty and his determination to judge its content by himself.[20] One could reasonably assume that this printed copy was the basis for the Ottoman translation.

According to Colyer, upon receiving the copy of the treaty, the Grand Vizier summoned a meeting of the Imperial Council 'at which it was discussed if it would not be better to conclude a truce as well [with the Austrian Habsburgs] upon reasonable terms'.[21] Although it cannot be judged for sure, the fact that the war in the West was now

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[18] '[…] sont arrivés ici de tous côtes les avis de la Paix Generale dans la chretienté, ce que les Tucs n'ont pas voulu croire à l'égard de l'Empereur, e de l'Empire, jusques à ce le Prince de Valachie en a fait remettre le 18 de ce mois un Exemplaire imprimé entre les mains du Grand Vizir […]': The National Archives, Kew, Richmond (hereafter cited as: TNA), SP 97/20, fol. 389ᵛ, Colyer to Hemskerk, 27 Dec. 1697.

[19] The Ottomans were also informed of the treaty by the French ambassador at the Ottoman court, *Ta'rīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i ʿAmcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fol. 33a.

[20] On the ways via which the Ottoman administration acquired information see, Güneş Işıksel, *La diplomatie ottomane sous le règne de Selîm II; paramètres et périmètres de l'Empire ottoman dans le troisième quart du XVIᵉ siècle* (Paris–Louvain–Bristol: Peeters, 2016), pp. 35–37. An example of oral transmission of information, concerning mainly again the Nine Years' War, see the quite intriguing conversation that took place in January 1691 between the Grand Vizier at the time, Fāżıl Muṣṭafā Paşa, and the English Ambassador William Trumbull, in John-Paul Ghobrial, *The Whispers of Cities. Information Flows in Istanbul, London, & Paris in the Age of William Trumbull* (Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 75–77.

[21] '[…] dans lequel fut deliberé s'il ne seroit pas mieux de faire aussi une Trêve sur des conditions raisonnables', TNA, SP 97/20, fol. 389ᵛ, Colyer to Hemskerk, 27 Dec. 1697.

over, allowing the totality of the Habsburg forces to be concentrated in the East, appears to be weighted heavily in the final Ottoman decision to commence new peace talks with the Holy League in January 1698.[22]

In addition to all that, Silāḥdār's reasoning for including a translation of this specific treaty becomes more apparent. It could be argued that it can be understood in light of the close diplomatic and military interconnectedness between the eastern and western *Theatrum Europeum* during the last two decades of the seventeenth century. This correlation may have resulted in a realisation by the author – a very close associate of the sultan[23] – as well as members of the Ottoman élite, that events taking place in the 'Land of the Infidels' could have significant effects on the Ottomans themselves. Narrations of wars, peace settlements, and even novel interstate tenets among the Christian European States would begin to occupy increasing space in the Ottoman historical and political literature in general as it gradually became essential for the Exalted State's officials to be more and more aware of the developments in the Christian world.[24] In this respect, Silāḥdār represents an early manifestation of a phenomenon that will become more accentuated throughout the eighteenth century.

Copies or translations of treaties of particular interest to a specific state not directly involved in the process could be found in most Christian European chanceries of the late seventeenth century.[25] Silāḥdār's inclusion of an Ottoman translation of the Treaty of Ryswick reveals that the Ottoman chancery followed the same practice. It could also be said that as well as the need for each administration to be informed of

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[22] Lord Paget used the peace in the west and the transferring of Habsburg forces in the east as one of his main arguments in favour of peace during his first peace-talk meeting with the Grand Vizier in January 1698, *Ta'rīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i ʿAmcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fols 17b–18a.

[23] For Silāḥdār's biography and on the close relation he developed with the sultan Muṣṭafā II (1695–1703), see Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, pp. 21–29.

[24] On this process, see Marinos Sariyannis, *A History of Ottoman Political Thought up to the Early Nineteenth Century* (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2019), pp. 381–431.

[25] See for instance the abbreviated French translation of the alliance treaty against the Ottomans signed between the German Emperor and the Polish king in 1682 in *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, ed. by Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki (Bucuresci: Academia Română, 1912), 16, p. 50.

important peace treaties or alliances between third parties which directly or indirectly influenced its decision-making, the dissemination of such documents can be understood as part of the general information flow during the early modern period. By the dawn of the eighteenth century, chanceries were not the only places where copies and translations of peace treaties could be found; they also occupied a prominent place in the printed or handwritten contemporary news media.[26]

This interdependence between chancery and news-media sources of information resulted from a complex system of ultra-regional information networks in which certain people could usually act as suppliers for multiple actors, state/official or non-state/unofficial ones.[27] In our case, this interdependence becomes clearly illustrated. The Grand Vizier and, consequently, the Ottoman chancery received a printed copy of the peace treaty between the Holy Roman Emperor and the king of France from the Wallachian ruler Constantin Brâncoveanu (d. 1714) who, together with his chief minister and uncle, Constantin Cantacuzino (d. 1716), were the leading purveyors of news coming from western and central Europe, regularly supplying with handwritten and printed media, apart from the Ottoman officials, the English and Dutch resident ambassadors at the Porte.[28]

