

ВСЕОБЩАЯ ИСТОРИЯ

**Habsburg-Safavid Diplomacy:
Nicholas von Warkotsch and Haji Khosrow in Moscow***L. Rybar*

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During the 16th century, several European states were regularly engaged in forming an anti-Ottoman alliance. The goal was to cooperate in the elimination of the Ottoman power and expansion in Europe. In addition, traditional European members of the anti-Ottoman league (the Papal State, the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs, the Venetian Republic) were counting on the help of the Eastern empires such as the Tsardom of Muscovy (Russia) and the Safavid Persia. In connection with this policy, Habsburg-Safavid diplomatic relations continued to develop. In the second half of the 1580s and 1590s, the Tsardom of Muscovy began to play an important mediating role in the context of Habsburg-Persian relations. An illustrative case is the presented study, which deals with the missions of Habsburg envoy Nicholas von Warkotsch and the Safavid (Persian) envoy Haji Khosrow to the court of the Russian Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich in 1593. This issue is examined against the background of a broader international politics and diplomacy in the second half of the 1580s and the beginning of 1590s. Regarding their missions to the Russian tsar, both envoys took advantage of their mutual presence at the Muscovite court and through the mediation of Boris Godunov managed to arrange a meeting where they negotiated the possibility of the formation of an anti-Ottoman alliance. The

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analysis of the preserved archival and published documents concerning the above-mentioned missions reveals the goals and attitudes of all negotiating parties (Habsburgs, Persia, and Muscovy) in relation to the creation of an anti-Ottoman alliance.

Keywords: diplomacy, anti-Ottoman alliance, 16th century, Tsardom of Muscovy, Habsburg monarchy, Safavid Empire.

Габсбургско-сефевидская дипломатия: Николай Варкоч и Хаджи Хосров в Москве

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В течение XVI века несколько европейских государств было озабочено проблемой создания антиосманского альянса. Целью этого военного союза было сотрудничество в ликвидации османской власти в Европе и противодействие ее экспансии. Традиционные европейские участники антиосманской лиги (Папское государство, Королевство Испания, Габсбургская монархия, Венецианская республика) и ее остальные члены рассчитывали на помощь таких «восточных империй», как Московское царство (Россия) и Сефевидская Персия (Иран). Европейские и неевропейские государства начали устанавливать взаимные дипломатические контакты. В рамках этой политики развивались также габсбургско-сефевидские дипломатические отношения. Во второй половине 1580-х и в 1590-х гг. Московия стала играть важную посредническую роль именно в габсбургско-сефевидских отношениях. Показательным примером этих отношений является и анализируемая в статье миссия посланника Габсбургов Николая фон Варкоча и сефевидского (персидского) гонца Ази Хосрова при дворе русского царя Федора Ивановича в 1593 г. Этот вопрос поднимается на фоне более широкой международной политики и дипломатии конца XVI в. Что касается их миссии к русскому царю, то оба посланника приехали в Москву со множеством других задач, но, воспользовавшись пребыванием при московском дворе и заручившись посредничеством Бориса Годунова, сумели организовать встречу, на которой обсудили возможность образования антиосманского союза. Анализ сохранившихся архивных и опубликованных документов (из Национального архива Австрии в Вене и Российского государственного архива древних актов в Москве), касающихся вышеупомянутой проблематики, показывает, каковы были цели и позиции участников взаимных переговоров (Габсбургская монархия, сефевидская Персия и Московское царство), стремившихся создать антиосманский альянс.

Ключевые слова: дипломатия, антиосманский альянс, XVI век, Московия, Габсбургская монархия, Сефевидская империя.

Within the foreign politics of European states during the 16th century, the question of creating the anti-Ottoman league, which aimed to jointly eliminate expansion of Ottoman power in Europe, was constantly discussed. Besides European members of the anti-Ottoman league (The Papal States, Venetia, Spanish and Austrian branch of the Habsburgs, and others), “Empires of the East”, such as the Tsardom of Muscovy and Safavid Persia, were expected to participate. In the context of the anti-Ottoman politics, Habsburg-Safavid diplomatic relations were being formed. Territories ruled by the Austrian branch of

the Habsburgs in the West and Safavid Persia in the East in particular were the ones most negatively impacted by the Ottoman military expansion. Frequent military conflicts of both countries with the Ottomans led to the attempts from the beginning of the 16th century to make mutual contacts and to arrange a coordinated military approach against their common enemy — the Ottoman Sultan. In the second half of the 1580s, Muscovy began to play an important mediating role in Habsburg-Persian relations, which can be confirmed by the diplomatic mission of Nicholas von Warkotsch to Moscow in 1593 when he established contacts with a Persian envoy Haji Khosrow¹ at the court of the Muscovite Tsar. The aim of this study is to analyse the topic of Habsburg-Persian relations in the context of the efforts to create the anti-Ottoman alliance during Warkotsch' and Khosrow's missions to Moscow in 1593. The meeting of these two envoys has not yet been thoroughly analysed in specific research² and has only been interpreted within the framework of international politics of the Muscovite Tsardom, or of the Habsburg Monarchy, or perhaps Safavid Persia at the end of the 16th century³. Before I discuss the particular missions of both envoys, I will briefly present the background of a broader international-political context of the second half of the 1580s. It will also be necessary to introduce the diplomatic activities of the Habsburg, Persian and Russian parties which preceded the negotiations of the Habsburg and Persian representatives in Moscow in 1593. By doing so, I aim to fill the missing pieces of the mosaic of the Habsburg-Safavid diplomatic relations at the end of the 1580s and the beginning of the 1590s.

Historiography

The meeting of the Habsburg envoy Nicholas von Warkotsch with the Safavid envoy Haji Khosrow is recorded in several archived and edited documents of the Habsburg and Russian side. Unfortunately, no evidence on this topic has been preserved by the Iranian side⁴. The Russian archived documents are stored mainly in Moscow, in the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (RGADA)⁵. Documents from the Russian archive regarding relations between the Tsardom of Muscovy, the Holy Roman Empire and Safavid Persia were produced and collected by the institution called “Posolskiy prikaz” (Ambassadorial Office)⁶. The funds concerning Russian relations with the Holy Roman Empire (Fund

¹ In Russian sources he is called also Azi or Ali Khosrow. In Iranian historiography, the name Haji Khosrow is commonly used. In this study I will use the Persian form the name. See: *Jamāl-zade M. A. Tārikh-e ravābaṭ-e Rūs va Īrān*. Tehrān, 1372. P.221, footnote 375; *Gafārī Fard A. Farhang-e tārikh-e Safaviye*. Tehrān, 1397. P.145, 674.

² Except for the works of I. V. Magilina, in which one chapter is concerned with the meeting of Warkotsch and Khosrow at the court of the Muscovite tsar. However, the author focuses mainly on the role of the Tsardom of Muscovy in the project of the anti-Ottoman league (*Magilina I. V. Rossiia i proiekt antios-manskoi ligi v kontse XVI — nachale XVII vv. Volgograd*, 2012. P.372).

³ This topic was discussed primarily by Russian, German, Austrian and Czech historians, such as P. P. Bushev, A. V. Florovskii, S. F. Platonov, F. von Adelung, H. Uebersberger, J. P. Niederkorn, D. Picková, J. Polišenský and others. For their works, see the references.

