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## ***COURTING THE PORTE: EARLY ANGLO-OTTOMAN DIPLOMACY***

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**Abstract.** *This paper has two parts: some initial observations about how some historians mistake the nature of Ottoman diplomacy are followed by a discussion of four contemporary reports of how, in 1599, Henry Lello was received by Sultan Mehmed III to become Queen Elizabeth's "orator" to the Ottoman court. These accounts indicate how Europeans resident in Istanbul in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were well aware that the Ottoman court and state practiced a highly elaborated diplomatic protocol, one that followed different principles from those obtaining among the Italian city states and elsewhere in Western Europe.*

### **Ottoman Diplomacy**

For some time now there has been a rumour going about that, during the early modern period at least, the Ottoman Empire did not engage in diplomacy.<sup>1</sup> Put about by otherwise reputable scholars and historians, including J. C. Hurewitz, Bernard Lewis, M. S. Anderson, Thomas Naff, and Ercüment Kuran, this tale takes its substance and strength from two directions: first, the belief that the Ottoman Empire was "an Islamic or *Shari'a* state that conducted its external affairs on the basis of a conception of *Dar al-Islam* [the region of true believers]... versus *Dar al-Harb* [the region of unbelievers]," a religious notion of a geo-political division of global space "which involved a permanent state of war. The Empire consequently, so it is argued, conducted its external policies with a view to constant expansion" and so was not interested in any form of diplomatic negotiations (Yurdusev 2). Secondly, the fact that the Ottomans posted no permanent resident overseas ambassadors until 1793 is taken as proof that the Ottomans continued to exist outside the world of so-called "modern" diplomacy that developed during the fifteenth century amidst the Italian city states and subsequently spread throughout Europe.

My aim here is to expose this rumour and to complicate the rather simplified version of it that I have presented so far. I shall argue that, if Kipling's famous proposition about East and West being West has any meaning at all—and I think it has—then the second part about twains never meeting is both historically inaccurate and dangerously misleading. From Kipling to Samuel Huntington's self-fulfilling prophecy about the "clash of civilizations" is, after all, not a very great leap.<sup>2</sup>

Now, the Ottoman state was, without doubt, imperialist and expansionist, but religion was usually invoked as a post-facto legitimation of that expansion rather than its primary or principle cause. The Ottomans were certainly Muslim, yet, while their policies took Islamic tradition into account, they were never strictly orthodox. From the late fifteenth century onwards, the Ottomans did, it is true, begin describing themselves as *ghaza*, or holy warriors, but this was a strategy aimed at gaining prestige with

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<sup>1</sup> My observations here follow A. Nuri Yurdusev's editorial introduction, and chapter "The Ottoman Attitude toward Diplomacy", in Yurdusev, ed., *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 1-4, 5-35.

<sup>2</sup> See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1997; rpt. London: Simon and Schuster, 2002).

other Muslim states, a matter of increased urgency once their Empire had expanded to include other Muslim populations (see Inalcik, Finkel). Recent archival research is making it more and more clear that their ambitions and methods of warfare and of rule were pragmatic rather than ideological, aimed at achieving and maintaining authority over the widest possible terrestrial domain rather than spreading religious uniformity. In addition to the *Dar al-Islam* and the *Dar al-Harb*, Ottoman statesmen and jurists were aware that Islam admitted of a third conception of geo-political space, the *Dar al-Sulh*, where Muslims and non Muslims live in peace: a concept incomprehensible to early Christian states that were intent on expelling, converting or persecuting anyone and everyone who refused to accept their version of belief (Bülent Arı in Yurdesev 15; 36-65). Instead, Ottoman policy was consistently to install a form of discriminatory toleration based on the *aman* system of safe conduct; this permitted Jews and Christians of any and all denominations to continue practicing their own religious beliefs and to practice their trades so long as they accepted the authority of the Sultan, paid their taxes, obeyed local regulations, and did not cause trouble. Rather than seeking to convert subjects to Islam, the Ottomans preferred Jews to remain Jews and Christians to remain Christians since they were taxed at a higher rate than Muslims.

The view that the Ottomans could not be interested in diplomacy because they were engaged in *jihad* simply does not fit knowable evidence. Further, the fact that Ottoman diplomacy did not fit the paradigm developed in the Italian city-states as described authoritatively by Garrett Mattingly in his *Renaissance Diplomacy* does not mean that it did not exist (Mattingly 15-23). On the contrary, highly elaborated rituals inherited from Turkic, Persian, Byzantine, and Arab traditions were firmly embedded in Ottoman court culture by the late fourteenth century when the Ottomans were expanding rapidly into the Balkans (see Brummett). The key difference is that the Sultans viewed themselves as rulers of the whole world, not simply a limited region, and they consequently recognised no other leaders as their equals: reciprocity was not an option, submission was.