Before the printed copy was given to the head of the Ottoman government, it had to be translated by the chief interpreter of the Imperial Council (*Dīvān-i Hümāyūn Baş Tercümānı*).[29] Although part of the

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[26] On the burgeoning research field of news media in the early modern world see notably, among others, *Travelling Chronicles: News and Newspapers from the Early Modern Period to the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Siv Gøril Brandtzæg, Paul Goring, and Christine Watson (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2018); *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2016); Johann Petitjean, *L'intelligence de choses. Une histoire de l'information entre Italie et Méditerranée (XVIᵉ–XVIIᵉ siècles)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2013); Mario Infelise, *Prima dei Giornali: Alle origini della pubblica informazione (secoli XVI e XVII)* (Roma: Editori Laterza, 2002).

[27] See Ghobrial, *The Whispers of Cities*.

[28] Eric Ditmar Tappe, 'Documents concerning Rumania in the Paget Papers', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 33, no. 80 (1954), 201–11.

[29] This process can be seen among many other examples in *Ta'rīḫ-i Ṣulḥnāme-i ʿAmcazāde Ḫüseyin Paşa*, fol. 28a, 35a.

Imperial Chancery, we do not know much about the internal subdivision of his office. And even though not with absolute certainty, one could assume that the chief interpreter himself would have translated the most important documents. By 1697 the latter was the long-experienced negotiator and holder of the chief interpreter's title for nearly three decades, Alexandros Mavrocordatos (d. 1709).[30] Presumably, he could be designated, yet not unequivocally, as the translator of the text.

Prominent British cultural historian Peter Burke distinguished between the medieval and post-medieval regimes or cultures of translation. The medieval was generally influenced by the word-for-word mode of translation, whereas the post-medieval – by the more unrestrained rendering of the general meaning of the text.[31] This distinction is to be regarded as a principle in the present case. The Ottoman translator of the treaty did not intend to translate faithfully, word-for-word, the peace articles but instead to synopsise, to provide a concise form of them. His purpose appears to inform the Grand Vizier about the treaty's content in a straightforward, not time-consuming form. Let us take Article VII as an example:

Original text	Ottoman translation
Fruentur etiam omnibus emolumentis Pacis hujus, ejusque assertione plenissimè comprehendetur Dominus Elector Brandeburgicus, cum omnibus ditionibus, possessionibus Subditis & juribu, nominatim iis quae ipsi ex Tractatu 29. Mensis Junii Anni 1679. inito compretunt, ac si singula speciatim relata essent.[32]	Kezâlik Brandebung Herseki ke'l-evvel yerlerine ve re'âyâlarına mutasarrıf ola.[33]

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[30] On his life and activity as a negotiator, see the still valuable yet not complete and outdated in many respects study of Nestor Camariano, *Alexandre Mavrocordato, le Grand Drogman. Son activité diplomatique 1673–1709* (Thessaloniki: Institute of Balkan Studies, 1970).

[31] Peter Burke, 'Cultures of translation in early modern Europe', in *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by id. and R. Po-chia Hsia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 7–38 (p. 26).

[32] *Traitè de paix entre L'Empereur, la France, et l'Empire Conclu à Ryswick en Holland le trentième Octobre 1697* (La Haye: Adrian Moetjens, 1697), p. 10 (it contains the Latin original and a French translation placed side by side. All subsequent references to the original text of the peace agreement will be from made from this printed form of the treaty).

[33] Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, p. 457.

In this respect, it seems that he followed a more general pattern. Coincidentally, the editor of one of the most renowned monthly printed periodicals of the time, the *Mercure Historique et Politique*,[34] published a translation of the same treaty in French, declaring to the readers that 'this treaty is a bit too long to be included in its entirety. We will content ourselves with an extract of it'.[35]

Still, the Ottoman version of the peace treaty is not only abbreviated in how it is translated but also in the actual number of articles. It contains thirty-seven of them,[36] whereas the actual treaty has sixty articles.[37] It follows that nine articles are entirely missing,[38] whereas 21 are merged. For instance, four of the sixteen articles in the original text concerning the Duke of Lorraine are not mentioned,[39] and the others are integrated into three articles.[40] There seems to be a logic behind the fusions, such as the categorisation of a single subject, the affairs of Lorraine, or the newly built French fortresses on the eastern side of the Rhine after the Treaty of Nijmegen (1678–79).[41] On the other side, the omission of other articles, such as the one declaring the inviolability of the treaty (Article LIII), is more difficult to explain.