⁴ All historical works (about Russian-Persian relations in the 16th century) by Iranian historians are based primarily on Russian sources.

⁵ RGADA. F.32. Snosheniia Rossii s Avstriei i Germanskoi imperiei. Op. 2; F.77. Snosheniia Rossii s Persiei. Op. 1.

⁶ Central government office in Russia in 1549–1720. See more: *Belokurov S. A. O posolskom prikaze*. Moscow, 1906.

32) and Persia (Fund 77) are of key importance in particular. The majority of the archived documents of the concerned period have already been published in several editions. As far as the issue in question is concerned, source editions (on the relations of Russia with the Holy Roman Empire) from 1851⁷ are essential, as are source editions (on the Russian-Persian relations) processed and published by the Russian historian N. I. Veselovsky from 1890⁸. The documents published by N. I. Veselovsky, however, do not include the records of the meeting between Nicholas von Warkotsch and Haji Khosrow in the report of the arrival of Haji Khosrow at the court of the Muscovite Tsar, but they are in the report of the Russian envoy, knyaz Andrey Dmitriyevich Zvenigorodskiy (dated later in 1595) who was sent to Safavid Persia in the years 1594–1595⁹. This current research would not be possible without documents of German provenance which are stored in Vienna, in the Austrian State Archive *Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv* (HHStA)¹⁰. Besides these sources, other published editions regarding Warkotsch' mission to Moscow in 1593 exist, namely, the report of Stefan Heyss (or Heuss) about the second arrival of Warkotsch in Moscow, which was published in Berlin in 1820¹¹. These notes were translated to Russian in 1874 (published a year later)¹². Another very important document is Warkotsch' report of March 1594¹³. Originally, researchers assumed that Warkotsch' notes were concerned with his third mission to Moscow in the years 1594–1595. Most recent research, however, reveals that the document was issued as a “*relation*” from the second mission of Warkotsch to Moscow in 1593¹⁴. For the purpose of this study, I also worked with the Italian translation of this document¹⁵.

The progress of previous diplomatic activities, or the Habsburg and Persian missions respectively, was reconstructed based on further documents. A very important source is Warkotsch' report (*relation*) about his first stay in Moscow in 1589, originally written in the German language¹⁶. Certain fragments of the emperor's instruction addressed to Nicholas von Warkotsch and his reports from the visit have already been

⁷ Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh snoshenii drevnei Rossii s derjavami inostrannymi. Snoshenia s gosudarstvami evropeiskimi. Part 1. Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh snoshenii s imperieiu Rimskoiu. Vol. 1. (s 1488 po 1594) (further shortened PDS). St. Petersburg, 1851.

⁸ *Veselovskii N. I.* Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii Moskovskoi Rusi s Persiei. Vol. 1. St. Petersburg, 1890.

⁹ *Ibid.* P. 221–334.

¹⁰ HHStA. F. Russland I. Cart. 3 (1589–1595).

¹¹ *Heuss S.* Beschreibung der Reiss in die Moskaw so Herr Niklas Warkostch (1593, 22 July) // Sammlung bisher noch ungedruckter kleiner Schriften zur aelteren Geschichte und Kenntnis des russischen Reichs. Berlin, 1820. S. 123–200.

¹² *Geis S.* Opisanie puteshestviia v Moskvu Nokilaia Varkocha, posla rimskogo imperatora s 22 iulia 1593 goda // *Chteniia imperatorskogo Obshchestva Istorii i Drevnostei Rossiiskikh*. Book 4. Moscow, 1875. P. 36.

¹³ *Relation aus Moskaw. Den 19 Martz 1594* // HHStA. F. Russland I. Cart. 3 (1589–1595). Konv. 5 (1594), fol. 7–40.

¹⁴ *Panov V.* On the Contents of Niklas Warkotsch's 1594 Report in the Light of His Moscow Missions // *Slovanský přehled / Slavonic Review: Journal for the History of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe*. 2019. Issue 105, no. 2. P. 277–292.

¹⁵ The Italian document is stored in the Vatican Secret Archive (*Archivum Secretum Vaticanum*). In this study, I used the published version issued by the Russian historian A. I. Turgenev in 1842 (see document no. XXV): *Relazione fatta all Imperatore da Nicoló Warkotsch...* // Turgenev A. I. *Akty istoricheskie, otnosiashchiesia k Rossii izvlechenye iz inostrannykh arkhivov i bibliotek*. Vol. 2. St. Petersburg, 1842. P. 2–45.

¹⁶ The full German version of Warkotsch' report 1589 “*Moscovitische Relation*” (without exact date) is stored in HHStA. F. Russland I. Cart. 3 (1589–1595). Konv. 1 (1589). Fol. 68–105.

published¹⁷. There was also a Spanish translation of the report created for the Spanish king Phillip II by Don Guillen de Sant Clemente, his ambassador to the court of Rudolph II¹⁸. He probably based it on the actual Warkotsch' report written in the German language¹⁹. It is stored in Spain, in the General Archive of Simancas (Archivo General de Simancas)²⁰. This document in particular contains the largest amount of information regarding the organisation of anti-Ottoman league and the participation of Safavid Persia in it at the end of 1580s. Based on that, it is possible to clarify several questions regarding the development of the Habsburg-Persian relations and the actual organisation of the anti-Ottoman league even before the meeting between Warkotsch and Khosrow in Moscow. As far as Persian missions to Moscow in 1590 are concerned (e. g. Hadi beg and Budaq beg)²¹, which preceded the mission of Haji Khosrow, I worked primarily with the above-mentioned Veselovsky' editions concerning Persian-Russian relations.

Individual documents vary in a number of aspects. Russian documents are richer than German or Italian documents in terms of content and offer more detailed reports on the progress of the negotiation between Warkotsch and Khosrow²². They also vary in the use of salutations and titles. Russian documents are much richer in language, more pompous, and stricter in terms of using titles of the rulers or addressing the envoys themselves²³. German documents are more modest and free when it comes to titles. In terms of the description of the actual process of mutual negotiations between the Habsburg and the Safavid parties, the documents differ in some details, although in principle they agree on the subject of the negotiations. The differences can be predominantly attributed to the fact that the authors of the reports recorded their own view determined by the interests of the individual negotiating parties in the context of the negotiations on the anti-Ottoman alliance. In additions, errors in the production of translations of documents cannot be ruled out. Either the translation from the German original to the Russian or the translation of Russian documents to German might not have been precise. That could have led to a different understanding of the language of diplomacy²⁴. Alternatively, the authors of the reports might have recorded only what matched the interests of a particular negotiating side.

¹⁷ *Uebersberger H.* Österreich und Russland seit dem Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts. Vienna, 1906. S. 536; *Adelung F.* Kritiko-literaturnoe obozrenie puteshestvennikov po Rossii po 1700 i ikh sochineniia. I-II. Moscow, 1864. P. 254–261; *Otchet o 21 prisujdenii nagrad grafa Uvarova.* St. Petersburg, 1880. P. 115–116, 117–118.