It was into a highly elaborated and theatrical world of well-established diplomatic ceremonial, aimed at preserving the central authority of the sultans, that the earliest English ambassadors arrived at the end of the sixteenth century.

### The English Arrive

Performativity proves a useful way of examining Anglo-Ottoman diplomatic encounters of the early modern period, when the Ottoman Empire was still expanding westward and the British were, for the first time in history, becoming an important maritime presence in the Mediterranean. The earliest English ambassadors to arrive in Istanbul were a fairly mixed bunch, yet it was in part because of the success of the first five - William Harborne (c.1578--1588), Edward Barton (1588--1597), Henry Lello (1598/9--1607), Thomas Glover (1607--1611) and Paul Pindar (1611--1619) - that, within four decades, the English had ousted the French and Venetians to become Christian Europe's major trading partner with the Ottoman Empire. "Except for the disturbance of England's trade during the English civil wars, from which the Dutch drew some profit," writes Bruce McGowan, "the English were the undisputed leaders in the Levant trade between 1620 and 1683" (McGowan 21).<sup>3</sup> England's trading supremacy was obviously a complex and multifaceted achievement, but had the earliest ambassadors failed in their performances at the Ottoman court, it might not have come about.

In terms of Anglo-Ottoman diplomacy, the final year of the sixteenth century was marked by several spectacular events and performances. In August 1599, the magnificent 300-ton *Hector* arrived off seraglio point and performed a 30-gun salute to Sultan Mehmed III during which one luckless English mariner was killed by a mis-firing canon. The *Hector* also brought Thomas Dallam and his clockwork organ, an elaborate mechanical music-machine that Elizabeth and her loyal merchants had chosen to

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<sup>3</sup> On performativity in this context, see my 'Performing East and Captive Agency,' chapter 3 of *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), pp. 97-119.

present to Mehmed in order to enable the English ambassador in waiting, Henry Lello, to be officially received by the Sultan and begin his embassy. Until a suitable gift had been duly received at the Ottoman court, the status of the English community in Istanbul remained insecure, lacking in prestige and subordinate to the French. Only by offering suitable gifts to the new sultan could the resident English merchants receive renewal of the all important *ahidname*, or capitulations, which permitted them to trade in Ottoman lands.<sup>4</sup>

The signal importance of Lello's first formal meeting with Mehmed, at least to the international community gathered in Istanbul, is indicated by the fact that at least four eye-witness accounts remain: Dallam's journal, Lello's own report to Robert Cecil, reports by the Venetian *bailo* Girolamo Capello, and accounts to be found in letters circulating among a coterie of English merchants. As we might expect, each of these sources betrays clear, distinct and notable biases, but significantly I think, all of them also emphasize the importance of the performative nature of the event, judging Lello by his ability to act within ceremonial protocols of which he himself seems to have been well rehearsed.

### Lello's Performance

Thomas Dallam's performance of his clockwork organ for Mehmed III inside the Topkapi palace remains a rich and familiar instance of an early Englishman's personal encounter with the *padishah* and the inside of the seraglio; but I am interested here in the performance of Henry Lello, the Levant Company agent who had been resident secretary under Edward Barton, the previous ambassador, and who had been waiting three years since Barton's death for the formal presents and letters from Elizabeth to arrive that would enable him to begin his appointment as ambassador to Sultan Mehmed.

#### 1. Dallam's Account, August-September 1599

From Dallam's, we learn that Lello was fully familiar with the theatricality and ceremonial protocols surrounding his crucial visit to kiss Mehmed's hand. Indeed, Dallam's account suggests the incredible strain under which Lello must have felt himself to be operating as resident secretary to the English company of merchants, but with no authority over them or status at the Sublime Porte. He had clearly been fully instructed in the necessary ceremonies involving his reception by the Sultan, and he seems to have rehearsed the moment thoroughly within his own imagination. Certainly he was able to impress the scene directly into Dallam's memory in the only example of reported speech to be found in Dallam's manuscript. Those familiar with Dallam's account will recall the remarkable moment when he claims to have written down, word for word, the advice Lello gave him the night before his own performance, to which I will turn in a moment.