The matter became further complicated since the number of articles was indeed known to the Ottoman officials. In his Relation on the Peacy Treaties of Carlowitz (or Karlowitz (modern Sremski Karlovci in Serbia), the head of the Chancery (*Re'isü'l-küttāb*) and first Ottoman

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[34] For more on the *Mercure Historique et Politique*, see Jean Lombard, 'Mercure Historique et Politique (1686–1782)', in *Dictionnaire des journaux, 1600–1789,* ed. by Jean Sgard, vols 1–2 (Paris: Universitas, 1991), 2, pp. 871–78.

[35] 'Ce Traité est un peu trop long pour le pouvoir inserer tout entier. On se contentera d'en voir un Extrait', *Mercure Historique et Politique*, Nov. 1697 (vol. 23, July–December 1697), 605.

[36] Silāḥdār mentions also that the treaty that was signed had thirty-seven articles: 'otuzyedi mâdde üzerine', Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, p. 456.

[37] *Traitè de paix*.

[38] Articles XXXI, XLI, XLII, XLIII, LI, LIII, LIV, LV, and LX of the original text.

[39] See fn. 32 above.

[40] Articles 26, 27, and 28 of the Ottoman translation, Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, pp. 459–60.

[41] Articles XXV, XXVI, and XXVII of the original text, *Traitè de paix*, pp. 21–22, and article 25 of the Ottoman translation, respectively, Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, p. 459.

plenipotentiary at the same peace congress, Meḥmed Rāmī, in the section where he is discussing the treaty of Ryswick, explicitly mentions that the latter was concluded upon sixty articles.[42] In that case, either the translator chose for brevity – or some other unknown reason – to present the translation in a shorter form, *Silāḥdār*, or even a later copyist of his text copied the original text of the translation erroneously.

Delving further into the translator's choices, one notes some small but intriguing details. In Article VIII, concerning the affairs of the Palatinate and the litigation between the members of its princely family,[43] he specifies that Duchess Elisabeth Charlotte of Orleans (d. 1722) is a relative of the French king.[44] This specification is absent in the original text, so the translator either deemed it vital for the Ottoman officials to comprehend the situation better or added it to display his knowledge of European matters tacitly.

On the other hand, some significant non-inclusions captivate the historian's attention. In several articles of the peace treaty, reference is made to two previous seventeenth-century congresses, namely the Peace Treaties of Westphalia (1648) and the Peace Treaties of Nijmegen (1678–79).[45] And yet surprisingly, whereas the latter is always mentioned in the Ottoman translation,[46] the first is entirely absent. Only speculations can be made on this choice made by the translator. Did he not deem it essential to include both treaties but only the most recent one? If yes, why? Did he not consider Westphalia equally important to Nijmegen? Unfortunately, in the absence of further evidence, the only thing one can do is point out this conspicuous omission in all respects.

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[42] '[…] altmış madde üzerine ṣulḥ olmuş-idi […]', *Ta'rīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i ʿAmcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fol. 33a.

[43] *Traitè de paix*, pp. 10–11; Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, p. 457.

[44] 'França akrabâsından olan Ducsad Orliye […]', Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, p. 457. Elisabeth Charlotte of the princely House of the Palatinate was married to the brother of the French King, Philippe I, Duke of Orléans (d. 1701). See Dirk Van der Cruysse, *Madame Palatine* (Paris: Fayard, 1988).

[45] Notably Articles III, XIV, and XLVII.

[46] Rendered as *Nemyega* in the Ottoman translation, Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, pp. 456, 458.

In recent decades, translation studies, mainly focusing on the early modern period, have gathered momentum in the field of cultural history.[47] The translation process was seen more as 'a shift between two cultures' rather than a 'shift between two languages' to follow Umberto Eco.[48] A new term was coined, that of *cultural translation*. A term that gradually expanded its use well beyond the translation of texts *per se* to include a wide range of 'translation of practices' taking place mainly during intercultural encounters,[49] a development closely connected to the currently in-vogue field of global history. Despite a surge in studies on the language of peace or the languages of diplomacy in the early modern period, translations of peace treaties as possible examples of cultural translation lagged far behind.[50]

And yet, as rightly pointed out, it was primarily through the texts of peace treaties and the evolution, effusion and stabilisation of their terminology that common 'laws of peace' came into being.[51] Such a historical development, of course, did not occur over a few decades in the second half of the seventeenth century but gradually and over centuries. In this respect, the Ottoman translation of the Treaty of Ryswick provides an

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[47] Of the numerous publications on the subject see, among others, the pivotal collective volume: Burke, Po-chia Hsia, *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*; and the most recent one: *Übersetzen in der Frühen Neuzeit – Konzepte und Methoden*, ed. by Regina Toepfer, Peter Burschel, and Jörg Wesche (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2021). Also, as the result of the multidisciplinary project: 'Übersetzungsleistungen von Diplomatie und Medien im vormodernen Friedensprozess. Europa 1450–1789' (IEG–Mainz), two important collective volumes on the issue of translation and peacemaking process where published: *Frieden übersetzen in der Vormoderne. Translationsleistungen in Diplomatie, Medien und Wissenschaft*, ed. by Heinz Duchhardt and Martin Espenhorst (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), and *Frieden durch Sprache? Studien zum kommunikativen Umgang mit Konflikten und Konflictlösungen*, ed. by Martin Espenhorst (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012).