¹⁸ The Spanish version was published in several editions. *Sumario de la relacion de Nicolas Warkotsch embaxador que fue de Su Magestad Cesarea en Moscovia // Shmurlo E. F.* Rossiia i Italiia. Sbornik istoricheskikh materialov i issledovanii kasaiushchikhsia snoshenii Rossii s Italiei. Vol. 3, issue 2. St. Petersburg, 1915. P. 352–372; *Ignotus ad usum officii refert summatim amplissimam relationem quam de sua missione in Moscovia a die 31.III ad 3.VII.1589 fecit Nicolaus Warkosch // Meysztowicz V.* Elementa ad Fontium Editiones XVI. Documenta Polonica ex Archivo Generali Hispaniae in Simancas. V Pars. Roma, 1966. P. 185–197.

¹⁹ *Polišenský J.* Poselství z Prahy do Moskvy roku 1589. Prague, 1975. P. 12–13.

²⁰ This document was also translated to Czech and Russian languages: *Ibid; Lapteva L.* Donesenie avstriiskogo posla o poiezdkе v Moskvu v 1589 godu // *Voprosy istorii.* 1978. No. 6. P. 95–112.

²¹ In the majority of cases, in Russian documents (and also in Russian academic literature) the term *Andi bek* and *Butak bek* is used. In this study, I use the Persian equivalents or forms of these names: *Hadi beg* (or *beyg*) and *Budaq beg* (or *beyg*). This form seldom appears in Russian documents.

²² *Panov V.* On the Contents of Niklas Warkotsch's 1594 Report. P. 279.

²³ *Panov V.* Tři moskevské mise Mikuláše Varkoče 1589–1594 ve světle diplomatického rituálu Ruska // *Opera historica: časopis pro dějiny raného novověku.* 2019. Issue 20, no. 1. P. 7–20.

²⁴ *Mika N.* Tatarská otázka v politických misích císařských kurýrů a poslů k moskevskému dvoru v letech 1587–1589 // *Rus' and the World of the Nomads (The second half of 9th–16th century).* Colloquia Russica, Series I, vol. 7. Krakow, 2017. P. 430–431.

Diplomatic activities of Persia, Muscovy and the Habsburgs at the end of the 1580s and the beginning of the 1590s

The meeting of the diplomatic representatives of Nicholas von Warkotsch and Haji Khosrow was determined primarily by the efforts to implement the idea of a common anti-Ottoman alliance. However, the issue had already been discussed by the Habsburg, Russian and Persian sides already at the end of the 1580s, before the 1593 Habsburg-Safavid negotiations. The whole process was preceded by several military-political events that influenced the initiation of the diplomatic activities from different perspectives. At that time, there was a military conflict between Safavid Persia and the Ottoman Empire (1578–1590), and as a consequence, the Safavids lost a significant part of their territory in the Southern Caucasus (Shirvan, Azerbaijan, and others), Kurdistan, and Lorestan. Given the difficult and unsolvable situation, the Persian shah of the time Mohammad Khodabandeh sought a potential military ally who would help him banish the Ottomans from the occupied territories of the Caspian and the Caucasus. For this purpose, he sent his envoy Hadi beg (in Russian documents referred to also as Andi bek) to the court of the Muscovite tsar in summer (or autumn) of 1586²⁵. He arrived in Moscow through the Caspian Sea, Astrakhan, and the Volga River probably around the end of autumn of 1587²⁶. Hadi beg came to Moscow to request direct military help from Muscovite tsar Fyodor Ivanovich against the Ottomans with the aim to expel them from the Caspian territories. In exchange, the Persian shah promised to the tsar to surrender two strategic cities on the Caspian Sea — Baku and Darband²⁷. According to the reports, the Persian shah intended to become allies with the Muscovite tsar and to stand up against their common enemy, the Ottoman Sultan²⁸. The Russian documents regarding the relations between Russia and the Habsburgs also mentioned similar but extended content. As stated in the documents, the Persian envoy proposed to the Muscovite tsar to create a large anti-Ottoman league that the Holy Roman Emperor and other Christian rulers from Europe were supposed to join²⁹. The court of the Muscovite tsar used the opportunity and decided to send their own envoy Grigoriy Borisovich Vasilchikov to Persia³⁰. He was to leave with Hadi beg who was also returning to Persia. Although Hadi beg's mission to Moscow had not achieved any concrete results, it did lead to the regular Russo-Persian exchange of envoys³¹. Moreover, soon after Hadi beg and G. B. Vasilchikov departed to Persia, Boris Godunov sent several messengers to the

²⁵ Russian historian P. P. Bushev Hadi beg's mission to Moscow considered as the beginning of regular Russian-Safavid diplomatic relations: *Bushev P. P. Istoriia posolstv i diplomaticheskikh otnoshenii*. P. 52. — For a general overview of Persian missions to Russia during this period, see: *Andreev A. A. Persidskie posolstva v kontse XVI — nachale XVII vv. v Rossiю shakha Abbasa Velikogo: personalii, struktura i osobennosti // Rus, Rossiia. Srednevekovie i Novoe vremia*. No. 6. Moscow, 2019. P. 707–711.

²⁶ *Bushev P. P. Istoriia posolstv i diplomaticheskikh otnoshenii*. P. 57; PDS. P. 1012.

²⁷ *Karamzin N. M. Istoriia gosudarstva Rosiiskogo*. Book 3. Vol. X. St. Petersburg, 1845. P. 41. — Regarding the cities of Baku and Darband in the Russian-Persian negotiations in the end of the 16th century see: *Rybar L. Shirvan and its Role in the Russo-Safavid Trade and Diplomacy in the 16th Century // Vestnik of Saint Petersburg university. History*. 2020. Vol. 65, issue 2. P. 605–617.

²⁸ *Veselovskii N. I. Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii*. P. 3–4; *Belokurov S. A. Snosheniia Rossii s Kavkazom*. P. 563.

²⁹ PDS. P. 1011–1012, 1057–1058.

³⁰ Regarding the mission of tsar's envoy G. B. Vasilchikov to Persia see: *Bushev P. P. Istoriia posolstv i diplomaticheskikh otnoshenii*. P. 73–102.

³¹ *Matthee R.*: 1) Anti-Ottoman politics and transit rights: The seventeenth-century trade in silk between Safavid Iran and Muscovy // *Cahiers du Monde russe*. 1994. Vol. 35, no. 4. P. 745; 2) Anti-Ottoman

Emperor's Court in Prague. The goal of these missions was to resolve the question of succession to the Polish throne, together with the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph II and his brother Maximilian III, Archduke of Austria, and also to inform the emperor about the proposal of the Persian shah, which was outlined to the tsar by the Persian envoy³². The messengers were to cross the enemy's territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which posed a great danger to them. That was why, only one messenger, Lucas Pauli³³, managed to arrive in Prague successfully and was admitted to an audience with the emperor at the beginning of April 1588³⁴. In the document delivered by Lucas Pauli, the Muscovite tsar stated that in December 1587 the shah's envoy (his name is not mentioned in the document) arrived in Moscow, and in the name of the Persian shah asked him to keep a firm friendship (in Russian, 'в дружбе') and to stand up against the Ottoman Sultan together³⁵. He also called for the Holy Roman Emperor, King of Spain, and King of France to join the union against the Ottomans. For that purpose, the Muscovite tsar was to send his messenger to the emperor's court. Moreover, in the following summer, the Persian shah was to send his envoy to Moscow again so that they would bring the matter to a successful end³⁶. Based on that, the tsar was to create a union with the Persian shah that had a character of a contract and an alliance (in Russian 'в dokonчанье и в соединенье')³⁷, and that was to be expanded by other members³⁸. He therefore suggested that not a bilateral but rather a multi-lateral agreement be created as a union for the "prosperity of the whole Christian world" as well as Persia³⁹. Emperor Rudolph and his counsellors soon reacted to the message from Moscow and decided to send the envoy to the tsar's court. His decision was determined not only by the dispute over the crown with the Polish-Lithuanian state but also by the situation at the Ottoman-Hungarian borders at the time. In 1583, the truce with the Ottomans (signed in 1576 already) ended, and although the emperor managed to renew it with an effect coming from 1st January 1584, it did not seem plausible, and military skirmishes persisted at the Ottoman-Hungarian borders⁴⁰. Therefore, Emperor

Concerns and Caucasian Interests. Diplomatic Relations between Iran and Russia 1587–1639 // Safavid Iran and Her Neighbors. Salt Lake City, 2003. P. 101–128.