What we make of this moment and of Dallam's account in part depends on how we understand the evolving relation between Dallam and Lello. But in terms of subsequent events, Lello's advice proves wrong in several ways. Dallam's performance turned out to be such a success that he was personally rewarded by Mehmed and kept in consultation for such a long time with the Sultan that Lello was ignominiously kept waiting for several hours, and then sent away until another day.

Lello must have felt especially angry to be delayed by Dallam. The ambassador in waiting and the musical engineer had quarrelled at their first meeting. On Monday, the 20th of August, Dallam had opened the chests containing his clockwork organ in a room at "the imbassadors house in the Cittie of Gallata". Shaken up inside its packing chests during the journey, the organ had literally come unstuck—"all glewinge fayled; lyke wyse divers of my mettle pipes were brused and broken" (Dallam 58). Lello

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<sup>4</sup> See Dallam's own account in Dallam, Thomas. "The Diary of Master Thomas Dallam, 1599-1600". In Bent, ed., *Early Voyages*, pp. 1-98, and my chapter on Dallam in *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Mediterranean, 1580—1720* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), pp. 3-47.

may already have heard reports that a great deal of the clothing that had also been sent as gifts aboard the *Hector* had been ruined in passage, in which case he must have been feeling desperate that, now they had finally arrived, the gifts would be inadequate to their task.<sup>5</sup> The ambassadorial party, it seems, were haughty and contemptuous at their first sight of Dallam's craftsmanship. Dallam replied to Lello in such strong terms that he notices not recording them:

When our Imbassader, Mr. Wyllyam Aldridge, and other jentlmen, se in what case it was in, they weare all amayzed, and sayde that it was not worthe iid. My answeare unto our Imbassader and to Mr. Aldridge, at this time I will omitt; but when Mr. Alderidge harde what I sayede, he tould me that yf I did make it perfitt he would give me, of his owne purss, 15 li., so aboute my worke I wente (Dallam 58).

For the next ten days, Dallam and crew set about rebuilding the organ and moving it to the seraglio. Once the organ was successfully repaired and working, relations between Lello and Dallam remained strained. The night before he was scheduled to perform before Mehmed, Dallam was summoned to the ambassadorial chamber and given, not so much encouragement, but such stern advice that he felt impelled to write it down, word for word. Lello was evidently extremely anxious about the event; after all, a mistake would ruin his embassy and the reputation of the English in Istanbul. Dallam, who seems to have been oblivious to the political circumstances, was nevertheless so struck by the moment that he transcribed Lello's speech as if word for word, and gave it a title in his manuscript—"The Imbassadors spetche unto me in Love after he had given me my charge." This is the only extended passage of reported speech in Dallam's entire account. The term "Love" here is open to diplomatic irony since, in context, the speech served as a stern warning.

Almost every detail of Lello's speech indicates his anxieties over the pomp and ceremony of his own impending performance. He began by presuming on the title of the Queen to make sure that Dallam understood his place amongst the various players involved in the next day's events. "Yow are," Lello commenced, "com hether wythe a presente from our gracious Quene, not to an ordinarie prince or kinge, but to a myghtie monarke of the worlde," from whom, it seems, Dallam was to expect no reward. "It was," Lello continued:

never knowne that upon the receaving of any presente he gave any rewarde unto any Christian, and tharfore you muste louke for nothings at his handes. Yow would thinke that for yor longe and weariesom voyege, with dainger of lyfe, that yow weare worthy to have a litle sighte of him; but that yow muste not loake for nether (Dallam 65).

In reporting how Lello instructed him to be humble and to expect no reward, not even a sighting of the Sultan, Dallam set himself up for some more singular achievements. Yet his record of Lello's speech also offers a sense of how Lello's anxiety increased while he elaborated on the dangers of proximity to the Sultan, describing how even a great ambassador must act humbly, and how he himself would only ever be led into the presence under physical restraint. In anticipation of his own meeting with Mehmed, Lello grew expansive as he rehearsed in detail what would be expected of him:

We cale it kisinge of the Grand Sinyor's hande; bute when I com to his gates I shalbe taken of my horse and seartcht, and lede betwyxte tow men holdinge my handes downe close to my sides, and so lede into the presence of the Grand Sinyor, and I muste kiss his kne or his hanginge sleve. Havinge deliverede my letteres unto the Coppagawe, I shalbe presently ledd awaye, goinge backwardes as longe as I can se him, and in payne of my heade I muste not turne my backe upon him, and therefore you muste not louke to have a sighte of him (Dallam 65).