[48] Cited in Burke, 'Cultures of translation', p. 7.

[49] On its use as an analytical tool in intercultural diplomatic encounters, see the dedicated to the subject *Journal of Early Modern History*, 20, no. 4 (2016).

[50] A notable exception, focused though more on linguistic aspects, is: *Verständigung und Diplomatie auf dem Westfälischen Friedenskongress. Historische und Sprachwissenschaftliche Zugänge*, ed. by Annette Gerstenberg (Köhl–Weimar–Wien: Böhlau, 2014).

[51] Martin Espenhorst, 'Einführung: Frieden übersetzen in der Vormoderne. Translationsleistungen und -defizite im vormodernen Friedensprozess', in *Frieden übersetzen in der Vormoderne*, pp. 9–15.

excellent case to test the *cultural translation* paradigm in peace treaties. The same test applies to another historiographical perception that sustains the alleged dissemination of European peace-making know-how outside Christian Europe from the end of the seventeenth century onwards.

According to the dominant narrative, still widely shared among early modern European diplomacy historians, an *ius publicum Europeum* had come into being among the Christian European states by the dawn of the eighteenth century. The Ottomans, usually portrayed as militant followers of the 'Islamic Law of War and Peace', only reluctantly acceded partly to it due to the Treaties of Carlowitz.[52] Such a narrative privileges a model of effusion in which Christian Europe acts as the sole avant-garde disseminator of diplomatic practices and peace norms to the rest. If that were the case, the Ottoman translator of a Christian-European peace treaty would have faced insurmountable problems. Because not least, he would either have to invent an entirely new set of terminology or square the circle of adjusting the legal vocabulary and norms of the 'Infidels' to the precepts of Islamic Law. But was the situation indeed as such?

An examination of the translation attests otherwise, starting from the appellation of the peace agreement itself. The translator principally calls the treaty *ṣulḥ u ṣalāḥ*.[53] In the Islamic legal phraseology, and especially that of the *ḥanafī* legal school, predominant in the Ottoman Domains, the word *ṣulḥ* designates a short-period truce (up to ten years usually) that a Muslim ruler can sign with an 'Infidel' one since permanent peace between them is strictly forbidden.[54] And still, the same term is here used to refer to a peace agreement between Christians.

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[52] See for instance, Heinz Duchhardt, 'Peace treaties from Westphalia to the Revolutionary Era', in *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History. From the Late Middle Ages to World War One*, ed. by Randall Lesaffer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 45–58; Colin Heywood and Ivan Parvev, 'Introduction', in *The Treaties of Carlowitz (1699). Antecedents, Course and Consequences*, ed. by eid. (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2020), pp. 1–16.

[53] Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, pp. 455–56. In other instances, it is designated simply as *ṣulḥ*, ibid., p. 456, 460–61, and one time with a synonym of *ṣulḥ*, *muṣālaḥa*, ibid., p. 460.

[54] Viorel Panaite, *Ottoman Law of War and Peace. The Ottoman Empire and Its Tribute-Payers from the North of the Danube*, 2nd revised edn (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2019), pp. 170–72.

A peace, which, according to its Latin text, was 'Christiana, universalis & perpetua'.[55] Thus, either the translator chose to interpret this peace as a truce – which, in fact, ironically was – in the traditional Islamic legal frame, in the absence of an analogous term for perpetual peace, or that the word *ṣulḥ u ṣalāḥ* itself had semantically evolved.[56]

In recent years, a new generation of scholars of Ottoman diplomacy tried to demonstrate the practical nature of Ottoman diplomatic practices and vocabulary, their constant evolution throughout the life span of the Empire to adapt themselves to equally constantly transforming historical processes.[57] In this light, it should be pointed out that the Ottomans have signed non-time-limited peace agreements with various Christian European powers since the beginning of the fifteenth century.[58] This practice was expressed in adopting novel concepts or re-semanticisation of existing ones. The best example of such re-semanticisation of peace-related terms is the famous Ottoman legal authority of the sixteenth century Ebu's-suʿūd Efendi (d. 1574). By legitimising an already established practice, the latter clearly distinguished between two types of *ṣulḥ:* a time-limited one (*muvaḳḳit*) and an indefinite one (*müʾebbed*).[59]

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[55] *Traitè de paix*, p. 7.

[56] The war, known as the War of the Spanish Succession, commenced again in 1701.

[57] See notably Güneş Işıksel, 'II. Selim'den III. Selim'e Osmanlı Diplomasisi: Birkaç Saptama', in *Nizâm-ı Kādîm'den Nizâm-ı Cedîd'e III. Selim ve Dönemi/ Selim III and His Era from Ancien Régime to New Order*, ed. by Seyfi Kenan (İstanbul: İSAM, 2010), pp. 315–38.