³² Besides that, they were to give money to the tsar for helping in the fight against Poland. For details, see: *Floriia B. N.* Russko-polskie otnosheniia i baltiiskii vopros v kontse XVI — nachale XVII v. Moscow, 1973; *Macůrek J.* Zápas Polska a Habsburkú o přístup k Černému moři na sklonku 16. století. Prague, 1931.

³³ Lucas Pauli — in Russian documents called Lucas Pavlusov, the son of Magnus (i.e. the son of Magnus Pauli). Lucas Pauli as the emperor's agent and messenger was sent to Moscow already in the autumn of 1587. His task was to find out about the mood and attitudes at the court of the Tsardom of Muscovy and to gain help in the effort of the Habsburgs to get the Polish throne and in the fight against the Ottoman Empire. For details, see: *Mika N.* Tatarská otázka v politických misích císařských kurýrů. P. 425; *Bushev P. P.* Istoriia posolstv i diplomaticheskikh otnoshenii. P. 67; PDS. P. 1102, 1113, 1114, 1124.

³⁴ *Bushev P. P.* Istoriia posolstv i diplomaticheskikh otnoshenii. P. 67.

³⁵ PDS. P. 1057–1098.

³⁶ *Ibid.* P. 1057–1058, 1073–1074.

³⁷ The term "dokonchanie" refers to a specific political agreement (peaceful or friendly) between two rulers or princes. "Soedinenie", or alliance, refers to an alliance treaty or a union against a third party, in this case — the Ottomans. See: *Sreznevskii I. I.* Materialy dlia slovaria drevne-russkogo iazyka. Vol. 1. Moscow, 1893. P. 693; Vol. 3. Moscow, 1912. P. 704–705; *Filiushkin A.* Tituly russkikh gosudarei. Moscow; St. Petersburg, 2006. P. 220–238; *Panov V.* Tři moskevské mise Mikuláše Varkoče. P. 7–20.

³⁸ PDS. P. 1059, 1074.

³⁹ *Ibid.* P. 1059.

⁴⁰ Regarding Habsburg-Ottoman relations in the 1570–1580s, see: *Skovajsa M.* Habsbursko-osman-ské mierové zmluvy 1498–1616 (Dissertation thesis). Bratislava, 2012. P. 151–174; *Leitsch W.* Rudolph und Südosteuropa, 1593–1606 // East European Quarterly. 1972. Vol. 6, no. 3. P. 302.

Rudolph continued to face a potential threat of the Ottoman attack. Positive reports from Moscow seemed to be welcome.

The court of the emperor selected the Silesian nobleman Nicholas von Warkotsch to lead the mission of the Habsburgs⁴¹. Lucas Pauli was chosen as his companion as he was well-informed about diplomatic issues and the situation at the court of the Muscovite tsar. Together with their entourage, they arrived in Moscow at the end of March 1589⁴². Warkotsch attended several audiences with the tsar and the secret boyar council. Besides the topic of the fight over the Polish-Lithuanian crown, the question of a mutual creation of the anti-Ottoman alliance and the participation of Safavid Persia in it was discussed within the negotiations with the Boyar Duma, and especially with the tsar's right-hand man Boris Godunov⁴³. In the framework of these negotiations, they discussed the results of the dealing with the Persian envoy Hadi beg at the tsar's court as well as the possibilities of potential military forces of all participants in the intended anti-Ottoman league. Warkotsch was also informed about the progress of the Safavid-Ottoman conflict and about the overthrowing of the Persian shah Mohammad Khodabende replaced by his son Abbas I (called "*gran enemigo de Turcos*")⁴⁴. He was also apprised of sending of the Muscovite envoy G. B. Vasilchikov to Persia, who was supposed to persuade the new shah to continue the war against the Ottomans as well as to assure the shah of not only the support from the Muscovite tsar but also from the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of Spain.⁴⁵ Warkotsch was further promised that as soon as the envoys arrived from Persia to Moscow, the tsar would immediately send another mission to Prague to inform the emperor about agreement between the tsar and Persian shah⁴⁶. Towards the end of the negotiations, boyars proposed to Warkotsch that in the case of the emperor's agreement with the plan, he should send his envoy to Moscow in the following year (1590) to arrange further steps in the matter of the anti-Ottoman league.

After more than a month after his audience with the tsar (June 15 or 25) Nicholas von Warkotsch departed from Moscow to Prague. Upon his return, Emperor Rudolph soon admitted him. However, the emperor did not take any steps in the desired matter. The situation soon started evolving against the emperor. Shah Abbas concluded an agreement with the Ottoman sultan and thus ended their mutual military conflict. The sultan could therefore focus on the events in central Europe when soon the Long Turkish War erupted (1593–1606).

⁴¹ According to N. Mika, Nicholas von Warkotsch undertook the mission also due to the fact that his property in Silesia was severely damaged as a result of looting by the troops of the Polish nobleman (Jan Zamoyski) who was an opponent of the Habsburgs in the dispute over the Polish-Lithuanian throne: *Mika N. Tatarská otázka v politických misích císařských kurýrů*. P. 427. — According to J. Polišenský, Warkotsch spoke several Slavic languages, such as Polish or Russian, which might have been the reason why he was selected for the mission: *Polišenský J. Poselství z Prahy do Moskvy roku 1589*. P. 13.

⁴² For details about the mission, see: *Procházka J. Cesta slezského šlechtice do Ruska v roce 1589 // Slezský sborník / Acta Silesiaca*. 1997. Vol. 95, issue 4. P. 255–262; *Uebersberger H. Österreich und Russland*. S. 535–544.

⁴³ The question of the creation of the anti-Ottoman league (in 1589) is particularly discussed in the study: *Rybár L. Misia Mikuláša Varkoča a Lukáša Pauliho do Moskvy v roku 1589 a otázka spojenectva Habsburgovcov s Perziou proti Osmanom // Byzantinoslovaca VII*. Bratislava, 2020. P. 223–227.

⁴⁴ *Polišenský J. Poselství z Prahy do Moskvy roku 1589*. P. 54.

⁴⁵ *Moscovitische Relation, 1589 // HHStA. F. Russland I. Cart. 3 (1589–1595)*. Konv. 1 (1589). Fol. 82.

⁴⁶ PDS. P. 1181.