<sup>5</sup> Capello reported that the English gifts included 'many suits of cloth which they say are all mouldy and ruined,' 18 September 1599, *CSPV, 1592-1603*, #814.

At the time, Lello was attempting to impress Dallam with the importance and pomp of the occasion, backed up with implicit threats and minimal hope of reward. With supreme condescension, he continued waving big sticks while offering only tiny future carrots. Lello, perhaps, had already come to resent not only Dallam's confidence and reputation, but also the fact of his own dependence on the craftsman's success if his embassy were to succeed. If tomorrow's performance did not please the sultan, he warned, Dallam would face more than Turkish diffidence:

I thoughte good to tell yow this, because yow shall not hereafter blame me, or say that I myghte have tould yow so muche; lett not your worke be anythinge the more carlesly louked unto, and at your cominge home our martchantes shall give yow thankes, yf it give the Grand Sinyor contente this one daye. I car not yf it be non after the nexte, yf it doo not please him at the firste sighte, and performe not those thinges which it is Toulde him that it can Dow, he will cause it to be puled downe that he may trample it under his feete. And than shall we have no sute grantede, but all our charge will be loste (Dallam 65-66).

It is at this point in his account that Dallam termed Lello "my Lorde" for the first time in a moment of what is clearly ironic excess: "After I had given my Lorde thankes for this frindly spetche.." For the rest of his stay in Istanbul, he will use this term with varying degrees of sarcasm and contempt. Since none of Lello's dire warnings came to pass, Dallam's use of reported speech here was clearly aimed at setting up the details of his own subsequent victories, rhetorical and otherwise, over this "lord."

After I had given my Lorde thankes for this frindly spetche, thoughe smale comforte in it, I tould him that thus muche I understoode by our martchantes before my cominge oute of London, and that he needed not to Doubte that thare should be any faulte either in me or my worke, for he hade sene the trial of my care and skill in makinge that perfickte and good which was thoughte to be uncurable, and in somthinges better than it was when Her Maiestie sawe it in the banketinge house at Whyte Hale (Dallam 66).

Amidst this jockeying for place and position, Dallam's mention of the great day when Elizabeth saw his machine perform at Whitehall boldly places him closer to the centres of power than Lello. Dallam was, however, clearly impressed by Lello's horsemanship. On the morning of 25 September, Dallam, and his colleagues John Harvie, Rowland Buckett, and Michael Watson were already in the seraglio when Lello, who "did ride lyuke unto a kinge, onlye tht he wanted a crowne," arrived on the scene:

Thare roode with him 22 jentlmen and martchantes, all in clothe of goulde; ye jentlemen weare these: Mr. Humfrye Cunisbye, Mr. Baylie of Salsburie, Mr. Paule Pinder, Mr. Wyllyam Alderidg, Mr. Jonas Aldridge, and Mr. Thomas Glover. The other six weare martchantes; these did ride in vestes of clothe of goulde, made after the cuntrie fation; thare wente on foute 28 more in blew gounes made after the Turkie fation, and everie man a silke grogren cape, after the Ittallian fation. My livery was a faire clooke of a Franche greene, etc. (Dallam 66-67).

Like other Englishman of his age, Dallam understood the importance of ceremonial occasions, and how such processions were about whether and how one rode or walked, one's position relative to others in the parade, as well as the magnificence and source of the clothes one wore. The Venetian *bailo* was understandably concerned that the ostentatious costliness of Lello's entourage on this occasion would greatly contribute to his prestige with the Sultan.<sup>6</sup> Yet, amidst all the pomp and ceremony, Lello was being set up, like a king without a crown, waiting to be invited in to kiss the Sultan's hand, but on this occasion, to be ignominiously delayed.

<sup>6</sup> See Girolamo Capello to the Doge and Senate, 21 August 1599 and 18 September 1599, *CSPV, 1592-1603*, p. 806, 814.

## 2. Lello's Account, 4 October.

Lello's own report to Robert Cecil of being received by the Sultan dramatizes the event and uses performative rhetoric in self-interested and obvious ways but lacks Dallam's eye for colourful detail. Lello omits mention of 25 September, the day he was kept waiting while Dallam performed, and describes instead what happened the day he was received, October 4. He does complain that he had been delayed, but attributes it not to Dallam but to the "great bribes" of the French Ambassador who "receiving now the Pope's pay, spares nothing to hinder all my designs" (Brown xlv). Lello describes the opulent display of his progress to Topkapi, emphasizing the number and cost of the costumes worn by his numerous entourage:

I appointed to attend upon me twelve gentlemen on horseback vested in cloth of gold and silver, a gentleman usher, two pages in white damask, twenty men in livery gowns, twelve merchants decently apparelled merchant-like in black, and myself attired as richly as I might (Brown xlv-xlvi).