[58] For example, in the peace treaty concluded in 1430 between the Ottomans and the Venetians, Sultan Murad II promised 'bona, dreta, fedel, ferma e veraxia paxe, per mar e per terra' to the Doge, without a specific duration, *Diplomatarium veneto-levantinum: sive, Acta et diplomata res Venetas, Graecas atque Levantis illustrantia*, ed. by Georg Martin Thomas and Riccardo Predelli, vols 1–2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 2, pp. 343–44.

[59] Cited in İbrahim Peçevi, *Tarīh-i Peçevi* (İstanbul, H. 1283/1866), I, pp. 486–87. In his seminal study on the Ottoman foreign policy during the last quarter of the sixteenth century, Güneş Işıksel noted that this *fetvā,* legitimising the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1570, is interestingly not to be found in contemporary to the events Ottoman chronicles but only in that of Peçevi, written much later, in the seventeenth century, Işıksel, *La diplomatie ottomane*, p. 158. Irrespective of its possible authenticity, the presence of such a *fetvā* clearly manifest, as it is argued in the main text, that the Ottomans were trying, by enriching and re-interpreting its content, to harmonise the Islamic Law with their political exigencies.

In the late seventeenth century, this distinction was part of the typical jargon of the Ottoman officials and peace negotiators,[60] whereas another term, *terk-i cidāl* (literally, the abandonment of war), was adopted to designate either the truce or the armistice.[61]

That being as it is, by the time of the Peace of Ryswick, the supposedly 'Christian European Law of Nations' tripartite division of war-ending agreements, peace/truce/armistice, was shared and had equivalent terms in the Ottoman-Turkish. It is interesting to point out that the Ottoman translator decided to omit the word *perpetua* (and, along with it, the *Christiana* and *universalis*) despite the presence of an Ottoman equivalent and chose to state the infinity of the treaty by referring to its validity for the ancestors of the two signing monarchs, a statement also found in the original text.[62]

A distinctive feature of peace congresses of the second half of the seventeenth century was the appointment by the opposing parties of a third power as mediators to facilitate the peace-making process.[63] In the Congress of Ryswick, for instance, the role of mediator was held by Sweden.[64] The word used by the Ottoman translator for mediation was the word *tavassuṭ*.[65] To understand its selection, one needs a short but essential delving into the Islamic legal framework and, most specifically, into the legal concept of *ṣulḥ*.[66]

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[60] See, for instance, *Ta'rīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i 'Amcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fol. 22b.

[61] Although the terminology may be a bit confusing sometimes. See, for instance, the discussion between the Ottoman plenipotentiaries and the Muscovite one at Carlowitz, where the former proposed to the latter either a perpetual peace ('müe'bbed […] ṣulḥ u ṣalāḥ'), or a truce ('terk-i cidāl u muvāda'a'), or an armistice ('terk-i cenk ü cidal'), ibid., fol. 109a.

[62] Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, p. 456; *Traitè de paix*, p. 7.

[63] On the issue in general, see Michael Rohrschneider, 'Friedensvermittlung und Kongresswesen: Strukturen – Träger – Rezeption (1643–1697) ', in *L'art de la paix. Kongresswesen und Fridensstiftung im Zeitalter des Westfälischen Friedens*, ed. by Christoph Kampmann et al. (Münster: Aschendorff, 2011), pp. 139–65.

[64] Werner Buchholz, 'Zwischen Glanz und Ohnmacht. Schweden als Vermittler des Friedens von Rijwick', in *Der Friede von Rijwick 1697*, ed. by Heinz Duchhardt et al. (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1998), pp. 219–56.

[65] Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, p. 455.

[66] Aida Othman, 'And Ṣulḥ is best: Amicable Settlement and Dispute Resolution in Islamic Law' (unpublished PhD thesis, Harvard University, 2009).

In Islamic Law, this polysemous word does not denote the peace or truce between monarchs or states but rather the peaceful settlement (or contractual agreement) between two litigants who concord to settle their dispute without presenting themselves at the Islamic court. To help them resolve their litigation, the two parties designate a commonly trusted third person (or persons) called *mutavassıṭ*, mediator, and his service *tavassuṭ,* mediation.[67] Interestingly, this interpersonal legal procedure and its specific vocabulary were transferred discoursively to an inter-state level. Thus, according to the Ottoman thinking, the crucial scope and aim of a peace mediator is the 'reconciliation between two persons' (*ıṣlāḥ-ı ẕātu'l-beyn*),[68] the noun *ıṣlāḥ* (redressing, betterment, conciliation) occupying a prominent place in the lexicon of the legal procedure of *ṣulḥ*.[69]

Contrary to the established belief that the first encounter of the Ottomans with the concept of mediation in an inter-state peace-making process was at the Peace Congress of Carlowitz, the Exalted State had already been using the idea years before. In 1685, for instance, the Prince of Transylvania Mihály Apafi (d. 1690), was formally appointed by both the Ottomans and two powers of the Holy League, the Habsburgs and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as a mediator to help end the conflict started in 1683. His efforts were not crowned with success, though.[70] In another two instances, in 1688 and 1691, the Porte equally accepted the Dutch and English mediation to terminate the same conflict, a mediation which again bore no fruit in the end.[71] Hence, even arising from entirely different legal traditions, the idea of mediation appears thus to have been shared equally as a practice in a broader than is usually accepted geographical area during the second half of the seventeenth century.