In the meantime, diplomatic negotiations between Moscow and Persia proceeded. Alongside Hadi beg, the above-mentioned tsar's envoy G. B. Vasilchikov was sent to Persia in April 1588 and stayed there for over a year. Since Shah Abbas ascended to the throne during the missions of Vasilchikov and Hadi beg in Persia, he probably had not yet been informed about the prospects of creation of the anti-Ottoman league (together with the Muscovite tsar, the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of Spain), which had already been addressed by his father Mohammad Khodabandeh. It was envoy Vasilchikov who familiarised him with the issue again, which made the young shah interested⁴⁷. Thus, he decided to respond to the proposal and together with Vasilchikov sent his envoys Budaq beg and Hadi beg to Moscow to gain more information about the proposed project⁴⁸. They arrived in Moscow at the end of 1589, however, the tsar did not accept them at the court until the spring of 1590⁴⁹. Even though the documents do not include mentions of the discussion during the Persian-Russian negotiations of the possibilities of creating the anti-Ottoman league together with the Holy Roman Emperor and other rulers of Europe, by the end of the negotiations Persian envoys were assured that as soon as envoys from the Holy Roman Emperor and from other Christian rulers arrived in Moscow and agreed on "this great matter" ("великих делах"), the Muscovite tsar would immediately inform the Persian shah about the results of the agreement through his envoy⁵⁰. Under the circumstances, Moscow decided to subordinate their interests in the Southern Caucasus to foreign political interests in general. Such an attitude guaranteed negotiating and mediating the position which resulted not only in potential territorial benefits (possible gain of the cities of Baku and Darband; gain of the Baltic territory) but also in the acquisition of important international status in European and Asian foreign politics⁵¹. In the meantime, Abbas sent his envoy to Istanbul where they agreed on signing a peace treaty (1590) which ended the military conflict between them. This brought about shuffling of the cards in the international political sphere, which also had an impact on the organisation of the anti-Ottoman league itself.

Nicholas von Warkotsch and Haji Khosrow in Moscow

Meanwhile, in Central Europe, the situation changed as tensions on the Habsburg-Ottoman border turned into open warfare. At the beginning of the conflict, the imperial court in Prague did not consider sending its own embassy to Persia, but rather hoped through the mediation of the Russian tsars to induce the Persian shah to start military manoeuvres on the Ottoman border⁵². In anticipation of the impending war with the Ottomans, Em-

⁴⁷ Magilina I. V. Rossiia i proiekt antiosmanskoi ligi. P. 84.

⁴⁸ J. Prochádzka claims that the Persian shah acted reluctantly and Vasilchikov left Persia without an official statement is not therefore completely true which is also evidenced by the Persian mission having been sent to Moscow: Prochádzka J. Cesta slezského šlechtice do Ruska v roce 1589. P. 257.

⁴⁹ Bushev P. P. Istoriia posolstv i diplomaticheskikh otnoshenii. P. 121–145.

⁵⁰ Veselovskii N. I. Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii. P. 142–143, 144.

⁵¹ Magilina I. V. Rossiia i proiekt antiosmanskoi ligi. P. 83. — For complex goals of the Muscovy and Persia in the Caucasus see also: Kortepeter C. M. Complex goals of the Ottomans, Persians, and Muscovites in the Caucasus, 1578–1640 // New Perspectives on Safavid Iran. London, 2011. P. 59–83.

⁵² Niederkorn J. P. Zweifrontenkrieg gegen die Osmanen. Iranisch-christliche Bündnispläne in der Zeit des „Langen Türkenkriegs“ 1593–1606 // Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung. 1996. Bd. 104, no. 3–4. S. 314.

peror Rudolph sent his own envoy Nicholas von Warkotsch to Moscow again. He left for Moscow with his diplomatic entourage just before the official outbreak of the war with the Ottomans through the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian state on 22 July 1593. He arrived in Moscow in September 1593 and already at the beginning of October was admitted for the first audience with the Muscovite tsar⁵³. The main aim of his mission was to discuss the participation of the Muscovy in the anti-Ottoman alliance, which several European powers (Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Papal States) were planning to create. In addition, the emperor wanted to gain material and financial help for the war against the Ottomans from the tsar and also asked the Tsardom of Muscovy to help prevent the invasion of the Crimean Tatars (as Ottoman allies) into the West. Another subject of negotiations was the offer of Emperor Rudolph II to mediate peace between the Muscovite Tsardom and Sweden. He wanted to ensure that Sweden entered into the anti-Ottoman union⁵⁴. The last matter of discussion was the question of Persia and its participation in the fight against the Ottomans, which had already been negotiated in previous meetings.

In respect to the second visit of Warkotsch to Moscow in 1593, Persian diplomatic mission of Haji Khosrow sent by Shah Abbas I (1587–1629) played an important role. As the previous Persian courier Kay had not returned from his mission in Moscow⁵⁵, another mission led by the above-mentioned Haji Khosrow was sent from Persian Khorasan⁵⁶. They travelled through Gilan province where its members boarded a ship in 1592 and set off to Astrakhan by the Caspian Sea. The voyage through the Caspian Sea was complicated due to adverse weather, and thus they arrived in Astrakhan only at the beginning of December 1592. From there, they departed for Moscow by the Volga River route in April of the following year. According to the words of Russian historian N. M. Karamzin⁵⁷, Haji Khosrow arrived in Moscow in August. However, there are neither any specific reports preserved in the archived documents about the exact date of his arrival in Moscow nor about his first audience with the Muscovite tsar⁵⁸. The Persian envoy held negotiations primarily with the tsar's right-hand man Boris Godunov. The core subject of their negotiations was the regulation of trade relations, clarification regarding the Safavid-Ottoman peace of 1590, and potential alliance and "friendship" in the event of a conflict with the Ottoman Empire⁵⁹. Even though the main goal of both envoys was a diplomatic negotiation with the Muscovite tsar (de facto — with B. Godunov), they used each other's presence at the tsar's court. Boris Godunov subsequently allowed to organise the meeting of the representatives of both parties. Although at the time of Warkotsch' arrival, the Persian mission had been in Moscow for some time, Godunov was keeping Khosrow at the court

⁵³ The second mission of Warkotsch to Moscow see: *Panov V.* On the Contents of Niklas Warkotsch's 1594 Report. P. 277–292; *Uebersberger H.* Österreich und Russland. S. 552–559.

⁵⁴ *Bantysh-Kamenskii N.* Obzor vnesnikh snoshenii Rossii (po 1800 god). Vol. 1. Moscow, 1894. P. 13.

⁵⁵ Persian courier Kay was sent to Moscow already in 1591 and stayed there until 1593.

⁵⁶ According to the Russian historian I. V. Magilina, Haji Khosrow was sent to Moscow by the Persian shah because no Russian mission arrived in Persia in response to a previous (Persian) mission to Moscow (*Magilina I. V.* Rossiia i projekt antiosmanskoj ligi. P. 105).

⁵⁷ *Karamzin N. M.* Istoriia gosudarstva Rosiiskogo, primechaniia k X tomu. Prim. 323. P. 61.