Lello must have enjoyed the moment of reporting to the Secretary of State: "We spent a small time until the banquet for me was provided, which being furnished, only I" and certain Ottoman dignitaries, dined on "dainties usually served to the Grand Seigneur" (Brown xlvi). Not a word appears about being man-handled before the Sultan as he told Dallam; rather Lello reports how he and twelve of his "gentlemen" were "clothed in vestments out of his treasury, which were there scarcely found; yet I had two and ten for my gentlemen." Lello emphasizes the pomp and propriety of the occasion; how he and his entourage received what seemed to be the full and proper respect due to their importance. And, as befits an official report, he trims descriptive irrelevance: "Omitting the sumptuousness of the sight," he writes of being received by Mehmed, "I first saluted him in her Highness" name' (Brown xlvi) then got to business. Told that "I should receive satisfaction of all I desired," Lello took his leave, "accompanied by chouses and other officers to my house ... And thus, while thinking myself sure of all things, the French Ambassador, with his bribe of six thousand chequins, not only overthrew our former grant of Consulage of Forestiers but all other demands I made" (Brown xlvii). Foiled by the French after all.

By his own account, Lello's performance was not to blame for the failure of negotiations in which he failed to gain control over Flemish merchants trading in Ottoman ports—the "Consulage of Forestiers"; everything had gone as well as it possibly could have done. But there were powerful forces at work behind the scenes, as it were, that were not fully apparent to Lello at the time and consequently beyond his control.

## 3. Capello's Account

Girolamo Capello's report of Lello's performance before Mehmed immediately picks up the international implications of this ceremonial event: Lello's continuing struggle with the French ambassador for consulage over the Flemish, and his attempt to establish a Protestant congregation in Galata come to the fore of Venetian concerns. Capello reports that Lello is to kiss hands tomorrow, and:

He goes working away at various chimerical schemes, principally the idea of asking the Grand Signor to give him one of the churches in Galata for the use of a preaching minister whom he has brought with him. [Maye, not Biddulph] Both the French Ambassador and myself considered this design of his to be obviously important in its effect on the honour of the Holy Church, and we accordingly approached the poor Mufti on the matter. He promised us every support; but now we have had recourse to the Chief Eunuch; nor shall we fail to make every effort in order to thwart this excessive and arrogant pretension of the English, who would endeavour to sow even here the perversity and impiety of Calvin to the ruin of these poor Christian Perots who have applied for our advice and assistance (CSVP 817).

From Capello's point of view, Lello was, like the English in Istanbul generally, an insolent upstart and great nuisance who might eventually prove dangerous, but who would most likely find himself without much support. Capello himself does not seem to have attended the event, but he

evidently heard a full report including details about the one member of the English party who distinguished himself before the assembly: this was Thomas Glover. On 16 October, Capello wrote to the Doge:

The English ambassador kissed hands on the fourth of this month. His present was forty suits of cloth of various colours, ten ewers and basins of silver, besides the great clock and carriage that had been sent on before. He appeared attended by all the merchants who had come on board the ship, well appointed all of them, and he had the usual banquet in divan.

A young Englishman, servant of the late Ambassador, acted as interpreter and was listened to attentively. The Secretary of the Embassy, who was present, told me that the Sultan, in the middle of the Dragoman's discourse, made several official remarks, a quite unusual occurrence and a high favour. But the Ambassador, while the banquet was being prepared, engaged in a long conversation with Halil Pasha; in the course of it he touched upon the King of France... This conversation, reported by Halil to the French Ambassador in quite another guise, gave ground for a great scandal between the two ambassadors.<sup>7</sup>

Behind the scenes, Capello has heard that Halil Pasha was reported to have said that Lello called the French king an idolater, which increased existing hostilities between the French and English in Istanbul in the months to come. Capello reported at the end of October that "the Englishman [Lello] has but little experience and less prudence" and gave his opinion that "he will presently lay aside all his imaginary claims" (Capello to Doge: 30 October 1599: 825).

In the event, Lello gave up on the Protestant church, a snow-ball fight in January between servants at the French and English houses in Pera turned into something nasty, while the consulage dispute with the French over the Flemish raged on for several years.