Another fundamental element of the multilateral treaties after the Congress of Westphalia was the amnesty clause which, although

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[67] Ibid., pp. 7, 201–45. The *ṣulḥ* mediators were also called *muṣliḥūn*.

[68] *Ta'rīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i 'Amcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fol. 23a.

[69] Othman, 'And Ṣulḥ is best', pp. 34, 233.

[70] Konstantinos Poulios, 'Searching for Peace Amidst War: The Ottoman Diplomatic Efforts in the Year 1685 and the Role of Alexandros Mavrocordatos' (in Greek), *Mnemon*, 38 (2021), 11–32.

[71] *Ta'rīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i 'Amcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fols 2b–3a, 4a.

present in earlier treaties, became more amply disseminated during the second half of the seventeenth century.[72] In the Peace of Ryswick between the Holy Roman Emperor and the French king, amnesty holds a prominent position, being the main subject of the second article of the treaty.[73] To my knowledge, the first mention of an amnesty article in an Ottoman peace treaty was made at Carlowitz, where a general amnesty was agreed between the Ottoman Empire and Venice.[74] Yet, it seems that the concept of amnesty must have been already known to the Ottomans since the translator used specific terms, such as *ferāmūş olmaḳ* (to forget) or *ʿafv olmaḳ* (to forgive, to pardon) as Ottoman equivalents to the word *amnesty*,[75] terms which one will also encounter in the 1699 treaty with Venice.[76]

From perhaps the first half of the seventeenth century on, the ambassadors appointed at peace conferences were designated as *plenipotentiaries*.[77] The Ottoman equivalent encountered in the Ottoman translation of the treaty was the term *meʾẕūn ü muraḫḫaṣ* (the one who has a permit) *vekīlleri*.[78] Although the words *meʾẕūn* and *muraḫḫaṣ* have not the meaning of plenipotentiary in Meninski's famous Ottoman- -Latin dictionary published in 1680,[79] this appellation seems to have been already used in the diplomatic context since one could amply encounter it in the Relation of Zülfiḳār Efendi on his embassy in

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[72] Espenhorst, 'Einführung', p. 14.

[73] *Traitè de paix*, p. 8.

[74] HHstA, Turcica 170, Protocollum, fol. 199. See the Ottoman text of the treaty in Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, pp. 505–13, and especially the reference to a general amnesty: ibid., p. 511.

[75] Ibid., p. 456.

[76] Ibid., p. 511.

[77] Franz Bosbach, 'Verfahrensordnungen und Verhandlungs-Abläufe auf den Friedenskongressen des 17. Jahrhunderts. Überlegungen zu einer Vergleichenden Untersuchung der Äusseren Formen frühneuzeitlicher Friedensverhandlungen', in *L'art de la paix*, pp. 92–118 (p. 103).

[78] Silâhdâr, *Nusretnâme*, p. 456.

[79] Franciszek Mesgnien Meniński, *Thesaurus linguarum orientalium turcicae, arabicae, persicae* (Vienna, 1680), pp. 4232, 4564. On the other hand, the word *vekīl* takes indeed that meaning in the term *vekīl-i muṭlaḳ*, ibid., p. 5409. A term used mainly to designate the Grand Vizier. For instance, *Taʾrīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i ʿAmcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fol. 38b.

Vienna (1688–92) to designate both the Ottoman peace negotiators as the Christian ones.[80]

From this brief juxtaposition of some critical peace-making-related vocabulary between the original text and the Ottoman translation, one could infer that the Ottomans shared much of the lexicon and norms of peace with their Christian neighbours. What is more, the Porte was swift in assimilating new concepts – such as the one of amnesty – or in ascribing novel meanings to existing words to express a recent diplomatic norm, as in the case of the *muraḫḫaṣ vekīl*/plenipotentiary. Therefore, the Ottoman translator of the Treaty of Ryswick did not have to face similar problems as, for example, the Jesuits in trying to adjust the Christian vocabulary in seventeenth-century China.[81] Because even though most of the Ottoman--Turkish terms originated from a different cultural/legal background than the European Christian one, the constant interaction between the Ottomans and the Christian world resulted in shared customary practices that transcended cultural and religious boundaries. Hence, one could speak more of supra-cultural than a cultural translation in this case.