⁵⁸ That is confirmed also by P. P. Bushev. In Fund 77 no detailed reports about his arrival and audience with the Muscovite tsar Fyodor Ivanovich have survived either — only the information that "Qizilbash envoy Haji Khosrow arrived in the month of August" (*Bushev P. P.* Istoriia posolstv i diplomaticheskikh otnoshenii. P. 181–182).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* P. 185–189.

so that he could not contact Warkotsch⁶⁰. That indicates that the Russian side was interested in mediating (and technically participating in) Habsburg-Persian negotiations. The main aim of the meeting was an attempt to agree on a common approach against the Ottoman Sultan and at the same time — on the establishment of the anti-Ottoman alliance. Muscovy thus played a significant role in the project.

As stated in the report from March 1594, Nicholas von Warkotsch after his arrival in Moscow accidentally learned that the Persian envoy Haji Khosrow was also present at the court⁶¹. According to his own words, Warkotsch was very pleased with it, as was the Persian envoy who was expecting him⁶². After some time, Warkotsch asked Muscovite tsar through Boris Godunov to allow to send greetings to the Persian envoy and his shah and subsequently asked to facilitate the meeting between the representatives of both missions⁶³. The fact that Warkotsch requested a meeting with Haji Khosrow is confirmed in other documents as well⁶⁴. Warkotsch referred to the emperor's own request who suggested that if Persian envoys were present at the tsar's court at the time, he was to ask Godunov to allow them (envoys of the Habsburg and the Persian sides) to "meet"⁶⁵. The main goal of the meeting was supposed "to talk about Turkish matters because as the Persian Shah, so does the Emperor stand against the Turkish [Sultan] and they both are asking the ruler [meaning the Tsar] for help"⁶⁶. Boris Godunov then requested the permission for Warkotsch to meet with the Persian envoy, which he was then granted by the tsar. According to Stefan Heyss, just a few days after that, on 23 October (or 12 October), Warkotsch sent his courtier Christoff Unruh (in Russian sources — Uprut)⁶⁷ and six more persons to the Persian envoy. When they arrived at the courtyard where the Persian envoy was staying, members of the Persian mission (led by shah's falconer)⁶⁸ awaited them at the entrance (lower) veranda. In accordance with the diplomatic ceremony, they respectfully received Unruh and the others and ushered them inside. Persian servants and other

⁶⁰ According to P.P. Bushev, the tsar's court would generally need 7–10 days to familiarise with the documents addressed to the Muscovite tsar. In this case, however, almost a month had passed before the Persian envoy was admitted to the tsar's audience for the first time. Delaying the Persian mission might have been connected with Warkotsch's arrival in Moscow (Ibid. P. 182).

⁶¹ In a German documents he is referred to as Asichosroff (Relation) or Achisoraw (Heuss), in an Italian one as Asicos Woff. Relation aus Moskaw. Den 19 Martz 1594 // HHStA. F. Russland I. Cart. 3 (1589–1595). Konv. 5 (1594). Fol. 10, 14rev; Heuss S. Beschreibung der Reiss in die Moskaw so Herr Niklas Warkostch. S. 167; *Turgenev A. I. Akty istoricheskie, otrosniashchiesia k Rossii*. P. 38.

⁶² *Turgenev A. I. Akty istoricheskie, otrosniashchiesia k Rossii*. P. 37.

⁶³ According to D. R. Stokes, in his report (of 1593) to Emperor Rudolph, Warkotsch stated that Persian envoy Khosrow requested from the Muscovite tsar a meeting with Warkotsch as soon as he arrived. This information is not completely precise. Moreover, the classification of the document that D. R. Stokes cites does not include the stated information either: *Stokes D. R. Failed Alliance and Expanding Horizons: Relations between the Austrian Habsburgs and the Safavid Persians in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Dissertation Thesis). University of St. Andrews, 2014. P. 74. — Document cited by D. R. Stokes: HHStA. F. Russland I-3 (1589–1595), Konv. 4 (1593). Fol. 10.

⁶⁴ For example, *Nakaz posolstvu V. V. Tufiakina i C. Emelianova iz 1597–1599: Veselovskii N. I. Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii*. P. 341–378.

⁶⁵ PDS. P. 1285. — Russian term 'to allow to meet' ('сослаться') or also 'to exchange messages' ('обослаться') in older diplomatic documents may refer to indirect or mediated meeting and exchange of envoys through own representatives. Such approach was based on older diplomatic tradition.

⁶⁶ Ibid. P. 1286.

⁶⁷ Ibid. — Russian translation by S. Heyss identifies him as Unrug (Унруг). — *Geis S. Opisanie puteshestviia v Moskvu Nokilaia Varkocha*. P. 22.

⁶⁸ PDS. P. 1286.

members of the entourage were in the room; and according to Heyss, they were dressed in gilded Persian silk caftans with turbans on their heads. Unruh was then escorted to another room where the Persian envoy was expecting to see him. According to preserved reports, Haji originally came from Lithuania but was captured near the town of Polotsk at a young age and then sold as a slave to Persia, where he gradually worked his way up to higher state positions⁶⁹. Since he came from Eastern Europe, he had to speak one or more Slavic languages (Polish, Russian) and also to know local social-cultural environment well. Probably because of that he was selected by the Safavid Shah as a suitable member of the previous Persian mission to Moscow led by Budaq beg. In the second case, he was appointed the first person in the diplomatic mission to Moscow.

After entering the room, Haji Khosrow welcomed Christoff Unruh in accordance with a Persian custom by holding hands⁷⁰. Heyss further continued with a detailed description of his lavish attire. Khosrow was dressed in silver-coated cloak and a long, gilded caftan made of brocade embroidered with floral silk patterns. He had a beautiful white scarf on his head. According to a Persian custom, a gold button with a tube was sewn on it, into which a bundle of beautiful feathers of a black heron was woven. Heyss further elaborated on the description of his hands, which were yellow like saffron, and on each little finger he wore silver rings of poor quality with some symbols engraved in them⁷¹. After the welcome, the Persian envoy asked Unruh if he wanted to talk to him alone. After his affirmative response, others present there left to the adjacent room, and Unruh together with a Tatar interpreter (Velyamin Stepanov) and the Persian envoy Khosrow stayed alone in the room and had a conversation that took about half an hour⁷². Even though Heyss' records do not mention the subject of the discussion, Russian documents contain almost the whole content of the negotiation. After the introductory welcome, Unruh spoke to the Persian envoy. The primary subject of the conversation was the question of the alliance against the Ottomans and a promise that the Holy Roman Emperor would send his diplomatic mission to the shah's court in Persia. In the documents it is stated that Unruh announced to the Persian envoy that: "*The Holy Roman Emperor requests to be in camaraderie and alliance with the Persian Shah <...> and if the Persian Shah wanted to be with Our Ruler, the Holy Roman Emperor, and if he would send his messengers to the Holy Roman Emperor through the territory of His Magnificence and Greatest Lord, the Tsar and Grand Knyaz*"⁷³. Following that Unruh continued that as a response the Holy Roman Emperor would "*send his messengers to the Persian Shah so that they could stand in alliance and united against the terrible Sultan of Tsargrad [Constantinople]*"⁷⁴. Similar content can be found in a later report of the Russian envoy Zvenigorodskiy (1595) and subsequently — in so called "nakaz" of V. V. Tufiakinov and S. Emelianov (1597–1599) who inform about the meeting of representatives of the Habsburg and Safavid envoys. Zvenigorodskiy noted: "*...so that Your Majesty Shah Abbas with Turkish [Sultan] would not make peace and that he would stand with Emperor Rudolph against him [the Sultan] in unity...*"⁷⁵. He further continued that "*Your Majesty Shah Abbas exchanged envoys about the alliance*

⁶⁹ Heuss S. Beschreibung der Reiss in die Moskaw so Herr Niklas Warkostch. S. 167.