#### 4. Sanderson and Kitley

A fourth source for accounts of Lello's performance before Mehmed in October 1599 is the letter book of John Sanderson. Sanderson was an old Turkey hand and great gossip mongerer who not only kept accounts for the Levant Company but also kept records of various goings on among the expatriate community in journals and letters. He travelled with Dallam on the *Hector* for his third tour in Istanbul, but even after returning to London, he kept up a vigorous correspondence, both business and gossip, with friends in Istanbul and Aleppo who knew and remembered Lello, a man they mostly despised and called "Fog."

In 1607, Thomas Glover—the notable interpreter—returned to Istanbul from a secretarial mission to England. He brought with him a personal knighthood, a new wife, and an appointment from the Levant Company to replace Lello as ambassador. The changeover was not without incident. Amidst lurid rumours over Glover's personal life, John Kitley, physician to the English community in Istanbul, indulged in a favourite pastime among Sanderson's group: recollecting how Lello invariably made a fool of himself whenever he was called on to perform his duties at ceremonial events. Years after the event, Kitley recalls Lello's anxieties about his first meeting with Mehmed III back in 1599. Kitley's immediate aim is to show how the newly appointed ambassador, Glover, had made such personal capital with the sultan in 1599 that he immediately gained, and continued to exercise, considerably more influence at the Ottoman court than Lello ever could have enjoyed.

Confirming Dallam's report of Lello's peculiarly anxious behaviour in 1599, Kitley's recollection of the episode exposes the acrimonious rivalry between Lello and Glover and shows that it also involved matters of style and performance. Glover, Kitley recalled, "hath bine most maliciouslie

<sup>7</sup> CSPV, 1592-1603, 821. That the 'young Englishman' was Glover is confirmed by Sanderson's report to the Levant Company of 1 December 1599, in *The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant, 1584-1602*, ed. Sir William Foster (London: Hakluyt Society, 1931), p. 189.

wronged, havinge, in the time of the presents delivery, cariede himselfe with a hautie coradge, full of undaunted magnanimitie ... aimed to hit the Grand Signor in his youthfull humore” (qtd. from Sanderson 242). Glover’s success with Mehmed, however, was achieved despite the active discouragement of Lello who, as we can imagine, was proudly jealous of his own position on the day he finally did get to kiss the Sultan’s hand.

Kitely recalled how, before the event, Lello created difficulties over the appropriate costumes that members of his entourage should wear for the occasion. The problem was the number of feathers and quantity of gold braid in the costume that Glover was planning to wear:

which Fog, the chefe of that crewe, utterly misliked, and counseld ther should not be so many men with fethers; and others his associates said there was too much gold lace. “I,” quoth Fogg, “it were better to deliver it in civill manner”; as yourselfe knoweth hee did; who satt upon his horse with a ruddie downe looke, as though he had bine streyning at a close-stoole; and when he came before the Grand Signor, stooode with his hands handsomelie before him, like a modest midwife, and began a trembling spech in Inglishe, as you knowe sounding like the squeeking of a goose devided into semiquavers (Sanderson 242-43).

Not unlike Dallam, Kitley focuses attention directly on Lello’s appearance and performance: his costume, his appearance on horseback, his voice. Dallam thought he sat his horse well, but that was an earlier occasion.

So despite all his efforts to control the costumes of those in his entourage, Lello was about to be upstaged once again since Glover, ignoring Lello’s sartorial advice, “resolved to doble the Gould lace, and to many of the fethers added riche juells,” all of which exactly caught the attention and admiration of Sultan Mehmed just as it was planned to do. According to Kitley, Glover so far succeeded in creating the right impression with Mehmed that he had ever since enjoyed exceptional privileges. And “nowe all this bravery is tourned into good husbandry and frugalitie, wherein he also exedeth all his predecessors.” Indeed Glover, it is worth noting, had been brought up since childhood at the Ottoman court and understood the intricate customs and ceremonial manners of seraglio culture perhaps better any. England’s trading supremacy was obviously a complex and multifaceted achievement, but had Glover not up-staged Lello in his performance at the Ottoman court, it might not have come about.

Meanwhile, the memory of Lello’s performance would live on for some years after it had taken place. The pious Levant Company chaplain at the time, William Biddulph, admired him, but his was a solitary voice. Whether Lello looked fine in the saddle or not we will never know for certain, though the contradictory evidence is itself not insignificant since it points directly to the question of how performing East was a question of the body and to the crucially important matters of how that body was costumed, and how it was perceived at the Ottoman court.

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