The prevalent interpretation between modern-day historians concerning the peace treaty of 1697 between the Habsburg Emperor and the French king maintains that the situation returned to a *status quo ante bellum* with a slight advantage on the French side. The latter had to quit its possessions acquired during the war east of the Rhine, but it did secure Alsace with the vital city of Strasbourg. And although the Duke of Lorraine was reinstated to his domain, he only regained part of his sovereignty since the French troops were given the right to pass freely through his territory.[82]

Still, the interpretation the Ottomans ascribed to the treaty differed significantly. The Grand Vizier spoke of a 'dishonourable peace' that the French king had to conceal.[83] To understand that reaction, one should

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[80] *Zülfikâr Paşa'nın Viyana Sefâreti ve Esâreti (1099–1103/1688–1692)*, ed. by Mustafa Güler (Istanbul: Çamlıca, 2008), pp. 37, 39.

[81] Burke, 'Cultures of translation', pp. 9–10.

[82] Bély, *Les relations internationales*, pp. 371–72; George Clark, 'The Nine Years' War, 1688–1697', in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, ed. by John Selwyn Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 6, pp. 223–53, 252–53.

[83] See above p. 100.

not only interpret it as a result of the frustration and bitterness felt by the Ottoman side because of the abandonment of their 'informal alliance' in war by the French.

During the last quarter of the seventeenth century, especially during the Sixteen Years' War, an Ottoman admiration for France could be seen. The strength and power of the French to stand alone victoriously against a coalition of powers seem to have fascinated the Ottomans, who, at the same time, could not repel the alliance of the forces of the Holy League. Silāḥdār himself, while narrating the beginning of the Nine Years' War, could not but marvel that although so many powers united against the French king and marched upon him, the latter 'became victorious and triumphant against them all. The only thing that all these enemies achieved was to demonstrate the power of France'.[84]

From where did this power originate? In his Carlowitz Relation, the Ottoman plenipotentiary Meḥmed Rāmī provides the following explanation: French King Louis XIV 'acquired wisdom among the Christian kingdoms, and he (himself) worked hard to balance the income and expenditure. He reduced the excessive expenses, and by possessing innumerable treasuries […]', he amassed a great army with which he decided to march 'beyond his borders' (*ḥudūduñ bīrūn olub*).[85] Such an explanation mirrored contemporary Ottoman anxieties about balancing the budget and reducing what was perceived as unnecessary.[86] In this instance, the French king appears to act as a model which the Ottoman statesmen, even the sultan himself, should follow.

Yet, 'it's evident that he became the cause of great upheaval. The other Christian kingdoms were possessed by fear from such a degree of power and strength […]'.[87] They united against him, proclaiming that

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[84] '[…] cümleye ġālib ü manṣūr olub ancaḳ bu ḳadar düşmanları Franca'nıñ iẓhār-ı ḳuvvetine bāʿiṣ oldılar […]', Silāḥdār, *Silāḥdār Taʾrīḫi*, 2, p. 398.

[85] '[…] mülūk-i Naẓārā arasında kiyaset ṣāḥibi olub irād ü meṣārifi niẓāmına ḳıyām u ihtimām ve meṣārif-i zāʾideyi ḳaṭʿ édüb ḫaẓāyin-i bī-şümāre mālik olmaġla […]', *Taʾrīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i ʿAmcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fol. 32a.

[86] Sariyannis, *A History of Ottoman Political Thought*, pp. 308–22.

[87] '[…] kemāl zevāle sebeb olduġu ẓāhir olub bu mertebe ḳuvvet ü ḳudreti olduğundan sāʾir mülūk-i Naẓārā ḫavfe düşüb […]', *Taʾrīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i ʿAmcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fols 32a–32b.

'they would not make peace unless all [the lands] taken by the French be returned to their owners'.[88] War was made. But the French king, despite such a power, 'after that [the War] perhaps, his treasury becoming empty and his subjects impoverished, his troops also fatigued, he thought of the possibility of the necessity of a highly dishonourable peace'.[89]

The reasons presented as the cause of the abandonment of war by King Louis XIV are the same that the Ottoman officials would use to justify their own decision to end the war with the Holy League a few months later.[90] Still, the idea of the 'dishonourable peace' merits attention. Recent studies have demonstrated the importance of 'honour', 'reputation', and 'good name' for the early modern 'Society of Princes'.[91] The latter seems to resemble what Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot refer to as *la cité de l'opinion*, a society in which the place one holds in the social hierarchy is closely associated with the opinion the others have of him. This opinion is formed by external symbols and manifestations of power and wealth, by his *grandeur*.[92]

Signing a peace treaty that would have resulted in a 'loss of honour' could urge early modern decision-makers to prolong wars until they would receive terms 'honourable' for them or be left with no other option but to sign a 'dishonourable' peace treaty.[93] The amazement the Ottomans felt was thus related to their perception of their French grandeur. This grandeur was, in their minds, irreconcilable with the

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[88] '[…] alınan her ne ise girü āṣḥābına redd olunmaya ṣulḥ olmayalar […]', ibid., fol. 32b.