⁷⁰ Ibid. S. 166–167.

⁷¹ Ibid. S. 167–168.

⁷² Ibid. S. 168.

⁷³ PDS. P. 1288.

⁷⁴ Ibid. P. 1286–1289.

⁷⁵ Veselovskii N. I. Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii. P. 232.

against the Turkish [Sultan] with Emperor Rudolph” and that the Muscovite tsar “through his great empire allowed them [the envoys] to cross”⁷⁶. After Unruh completed his speech, the Persian envoy Khosrow responded extensively: he assured Unruh that he would deliver all the messages to the Safavid Shah Abbas⁷⁷. He gave another assurance that the shah would also send his envoys to Emperor Rudolph so that “love and brotherhood between Our Rulers would be fulfilled”⁷⁸. In this case it is necessary to emphasise the symbolic meaning of some terms present in the Russian documents in light of the system of the political and diplomatic culture of medieval Rus’. This mainly concerns terms such as ‘love’, ‘brotherhood’ and ‘camaraderie’ or ‘friendship’, which were often mentioned in the context of the communication between the Habsburg and the Safavid envoys. In the documents of medieval Rus’, the term “love” (based on Christian ethics) referred to a relationship of the highest quality and was understood as a sign of unity, agreement, and close relations between the two rulers. The term “brotherhood” had a lower status than the term “love”. Brotherhood was considered rather a social category and in diplomatic communication represented a symbol of equality between the two rulers, in this case — between the Emperor and the Shah (or the Muscovite tsar). In the documents of the 16th century, the term “camaraderie” primarily symbolised the situation of peace, good diplomatic and trade contacts as well as alliance. In the case of the Habsburg-Safavid negotiations, the term was to signify the alliance against the Ottoman (Turkish) Sultan⁷⁹.

After the official conversation was completed, Unruh presented gifts for the Safavid Shah (so called “pominki”) — a clock and a portable gun⁸⁰. The Safavid envoy offered “med” (honey)⁸¹ and food in exchange. From Heyss’ report further details about what happened after the confidential conversation between Unruh and Khosrow can be inferred. According to his words, other members were once again invited to the room where they were offered vials of “honey” and different types of sweet food⁸². Then the Safavid envoy gifted the Habsburg court man a Persian caftan made of gilded brocade sewn of colourful silk⁸³. Unruh then asked Khosrow to send his own representative to Warkotsch. So Khosrow promised to send his man to Warkotsch. Subsequently, a Persian representative — falconer Bulad Aga or Bulad Bek (Poliad Beg)⁸⁴ was sent and he arrived with gifts and with an entourage of six of his men. Persians were welcomed in a similar manner to how the Habsburg members were welcomed at the Persian shah⁸⁵. Bulad Bek delivered

⁷⁶ Veselovskii N. I. Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii. P. 232.

⁷⁷ Schwarcz I. „Iter Persicum“ Tectanders und sein Russlandbild // Russland, Polen und Österreich in der frühen Neuzeit. Bd. 19. Festschrift für Walter Leitsch zum 75. Geburtstag. Vienna, Köln, Weimer, 2003. S. 194.

⁷⁸ PDS. P. 1291.

⁷⁹ Regarding symbolic meanings of titles and terms in medieval Rus’ see: Filiushkin A. Tituly russkikh gosudarei. P. 220–238.

⁸⁰ Giving ‘pominki’ (memorabilia or gifts) was a diplomatic norm and a custom in medieval Europe and Rus’ with strict rules. Regarding this topic, see: Iuzefovich L. A. “Kak v posolskikh obychaiakh vedetsia...” Russkii posolskii obychai kontsa XV — nachala XVII v. Moscow, 1988. P. 47–56.

⁸¹ The term “honey” (med in Russian) refers to an alcoholic beverage — honey wine. The custom of drinking “honey” was a regular part of a diplomatic protocol at the Muscovite court.

⁸² This was repeated three times, and every time they received different kinds of “honey”.

⁸³ Heuss S. Beschreibung der Reiss in die Moskaw so Herr Niklas Warkostsch. S. 169.

⁸⁴ In Russian documents referred to as Bulad Bek or Bulad Aga, and by Heyss — as Poliad Beg: Heuss S. Beschreibung der Reiss in die Moskaw so Herr Niklas Warkostsch. S. 169–170; PDS. P. 1292.

⁸⁵ PDS. P. 1292–1293.

gifts (Qizilbash silk cloak decorated with gold)⁸⁶ and confirmed the words that were told to Unruh. According to Heyss, they were sent “*honey of three kinds and vials*” from the Muscovite court⁸⁷. Warkotsch presented the Persian courtier with a beautifully decorated long firearm (called “*samopal*”)⁸⁸. Finally, according to their custom, they wished farewell, and the Persian courtier returned.

As far as Habsburg-Safavid diplomatic negotiations are concerned, it is necessary to emphasise the key role and the position of the Muscovite tsar and Boris Godunov. It is possible to infer this from Russian and German (or Italian) documents. First of all, the Muscovite tsar (in fact, Boris Godunov) was the main mediator and also a direct participant in the diplomatic exchange and negotiations between the Habsburg and the Safavid side, which is apparent from several surviving documents. In some places it is mentioned that envoys of both sides were to be sent to the court of the Muscovite tsar first and then with tsar’s approval — either to the Safavid Shah or the Holy Roman Emperor⁸⁹. The report by A. D. Zvenigorodskiy states that Emperor Rudolph would send his envoys to the Safavid Shah together with envoys who were heading to the Muscovite tsar (and at the same time, the Safavid Shah would send his envoy to Moscow), and that “*the Muscovite Tsar will allow the messengers of Emperor Rudolph and Your Majesty Shah Abbas to pass across his great empire*”⁹⁰. In a different place, in Warkotsch’s report addressed to Emperor Rudolph in 1594, it is said that the Tsardom of Muscovy was to fulfil primarily a mediating role: “*Since in this negotiation the Grand Prince offered himself as a mediator to bring the distant Persia closer*”⁹¹. Similar wording and expressions are used in a number of places in the document. Warkotsch’ report also contains several mentions about the intentions of the Holy Roman Emperor to create an alliance with the Persian shah using help of the Muscovite tsar as an intermediary⁹².

However, the Muscovite tsar played a role not only as the main mediator and participant of the negotiations, but also as a principal ally of both rulers (Emperor Rudolph and Shah Abbas) in the fight against the Ottoman Sultan. Such explicitly formulated attitude is apparent from Khosrow’s response to a courtier Unruh: “*And when God permits, Our Rulers, His Shah Majesty with Emperor Majesty will exchange messengers and strengthen their brotherhood and love and the Great Ruler, Tsar and Great Knyaz Fyodor Ivanovich, the one who holds the whole of Russia by himself, as a father for his children, will be part of their friendship. And so, these three Great Rulers will be in alliance and will stand up against the Turkish [Sultan], and Turkish [Sultan] will not be alive soon*”⁹³. This sentence reveals that the Muscovite tsar constituted a solid part of the anti-Ottoman alliance comprising three “Great Rulers”. The Muscovite tsar himself thus represented one of the key figures of the “Great alliance and friendship” against the Ottoman Sultan. In contrast to the Russian

⁸⁶ From Russian and German sources, we learn that the Persian envoy brought two brocade fabrics, which had human figures and animals depicted on it according to the Persian custom. In addition to that they brought another Persian cloak (caftan). Different silk fabrics (for example damask) are mentioned (*Heuss S. Beschreibung der Reiss in die Moskaw so Herr Niklas Warkostch. S. 169–170; PDS. P. 1294*).

⁸⁷ *Heuss S. Beschreibung der Reiss in die Moskaw so Herr Niklas Warkostch. S. 169.*

⁸⁸ PDS. P. 1294.

⁸⁹ *Veselovskii N. I. Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii. P. 232; PDC. P. 1288.*

⁹⁰ *Veselovskii N. I. Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh i torgovykh snoshenii. P. 232.*

⁹¹ *Turgenev A. I. Akty istoricheskie, otnosiashchiesia k Rossii. P. 41.*

⁹² *Relation aus Moskaw. Den 19 Martz 1594 // HHStA. F. Russland I. Cart. 3. Konv. 5 (1594). Fol. 29 rev. — 30, 31; Turgenev A. I. Akty istoricheskie, otnosiashchiesia k Rossii. P. 34, 39, 40.*

⁹³ PDS. P. 1291.

documents, Warkotsch's report even mentioned a more particular nature of Moscow's help and participation in the anti-Ottoman league⁹⁴. According to it, the tsar was to provide military help to Persia in the Caucasus where Russian units operated against the Crimean Schamkhal⁹⁵, vassal of the Ottoman Sultan. Subsequently, they could attempt to conquer the city of Darband (*Temicarpi*), which was under Ottoman control. All Asian allies (confederates) and Georgians were to join the Muscovite army. Together they would help the Persian shah to expel the Ottomans from the territories of the Caucasus and subsequently defeat them definitively⁹⁶. With regard to helping the Habsburgs, the tsar was to offer financial support under the condition that an agreement was concluded by all members of the alliance (i.e., the Muscovite tsar, the Holy Roman Emperor, the Pope, the Spanish king and the Safavid Shah)⁹⁷. At the end of the negotiations, they agreed that it would happen in Moscow two years later (in May of 1595)⁹⁸.

Envoys of both parties (Habsburg and Safavid) stayed at the court of Muscovite tsar for some time and afterwards left on their return journey. They both attended their final audience at the Muscovite tsar. Haji Khosrow departed from Moscow first, on 26 October 1593. Not even two months later (on 19th December 1593), Nicholas von Warkotsch left for Prague.

Conclusions

The key question of the presented research concerns the mutual negotiations between the representatives of the Holy Roman Emperor and the Safavid Shah — Nicholas von Warkotsch and Haji Khosrow — about the possibility of creating an anti-Ottoman alliance with the help of the Tsardom of Muscovy. However, it is necessary to note that the project of creating a common anti-Ottoman union (Spain, The Holy Roman Empire, The Papal States, and the Venetian republic) with potential assistance of Safavid Persia and the Tsardom of Muscovy, had been part of a wider context of Papal and Habsburg politics much earlier and continued also in the 1590s⁹⁹. After Nicholas Warkotsch returned to Prague, he delivered the report of the mission to Emperor Rudolph. According to Warkotsch's records, another negotiation was to take place in Moscow two years later (1595) which was to result in the signing of a tripartite alliance agreement. Furthermore, the Safavid and the Habsburg parties agreed that Emperor Rudolph would send a diplomatic mission to Persia.

⁹⁴ Relation aus Moskaw. Den 19 Martz 1594 // HHStA. F.Russland I. Cart. 3. Konv. 5 (1594). Fol. 29 rev. — 31; *Turgenev A. I. Akty istoricheskie, otnosiashchiesia k Rossii*. P. 40–41.

⁹⁵ Schamkhal — the title of the Crimean rulers in Dagestan. In Warkotsch's report referred to as "Crim Szeffkal" or "Crimst Zeffkal" (Relation aus Moskaw. Den 19 Martz 1594 // HHStA. F.Russland I. Cart. 3. Konv. 5 (1594). Fol. 29 rev; *Turgenev A. I. Akty istoricheskie, otnosiashchiesia k Rossii*. P. 40).

⁹⁶ Relation aus Moskaw. Den 19 Martz 1594 // HHStA. F.Russland I. Cart. 3. Konv. 5 (1594). Fol. 29 rev. — 30; *Turgenev A. I. Akty istoricheskie, otnosiashchiesia k Rossii*. P. 40.

⁹⁷ The King of England and the King of France, as enemies of the Habsburgs, were not to be included in the alliance. Relation aus Moskaw. Den 19 Martz 1594 // HHStA. F.Russland I. Cart. 3. Konv. 5 (1594). Fol. 30 rev. — 31; *Turgenev A. I. Akty istoricheskie, otnosiashchiesia k Rossii*. P. 40–41.

⁹⁸ At first Warkotsch suggested that the agreement be signed in Prague. Due to a great distance from Persia, however, they agreed to meet in Moscow (Relation aus Moskaw. Den 19 Martz 1594 // HHStA. F.Russland I. Cart. 3. Konv. 5 (1594). Fol. 31; *Turgenev A. I. Akty istoricheskie, otnosiashchiesia k Rossii*. P. 40–41).

⁹⁹ *Niederhorn J.P. Die europäischen Mächte und der „Lange Türkenkrieg“ Kaiser Rudolfs II (1593–1606)*. Vienna, 1993. S. 453; *Schwarz I. „Iter Persicum“ Tectanders und sein Russlandbild*. P. 194.

A year later (for the third time), Warkotsch departed for Moscow, however, as it is already known, no tripartite alliance was signed. Moreover, Rudolph did not send any diplomatic mission to Persia through the territory of the Tsardom of Muscovy. However, the Persian side was actively operating. Safavid Shah Abbas maintained diplomatic contacts with the Tsardom of Muscovy, which in the 1590s more or less continuously addressed the question of a joined anti-Ottoman fight (together with Holy Roman Emperor). This issue requires further thorough research. Perhaps also due to that (with a reference to the meeting of Nicholas von Warkotsch and Haji Khosrow in Moscow) a few years later, Shah Abbas decided to send a diplomatic delegation to Europe led by Hosseyn Ali Beg Bayat and an Englishman, Anthony Shirley, through the territory of the Tsardom of Muscovy (with Tsardom functioning again as a mediator of these relations). The goal of the mission was to visit several courts of European rulers and to urge them to create the anti-Ottoman alliance. The Persian delegation also visited the emperor's court in Prague. It is possible to assume that the relative success Habsburg-Safavid negotiations in Moscow in 1593 in the form of a promise of a treaty and of an exchange of envoys between both sides encouraged Shah Abbas, besides other matters, to send the aforementioned diplomatic delegation to Europe. The Habsburg-Persian diplomacy, therefore, had its continuation in the efforts to create the anti-Ottoman alliance also at the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century.

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