[89] 'Belki bundan ṣoñra ḥazinesine ḳillet ve reʿāyāsına żaʿf gelmekle ʿaskeri daḥi daġladıḳda ziyāde kesr-i ırż ile muṣālaḥayı muḥtāc olmaḳ iḥtimāli mulāḥaża ile […]', ibid.

[90] Ibid., fols 18b–19a.

[91] Michael Rohrschneider, 'Reputation als Leitfaktor in den internationalen Beziehungen der Früher Neuzeit', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 291, no. 2 (2010), 331–52.

[92] Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot, *De la Justification. Les économies de la grandeur* (Paris; Gallimard, 1991), pp. 126–37.

[93] For the Thirty Years' War, see Christoph Kampmann, 'Der ehrenvolle Friede als Friedenshidernis: Alte Fragen und neue Ergebnisse zur Mächtepolitik im Dreißigjährigen Krieg', in *Pax perpetua. Neuere Forschungen zum Frieden in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. by Inken Schmidt-Voges et al. (Munich: Bibliothek Altes Reich, 2010), pp. 141–56. For the Ottomans during the Sixteenth Years' War, see Poulios, 'Searching for Peace'.

terms the treaty contained. But to which terms were they referring? According again to Meḥmed Rāmī,

> And peace was made upon sixty articles which concerned some [territorial] exchanges and the abandonment [by the French king] of numerous places and so many strong fortresses taken with the loss of countless men and the spending of treasuries [all] these past twenty years.[94]

The main issue for the Ottoman statesman and negotiator seems to concern the demolitions/evacuations of many French-held fortresses east of and on the Rhine. That was the main reason for interpreting the treaty as 'dishonourable' for the French king. And yet, the Ottoman side apparently drew more profound conclusions from these 'disreputable' terms. This constatation could be made from an intriguing connection between some provisions of the Treaty of Ryswick and some of the Treaty of Carlowitz. The founding principle of the latter was the precept *uti possidetis* (*'alā ḥālihi* in Ottoman), that is, everyone keeps what holds at the moment.[95] Still, the Ottoman side, and according to some Christian sources, the Ottoman negotiator Alexandros Mavrocordatos,[96] the most probable Ottoman translator of the treaty of Ryswick, came up with a stratagem. Mavrocordatos reasoned that 'when the one side wants to keep everything, and the other to get back everything, a way needs to be found that satisfies both'.[97] The satisfaction claimed by the Ottoman side was the demolition and evacuation of fortresses along the frontier. The provision was that every such demolition or evacuation

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[94] '[…] ve yiğirmi seneden berü esrāf-ı ḫazīne ve itlāf-ı 'asker-i bī-şumār ile āḫz eyledüği bu ḳadar ḳılā'-ı üstüvār ve nevāḥī-i vāfire istirdādına ve ba'żı mübadeleye dā'ir altmış madde üzerine ṣulḥ olmuş-idi […]', *Ta'rīḫ-i Ṣulḥ-nāme-i 'Amcazāde Ḥüseyin Paşa*, fols 32b–33a.

[95] Ibid., fols 40b–41b. 'Narratio conventus caroloviciani, quam dedit quidam a secretis Carolo Ruzzini, veneti cum summa potestate ad eum conventum legati': Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice, It. VII 407(=7594), fol. 3ʳ.

[96] Ibid., fol. 17ᵛ–18ʳ.

[97] '[…] quand l'un desire de garder tout, et l'autre à ravoir tout, il faut trouver un moyen que chacun se relache […]', Paul Cernovodeanu, 'Le Journal des Travaux du Congrès de Karlowitz', *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, 19, no. 2 (1981), 325–54 (p. 328).

of fortresses had to be carried out only by the Christian allies and was to be solely in favour of the Ottomans.[98]

It would have been genuinely fascinating if, for this stratagem, the inspiration came from the articles of the Treaty of Ryswick. In arguing so, the Porte seems to have used the same tool applied by the Habsburg Emperor in his treaty with the French king to compensate for the loss of Alsace to save the Ottoman reputation against the loss of much of Ottoman Hungary. Though speculative, this is worth considering.

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The insertion of the Ottoman translation of the Treaty of Ryswick in an Ottoman historical text resulted from the close interconnection of the western and the eastern part of Europe in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. It attests to the realisation by members of the Ottoman élite of the growing importance of the affairs of the 'Infidels' for the 'Exalted State'. The translator chose not to provide a translation word for word but rather an abbreviated version allowing the Ottoman officials to go quickly through its essential points. When faced with the basic peace-related vocabulary of the treaty, he didn't have to 'culturally translate it' since much of the peace lexicon was already common. The Ottoman side could thus perfectly understand the content of the peace agreement, which is interpreted as a 'dishonourable' one for the French side. This interpretation was, among others, the outcome of a specific idea the Ottomans had of France. In Ottoman thinking, a vision of power and grandeur could not be reconciled with the apparent renunciation by the French side of fortresses and territories east of the Rhine that were in the possession of France.

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[98] See fn. 94 above.

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